

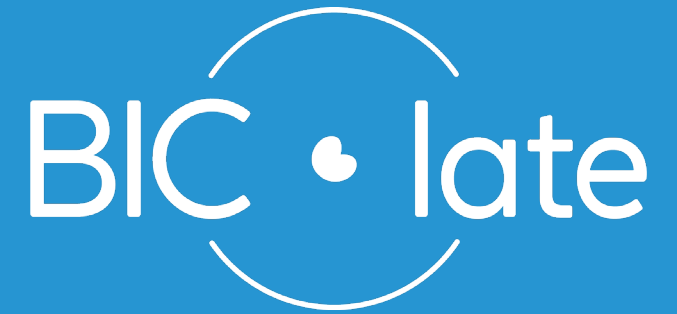


Wittgenstein Centre

FOR DEMOGRAPHY AND
GLOBAL HUMAN CAPITAL



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Late fertility among men and women in Europe: patterns and norms

Eva Beaujouan
University of Vienna

CEDEPLAR seminar, Brazil; 27 April 2022



What we know: Rise in women's (first) birth rates above age 40 in the high-income countries

- People did not have children at earlier ages

- Longer time spent studying
- Economic uncertainty, youth unemployment
- Competing activities

(Adsera 2017;
Kreyenfeld & Pailhe 2015)

(Testa 2017)

- New reasons to have children late

- Longer life expectancy
- Change in partnership and repartnering
- Change in values and attitudes

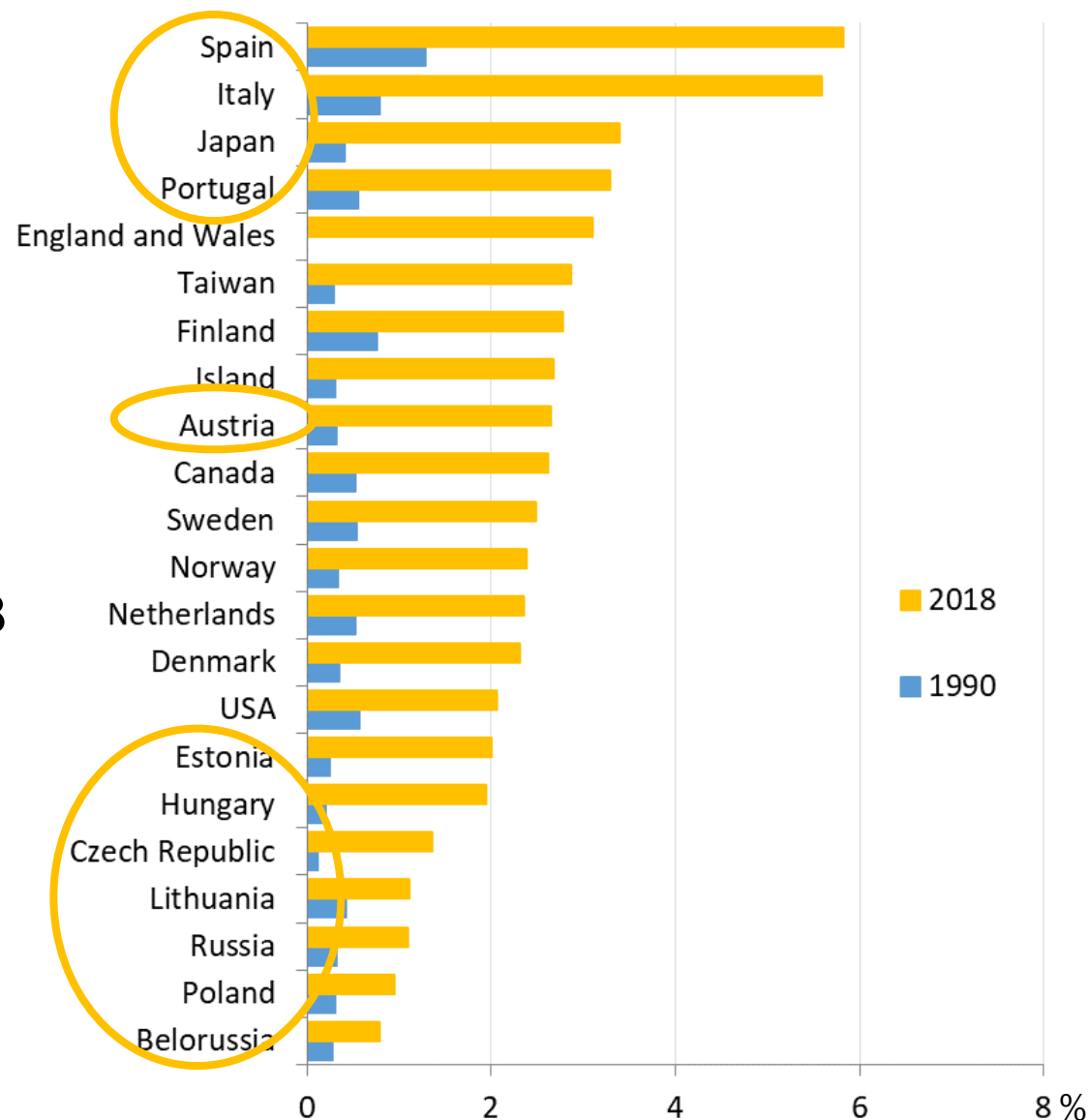
(Beaujouan & Toulemon
2021)

(Van Bavel et al. 2012)

(Lesthaeghe 2010)

An increasing share of women have their first child over age 40 in Europe, the US and Japan

Figure. Share of first birth rates at ages 40+ in total first birth rates; selected countries, women, 1990 and 2018



➤ In Chile, contribution of births at age 40+ to first birth rates was below 1% until the last data available in HFD (2005)

Bringing
men back
in



Men roles in the family are changing

- Men's economic role in the family is changing, depending on the country
 - Increasing share of dual-worker couples as opposed to male main breadwinner (Aboim 2010)
- Recent policies emphasise men's participation in childrearing
 - Increasing participation of fathers in childcare and domestic work (Sullivan et al. 2014)
 - (Substantial) parental leave dedicated to men in the Nordic countries, Austria & Germany
 - Example: Sweden, up to 3 months, "use it or lose it" (Sobotka et al. 2020)

Approach: an international comparison of male and female late fertility

- In France for instance, long tradition of studying male fertility
- Important to study it **internationally**
- Cross-country variation in known factors of fertility
 - economic situation
 - perception of gender roles and associated policies
- Different stages of the second demographic transition
 - Differences in separation and repartnering particularly relevant to late fertility
 - More advanced in the Nordic countries, less in Italy for instance

(Brouard 1977; Daguet 2002; Prioux 2005; Moguérrou et al. 2011; Compans 2021; ...)

(Aboim 2010)

(Lesthaeghe 2010)

Factors of childbearing are (also) sex-specific

- Biological constraints
 - Less for men than women, but still a decrease in capacity to have a child from age 40 (La Rochebrochard et al. 2006; Sartorius and Nieschlag 2010)
 - Age of the partner
- Individual characteristics, individual choices
 - Type of work, income, field of study... (Hobson & Fahlen 2009; Trimarchi & Van Bavel 2018)
 - Partnership trajectories differ by sex (Beaujouan 2010)
 - Different motivation for parenthood
 - rooted in traditional cultural expectations about masculinity, femininity and childrearing (Langdridge et al. 2005)
- Context
 - Family and childbearing norms more restrictive for women than for men (Billari et al. 2010)

A convergence between men and women's late fertility over time?

- Convergence of men and women's transitions to adulthood
 - Education and employment trajectories (Lesnard et al. 2006)
 - Family trajectories incl. first birth...
- Partners age differences more balanced (Trimarchi et al. 2020)
- Eroding of "traditionalist" family model (Brinton & Lee, 2016)
- **But** women and men don't have the same biological constraints
 - So, how far can women also become more similar to men at older ages?

This talk

- Give elements on male versus female late fertility
 - Comparison of high-income countries
 - Who wants children later?
 - Norms: perceived maximum age at birth

Data sources

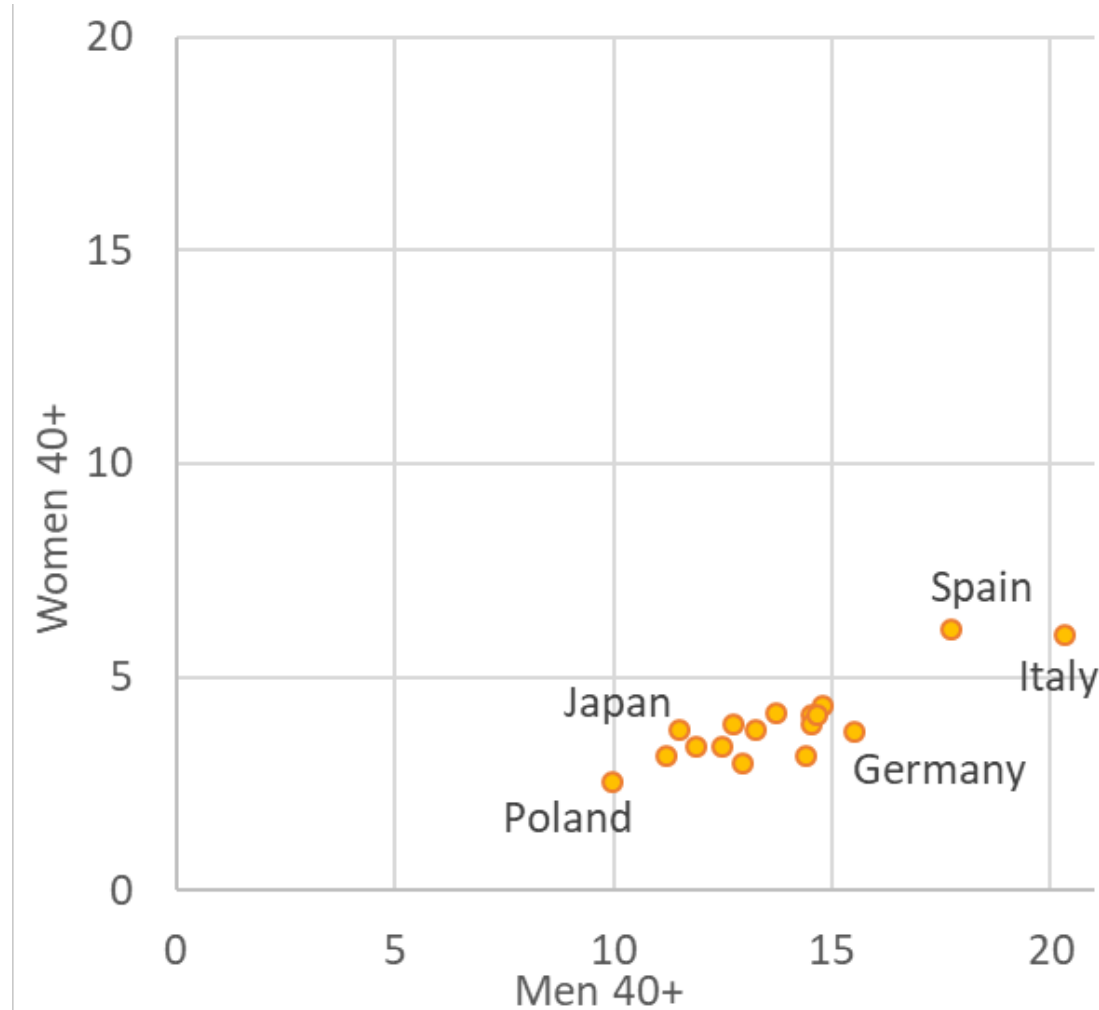
- Human Fertility Database
 - Age specific fertility rates
 - **Contribution** of late fertility rates to total fertility rates
 - Includes data on male fertility rates by age reconstructed by Dudel and Klüsener (2018)
- Generation and Gender Surveys
 - Late fertility **intentions** for men and women
- European Social Surveys 2006–07 and 2018–19
 - Question related to age norms
 - Age a woman/a man is too old to consider having any more children
 - Ester Lazzari and Marie-Caroline Compans

Later parenthood for men and women



Larger share of births after age 40 among men than women...

Figure. Contribution of births at age 40+ to TFR (in %), men versus women, 2014



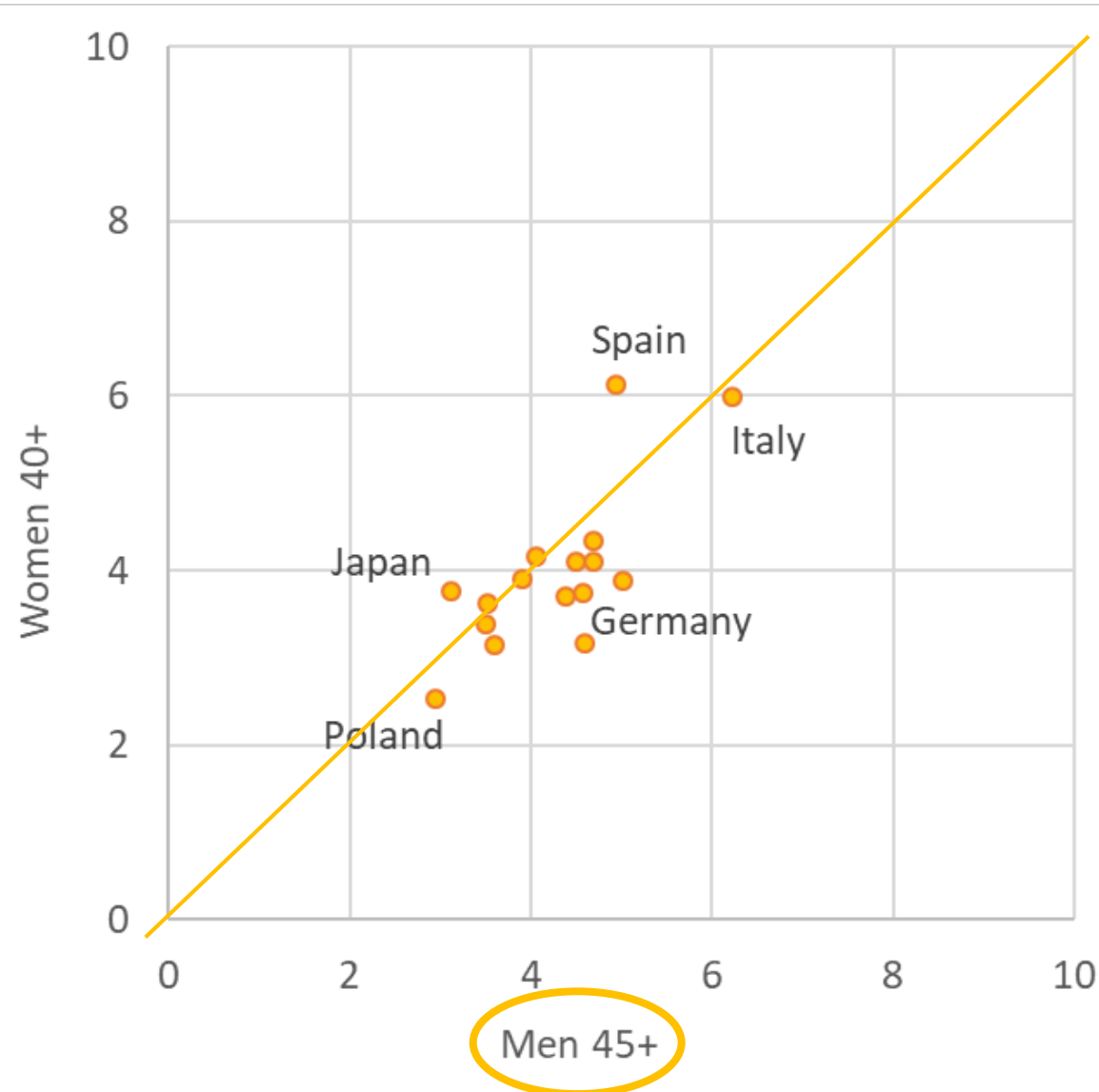
Data. Human Fertility Database (HFD, HFC, special collection on men)

- Men have children later than women
- They also have much more often children after age 40

Source. Beaujouan, Éva. 2020. Latest-Late Fertility? Decline and Resurgence of Late Parenthood Across the Low-Fertility Countries, *Population and Development Review* 46(2): 219–47. <https://doi.org/10.1111/padr.12334>.

... but consistency between 45+ for men and 40+ for women

Figure. Contribution of births at age 40+/45+ to TFR (in %), men versus women, 2014



- For men, age 45 generally a good cut-off age
- Levels of “late fertility” very similar within countries for men and women

Universal increase in late childbearing, often larger for women than for men

	Men 45+	Women 40+
England	53	180
Estonia	142	227
Finland	57	69
Germany	64	201
Hungary	222	296
Poland	44	68
Portugal	48	112
Spain	90	167
Sweden	101	138
USA	29	140

Figure. Increase in late fertility rates between 1990 and 2014, in %

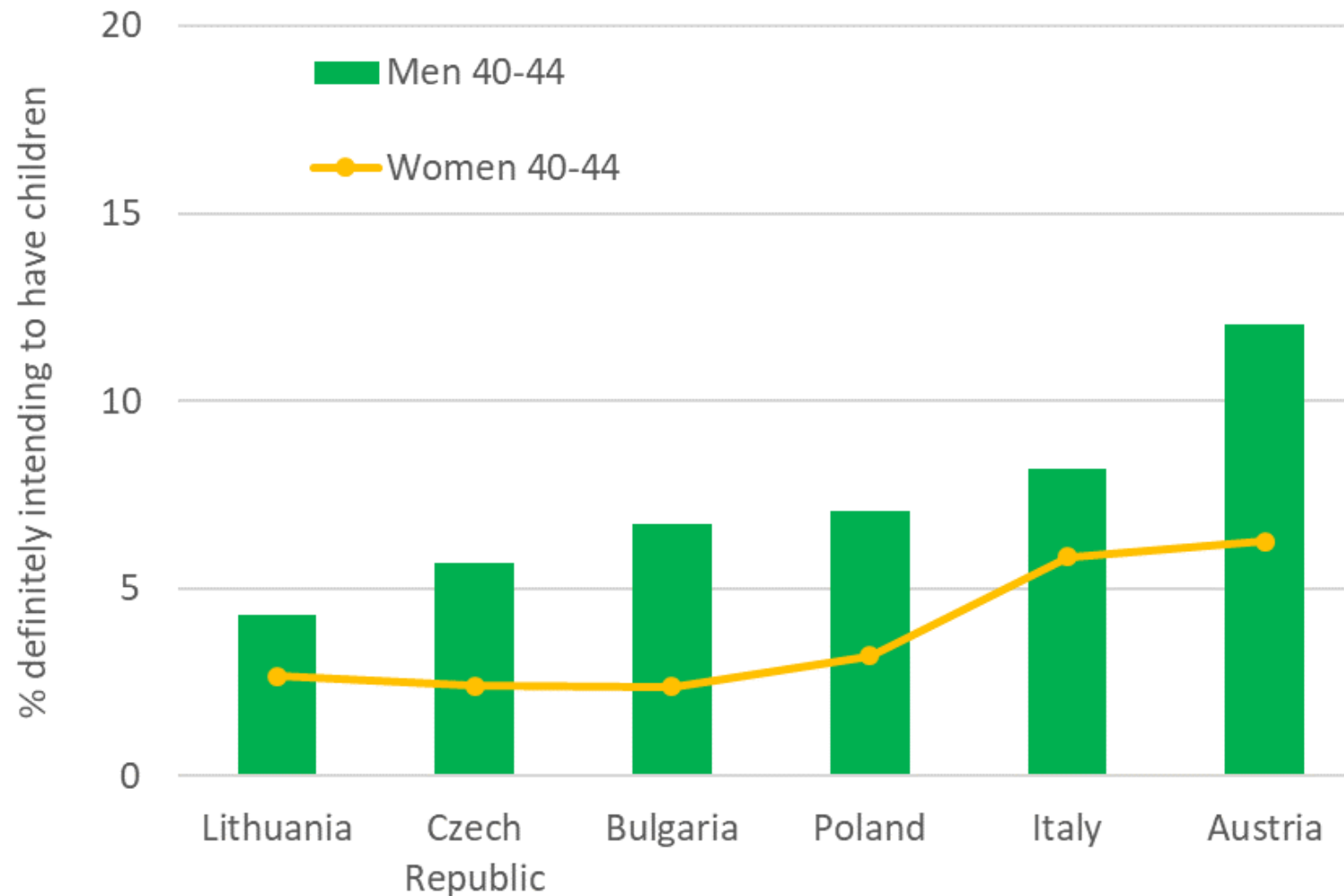
- Similar increases for men and women in some countries, much larger increases for women in other countries
- Note: Similar increase for men 40+ as for men 45+

Who wants
children after
age 40?



Fertility intentions at age 40-44 larger in the West of Europe, particularly for women

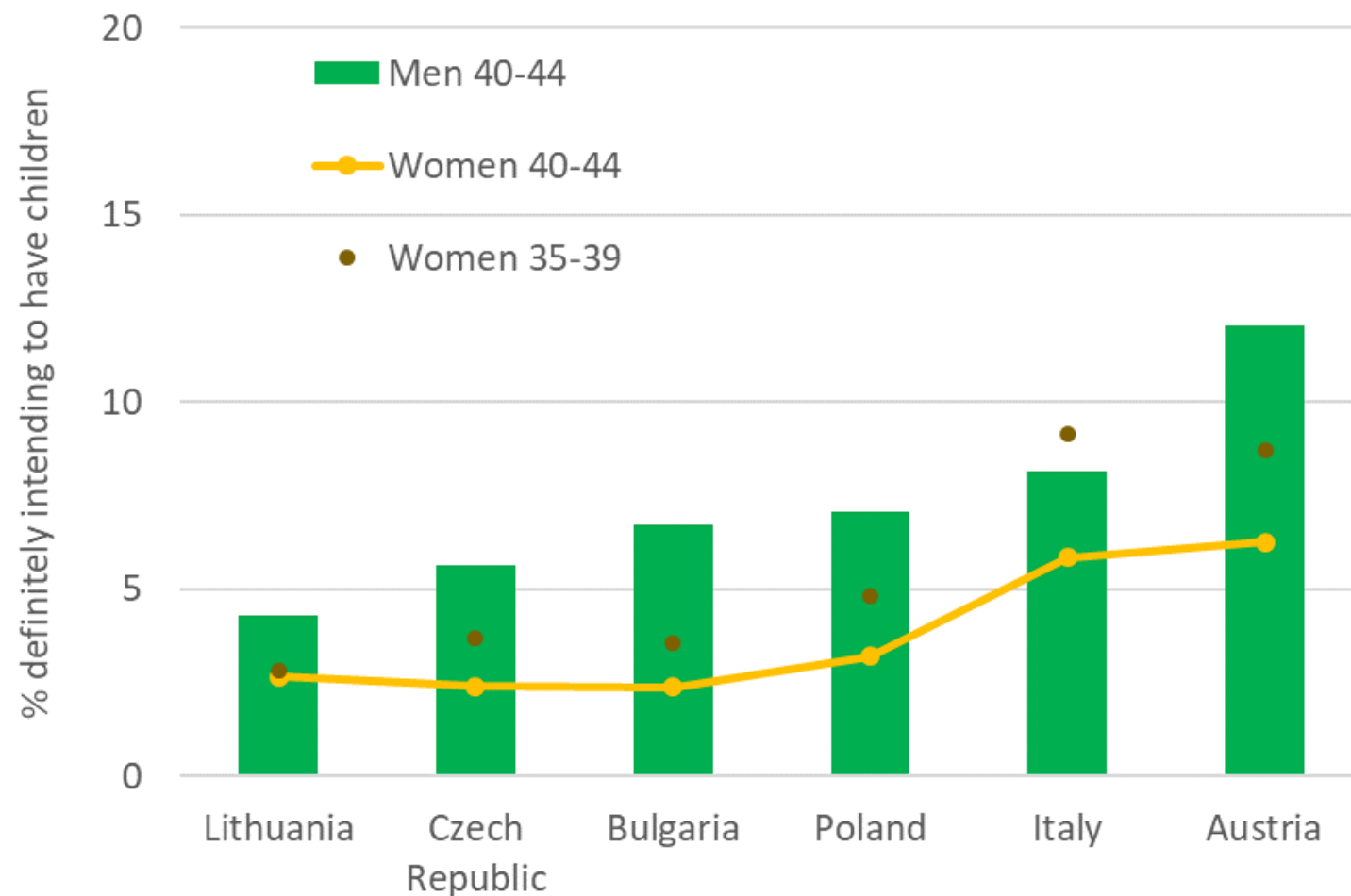
Figure. Share of women and men aged 40-44 who definitely intend to have a child, selected countries



*Question: "Do you intend to have a child...?"
Answer: definitely yes*

Fertility intentions at age 35-39 larger for women only in the West of Europe

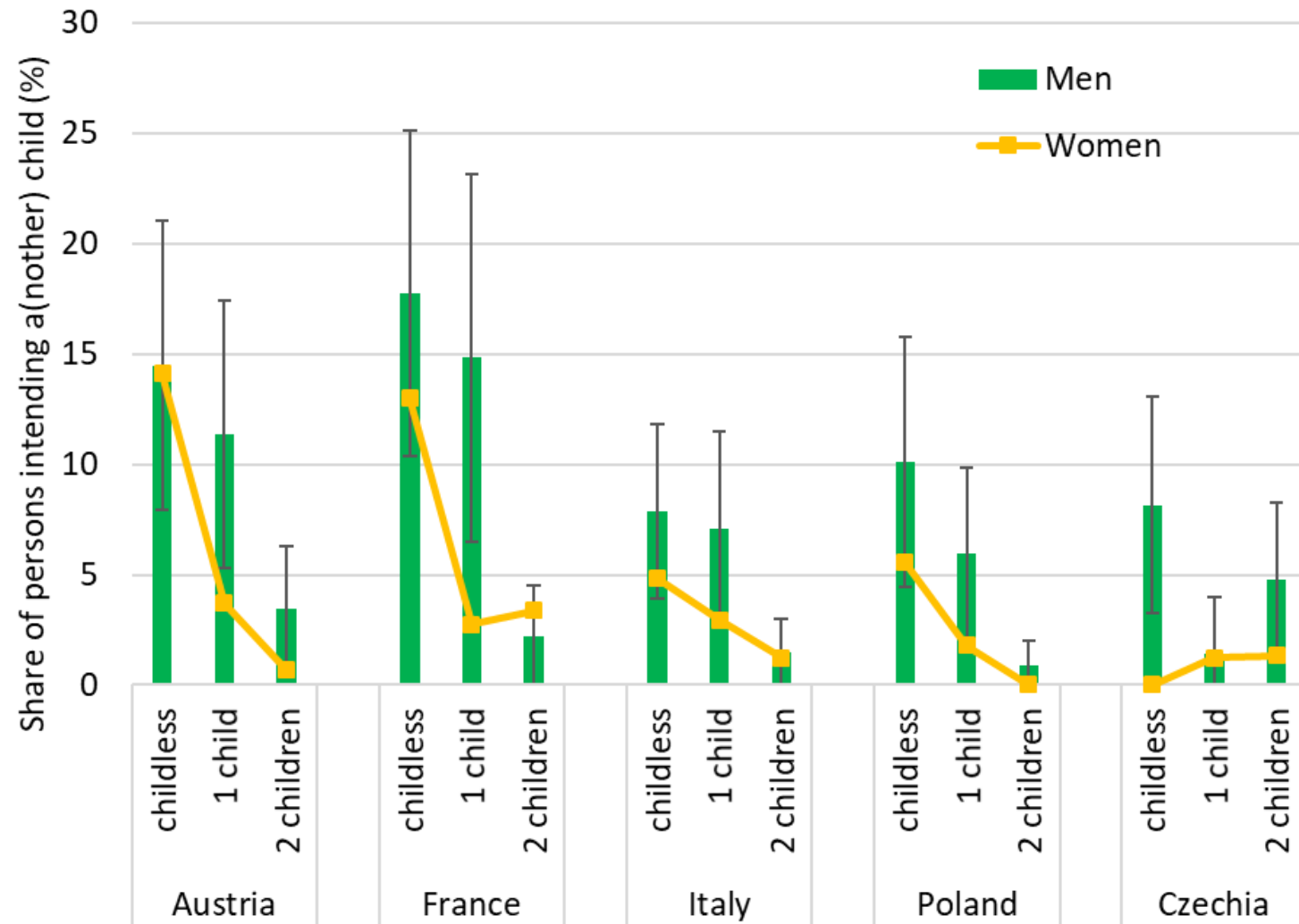
Figure. Share of women and men who definitely intend to have a child, by age group, selected countries



*Question: "Do you intend to have a child...?"
Answer: definitely yes*

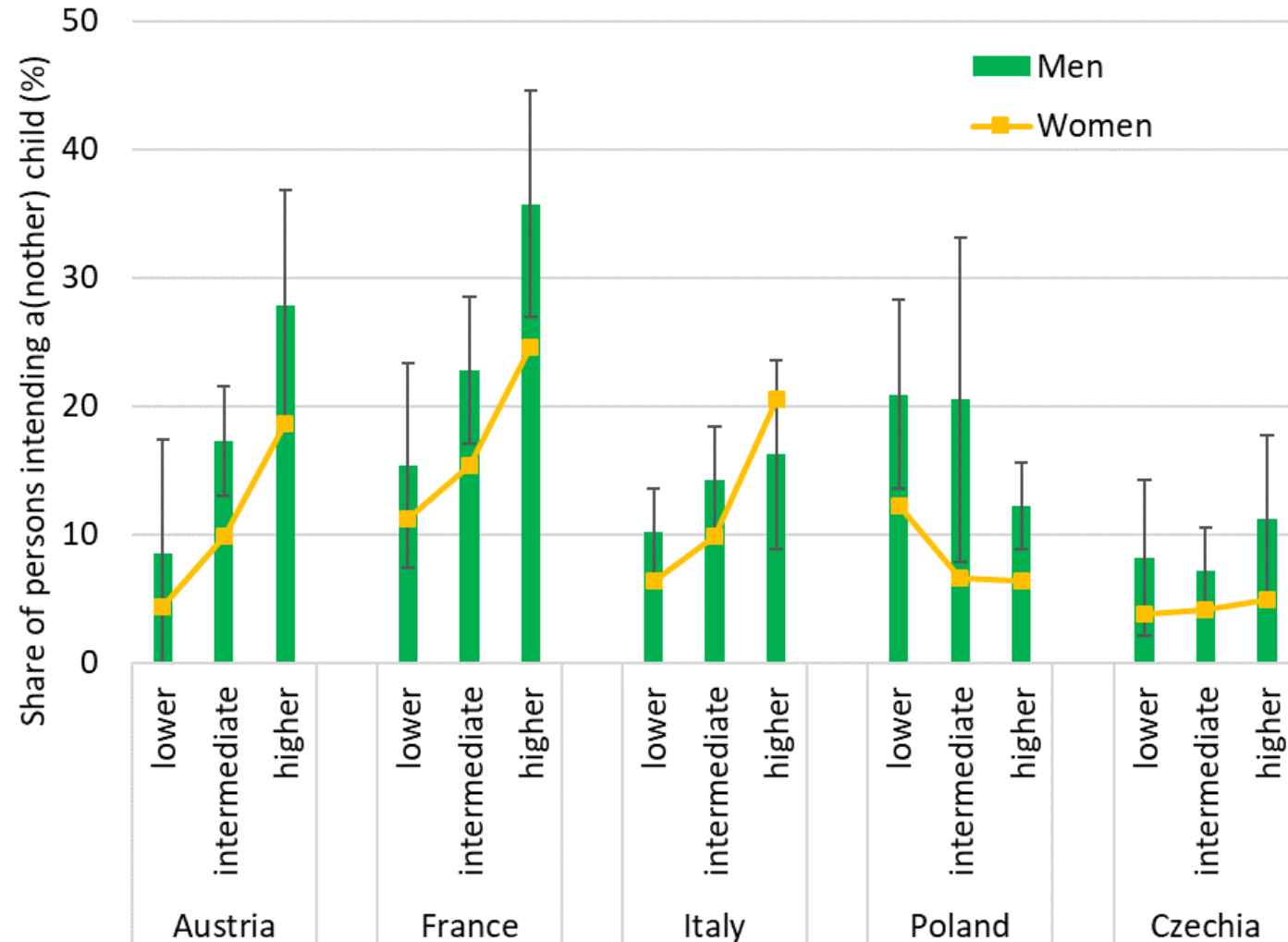
Childless women most likely to still intend to have a child at age 40-44, and men with 0 or 1 child

Figure. Share of men and women aged 40-44 who definitely intend to have a child, **by parity**, selected European countries, 2005-11



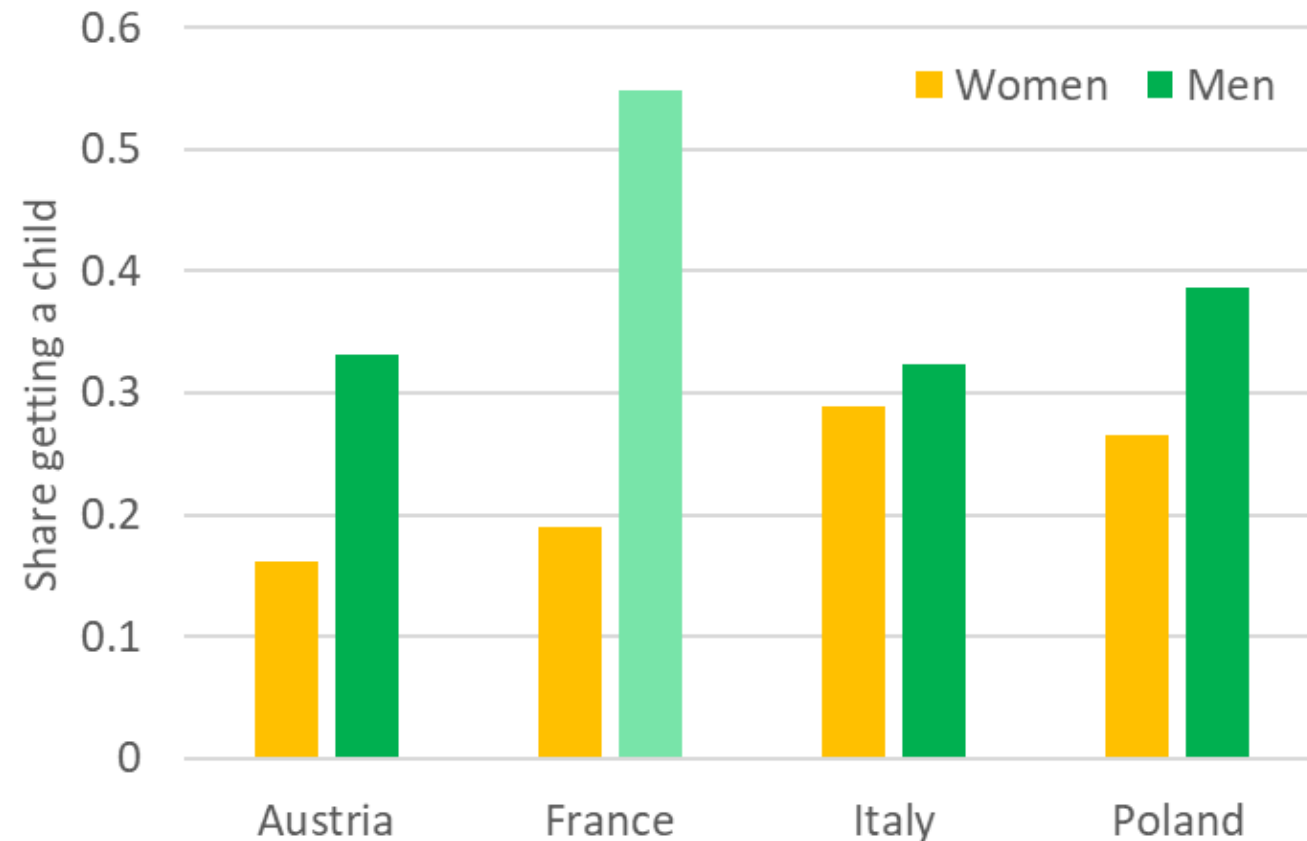
In the West of Europe, at age 35-44 and low parity, highly educated tend to want a child most often

Figure. Share of men and women aged 35-44 with no or one child who definitely intend to have a child, by level of education, selected European countries, 2005-11



Realization of intention: Men age 35+ rather more likely to have the child they wish than women

Figure. Realisation of short-term fertility intentions (definitely yes) by country and sex, women and men aged 35 years and above



Sample. Women and men aged 35 years and above who answered definitely yes to the question on intention to have a child within the next three years

Data. Generations and Gender Surveys (2000s)

Source. Brzozowska, Zuzanna, and Éva Beaujouan. 2020. Assessing Short-Term Fertility Intentions and Their Realisation Using the Generations and Gender Survey: Pitfalls and Challenges, *European Journal of Population* 37: 405–416.

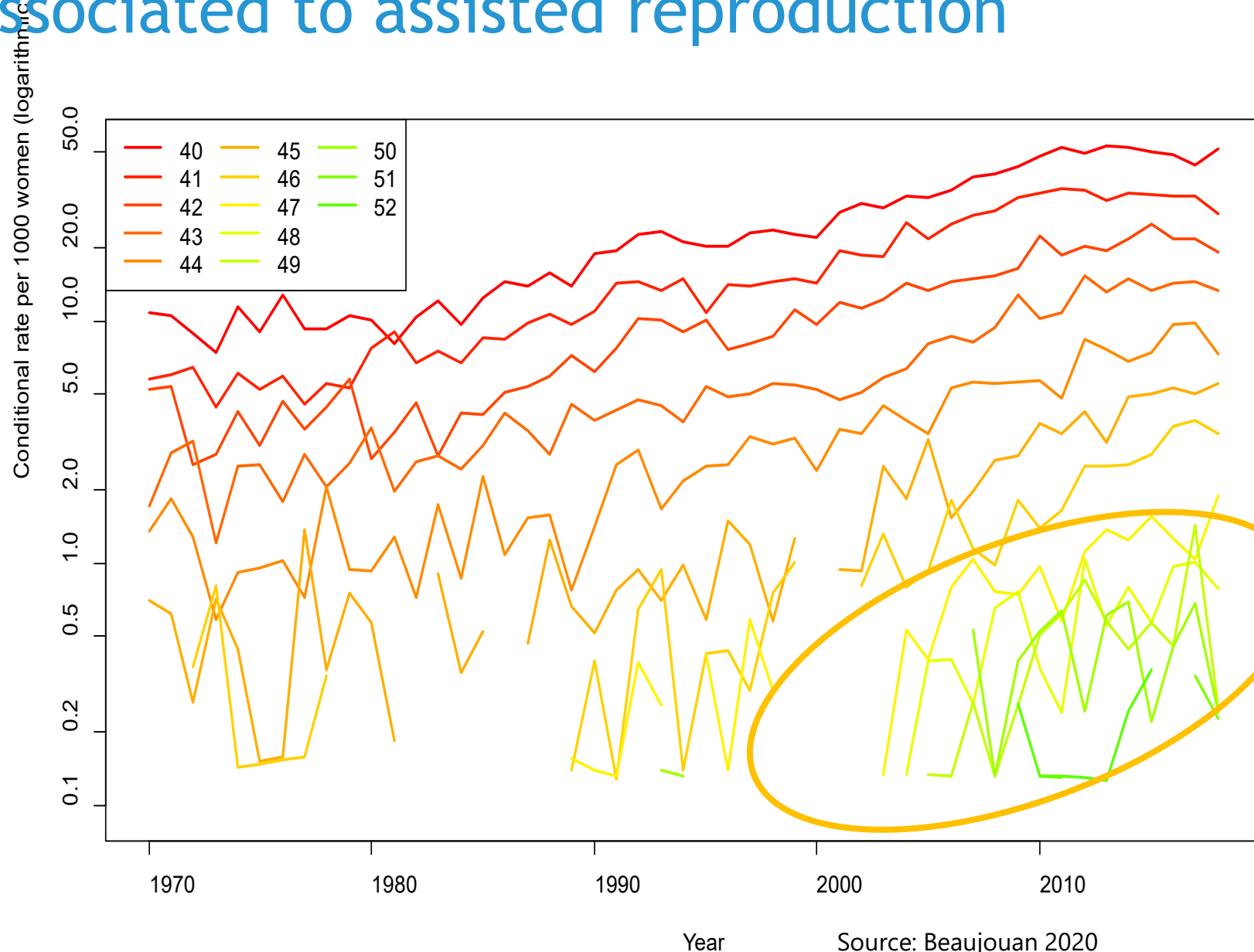
Summary (1)

- The increase in late fertility was faster for women than for men
 - Today, 2 to 6% of the TFR consists in births over age 40 for women and age 45 for men in the low fertility countries
 - More late fertility in the South of Europe, less in the East
- Like for women, childless and high educated men particularly want a child at later ages
 - Gradient more marked in the West of Europe
 - But not enough countries, small sample and a regression analysis would be necessary to check whether this is linked to other characteristics
 - Men want more often a child late and in that case have more often one than women, but the difference is not huge either

Ever later births? Biological limits



Emergence of very late first births for women, probably associated to assisted reproduction



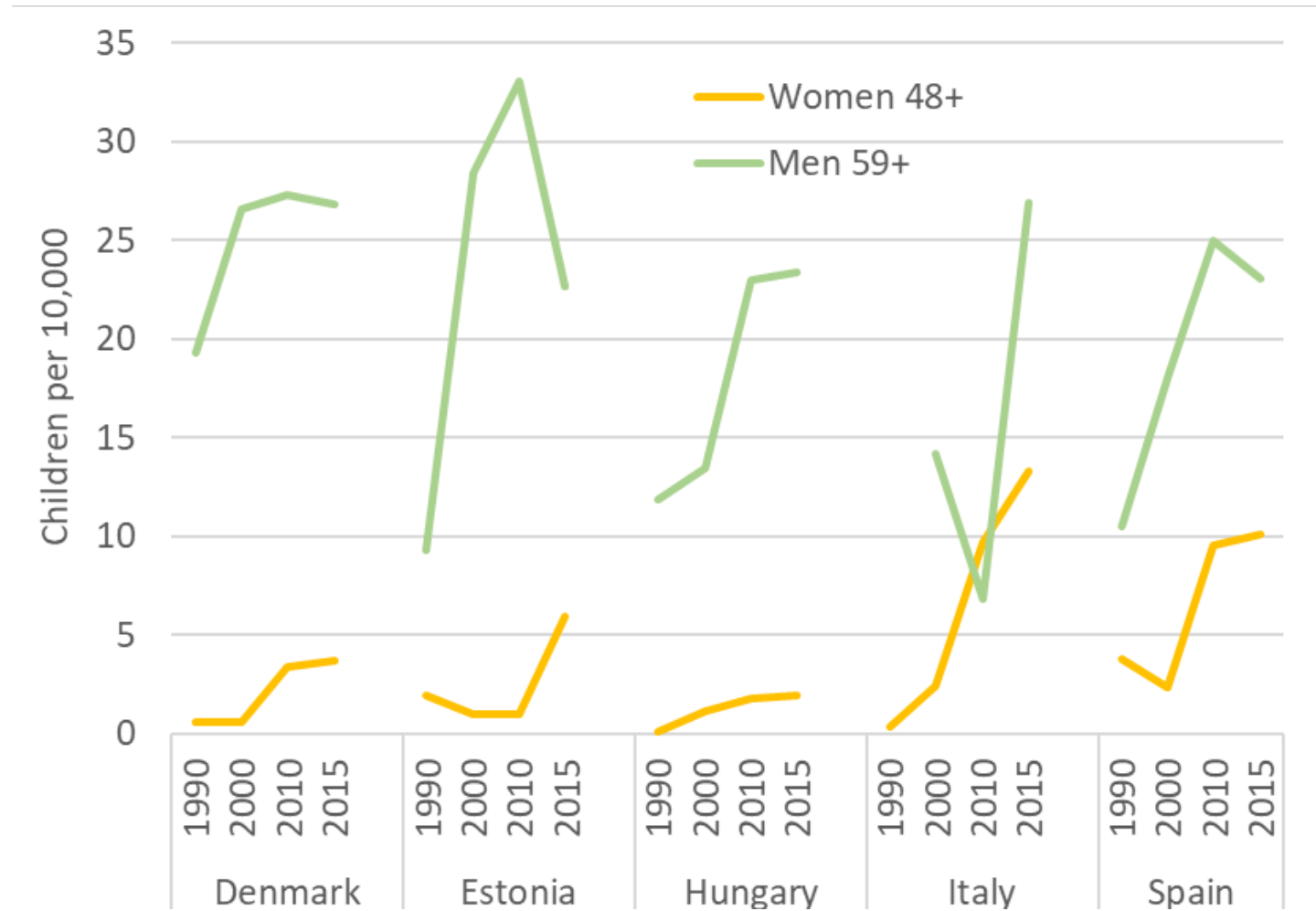
Ages 47-52:
Represents 30
children in 2018,
i.e. very few

Source: Beaujouan 2020
Data: HFD, <https://www.humanfertility.org/>

Figure. First birth rate by age for 1000 childless women, ages 40-52, Sweden

Beyond the biological limits for women - while very late first births are less new for men

Figure. Age Specific fertility rate by age, women ages 48+ and men ages 59+, selected European countries



An illustration of a woman with long blonde hair, wearing a pink jacket over a light-colored top, looking out a large window. In the foreground, a shopping cart is visible, containing a green box with the letters 'A.R.T.' and a small icon of a fetus. To the left, the back of a person with dark hair in a bun is visible. The scene is set in a brightly lit room with large windows.

Ever later births?
Norms around late
childbearing

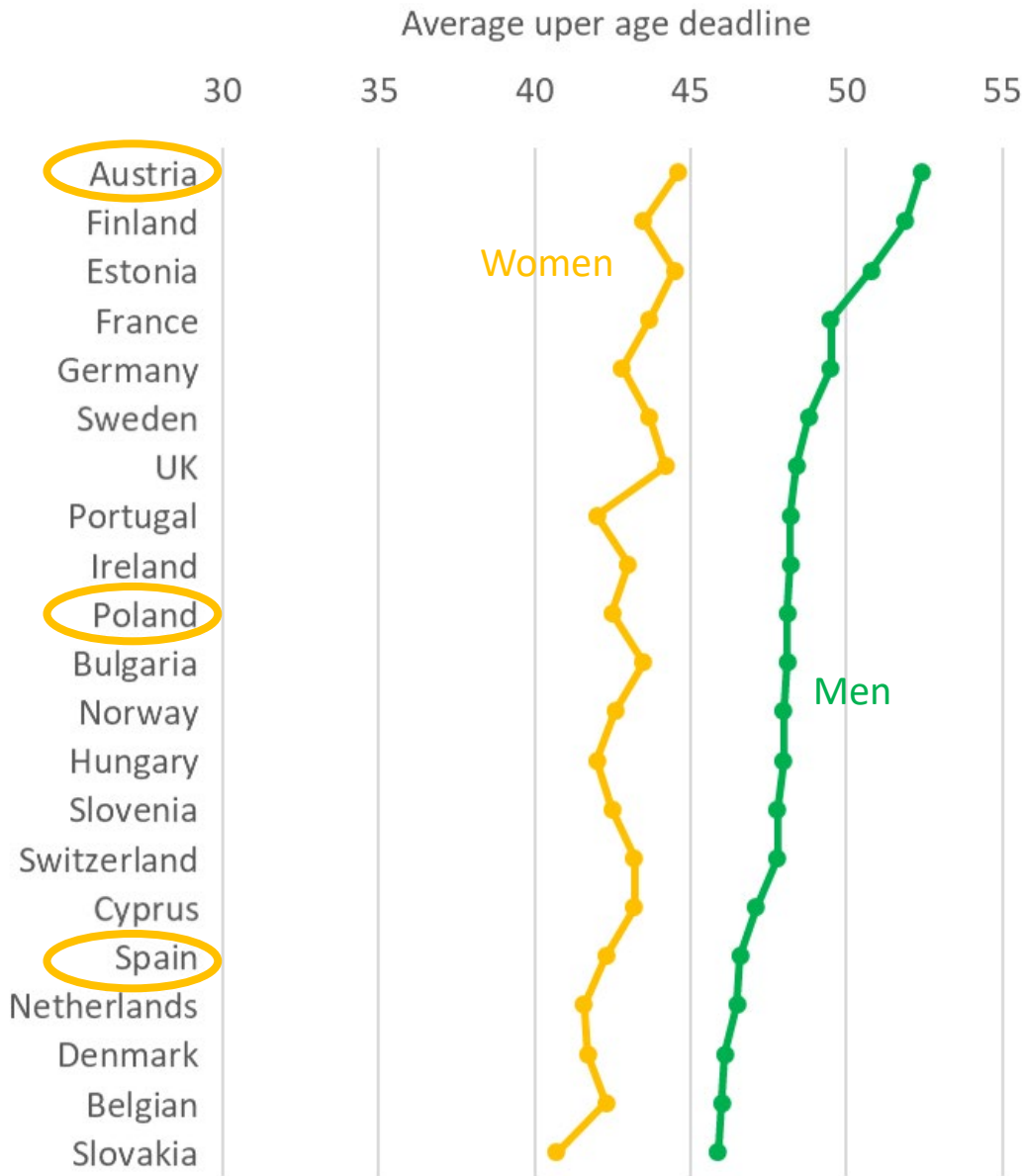
Social age norms

- Informal rules in a society about age at having children
 - Delineate ages at childbearing considered as acceptable by a social group
 - Countries often have different social norms
- Combined with biological limitations, age norms appear to be important barriers to fertility at older ages

We compare their flexibility for women and men, and whether they seem to change in parallel with fertility schedules

Country rankings by perceived age limit not at all similar to rankings by late fertility

Figure. Average age at which a woman/man is considered too old to consider having more children, by country, 2018-19

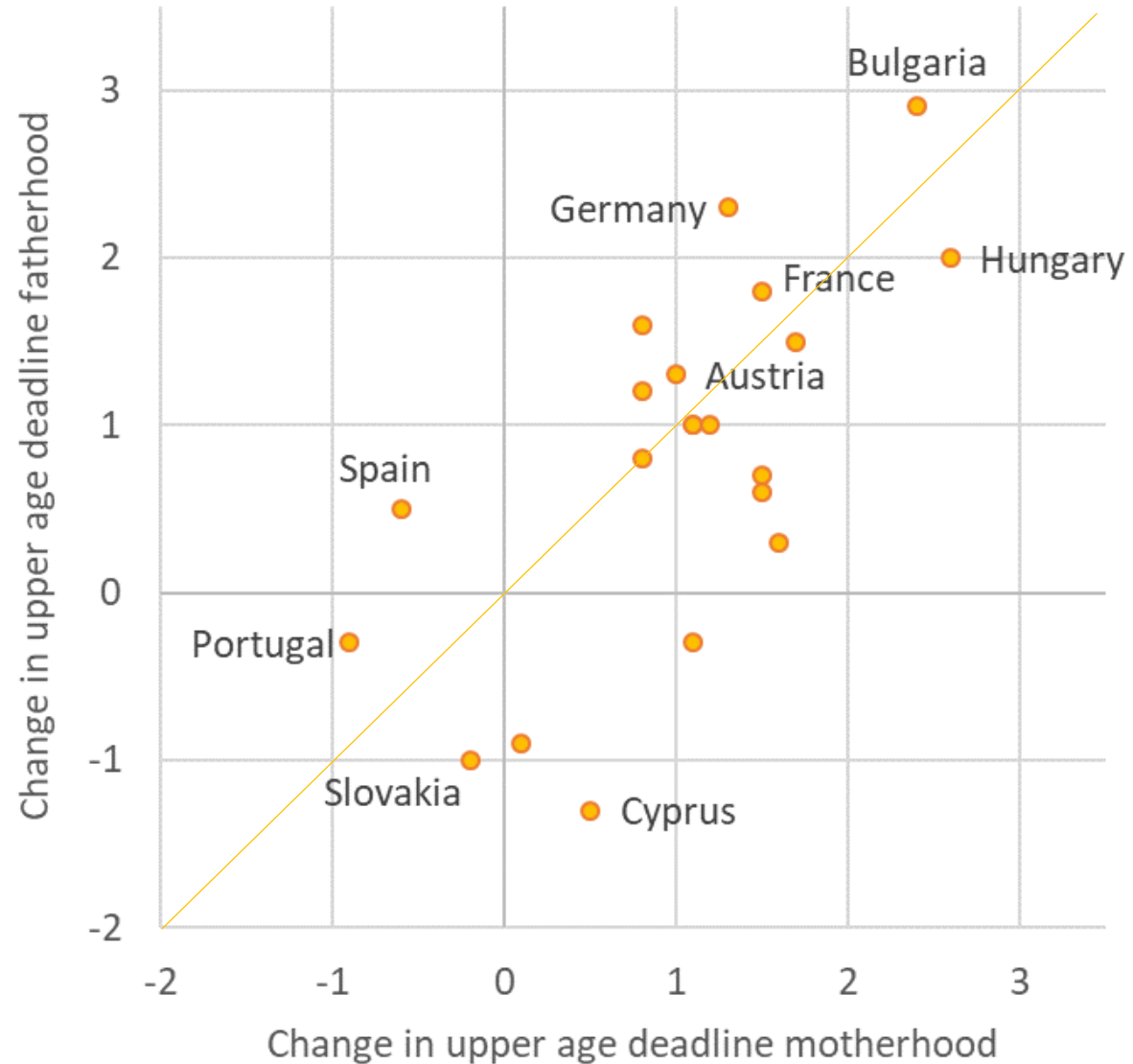


- Higher perceived upper age limit for men than for women
- More frequently than for women, respondents say that men are never too old or do not recognize an age limit for men

Source. Lazzari, Compans and Beaujouan, in progress
Data. European Social Survey 9.
Field. Respondents who acknowledged an age deadline between 26 and 80 years old

Similar change in upper age limit for men and women

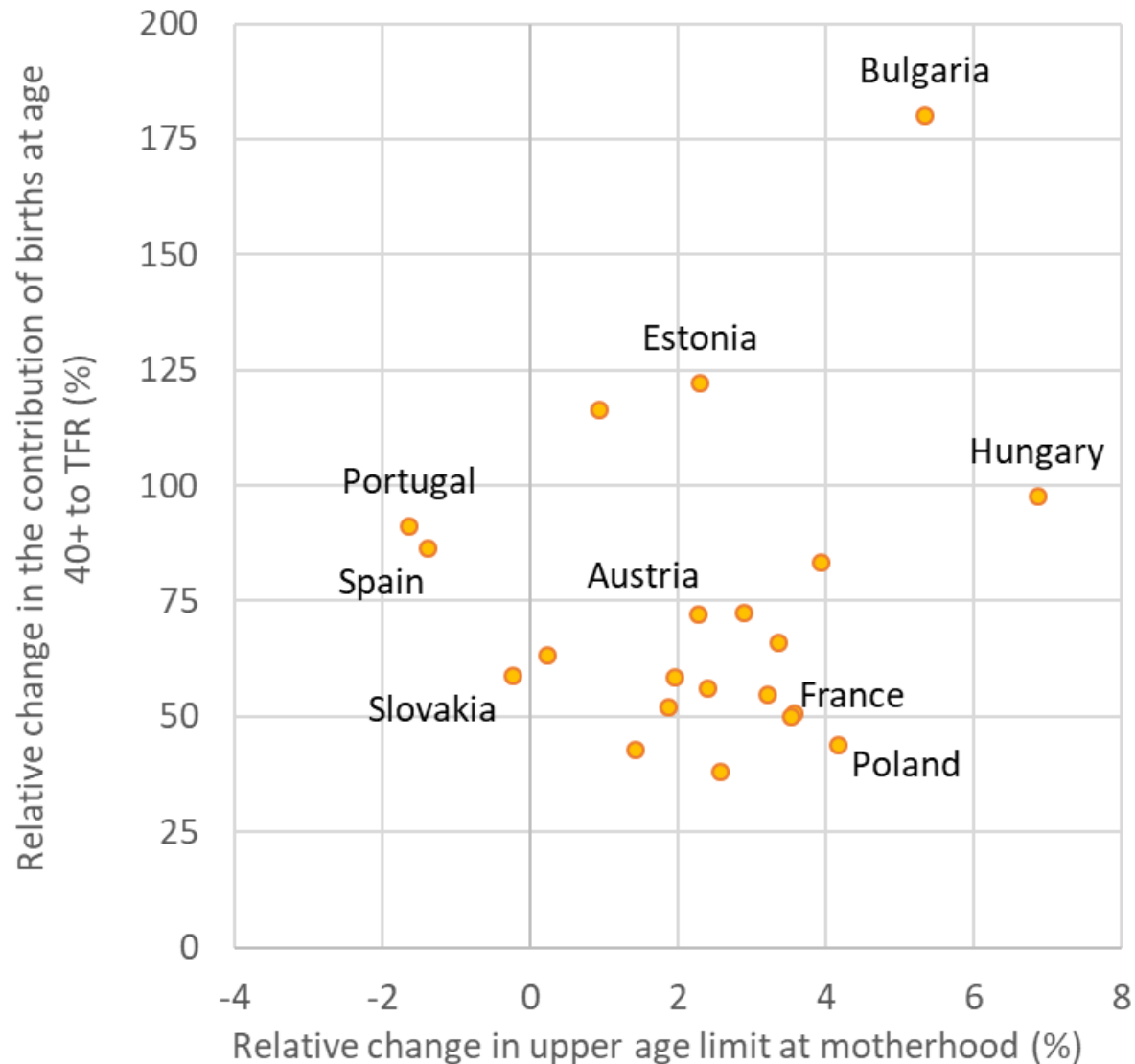
Figure. Change in upper age deadline at motherhood and fatherhood between 2006–07 and 2018–19



Source. Lazzari, Compans and Beaujouan, in progress
Data. European Social Survey 9.
Field. Respondents who acknowledged an age deadline between 26 and 80 years old

Upper age limit does not follow late fertility change across countries

Figure. Association between relative change in upper age deadline at motherhood and relative change in contribution of births at age 40+ to TFR between 2006–07 and 2018–19, women



Source. Lazzari, Compans and Beaujouan, in progress

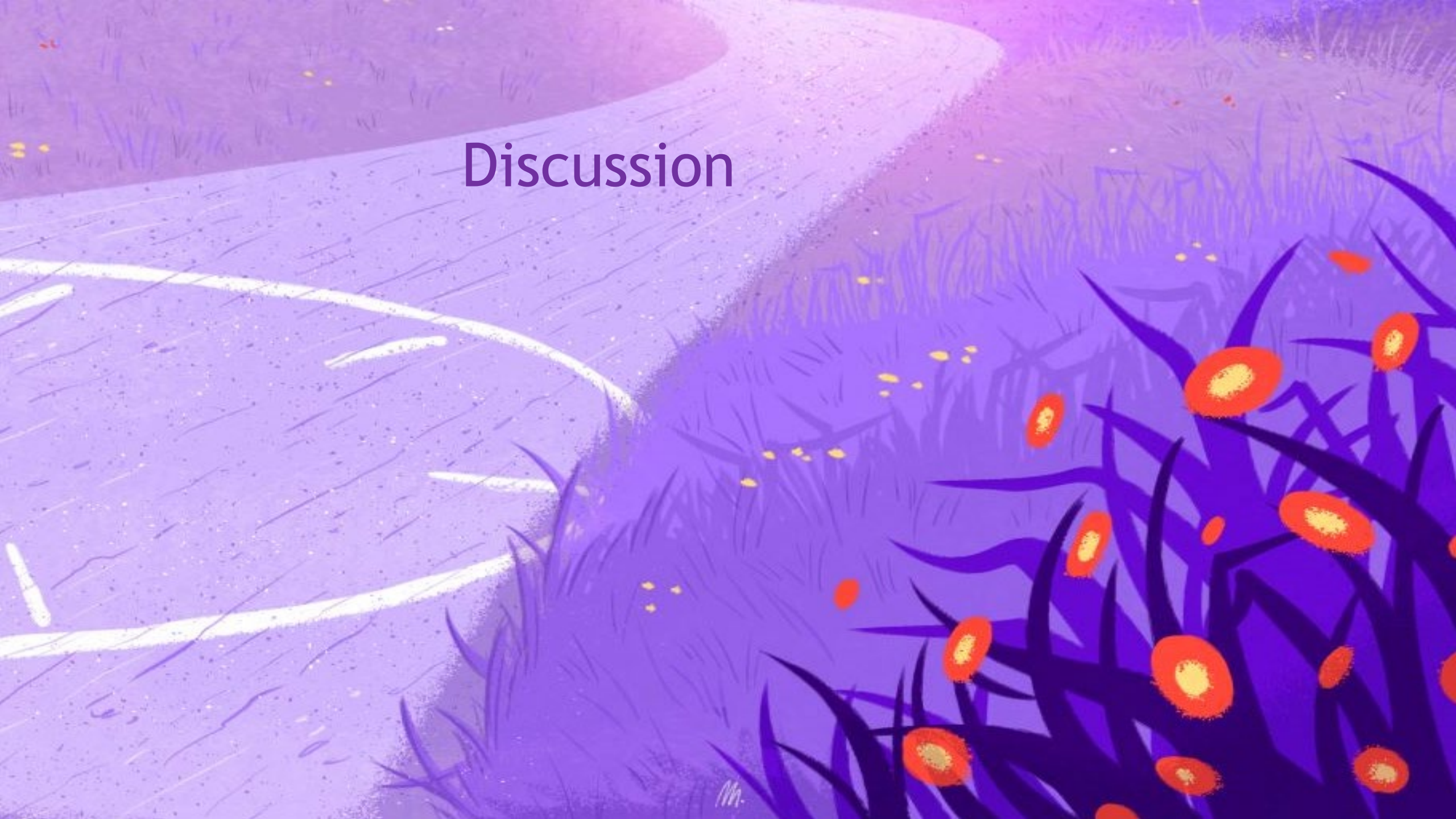
Data. European Social Survey 9.

Field. Respondents who acknowledged an age deadline between 26 and 80 years old

Summary (2)

- Increase in the share of very late births
 - Particularly observed for first births for women
 - Showing a stronger willingness to try to have a first child than further ones
 - For men, births above age 59 already existed, but increased as well
- Age norms are stricter for women than for men
 - Unlike what we would expect, upper age limits did not increase more for women than for men
 - For upper age limits, we don't see the country ranking usually observed for late fertility

Discussion



A convergence between late fertility of men and women over time?

- A trend toward women catching up on late births
 - But women are still limited in implementing their intentions after age 35
 - And men still have much more leeway at very high ages
- Late ages at birth seem to be more accepted in 2018 than in 2006 for both men and women
 - But the increase is no greater for women than for men

Final remarks (1)

- Increasing decorrelation between what people want and what they do
 - At the individual level
 - for example, fertility intentions increase greatly at ages at which the probability of conception is very low in Austria
 - At the country level
 - late fertility norms and practices do not overlap
 - A gap between intentions and fertility that increases with each cohort
 - An increasingly high proportion of people having children very late, indicating more biological constraints

(Beaujouan 2021)

(Beaujouan 2021; Guzzo 2021)

Final remarks (2)

- Men remain relatively limited in having children at older ages
 - Explore age of spouse/ differences in marital status
 - Better understand the biological limiting factors
 - that are likely to become increasingly important for future fertility levels
 - And whether the use of assisted reproduction can limit gender contrasts
- We need more recent data that covers reproductive health, assisted reproductive use, and sexuality across the ages
 - For men and women
 - Consistently across countries (adapting GGS2020?)



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