

# Success and failure in the realization of childbearing intentions

Comparing influencing factors in four European countries

Zsolt Spéder

Demographic Research Institute, Budapest

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# Fertility intention and outcome

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- Fertility intention and the realization or failure of fertility intention as key indicator of decision making
- The need of panel data
- The need of comparable data
  
- This is an outcome of the



# Two research questions

- (1) Is the chance to realize fertility intentions the same in the *European countries*? If not, what matters? (**societal level**)
- (2) Are the underlying mechanism of realization the same or different in the European countries? (**individual/group specific level**)

# The measures of our investigation

- *intended (expected) family size*
  - Quesnel- Vallée, Morgan, 2003; Monier 1989; Liefbroer, 2008
- *intention to have (any more) children at all*
  - Westoff and Ryder, 1977; Schoen et al. 1999; Berrington 2004
- the intention of having a(nother) child *within 2 years*  
(*c: another child within 3 years*)
  - Westoff and Ryder 1977, Toulemon and Testa 2005, Philipov, Testa 2008, Spéder, Kapitány 2009
- the *degree of certainty* of the childbearing intention and
  - Westoff and Ryder, 1977; Schoen et al. 1999, Philipov and Testa , 2007
- Coincidence of *the intentions of the partners*
  - Thomson 1977; Schoen et al. 1999

# Construction of the fertility intention-outcome variable

Fertility intention-outcome types	Intention	Outcomes	
	Fertility intention within <b>two</b> years (wave I.)	Had a birth within <b>three</b> years	If no child: Intend to have a child at wave II.
Intentional parents	Yes	Yes	
Postponers	Yes	No	Yes
Abandoner	Yes	No	No

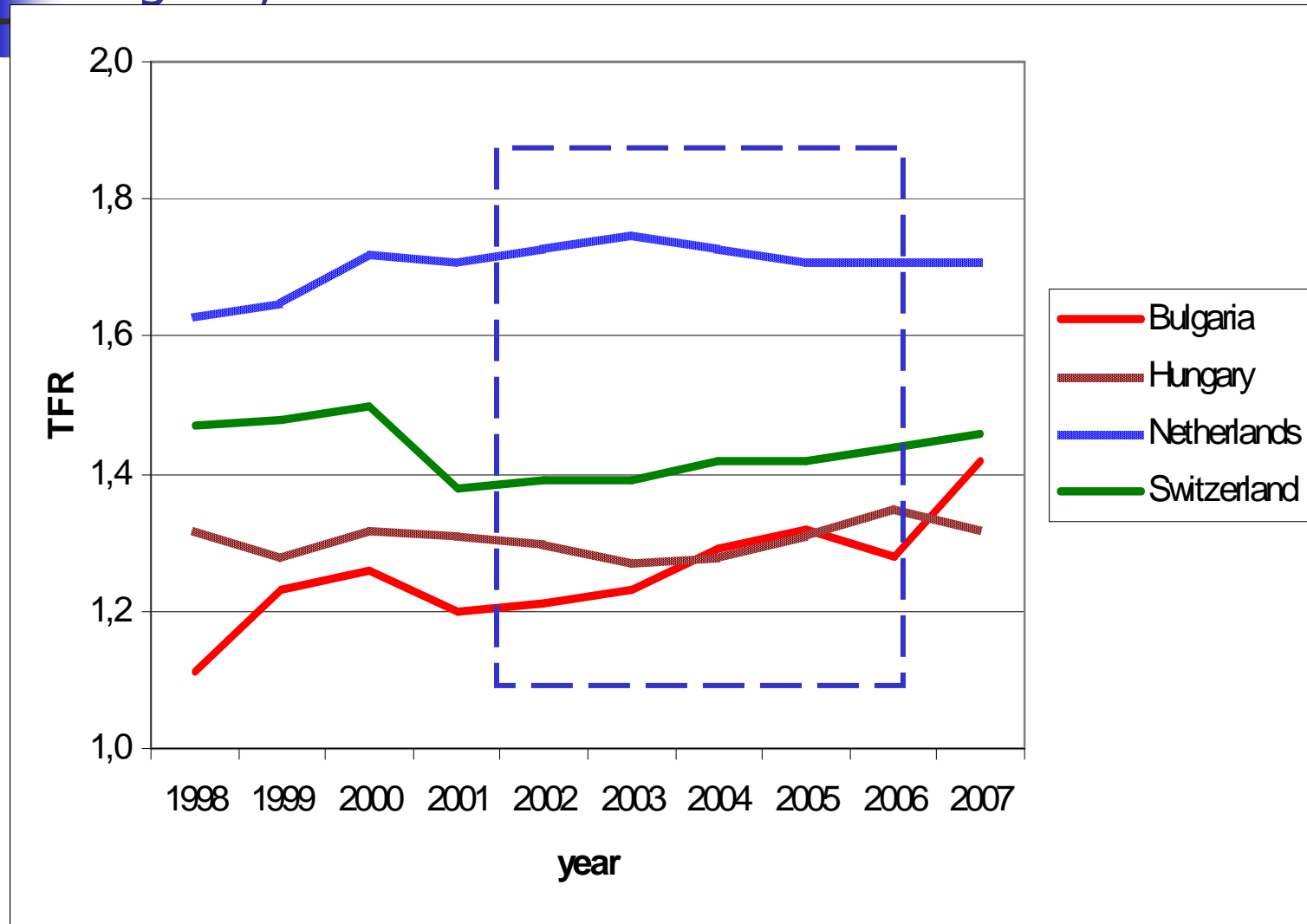


# Countries

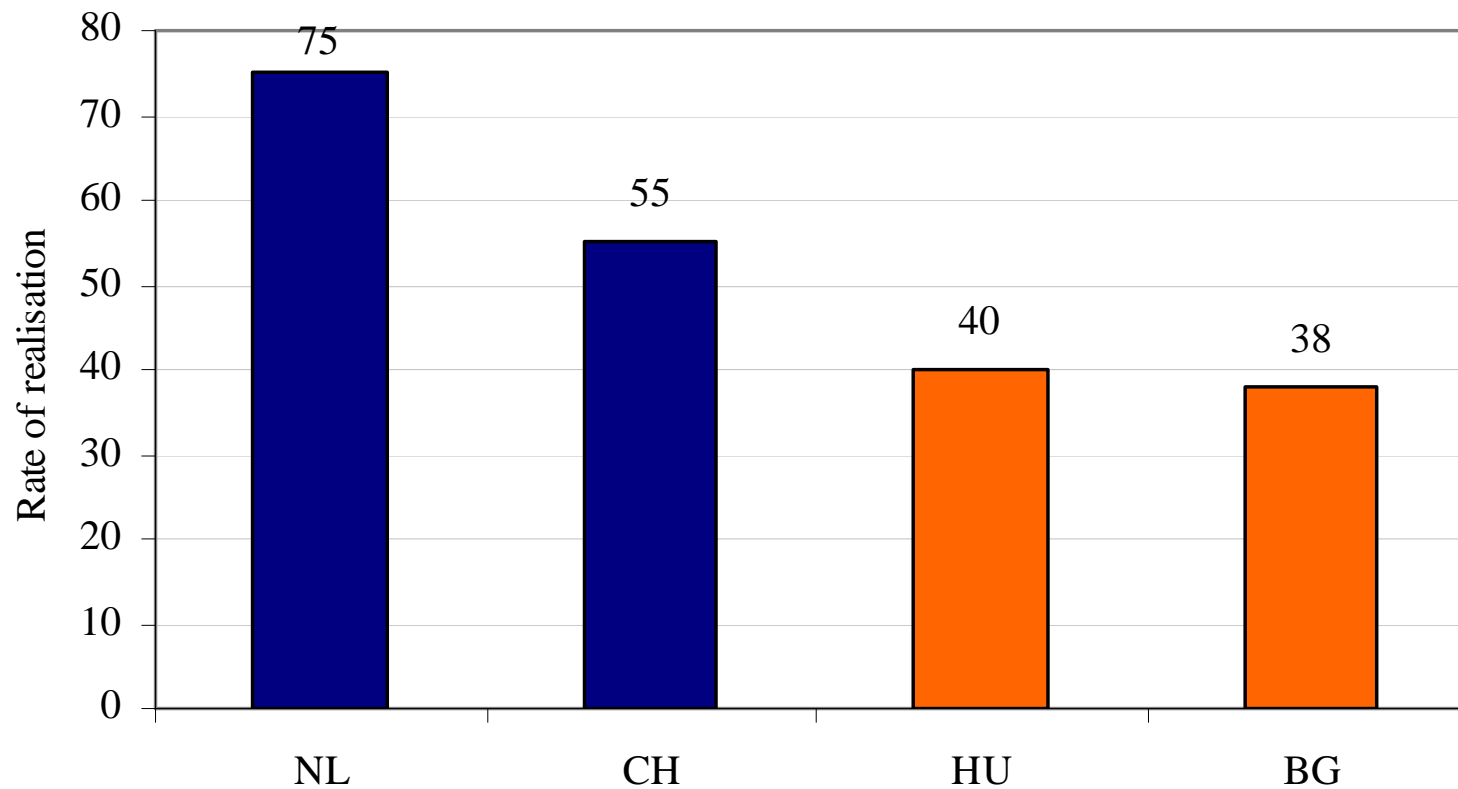
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- Four countries until now:
  - **Hungary:** 'Turning Points of the Life-Course' (Hungarian GGS survey) 2001/2 - 2004/5
  - **Netherlands:** 'Netherlands Kinship Panel Survey' (Netherlands GGS survey) 2003/4 - 2006/7
  - **Switzerland:** Schweizer Haushalt-Panel (SHPSI.-SHPSII.) 2004 (6th wave) -2007 (9th wave)
  - **Bulgaria:** Social Capital Survey (2002-2005)

# Total fertility rate in the Netherlands, Switzerland, Hungary and Bulgaria, 1998-2007



# Societal level result: Rate of realization firm (short term) intention





# Distribution of different fertility intention-outcome types

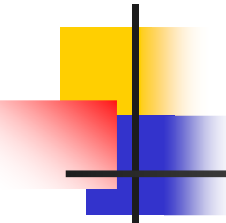
	<b>Netherlands (NL)</b>	<b>Switzerland (CH)</b>	<b>Hungary (HU)</b>	<b>Bulgaria (BU)</b>
<b>Intentional parents</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>38</b>
<b>Postponers</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>(27)</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>44</b>
<b>Abandoners</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>(18)</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>18</b>



## What are the reasons of dissimilar realization in the four countries?

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- Concept of intention and operationalization
- Biological factors
- Life course events
- Social and demographic factors
- Macro-social effects
  - Periods
  - Societal context



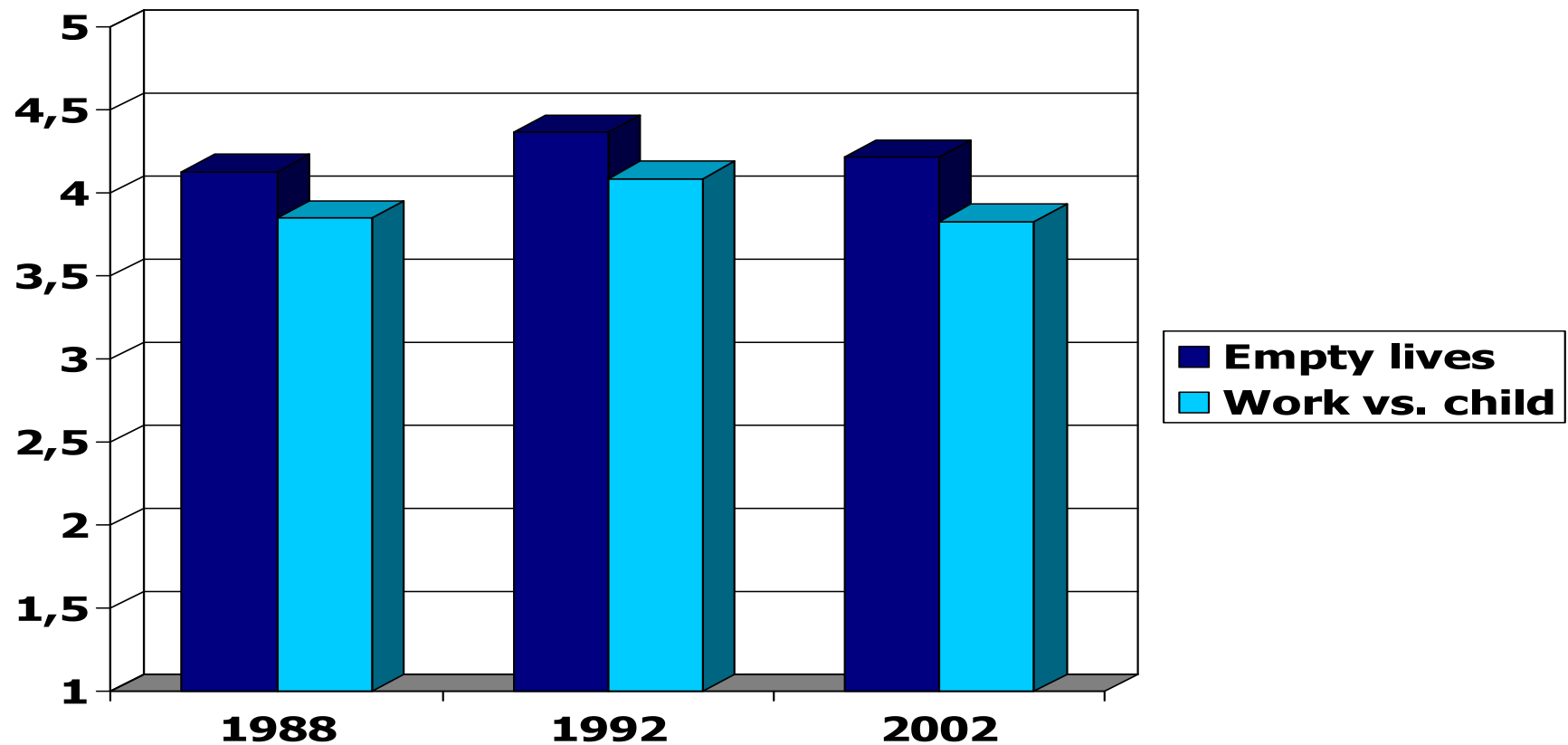
# Contextual factors do matter – societal transition (? turbulent times)

- Societal transition: two interlinked societal dimensions framing social action (Merton's view of social action):
  - Institutions, resources (structures) ==> changing opportunity structures
  - Attitude, values (culture) <== SDT: diffusion of values (individualization, etc.)
- Thesis: Diverse **pace of change** of structure and culture
  - **speed** change of institutions and structures
  - **„inertia“** of childbearing related values (Dahrendorf, Offe about long-term value change)
  - ==> FAILUR

# Hungary 1988, 1992, 2002: Agreement with...

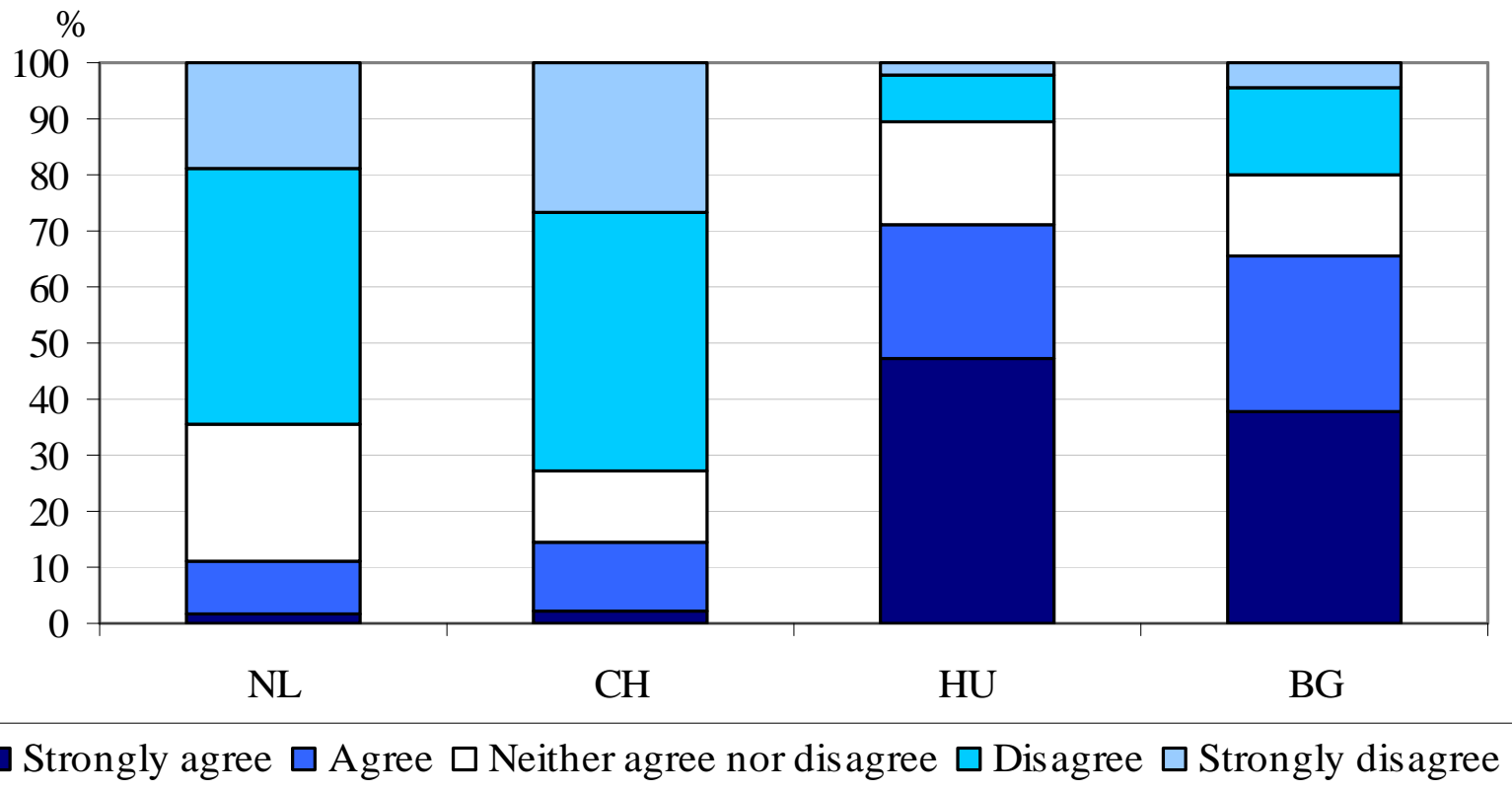
„People who have never had children lead empty lives.”

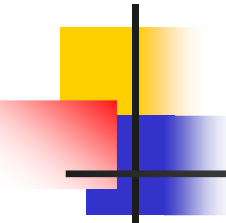
„A job is all right, but what most women really want is home and children”



## NL, CH, HU, BG (2002): Agreement with...

„People who have never had children lead empty lives.”





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# Individual/group specific level results:

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- Are there any social-demographic factors (group-specific features) that influence the realization of intentions?
- If yes, are these the same (universal) or are these different (country-specific)?

# Method & Description of the variables

Method:

Multinomial

Logistic

Regression

Dependent  
variable

- Intentional parents
- Postponers
- Abandoners

Independent variables

- Age (cont.)
- Parity (**Parity0**, Parity1, Parity2+)
- Partnership (**Marriage**, Cohabitation, No partner)

Control variables:

- Labor market (**No job**, Job)
- Level of education (years of study; cont.)
- Religiosity (**Roman Catholic**, Protestant, other religion, No religion)
- Gender



## Result 1: AGE

multinomial logistic regression models  
(ref: intended parents)

	Postponers				Abandoners			
	BU	HU	NL	CH	BU	HU	NL	CH
Age	1.044***	1,11***	,987	1,09***	1,17***	1,31***	1,30***	1,07**

- Intentional parents vs. postponers:
  - H1a: „biological clock” : declining fecundity with aging ⇒ IP younger
  - H1b: „Social age dead line”: intense realization of aged ⇒ IP older
- Result: older ages increasing postponement (H1a ✓)
- Intentional parents vs. abandoners:
  - H2: according both approach: older ages increasing abandonment
- Result: H2 confirmed

## Result 2: PARITY

multinomial logistic regression models  
 (ref: intended parents)

	Postponers				Abandoners			
	BU	HU	NL	CH	BU	HU	NL	CH
P1	1.394***	,663**	,349***	,138***	5.09***	3,59***	1,640	,221***
P2+	0.486**	,383***	,500	,252***	13.496***	5,25***	2,96**	,521

- Intentional parents vs. postponers
  - Hp3: Zero parity postpone
- Result: √ all countries, but
  - BU: the „(l)only child” family
- Intentional parents vs. abandoners
  - H4: Higher parity abandon
- Result: HU, NL, BU: Higher parities ABANDON, but  
 CH: zero parity abandoner: CHILDLESSNESS

## Result 3: PARTNERSHIP

multinomial logistic regression models  
(ref: intended parents)

	Postponers				Abandoners			
	BU	HU	NL	CH	BU	HU	NL	CH
Co	1.147	1,249	1,553	,620	0.521***	,954	1,307	,400*
No partn.	6.426**	4,01***	2,31	4,23***	2.598***	3,44***	2,63	5,94***

- Partnership as crucial prerequisite of realization
  - H5: living alone postpone
- Result: H5: confirmed
- Cohabitation: lower commitment than marriage ⇒
  - H6: cohabitants postpone more than married
- Result: No significant effect (in HU among female, not shown)

## Result 4: RELIGIOUS DENOMINATION multinominal logistic regression models (ref: intended parents)

	Postponers				Abandoners			
	BU	HU	NL	CH	BU	HU	NL	CH
<b>Pro</b>	--	1,176	<b>3,377*</b>	1,390	---	,880	,910	,829
<b>Oth.</b>	0.923	,848	<b>5,602**</b>	<b>4,013***</b>	0.953	<b>,416**</b>	,612	,774
<b>NO</b>	1.028	<b>1,433**</b>	<b>2,714*</b>	1,345	<b>0.417***</b>	,992	,942	1,756
<i><b>N.r<sup>2</sup></b></i>	<i><b>0.32</b></i>	<i><b>0.37</b></i>	<i><b>0.26</b></i>	<i><b>0.27</b></i>				

- Religious denomination /values/



# Summary

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- Social context as enabler of realization the intentions
- Overlaps of demographic factors affecting realization of fertility intentions
  - AGE
  - Partnership
  - Parity (partly)
- Some country differences (Abandonment of intention at Parity0 in Switzerland)
- Group specific effects influence similarly in different societal context
  - This may change, if more societal factors included in the analyze (values, resources, employment status)

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Thank you for your attention!