

Fertility and childbearing under different family policy schemes

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Background

- Family policies assumed to play significant role in enhancing fertility (Gauthier 2007, Luci-Greulich and Thévenon 2013)
- Changing family formation → diverging destinies: rising socioeconomic inequality (McLahan 2004, Lesthaeghe 2010)
- Parental response to socioeconomic inequality → delay childbearing to accumulate resources for children → effect on **first/second births**
- Family policies may effect timing rather than number of children (Gauthier 2007)
- Finland, Germany & United Kingdom: Divergent family policies & diverse fertility trajectories** (Leitner et al., 2008; Daly 2010; Luci, & Thévenon, 2011; Esping-Andersen, & Billari, 2015)

Data

Macrovariables

- Fertility policies, female unemployment

Microvariables

- Dependent variables:** Transition to first & second births
- Control variables:** mother's age, year of birth, relationship status, education, labour force participation, household income; grandparents' education & ISEI.

Datasets

- Finland: Register data (1995-2014)
- Germany: SOEP (1995-2015)
- UK: BHPS & Understanding Society (1995-2015)

Method

- Crossed random effects logit model

Results: crossed random effects logit model

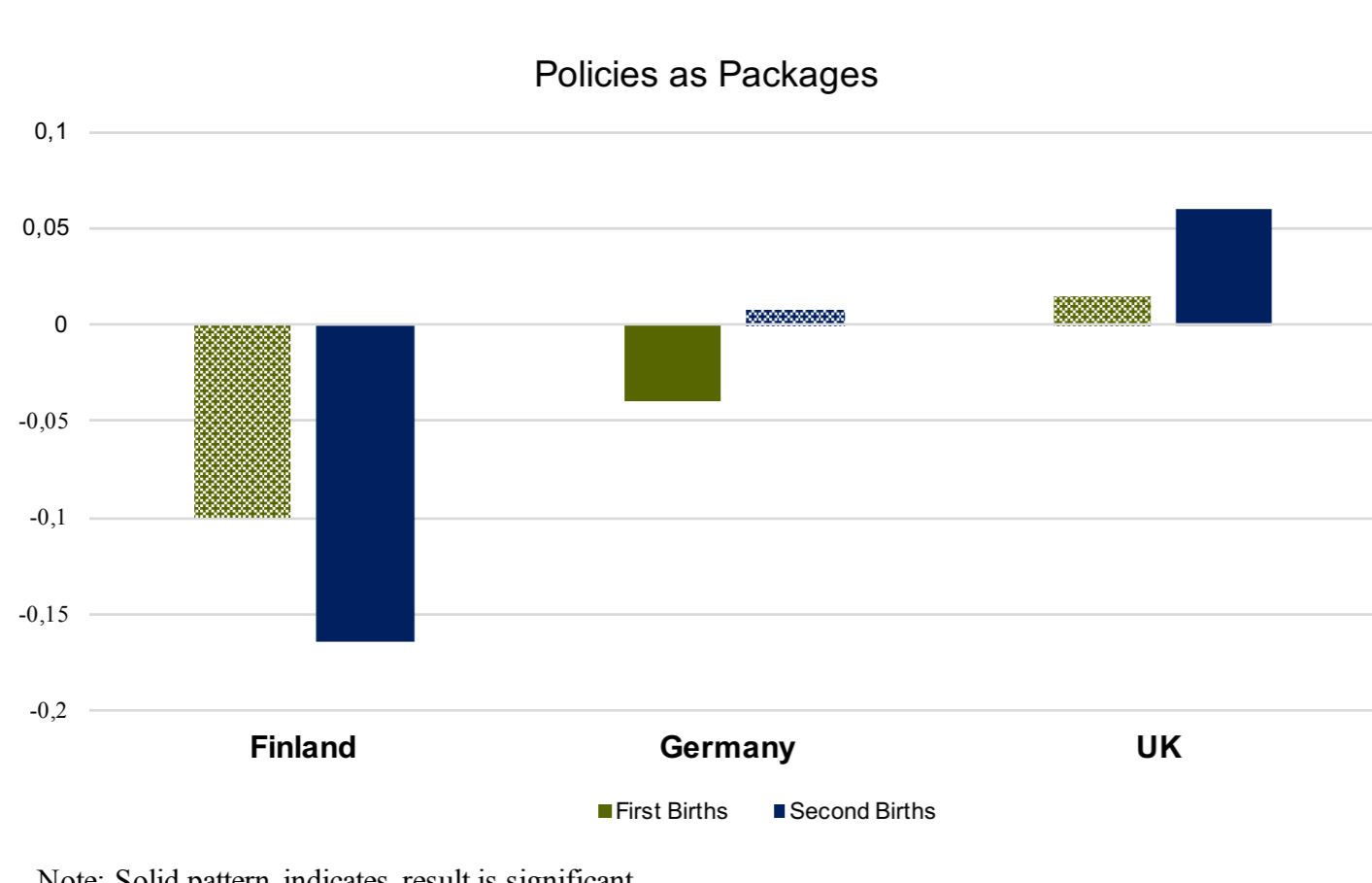
Transition to first births (F.B.) and second births (S.B.) , average marginal effects

	Finland		Germany		United Kingdom	
	F.B.	S.B.	F.B.	S.B.	F.B.	S.B.
Maternity Leave (Weeks)	-	-	-	-	0.004	0.011
Maternity Leave (Pay)	0.002**	-0.007*	-	-	-0.004	-0.037**
Paternity Leave (Weeks)	0.001	-0.003	-0.010*	0.003	0.072**	0.590*
Parental Leave (Weeks)	-	-	-	-	0.001	0.003
Parental Leave (Pay)	0.002**	-0.007*	-0.004	0.002	-	-
Allowance(s)	0.011**	-0.026**	0.008**	0.001	0.018	0.054*
Family Tax Break	0.008**	0.033***	-0.006***	-0.002	0.007	0.015
Pre-primary enrolment	0.000	NA	-0.006***	0.001	-0.001	-0.004

Results represent the effect of individual policies while controlling for micro-level and female unemployment; Significance: *p<0.05, **p<0.01, ***p<0.001; Policies that show no variation over the period of analysis (within the given sample) are indicated by a -; NA indicates lack of convergence due to incompatibility of pre-preprimary enrolment with labor force participation of women.

Policies as packages

- Policies are often delivered as packages & may reinforce each other in affecting fertility behaviour
- Principal component analysis to assess the effect of policies as packages on first & second births



Conclusion

- Overall, family policies appear to be ineffective in increasing fertility
- UK family policy affects transition to both parities in same manner, Germany and Finland somewhat flip
- In Germany, policy effect consistent across socioeconomic groups. In Finland and UK, policy effect differs across socioeconomic groups.
- Results don't allow a conclusive interpretation.

Main references

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