

Educational differentials in cohabitants' marriage intentions at different stages of family formation in 7 European countries



EDUCATION AND REPRODUCTION IN LOW-FERTILITY SETTINGS

2 DECEMBER 2015

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- Rise of unmarried cohabitation and non-marital fertility
 - Western Europe:
 - ✦ Part of a Second Demographic Transition (1970-...) (Lesthaeghe & Van de Kaa 1986; Van de Kaa 2002; Lesthaeghe 2010)
 - ✦ Cultural change in more privileged social groups (Lesthaeghe & Surkyn 1988; 2002)
 - ✦ Recent diffusion linked to changing economic realities and uncertainty (Oppenheimer 1988; Mills & Blossfeld 2005; Perelli-Harris et al. 2010)
 - ✦ Decreasing importance of socio-economic position (Beck & Beck-Gernsheim 1995)



- Rise of unmarried cohabitation and non-marital fertility
 - Central & Eastern Europe:
 - ✦ In most countries strong increase in post-communist era (Kostova 2007; Sobotka 2008; Zakharov 2008)
 - ✦ Relaxation of ideological controls and cultural orientation towards the west (Thornton & Philipov 2009; Gerber & Berman 2010)
 - ✦ Pattern Of Disadvantage: during economic transition particularly lowest social strata show alternative family behaviours (Sobotka 2008; Perelli-Harris & Gerber 2011; Potârca et al. 2013)



- Education and intentions
 - Education
 - ✦ SDT and POD suggest different socio-economic gradients in unmarried cohabitation and non-marital fertility
 - ✦ SDT: education as a key mechanism leading to changing values and attitudes (Lesthaeghe & Surkyn 1988; 2002)
 - ✦ POD: attainment strongly correlated with economic outlook (Perelli-Harris & Gerber 2011)
 - Intentions
 - ✦ Scant research relates education to intentions of family behaviours
 - ✦ Intentions may not reflect behaviours

RESEARCH QUESTIONS



- How do marriage intentions relate to education among cohabitants at different stages of family formation?
 - ✦ SDT predicts negative educational gradients
 - Higher educated more inclined to long-term cohabitation
 - ✦ POD predicts positive educational gradients
 - Higher educated more likely to afford marriage
 - ✦ Diffusion hypothesis predicts neutral educational gradients
 - No particular difference between educational levels



- Data
 - GGS Wave 1
 - WE: France, Germany, the Netherlands and Norway
 - CEE: Bulgaria, Georgia and Russia
 - Having a co-residential partner at interview time
 - Couple is unmarried
 - Age range: 20-34
 - Valid answers on short-term marriage and fertility intentions
 - Not pregnant or not unable to have children
 - (robustness checks for missing data)
 - (robustness checks for students)



- Dependent variables
 - Combining marriage and fertility intentions

	Marriage	Fertility
No	NO	NO
Marriage only	YES	NO
Non-marital fertility	NO	YES
Marital fertility	YES	YES



- Independent variables
 - Explanatory variables of interest:
 - ✦ Educational attainment: 3 levels
 - ✦ Education*parity: different family formation stages
 - ✦ Education*country: between-country variation
 - Control variables:
 - ✦ Age (categorical)
 - ✦ Union duration (quadratic)
 - ✦ Gender
 - ✦ Parental divorce
 - ✦ Previous union experience
 - ✦ Employment status
 - ✦ Relationship satisfaction



- **Methods**
 - Binary logistic regression models
 - Set of models conditional on having no fertility intentions:
 - ✦ Marriage intentions vs. no intentions (ref.)
 - Set of models conditional on having fertility intentions:
 - ✦ Marital fertility intentions vs. non-marital fertility intentions (ref.)

 - Country groups: WE en CEE
 - All countries given equal representation: country weight

RESULTS: Distribution intentions



Unweighted frequencies and proportions in combined intentions for CEE and WE (cohabiting individuals, age 20-34)

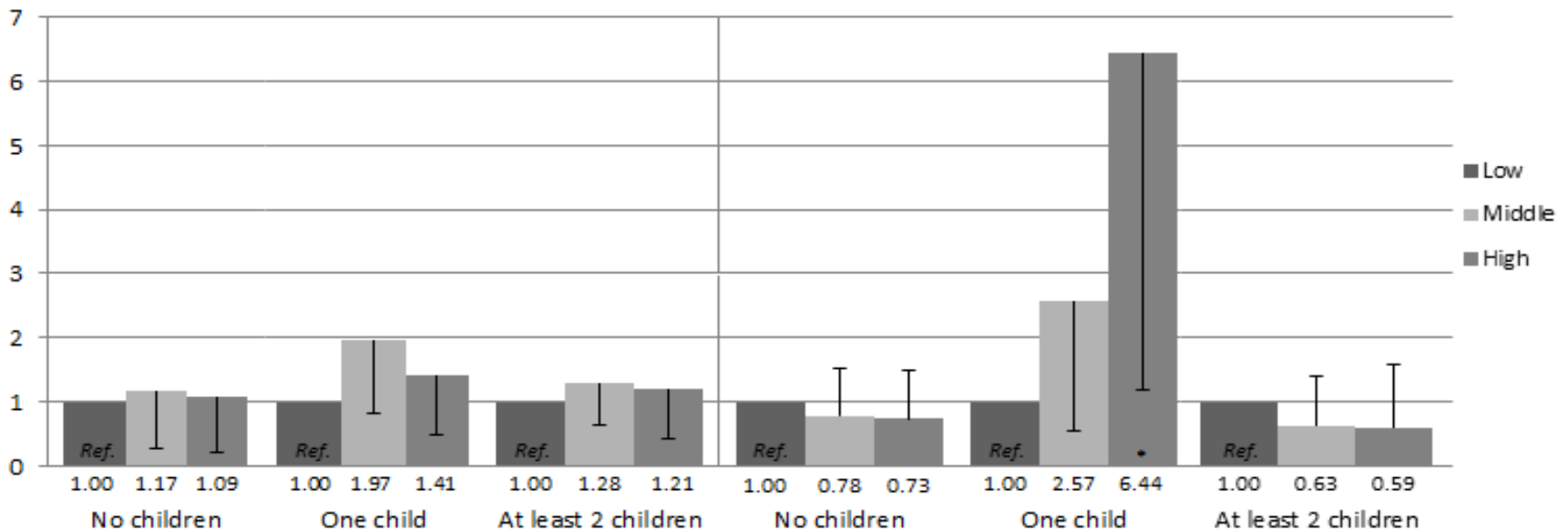
	CEE		WE	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
No	205	19.3	551	32.2
Marital only	310	29.2	191	11.2
Non-marital fertility	122	11.5	524	30.7
Marital fertility	424	40.0	441	25.8
<i>Total</i>	<i>1061</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>1707</i>	<i>100.0</i>

Source: GGS Wave 1, calculations by authors

RESULTS: Marital only vs. no intentions



Net interaction effects (odds ratios) between education and parity in a multivariate model (cohabiting individuals without fertility intentions, age 20-34)



Central and Eastern Europe

Western Europe

Source: GGS Wave 1, calculations by authors

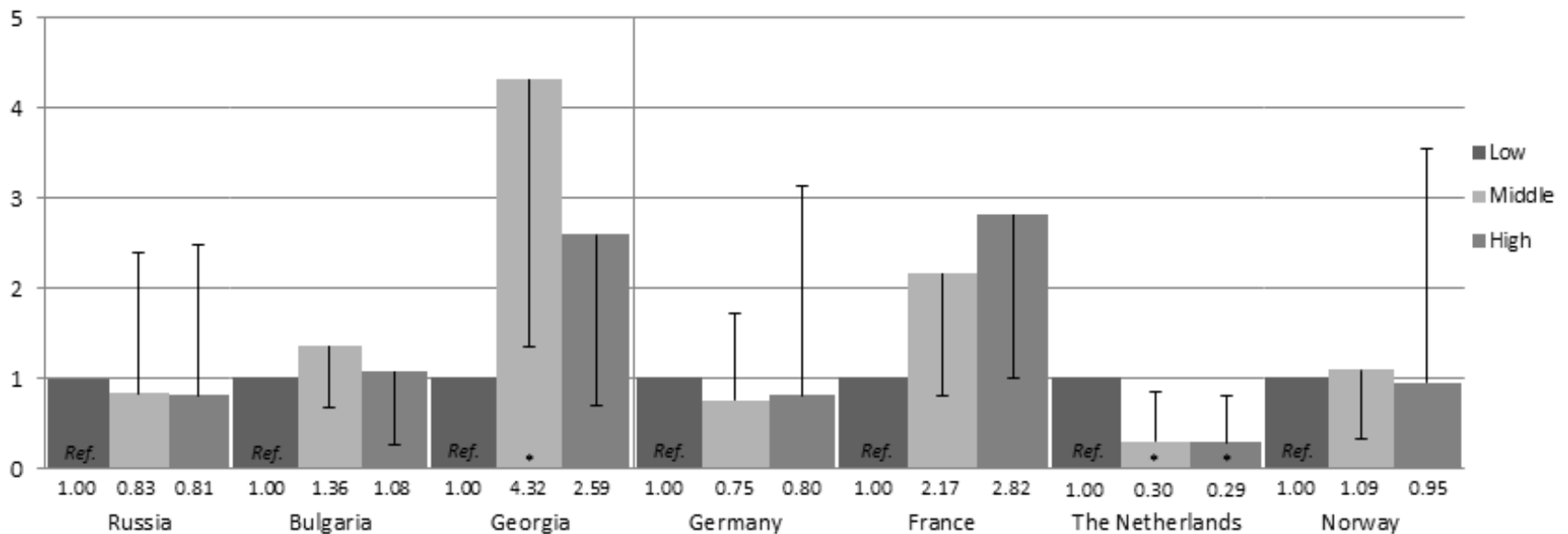
Multivariate models control for age group, union duration (quadratic), gender, parental divorce, relationship satisfaction, previous union experience, employment and country

Significance levels (two-tailed test): not significant (), $p < 0.050$ (*), $p < 0.010$ (**), $p < 0.001$ (***)

RESULTS: Marital only vs. no intentions



Net interaction effects (odds ratios) between education and country in a multivariate model (cohabiting individuals without fertility intentions, age 20-34)



Central and Eastern Europe

Western Europe

Source: GGS Wave 1, calculations by authors

Multivariate models control for age group, union duration (quadratic), gender, parental divorce, relationship satisfaction, previous union experience, employment and country

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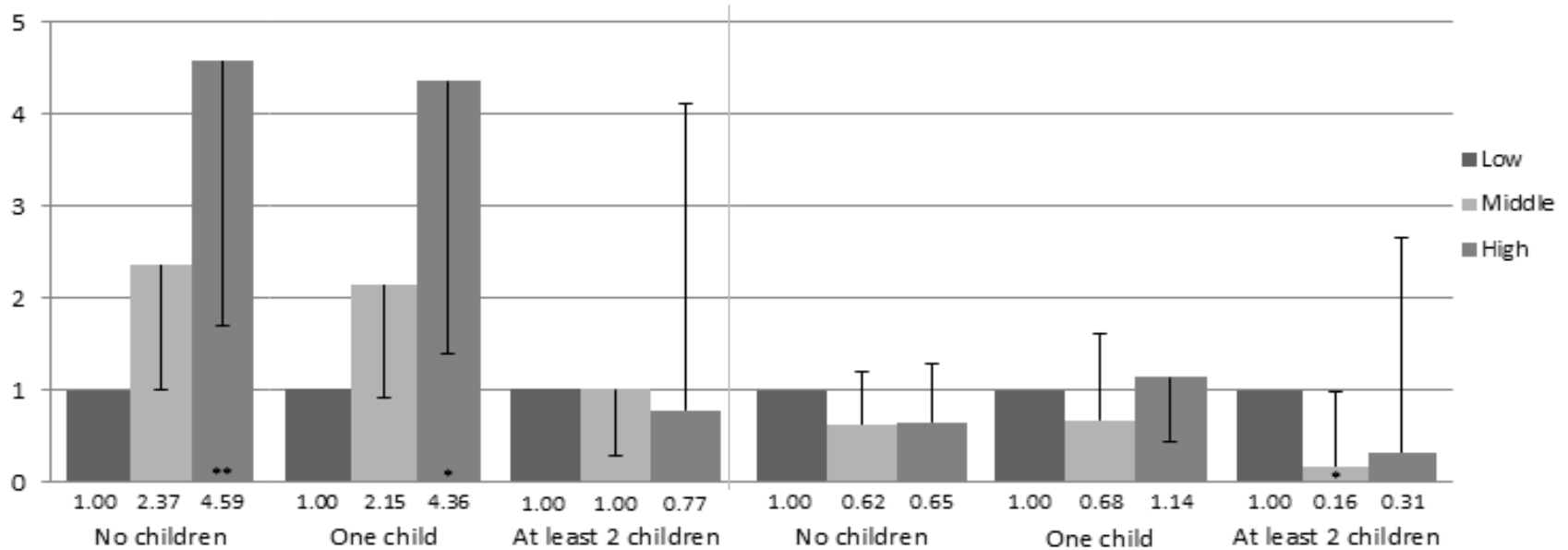
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RESULTS: Marital f. vs.



n-mar. f. intentions

Net interaction effects (odds ratios) between education and parity in a multivariate model (cohabiting individuals with fertility intentions, age 20-34)



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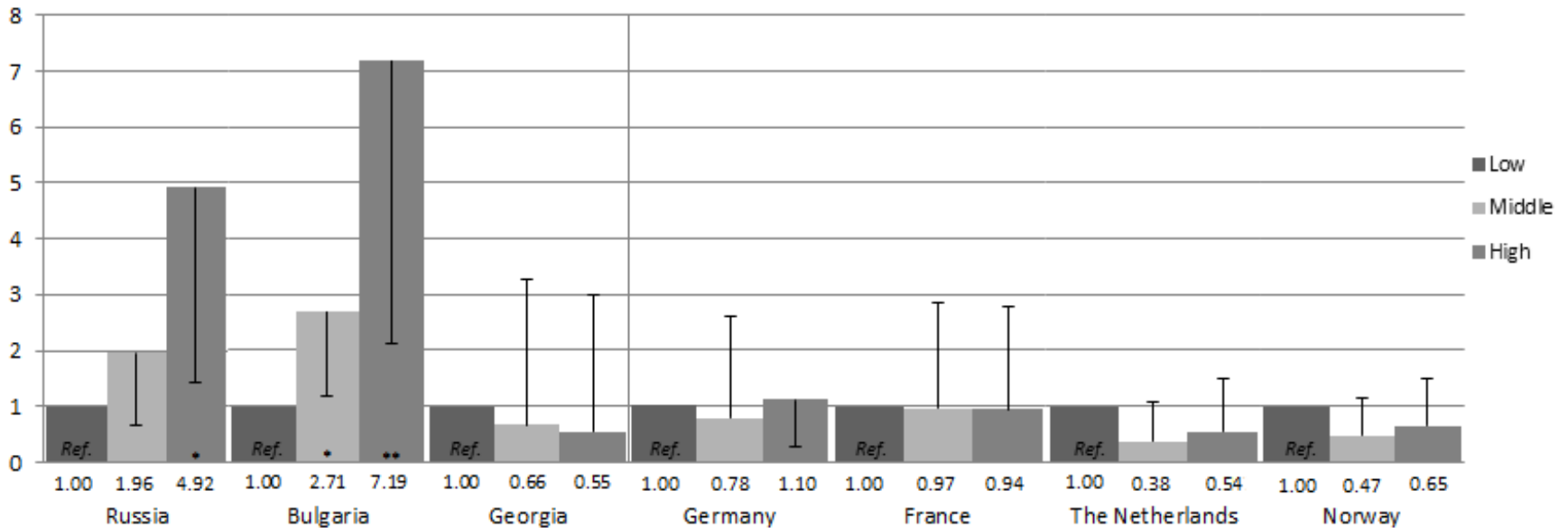
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- **Marriage intentions before family formation**
 - Western Europe and Central & Eastern Europe:
 - ✦ Support for diffusion hypothesis: neutral educational gradients
 - ✦ Detached from social group in both regions
 - ✦ Stronger effects for relationship quality (not shown) (Wiik et al. 2010)
- **Marriage intentions during family formation**
 - Western Europe:
 - ✦ Support for diffusion hypothesis: neutral educational gradients
 - Central & Eastern Europe:
 - ✦ Evidence for POD hypothesis: positive educational gradients
 - ✦ Predominantly childless couples and one-child parents
 - ✦ Bulgaria and Russia (Kostova 2007; Perelli-Harris & Gerber 2011)

RESULTS: Discussion



- Marriage intentions after family formation
 - Western Europe and Central & Eastern Europe:
 - ✦ Support for diffusion hypothesis: neutral educational gradients
 - ✦ Couples with traditional family behaviours have left cohabitation



- New family behaviours progressed in WE
 - Less traditional intentions
 - Weak educational gradients suggest eroded traditional norms
 - Importance of other variables such as relationship quality
- Alternative diffusion pattern in CEE
 - Despite studies suggesting cultural convergence with west
 - Context of
 - ✦ Rapid institutional and economic changes (Perelli-Harris & Gerber 2011)
 - ✦ Long-standing association between disadvantage and cohabitation (Spéder 2005; Kostova 2007)
 - Awareness of between-country heterogeneity, cfr. Georgia

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