Intentional parents, postponers, abandoners
Comparing the realization of fertility intentions in three European countries

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repro
Reproductive decision-making
in a macro-micro perspective

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The research questions

- Are there country-differences in the realization of time-related fertility intentions? (different welfare-regime context)

- Are the explaining mechanism of realization the same or are there country specificities?

- What kind of „story" tell us the micro level analysis about the concept of postponement?

The concept of postponement

- It is basically a macro concept (?)
- Implicit assumption: the postponement at the macro level is a result of intended birth in later ages
  - If this is right: the rate of realization of time-related birth is independent from the pace of the macro level postponement
- An alternative approach:
  - The macro-level postponement is (partly) a result of non-realization of time-related fertility intentions

Data, Methods

- Parallel analysis of independent, but comparable longitudinal surveys
- We involved three country into the comparison until now:
  - **Hungary**: 'Életünk fordulópontjai' (Hungarian GGS survey) 2001/2 - 2004/
  - **Netherlands**: 'NKPS' (Netherlands GGS survey) 2003/4 - 2006/7
  - **Switzerland**: Schweizer Haushalt-Panel (SHPSI.-SHPSII.) 2004 (6th wave) -2007 (9th wave)
- To involve new countries into the analysis, it is the future (France?, Bulgaria?, UK?)

Data – selected subsamples

- We included in the analysis only those people, who intended to have a(nother) child within 2 years. What are we capturing?

(1) Are there any differences between countries in the chance/risk of the realization of time-related fertility intentions?

(2) Policy implications: What can the policy do, in order to help the realization of the **intended** fertility?

Data – special subsamples II.

Limitations:

- Subsample: number of cases (those intnede to have a child within 2 years)
- different formulation of fertility intention questions

Hungary (N: 1056)	Netherlands (N:458)	Switzerland (N: 385)
Would you like to have additional child(ren)? F YES *At what age would you like to have your next child?*	*Do you think you'll have {more} children in the future?* IF YES *Within how many years' time would you like to have your {first / next} child?*	*Do you intend to have a child in the next 24 months?*

The dependent variables

Fertility intention within **two** years (wave I.)	Had a birth within **three** years	Intend to have a child at wave II.	Types
Yes	Yes		Intentional parents
Yes	No	Yes	Postponers
Yes	No	No	Abandoners

	Hungary (HU)	Netherlands (NL)	Switzerland (CH)
Intentional parents	40 %	75%	55%
Postponers	42 %	15%	27%
Abandoners	18 %	11%	18%

Coincidence of macro level postponement and time related fertility intentions

	TFR	Age at (all) birth	Macro post.	Survey results
Hungary (2002-2005)	1,31 → 1,28 Very low	27,8 → 28,5 low	0,7 year Very strong	intended p.: 40% postponers: 42% abandoners: 18%
Netherlands (2003-2006)	1,75 → 1,71 middle	30,3 → 30,5 high	0,2 year moderate	intended p.: 75% postponers: 15% abandoners: 11%
Switzerland (2004-2007)	1,42 → 1,46 low	30,4 → 30,8 high	0,4 year strong	intended p.: 55% postponers: 27% abandoners: 18%
Bulgaria (2002-2005)	1,21 → 1,32 Very low	25,3 → 26,0 Very low	0,7 year Very strong	Intended p: cca 30 %. Source: Philipov-Testa 2008

Conclusion 1.

- Macro-level postponement is result of (at least) two types of micro-level behavior:

  - Intended birth in later ages (planned postponement) *and*

  - Non-realization of time-related fertility intention (non-planned postponement)

Variables

Dependent variable

- Intentional parents,
- Postponers
- Abandoners

Independent Variables

- Age (cont.)
- Parity (Parity0, Parity1, Parity2+)
- Gender
- Partnership (Marriage, Cohabitation, No partner)
- Labor market (No job, Job)
- Education (cont.)
- Religiosity (Catholic, Protestant, other religion, No religion)

Variables – descriptive statistics
(R's who intend a child within three years)

	Hungary		Netherlands		Switzerland	
	mean	SD	mean	SD	mean	SD
Age	29,2	4,9	31,4	4,6	33	5,3
Sex (1-fem)	0,49	0,50	0,67	0,47	0,48	0,50
Parity1	0,30	0,46	0,41	0,49	0,37	0,48
Parity2+	0,17	0,38	0,14	0,34	0,18	0,39
Cohab (w.I.)	0,19	0,40	0,31	0,46	0,19	0,39
No part (w.I.)	0,27	0,44	0.07	0.26	0,13	0,34
R's had job (w.I.)	0.76	0.43	0.85	0.36	0.85	0.35
N of classes	11,7	2,5	14,6	2,1	13,2	2,7
calvinist	0.15	0.35	0.18	0.38	0.34	0.47
Other rel.	0.11	0.31	0.06	0.23	0.08	0.27
No rel.	0,21	0,40	0.57	0.50	0.13	0.34

Result 1:
multinominal logistic regression models (ref: intended parents)

	Postponers			Abandoners		
	Hun	**NI**	**Sw**	**Hun**	**NI**	**Sw**
Age	**1,11*****	,987	**1,09*****	**1,31*****	**1,30*****	**1,07****
Sex (1-fem)	,89	1,56	1,06	**,47*****	**3,62*****	,822

- **Intentional parents vs. Ppostponers:**
  - Hyp 1: biology
  - Hyp2.: Social age dead line of fertiliy
- **Result: older ages increasing postponement (Hyp2)**
- **IP vs. Ab.: older ages increasing abandonment**

Results 2:
multinominal logistic regression models (ref: intended parents)

	Postponers			Abandoners		
	Hun	**NI**	**Sw**	**Hun**	**NI**	**Sw**
Age	1,11***	,987	1,09***	1,31***	1,30***	1,07**
Sex (1-fem)	,89	1,56	1,06	,47***	3,62***	,822
Parity1	,663**	,349***	,138***	3,59***	1,640	,221***
Parity2+	,383***	,500	,252***	5,25***	2,96**	,521

- **Intentional parents vs. Postponers**
  - Zero parity postpone (all countries)
- **Intentional parents vs. Abandoners**
  - HU, NL: Higher parities ABANDON
  - CH: zero parity abandoner: CHILDLESSNESS

Result 3:
multinominal logistic regression models (ref: intended parents)

	Postponers			Abandoners		
	Hun	NI	Sw	Hun	NI	Sw
Age	1,11***	,987	1,09***	1,31***	1,30***	1,07**
Sex (1-fem)	,89	1,56	1,06	,47***	3,62***	,822
Parity1	,663**	,349***	,138***	3,59***	1,640	,221***
Parity2+	,383***	,500	,252***	5,25***	2,96**	,521
Cohab (w.l.)	1,249	1,553	,620	,954	1,307	,400*
No part (w.l.)	4,01***	2,31	4,23***	3,44***	2,63	5,94***

- Partnership as crucial prerequisite of realization
- Cohabitation do not differ from marriage

Result: multinominal logistic regression models (ref: intended parents)

	Postponers			Abandoners		
	Hun	**NI**	**Sw**	**Hun**	**NI**	**Sw**
Age	**1,11*** **	,987	**1,09*** **	**1,31*** **	**1,30*** **	**1,07** **
Sex (1-fem)	,89	1,56	1,06	**,47*** **	**3,62*** **	,822
Parity1	**,663** **	**,349*** **	**,138*** **	**3,59*** **	1,640	**,221*** **
Parity2+	**,383*** **	,500	**,252*** **	**5,25*** **	**2,96** **	,521
Cohab (w.l.)	1,249	1,553	,620	,954	1,307	**,400** *
No part (w.l.)	**4,01*** **	2,31	**4,23*** **	**3,44*** **	2,63	**5,94*** **
Job (w.l.)	1,149	,691	,811	1,109	1,479	1,661
N of classes	,945*	,948	,999	**,844*** **	**,817*** **	,978
calvinist	1,176	3,377*	1,390	,880	,910	,829
Other rel.	,848	**5,602** **	**4,013*** **	**,416** **	,612	,774
No rel.	**1,433** **	2,714*	1,345	,992	,942	1,756
Nagelk.R2 .	*0.37*	*0.26*	*0.27*	**<0.1*	***<0.05*	****<0.01*

Conclusion 2

- **Basic overlaps in realization of fertility intentions**
  - AGE
  - Parity

- **Some country differences (Abandonment in Switzerland)**

- **Week social/ideational influences**
  - ? Small sample size
  - ? Other, more sensitive method?