

1. BACKGROUND & RESEARCH GAP

- Fertility Intentions (wantedness, no. of children, certainty, **timing**).
- Fertility intentions are fluid in nature and often shift in response to personal and social circumstances.
- Existing literature focused on “family size”, “short-term intention”, “degree of certainty in intentions”.

What is the gap in existing research on “Fertility Intentions”??

In what aspect does an individual/couple think when it comes to childbearing decisions? → **Timing (Age)** → Do we have enough research on “Fertility Timing intentions”?

NOT REALLY!!!

- Fertility Timing – The age at which individuals or couples have children.
- Fertility Timing Intention** – The age at which individuals or couples want to have children.

2. AIM & RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Aim
Analyze how childless individuals adjust their intended timing for first childbirth as they age and experience partnership transitions.

Questions:

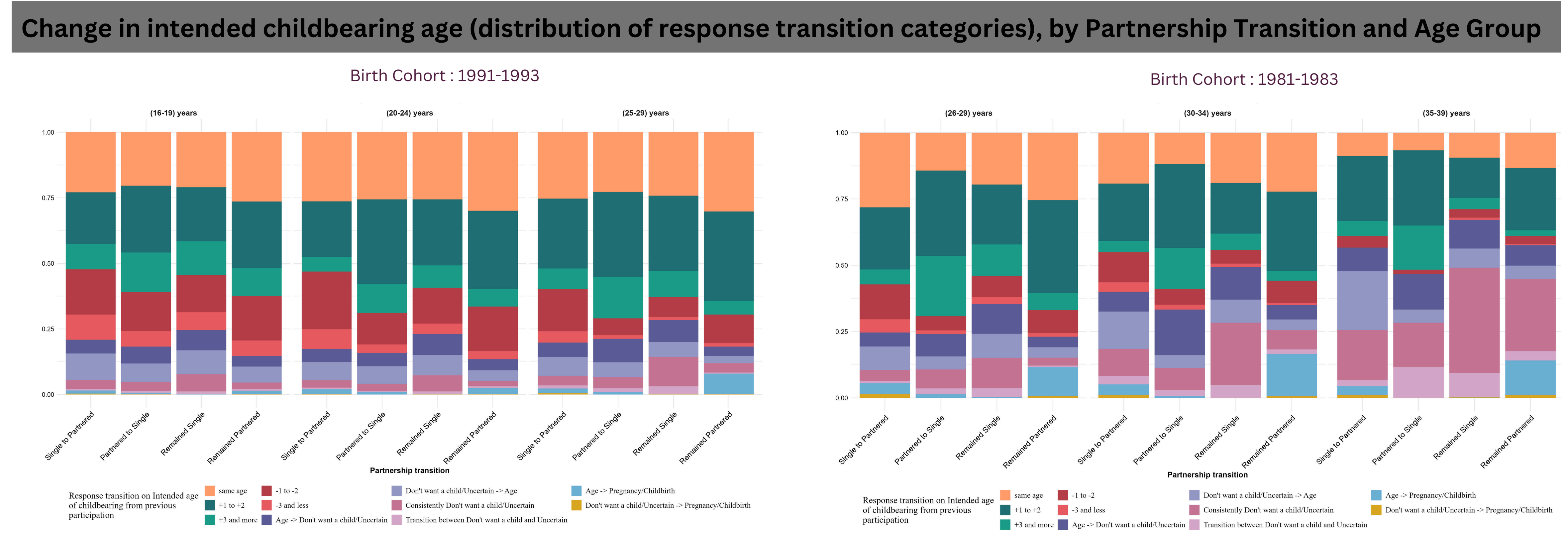
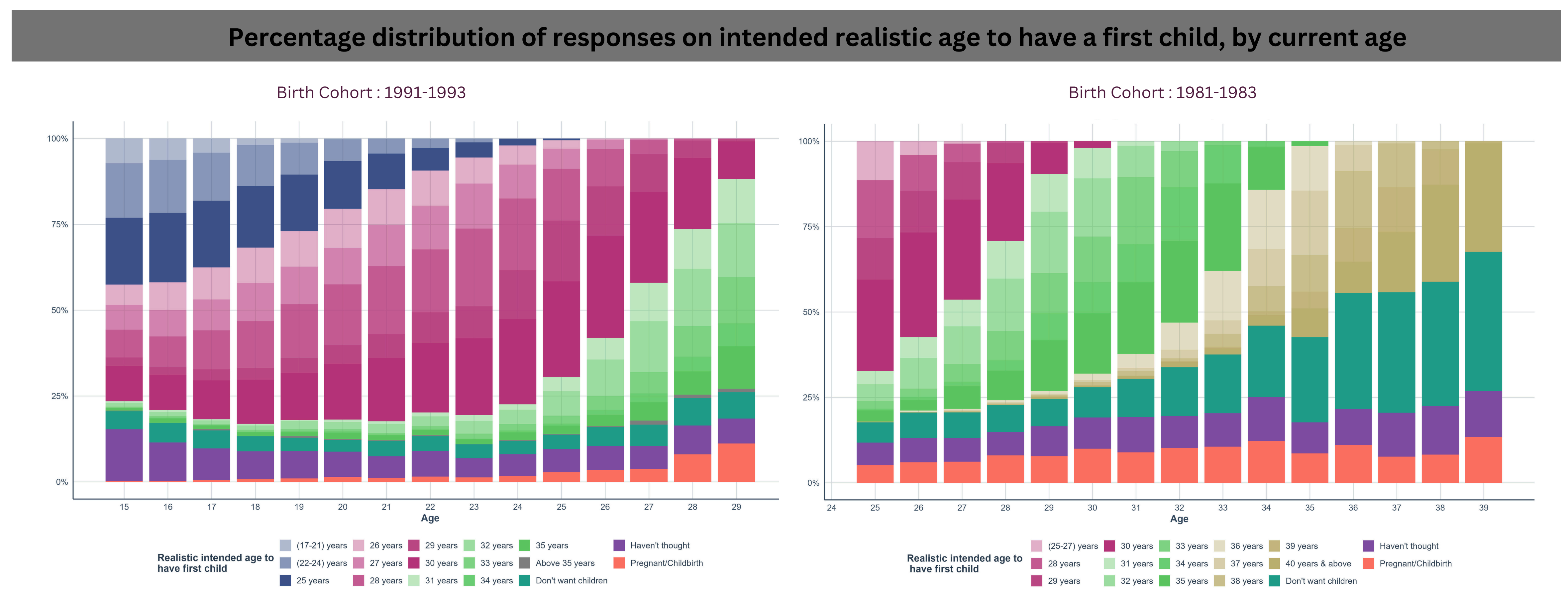
- How does intended childbearing age change with increasing age?
- How do (no) partnership transitions influence fertility timing intentions?

Why age and partnership status?
The certainty of reproductive intentions may vary based on age and partnership status (Ní Bhrólcháin and Beaujouan, 2011).

3. DATA & METHOD

- Data** – PAIRFAM (Panel Analysis of Intimate Relationships and Family Dynamics).
- Sample:** Childless individuals, 37,808 observations (8,034 respondents).
- Survey Question (frt9):** When you think realistically about having children : How old do you think you will be when you have your first child?
Age ___
 - I haven't thought about that
 - No answer
- Measures**
 - Intended realistic age to have a first child.
 - Changes in intended age across survey waves.
 - Partnership transitions: Single ↔ Partnered status, No transition
- Method** : Descriptive visualization

4. RESULTS



5. KEY FINDINGS

- Digit Preference in Fertility timing Intentions:**
 - Respondents prefer ages ending in 0, 5, or even numbers.
 - Younger respondents commonly target age 25, older ones target 30 or 35.
 - While men predominantly choose round figures (ending with 0 and 5), women also tend to prefer even numbers at certain ages, suggesting a slower pace of childbearing postponement among women.
- Influence of Partnership Status:**
 - Individuals often revise their childbearing plans both upwards (postponement) and downwards (advancement) repeatedly depending upon their partnership status in relation to last year.
 - Transition from single to partnered status typically decreases uncertainty and lowers intended childbearing age.
 - Break-ups or remaining single prompt increases in intended childbearing age or uncertainty about childbearing plans.
- Swinging Intentions:**
 - This includes instances where respondents initially provide a response in one survey wave, change this response in subsequent participation, and later revert to the initial response in a future wave.
 - This behaviour captures “swinging back and forth” pattern in their fertility timing intentions.
 - Most common intended childbearing ages respondents reverted to, by age group:
 - 15–19 years: 25 years
 - 20–24 years: 28 years
 - 25–29 years: 30 years
 - 30–34 years: 35 years
 - 35–39 years: “Don't want children”
- Stalled Postponement:**
 - Respondents often consistently report the same intended childbearing age over multiple survey waves without achieving it.
 - Indicates strong fertility desires but no realization.

6. CONCLUSION & CONTRIBUTION

This study identifies a key phenomenon, termed “Swinging Intentions”, which describes how individuals’ parenthood plans swing back and forth in response to changes in partnership and age.

- The findings reveal that while individuals frequently postpone childbearing, they also sometimes revert to their previous responses, giving new insight into how uncertainty around parenthood unfolds over time.
- The study highlight the importance of a longitudinal approach to understand the fluidity of fertility timing intentions, showing how it relates to age and partnership status.
- It states that fertility timing intentions are not static but evolve in response to personal and social circumstances— sometimes shifting later, sometimes reverting to an earlier age, and sometimes remaining unchanged for years.

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“This poster has received funding from the European Research Council (ERC) under the Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme: 101001410 ERC-2020-COG”