

Famiglie con un solo genitore e risultati scolastici dei figli: studenti nativi e immigrati a confronto

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Un nuovo inizio? Fecondità e dinamiche familiari in Italia. Presentazione dei risultati del protocollo di ricerca e PRIN "The Great Demographic Recession"

Roma – 6 Ottobre 2023



Motivation and Questions

- **Non-intact penalty, NIP: worse educational outcomes** for children experiencing parental separation or living in **single-parent households** than children living in intact families (and several other outcomes, e.g. Amato & Anthony, 2014)
- Our contribution:
 - (i) NIP in lower-secondary school **grades** & high-school **aspirations**: heterogeneity by **migratory background**
 - (ii) **types of non-intact families**: separation *vs* transnationalism

More penalty for whom?

- Novel interest in the heterogeneity in the effects of parental separation **by socio-economic status (SES)** - empirical evidence **ambiguous** (Amato & Anthony 2014; Grätz 2015; Guetto & Panichella 2019; Nilsen et al. 2020; Guetto et al. 2022)
- **Compensatory advantage** *vs.* **“more to lose”** mechanisms for high-SES children (Bernardi & Boertien 2016)
- “More to lose” mechanism: stronger NIP for majority children than **children of ethnic minorities** (US: McLanahan and Sandefur 1994; Netherlands: Kalmijn 2010)

Migrant-native children differences in NIP in Italy

- The “more to lose” mechanism may also apply when comparing **migrant and native children**, especially in Italy
 - (i) Strong immigrants’ segregation** in the secondary segment of the labor market (Fellini & Guetto 2019)
 - 31,2% of foreign families with small children were in **absolute poverty** in 2019, compared to 6,3% of native families (ISTAT 2020)
 - (ii) Strong educational achievement gaps** for both 1st and 2nd-gen immigrants, even after controlling for parental SES (Azzolini et al. 2012)

Migrant children and types of NI families

- **Different family dynamics** for parental absence in native and migrant families
 - Native families: parental separation/divorce → **Family conflict, stress, and reduced parent-child contacts**
 - Migrant families: **Transnationalism** → Parents living apart but still preserving unity and obligations across borders; **family strategy** for improving household members' position and future chances
 - parental absence may be **less disruptive** for migrants

Research hypotheses

- **H1:** NIPs are stronger for native children compared to migrant children
- **H2:** NIPs are stronger for 2nd-gen compared to 1st-gen migrants
- **H3:** Stronger NIPs for natives are explained by loss of resources and worsening family environment
- **H4:** Separation is associated with stronger NIPs compared to transnationalism, and this accounts for weaker NIPs for 1st-gen migrants

Data and Sample

- “**Integration of the second generation**” survey (ISTAT 2015)
- Native and migrant students attending **lower-secondary schools** in Italy (~ 10-13 years old)

Exclusion:

- Children living **with no parents** (N=338)
- Foreign-born children from **Western countries** (EU-15, North America, Oceania, Japan, South Africa) (N=417)
- N=31,027

Dependent variables: school performances

- **School report grades** in mathematics (Italian: not shown)
 - Continuous (0-10) and categorical (<6, 6, 7, 8+)
- **High-school aspirations** (type of upper-secondary school students aim at):
 - Most prestigious **academic track** (*liceo classico* and *liceo scientifico*)
 - **Technical schools** and less prestigious academic tracks
 - **Vocational schools** (*istituto professionale* or short professional courses)
 - (Else)
 - (Don't know)

Independent variable (I): Family structure

- **Non-intact family**

1. **Binary**: whether child lives with both parents (0) or not (1)
2. Type of non-intact: question about **where the absent parent lives**
 - **Intact**
 - **Separation** (1 – the absent parent lives either in the same city but in another house or a different city within Italy)
 - **Transnationalism** (2 – the absent parent lives abroad)
 - **Death** (3 – the absent parent is deceased)
 - **Else** (4 – the child does not know where the absent parent lives)

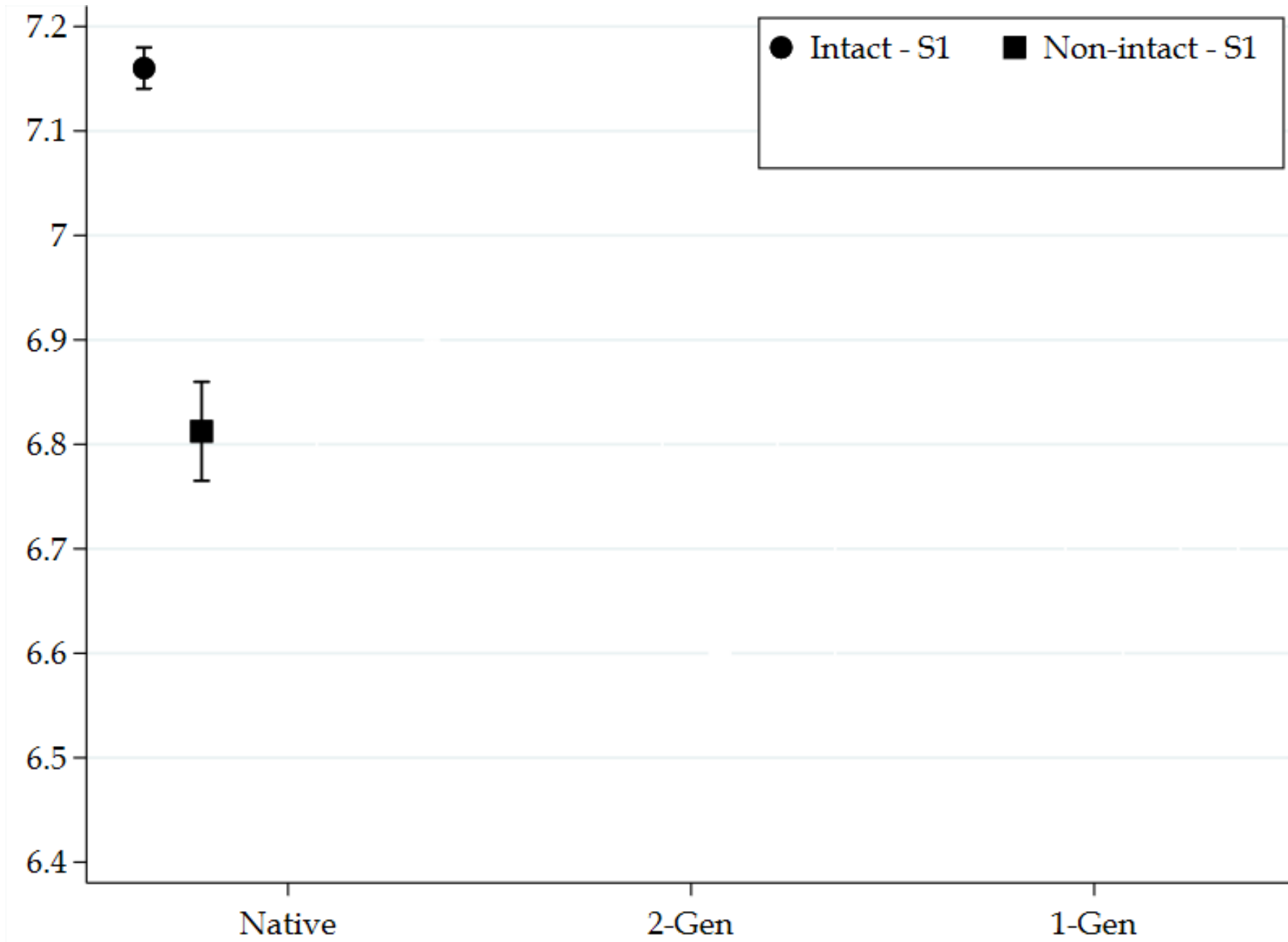
Independent variable (II): Migratory background

- Migratory background, combination of children's and parents' **place of birth** (Italy vs. abroad):
 - **Native** = Italian-born children of at least one Italian-born parent (+ foreign-born children of two Italian-born parents)
 - **2-Gen** (2nd generation) = Italian-born children of two foreign-born parents
 - **1-Gen** (1st, 1.5, and 1.75 generation) = Foreign-born children of at least one foreign-born parent

Control variables

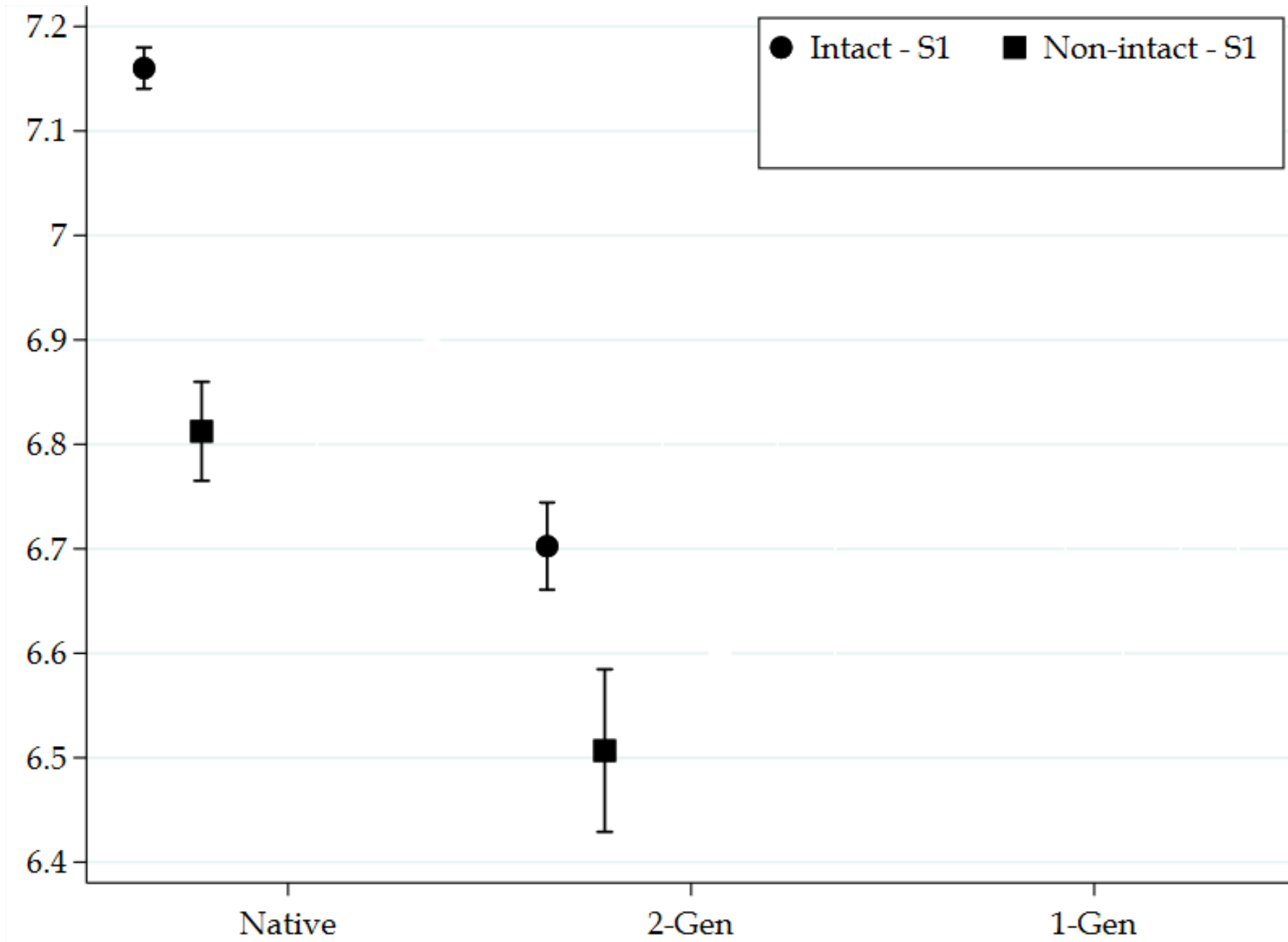
- **Socio-demographic variables:** sex; age (10-15+); grade (6-8); number of coresident siblings (0-5+); school macro-area (North-West, North-East, Center, South, Islands); mother's and father's educational level
- **Family socio-economic background:** self-reported economic condition; indicator of objects belonging to the household; housing condition (type of house and overcrowding); count on someone (yes/no)
- **Family environment:** Likert scales (0-5) for parents' school involvement; parenting quality; punishment; indifference

Figure 1. School report grades (Mathematics), by family structure and migratory background



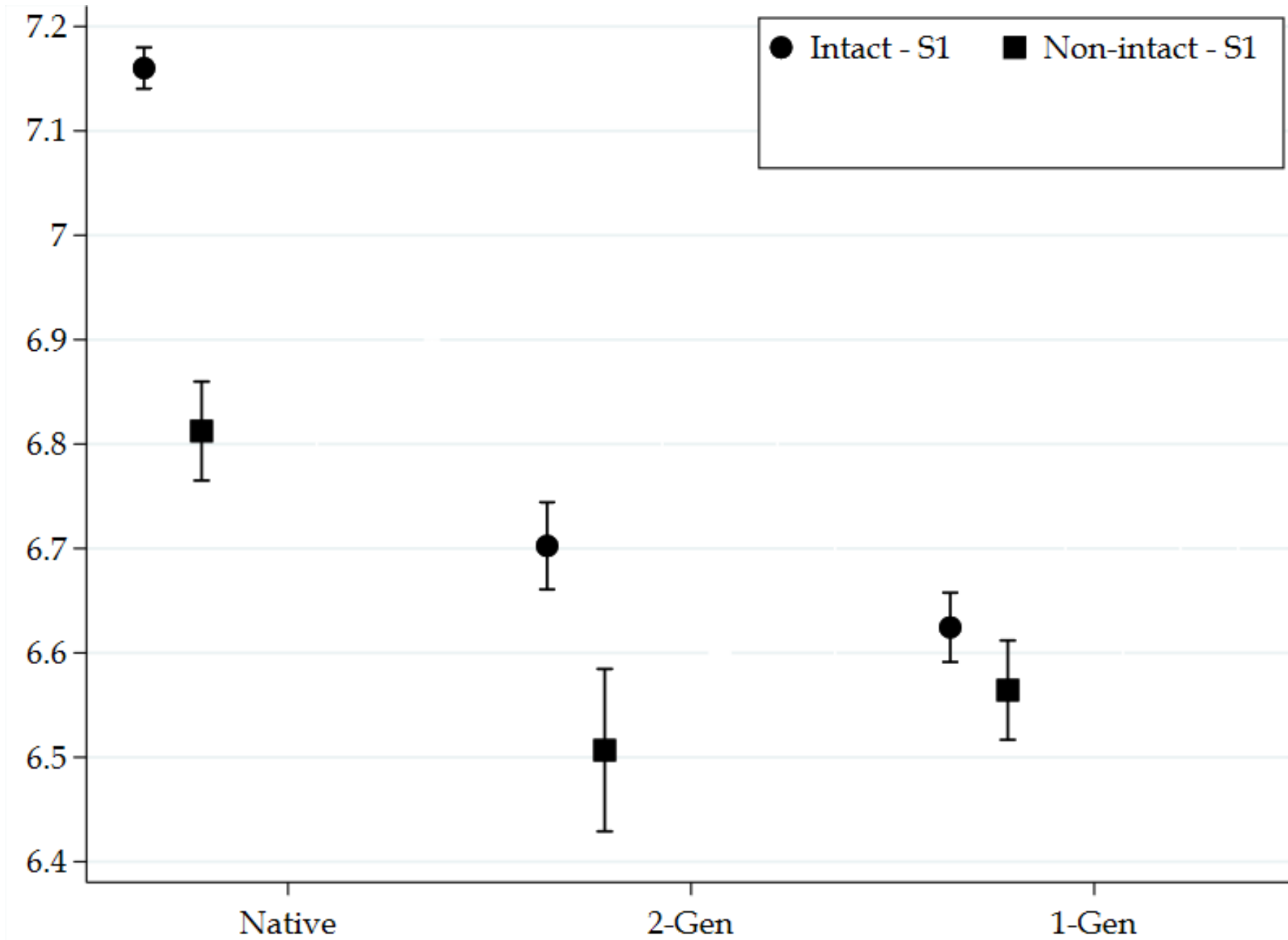
Note: Adjusted predictions after OLS models, with 83.5% C.I.
Controls: socio-demographic characteristics (Step 1).
N=31,027.
Source: Integration of the Second Generation survey (ISTAT 2015)

Figure 1. School report grades (Mathematics), by family structure and migratory background



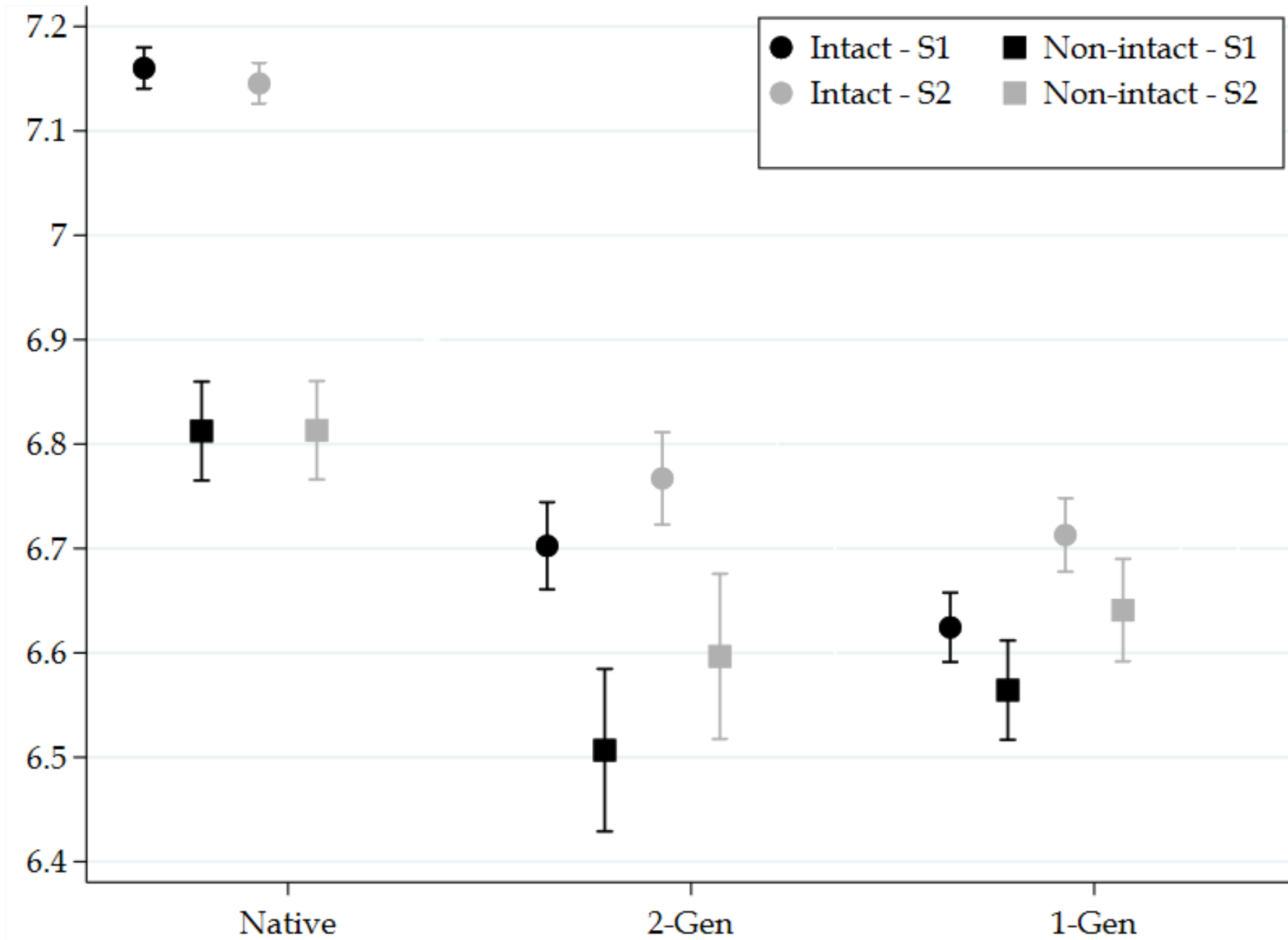
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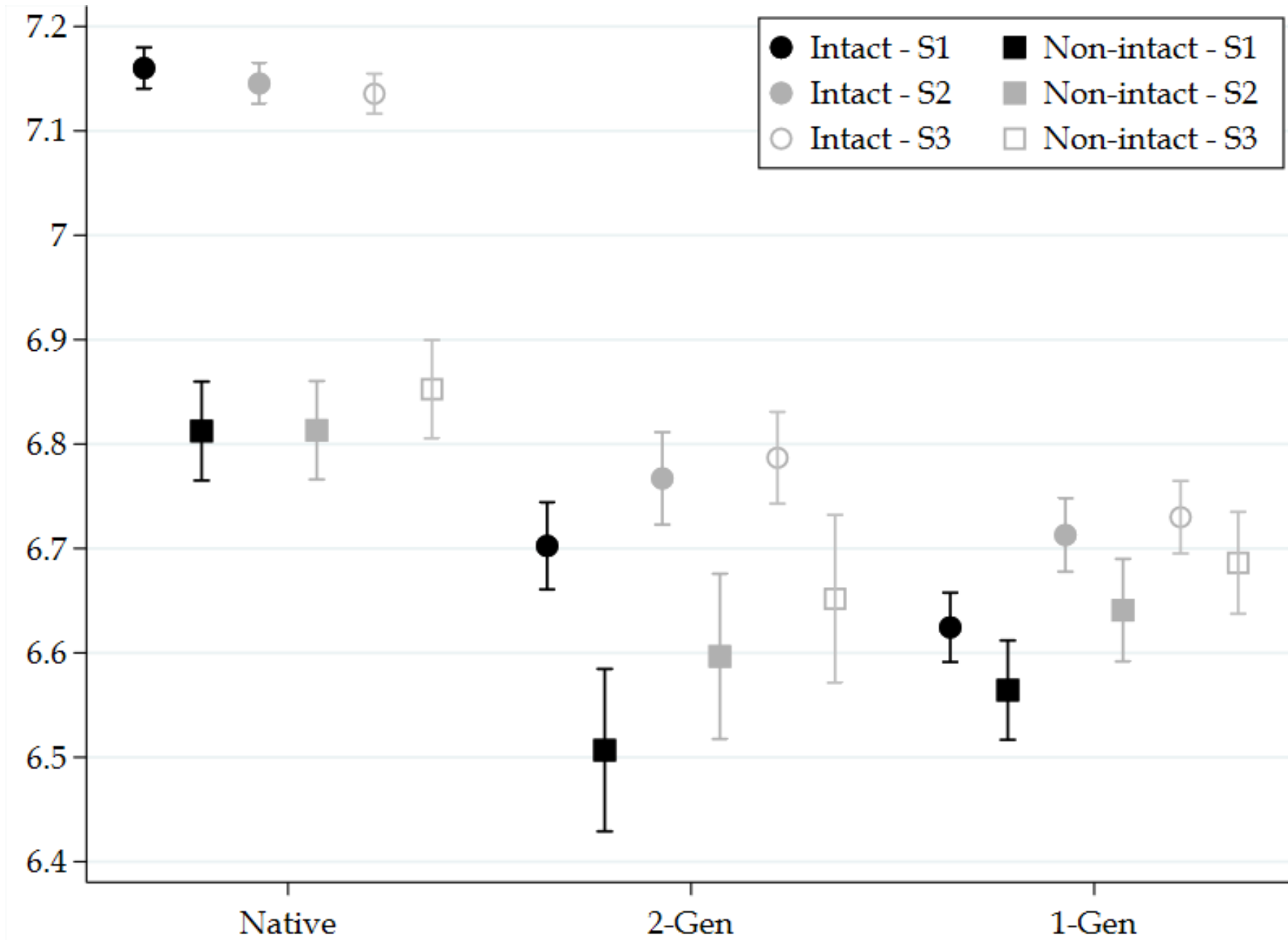
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Figure 1. School report grades (Mathematics), by family structure and migratory background



Note: Adjusted predictions after OLS models, with 83.5% C.I.
Controls: socio-demographic characteristics (Step 1) + family socio-economic background (Step 2).
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Figure 1. School report grades (Mathematics), by family structure and migratory background



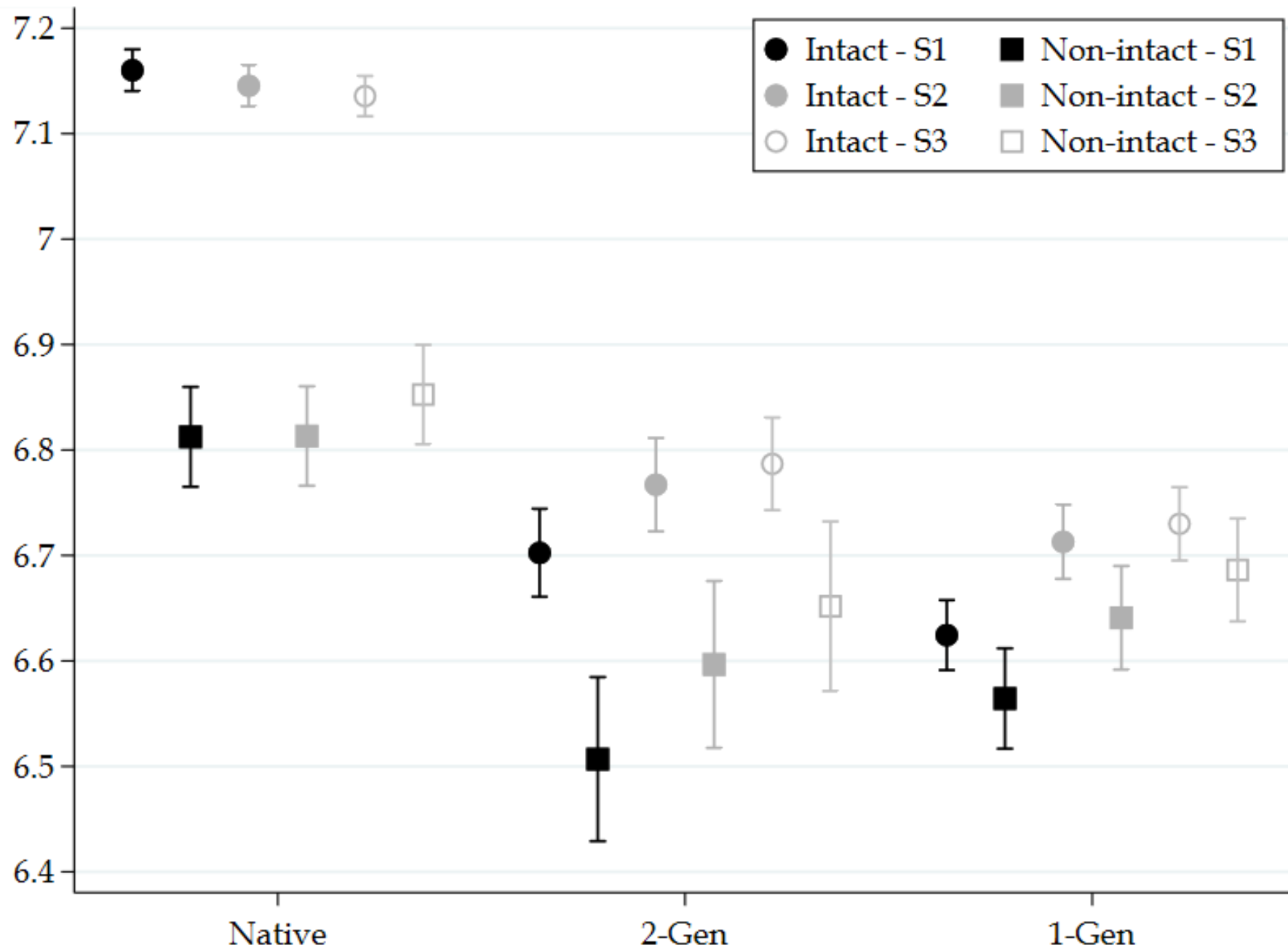
Note: Adjusted predictions after OLS models, with 83.5% C.I.

Controls: socio-demographic characteristics (Step 1) + family socio-economic background (Step 2) + family environment (Step 3).

N=31,027.

Source: Integration of the Second Generation survey (ISTAT 2015)

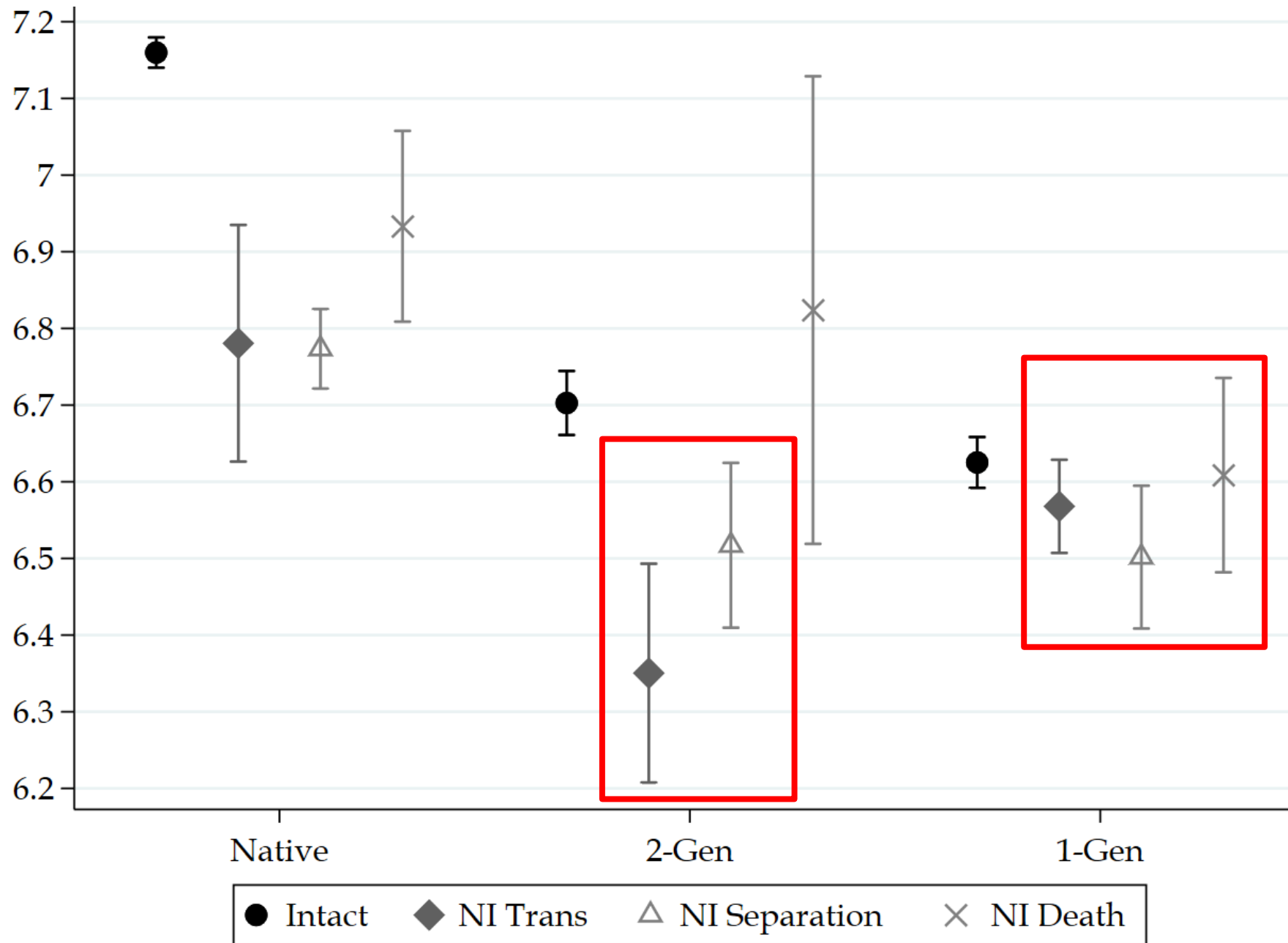
Figure 1. School report grades (Mathematics), by family structure and migratory background



Very limited heterogeneity by area of origin: no penalty for 1-Gen children regardless of their country of origin

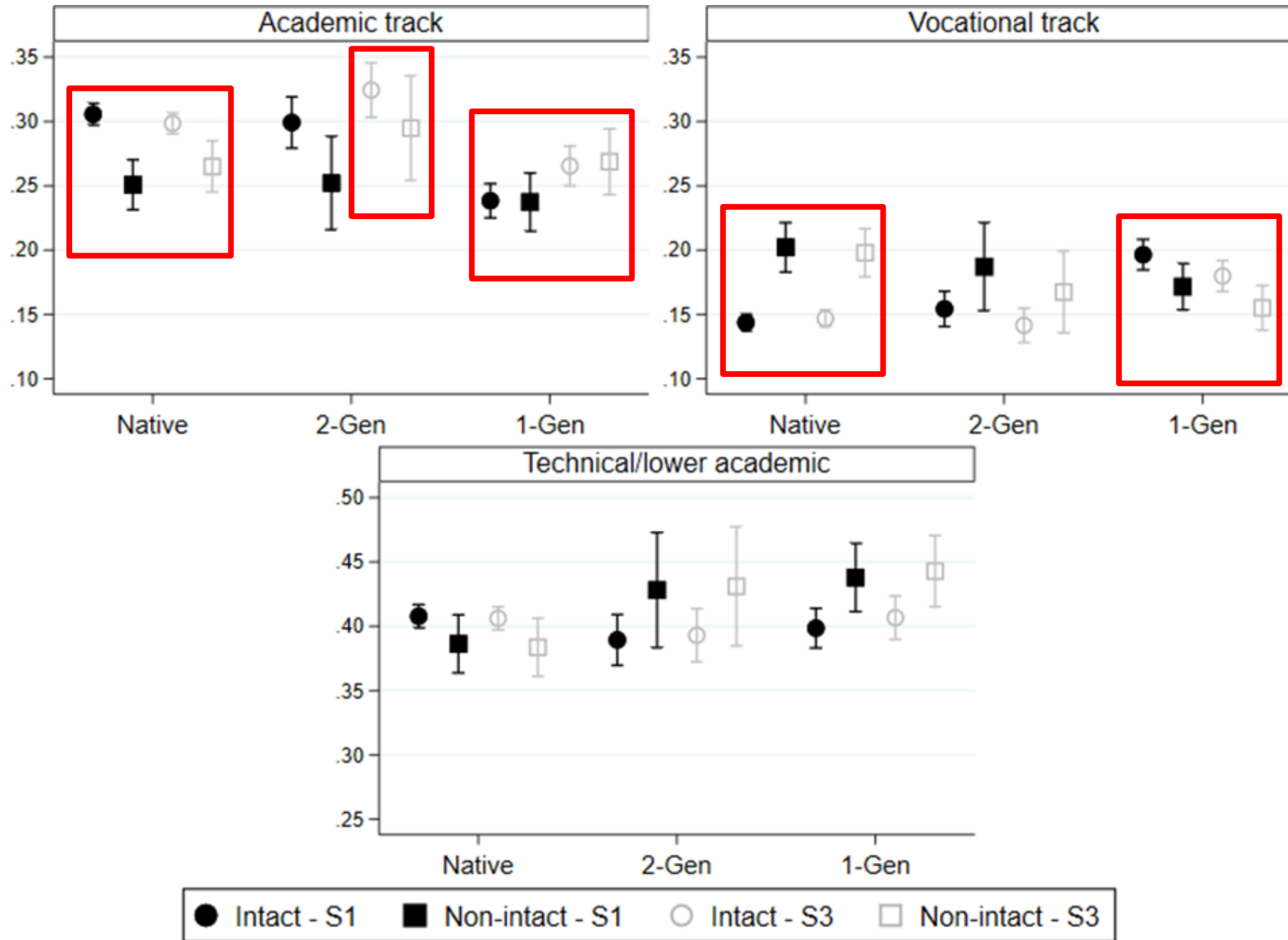
Note: Adjusted predictions after OLS models, with 83.5% C.I.
 Controls: socio-demographic characteristics (Step 1) + family socio-economic background (Step 2) + family environment (Step 3).
 N=31,027.
Source: Integration of the Second Generation survey (ISTAT 2015)

Figure 3. School report grades (Mathematics), by family structure (detailed) and migratory background



Note: Adjusted predictions after OLS model, with 83.5% C.I. Model controls for socio-demographic characteristics (Step 1). NI= non-intact.
 N=31,027.
Source: Integration of the Second Generation survey (ISTAT 2015)

Figure 4. Upper secondary school aspirations, by family structure and migratory background



Note: Predicted probabilities after multinomial logistic regression models, with 83.5% C.I. (Don't Know and Else not shown). Controls: socio-demographic characteristics (Step 1) + family socio-economic background & family environment (Step 3).
 N=31,027
Source: Integration of the Second Generation survey (ISTAT 2015)

Conclusions

- **H1 & H2 confirmed:** NIPs stronger for natives than for migrants, especially 1-Gen
 - consistent with “more to lose” mechanism
- **Limited evidence for H3:** NIPs for native children persists after controlling for family socio-economic background/environment
 - resources more important for university? Floor effect in grades?
- **H4 not confirmed:** parental absence has negative (or no) consequences irrespective of the type of separation (separation, transnationalism)

Limitations

- No **longitudinal data** (**timing** of parental separation)
- No precise information on the **reason for parental separation** (only proxy: where absent parent lives)
 - Transnationalism *also* parental separation?
- Information on family's socioeconomic status **reported by children**

Grazie per l'attenzione!

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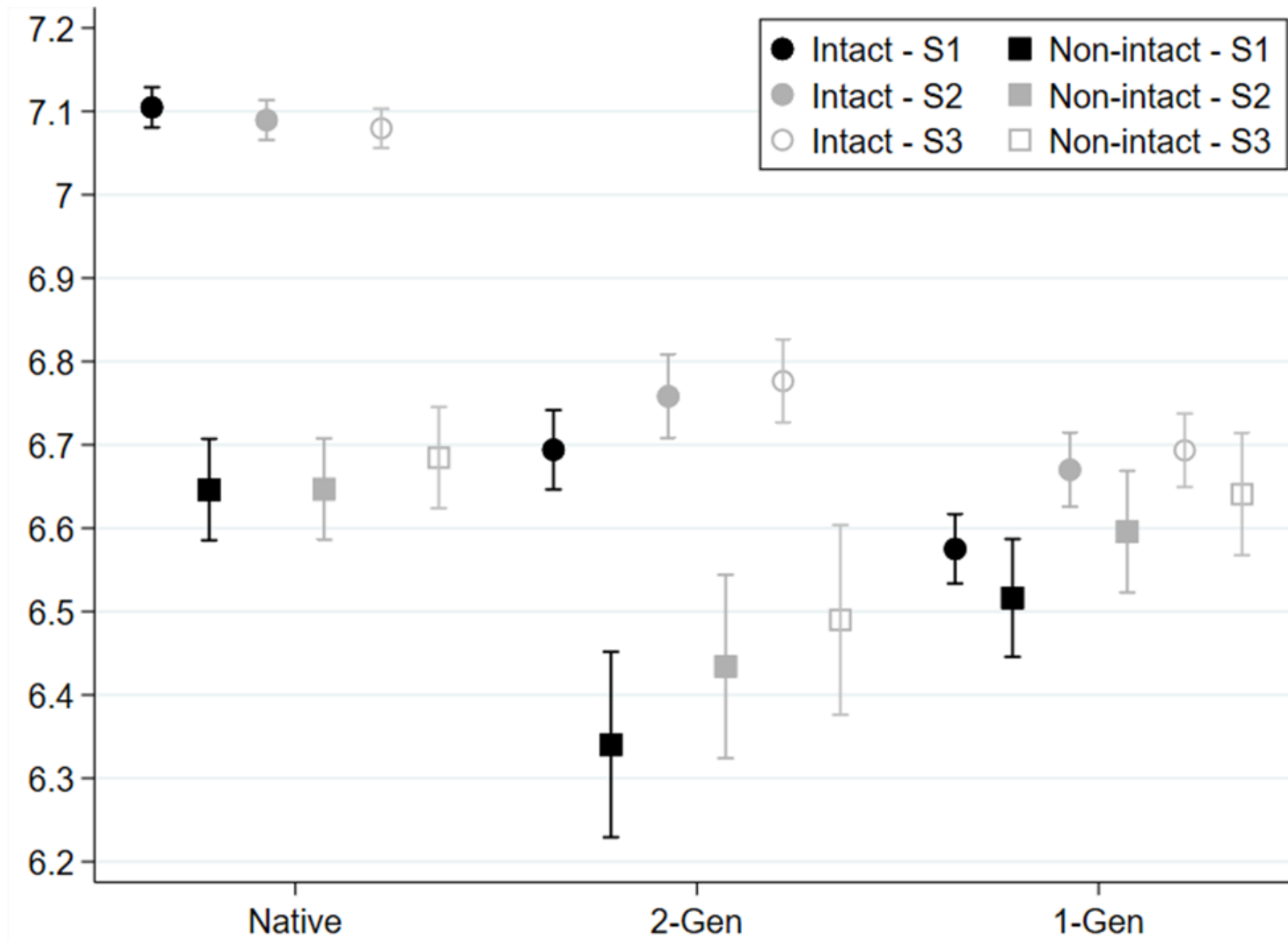
raffaele.guetto@unifi.it

Likert scales (0-5)

- Higher values indicate a better family environment and parent-child relationship
 1. *School involvement*: whether the child often shares with parents what happens at school and whether parents ask about the child's school
 2. *Parenting quality* index: whether family members help each other out, are sensitive to the child's feelings and needs, are respectful and encouraging toward children's opinions, and calmly explain children's mistakes
 3. *Punishment* index: whether there are frequent arguments among family members, whether parents administer punishments without explanations, and harsh reprimands for mistakes
 4. *Indifference* index: whether family members are indifferent to the child's mistakes and hold back and do not scold the child even in case of behavior against their rules and wishes

	Natives		2Gen		1Gen		Total	
	Mean; N	SD; %	Mean; N	SD; %	Mean; N	SD; %	Mean; N	SD; %
Dependent variables								
Mathematics grades	7.09	1.15	6.57	1.10	6.42	1.10	6.82	1.17
Italian grades	7.00	1.34	6.51	1.32	6.32	1.31	6.74	1.36
<i>Upper secondary school ambitions:</i>								
Academic track	5,306	30.34	1,386	24.65	1,533	19.36	8,225	26.51
Technical, lower academic	6,918	39.56	2,145	38.15	2,869	36.23	11,932	38.46
Vocational	2,601	14.87	963	17.13	1,771	22.37	5,335	17.19
Else	1,379	7.89	520	9.25	781	9.86	2,680	8.64
Don't know	1,282	7.33	609	10.83	964	12.17	2,855	9.2
Independent Variables								
<i>Family structure:</i>								
Intact Family	15,152	86.65	4,865	86.52	5,955	75.21	25,972	83.71
Non-intact Family	2,334	13.35	758	13.48	1,963	24.79	5,055	16.29
<i>Types of non-intact family</i>								
Non-intact: Transnational	115	0.66	235	4.18	1,129	14.26	1,479	4.77
Non-intact: Separation	1,792	10.25	334	5.94	375	4.74	2,501	8.06
Non-intact: Death	281	1.61	80	1.42	199	2.51	560	1.8
Non-intact: Don't know	146	0.83	109	1.94	260	3.28	515	1.66
Total	17,486	100	5,623	100	7,918	100	31,027	100

Figure A1. School report grades (Italian), by family structure and migratory background



	Native	2Gen	1Gen	Total
East Europe	0	45.0	61.5	23.8
Latin America	0	8.0	9.3	3.8
Asia	0	20.4	14.5	7.4
MENA	0	19.5	10.5	6.2
Africa Sub Sahara	0	7.2	4.2	2.4
Italy	100	0.0	0.0	56.5
Total (N)	17,486	5,623	7,918	100

Fig. 2 School report grades (mathematics), by family structure and migration background

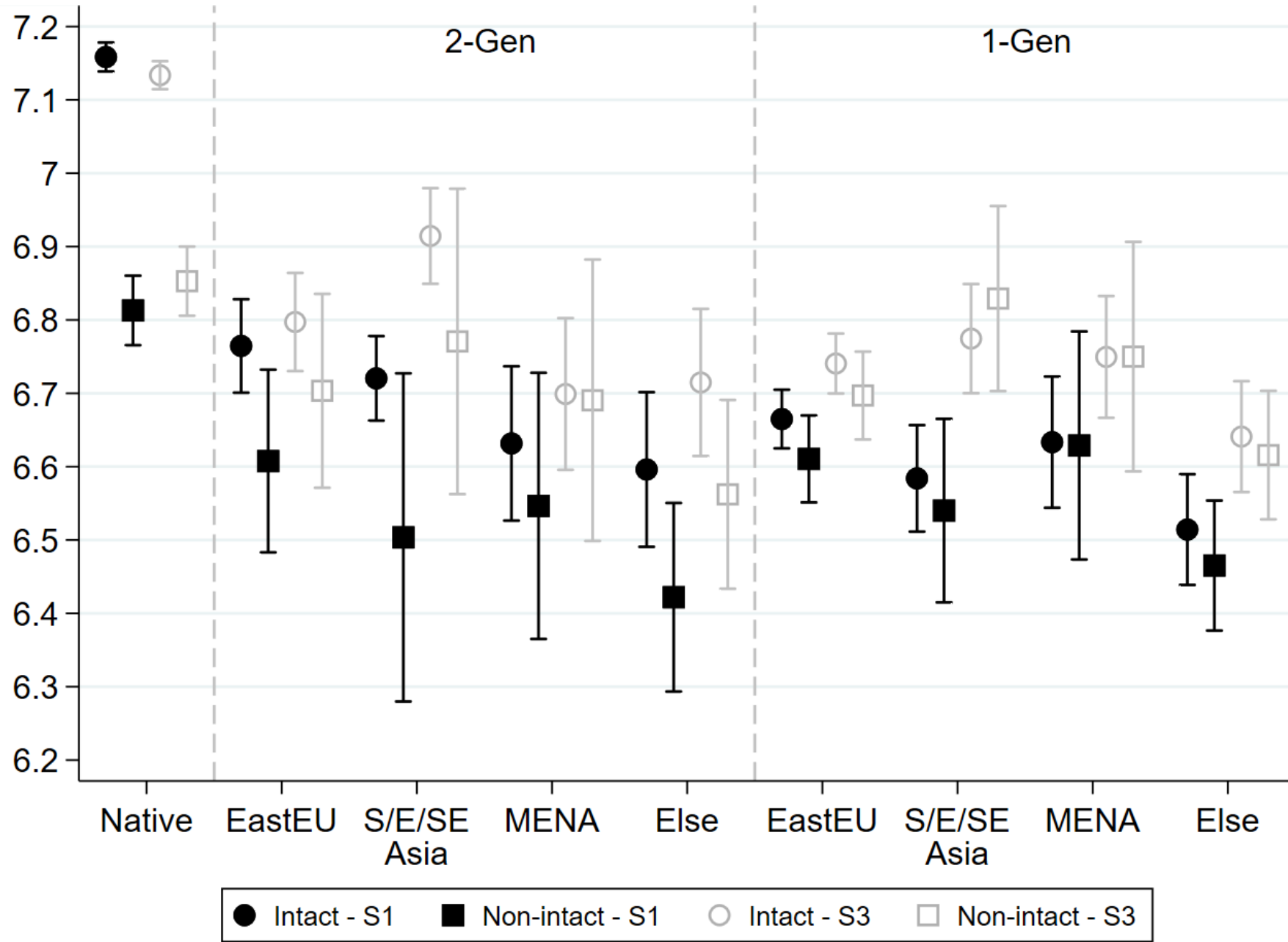
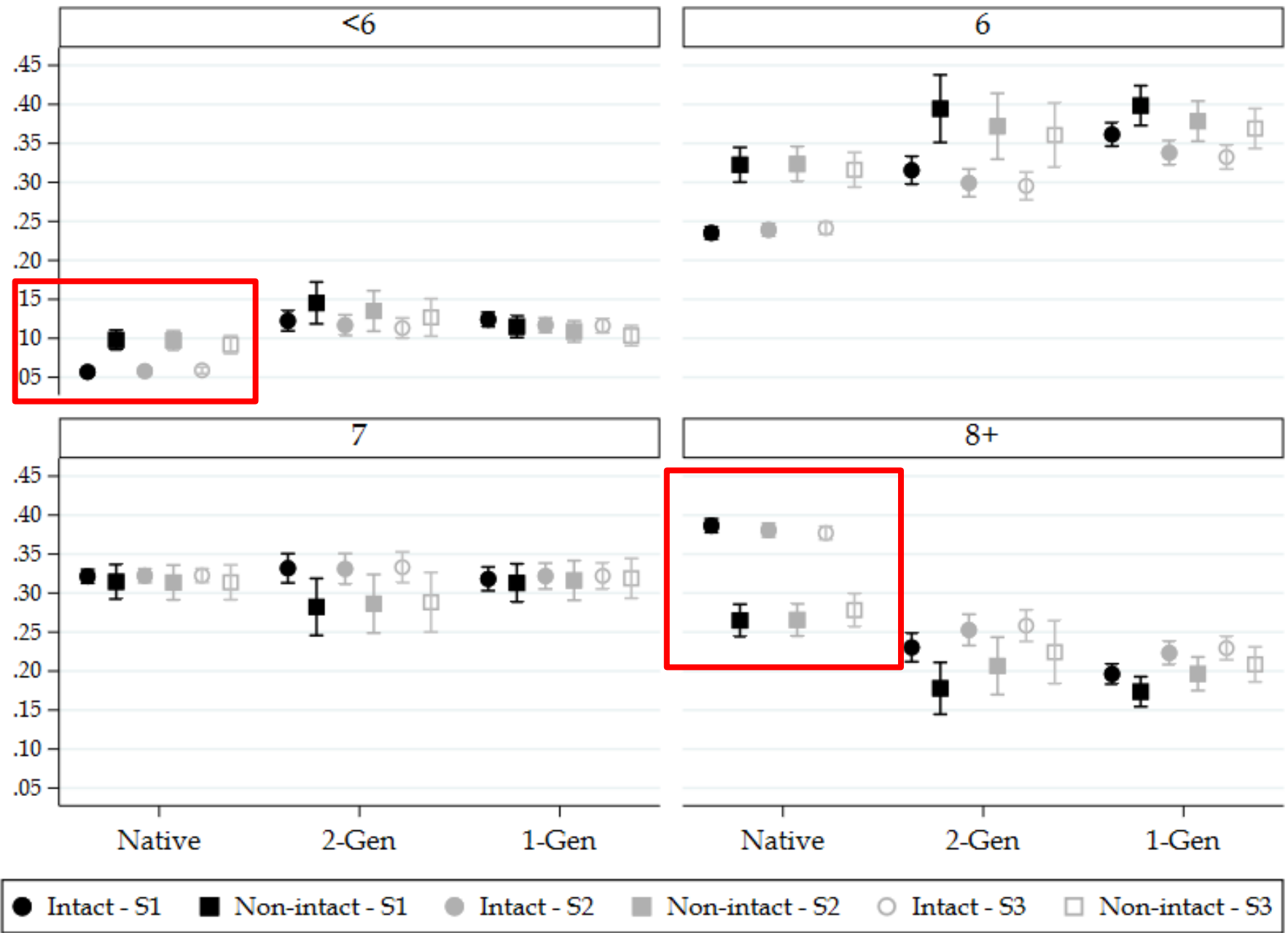


Figure 2. School report grades (Mathematics, categories), by family structure and migratory background



Note: Predicted probabilities after multinomial logistic regression models, with 83.5% C.I.
 Controls: socio-demographic characteristics (Step 1) + economic condition of the household (Step 2) + family environment (Step 3). N=31,027.
Source: Integration of the Second Generation survey (ISTAT 2015)