



# Welfare State, Family Policies and Fertility

Lisbon Conference on European and Portuguese Fertility Decline  
„Being Born in Portugal“

Cascais, February 2012

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Stockholm University

# Fertility and Policies in Europe



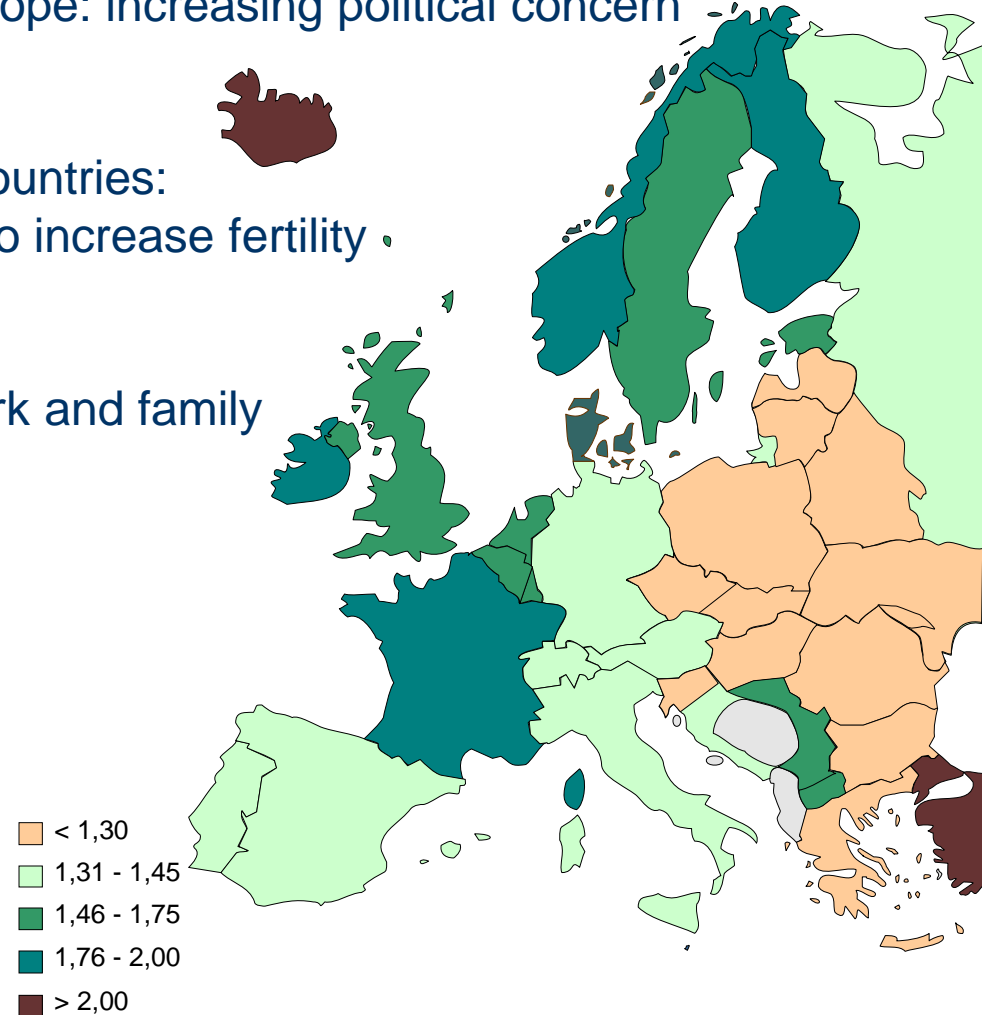
low fertility (TFR) in Europe: increasing political concern



majority of European countries:  
political measures to increase fertility



European Union:  
reconciliation of work and family  
gender equality



# Shift in Perception of Fertility Issues

- ➔ from childbearing as an individual matter to childbearing shaped by institutional factors
- ➔ from population policies/no policies to welfare state and family policies

# Shift in Welfare-State Perception of Fertility

➔ **shift from “old social risks” to “new social risks”**  
**shift from male-centered to family, individual,  
gender**

old social risks

sickness

old age

unemployment

loss of male breadwinner

„new“ social risks

having children/being female

access to/maintenance of

employment

Inefficient education

➔ **shift of welfare state – towards new groups**  
**expansion of welfare state – women and children**

# Shift in Family Policies



## shift towards employment-care-gender

1960s

family/marriage support

family law

taxation

cash benefits

housing support

child cash benefit

1990s

work-life balance/gender

maternity leave

parental leave

care leave

childcare services

child cash benefit

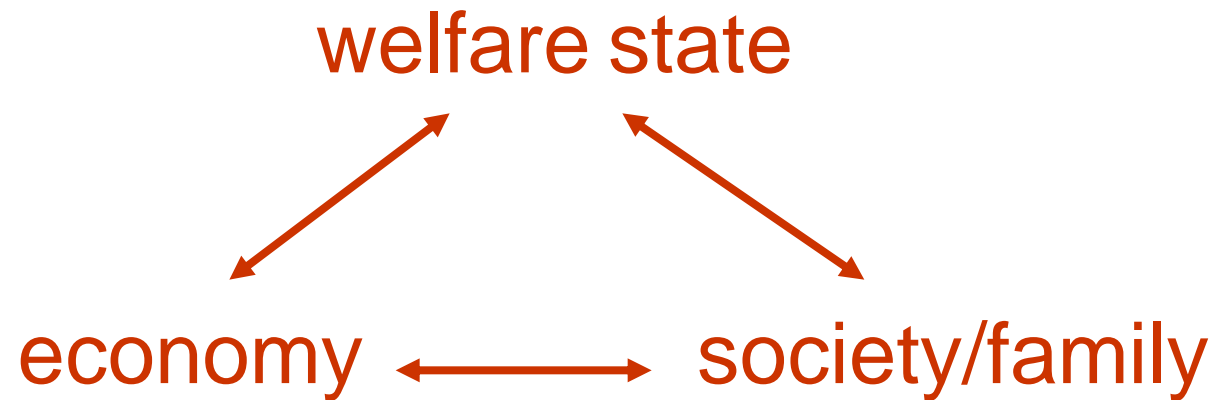


**change of family policies – form and focus  
expansion of family policies**

# Questions for Research and Policy Making

- ➡ Are differences in fertility levels and childbearing behavior in Europe attributable to differences in welfare-state configurations?
- ➡ Do family policies affect childbearing behavior and fertility outcomes?

# Welfare State and Fertility



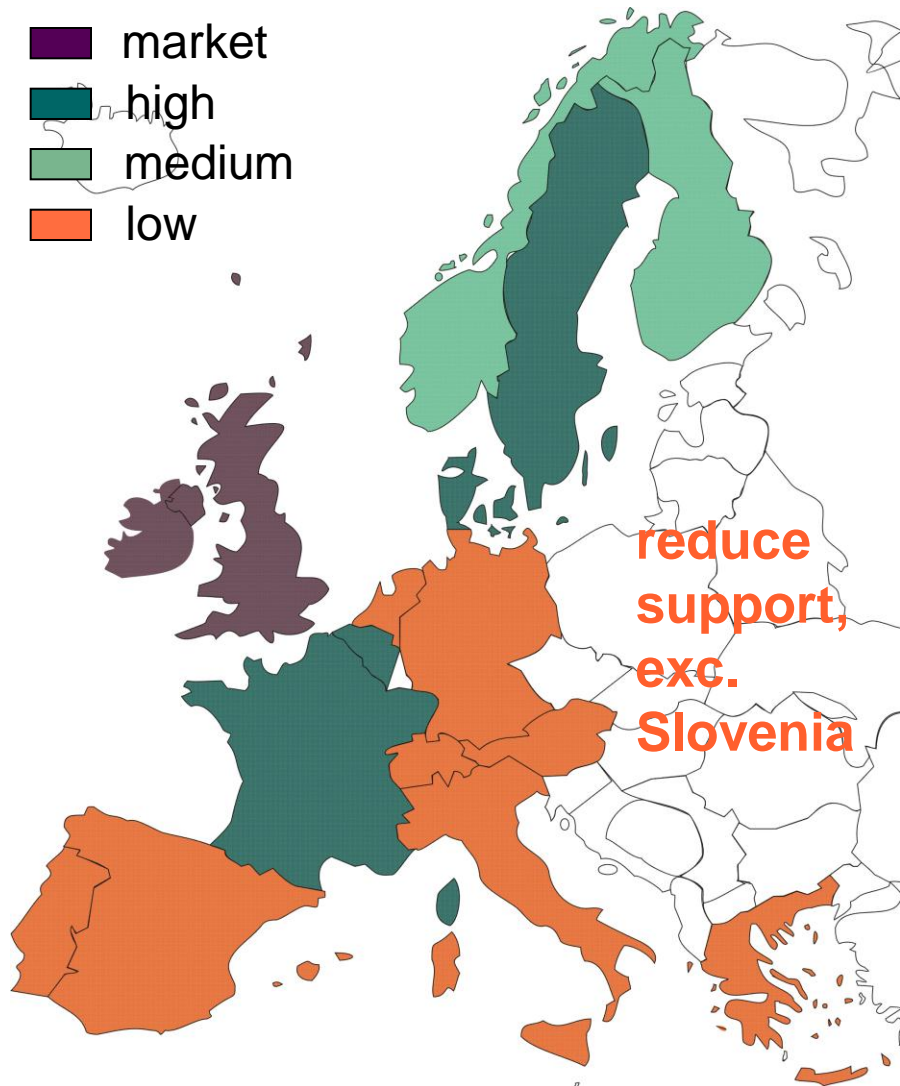
Welfare state uses social policies to structure labor markets, society, and the family;

Family Policies: structure private relationships, partnership and parenthood

# Welfare states – Employment - Care - Gender

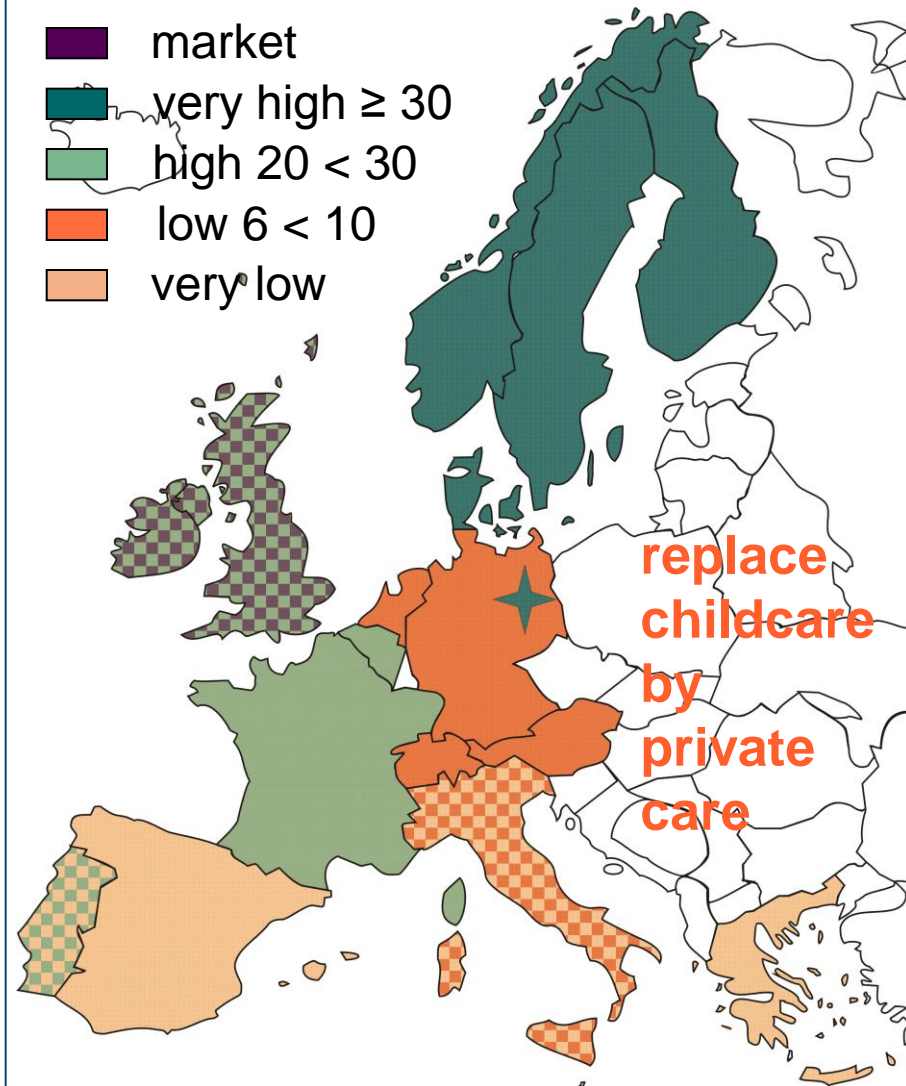
## Family Policies Supporting Mothers' Employment

- market
- high
- medium
- low



## Childcare Policies

- market
- very high  $\geq 30$
- high  $20 < 30$
- low  $6 < 10$
- very low





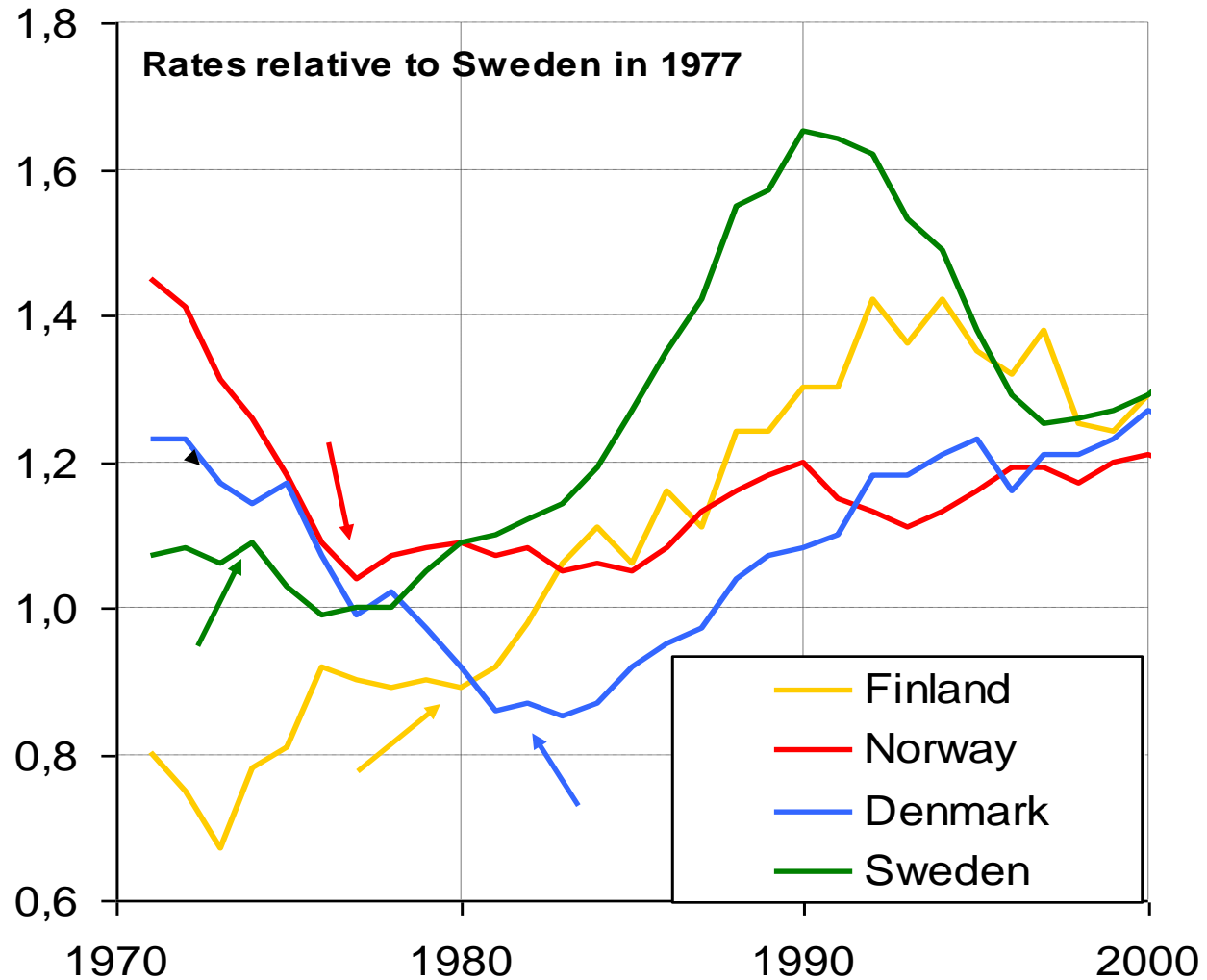
# Welfare State, Family Policies, and Fertility

- ➔ 1. Effect of parental-leave policies on childbearing  
income-related parental-leave benefit
- ➔ 2. Interaction between policies and labor-market  
development
- ➔ 3. Impact of childcare on childbearing  
interaction between cultural norms and policies
- ➔ 4. Interaction of welfare-state/family-policy setups  
education-labor market-family policies

# Welfare State, Family Policies, and Fertility

- ➔ 1. Effect of parental-leave policies on childbearing  
income-related parental-leave policy
- ➔ 2. Interaction between policies and labor-market development  
different parental-leave policies in similar setting
- ➔ 3. Impact of childcare on childbearing  
interaction between cultural norms and policies
- ➔ 4. Interaction of welfare-state/family-policy setups  
different policies & policy orientations

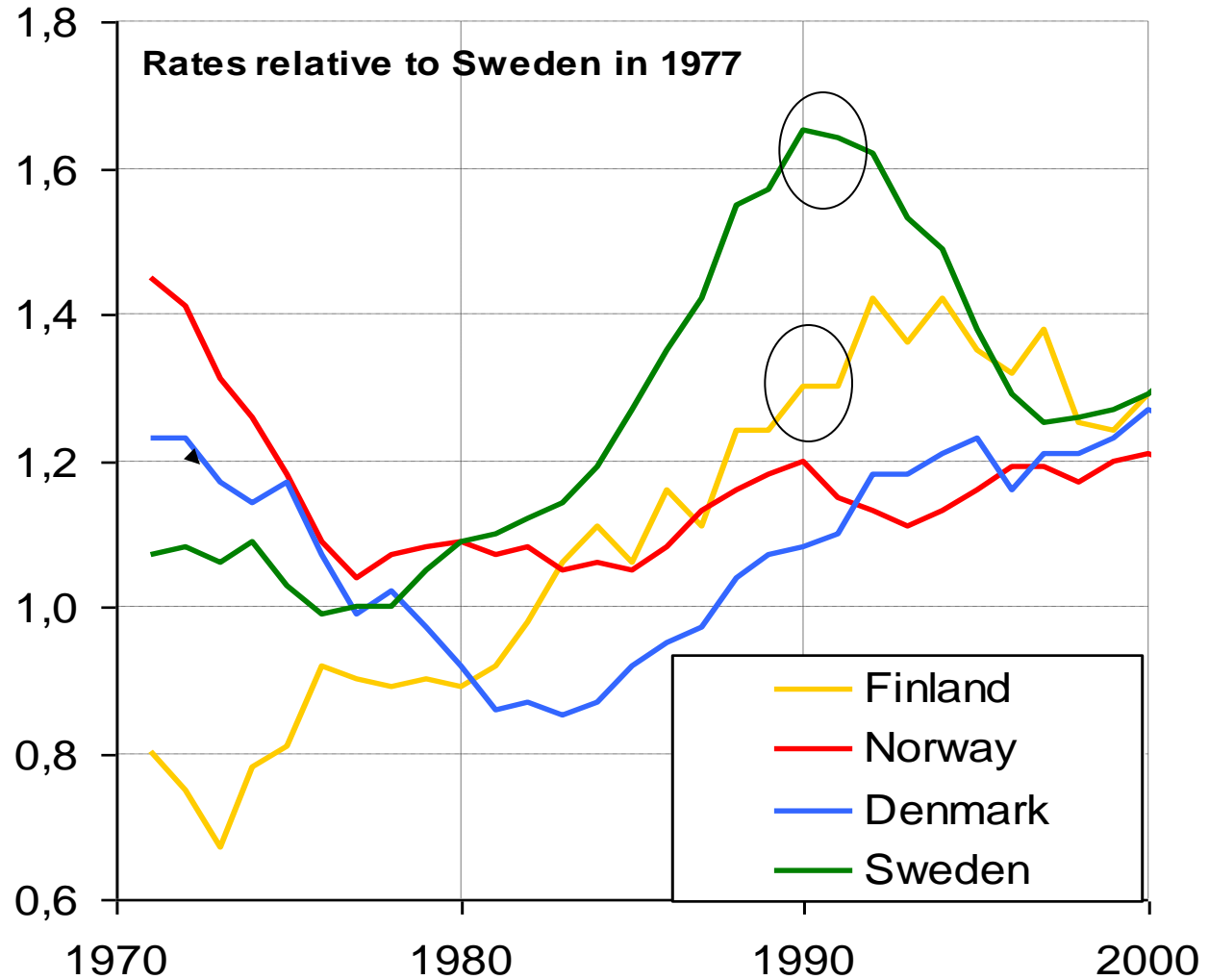
# Effects of Income-related Parental-leave Benefits on Second-birth Rates



# Welfare State, Family Policies, and Fertility

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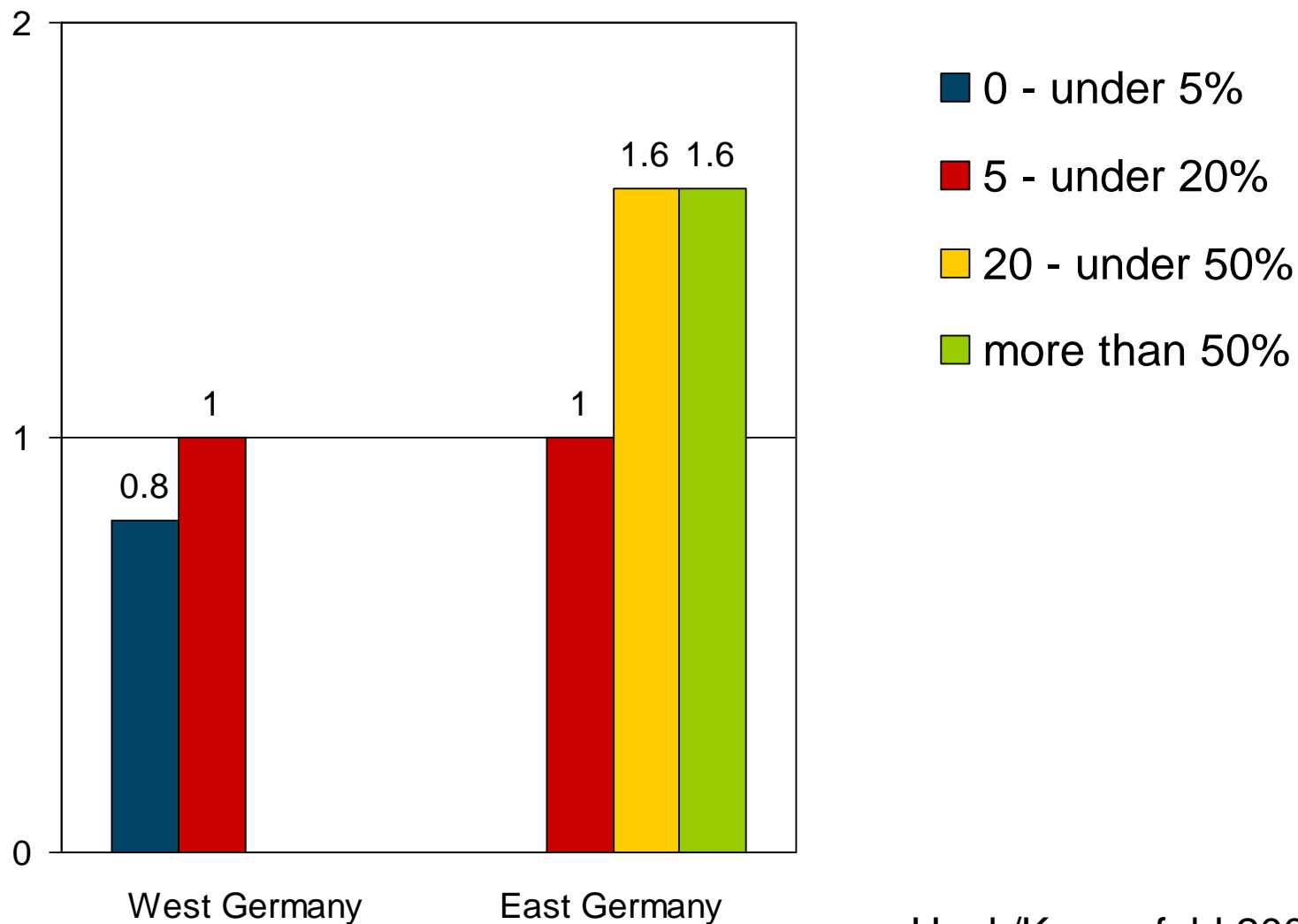
# Impacts of Family Policies & Economic Development on Second-birth Risks



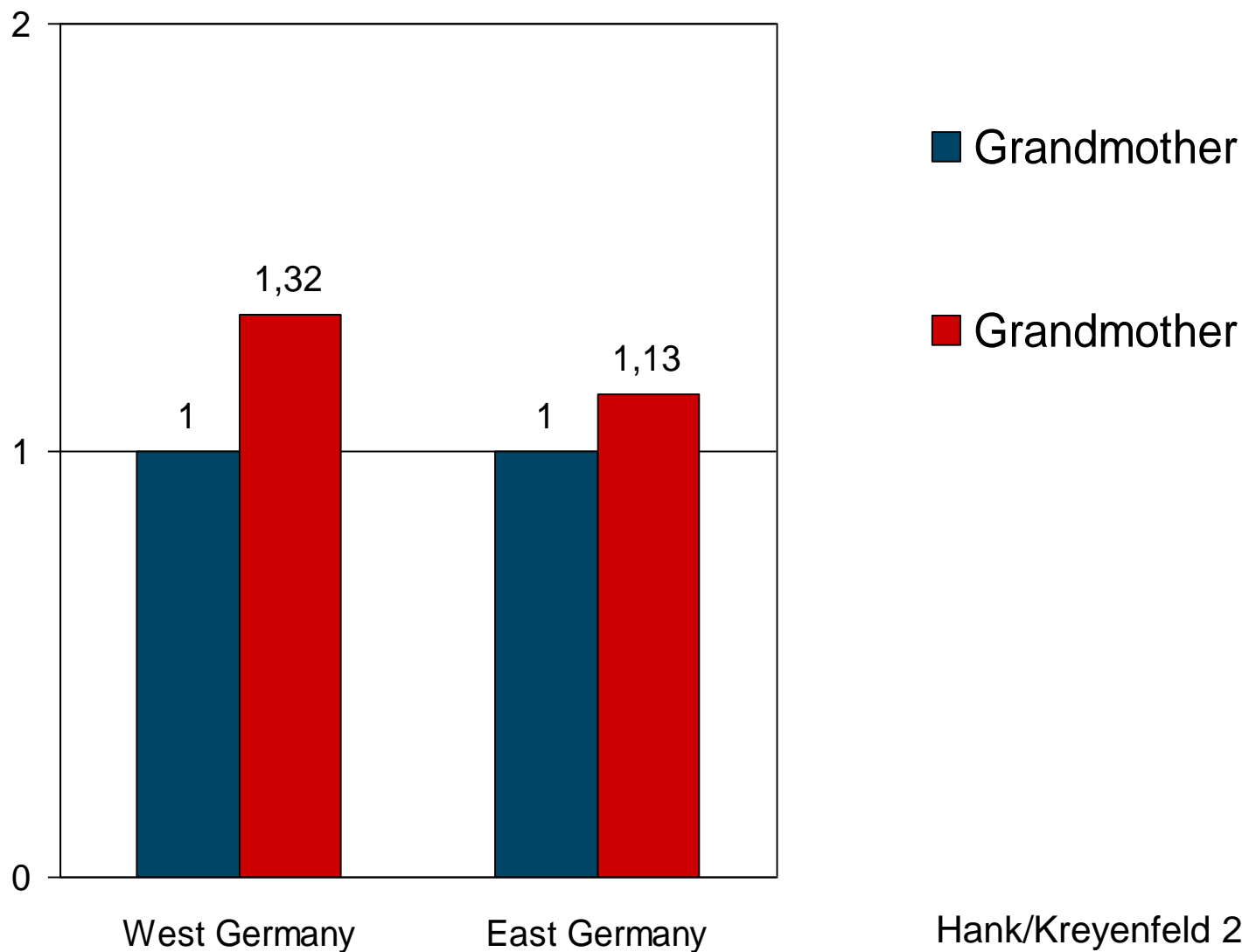
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## First-birth rates by provision of childcare (0-3 years)



# First-birth Rates and availability of childcare (0-3 Jahre) in Germany

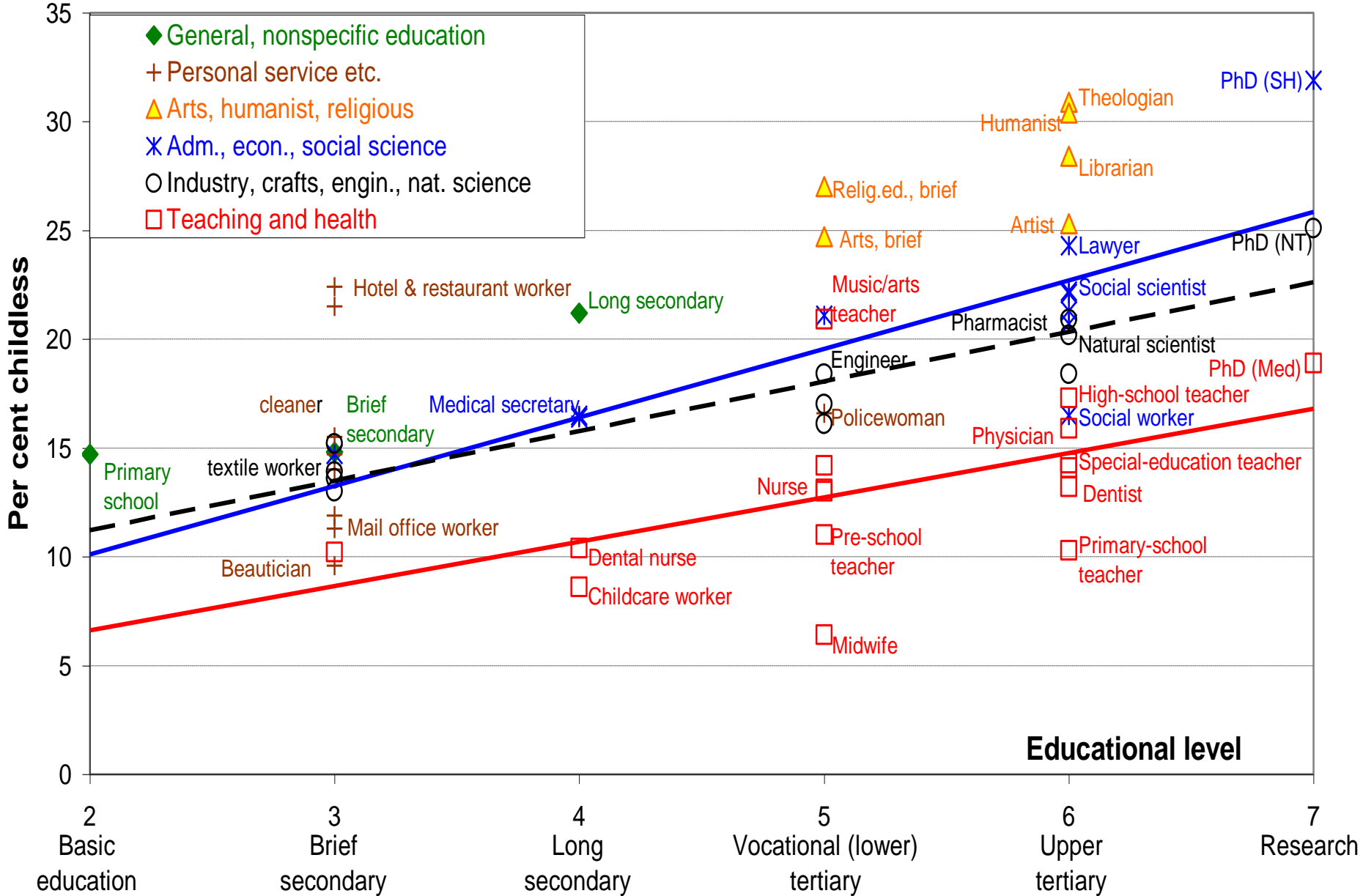




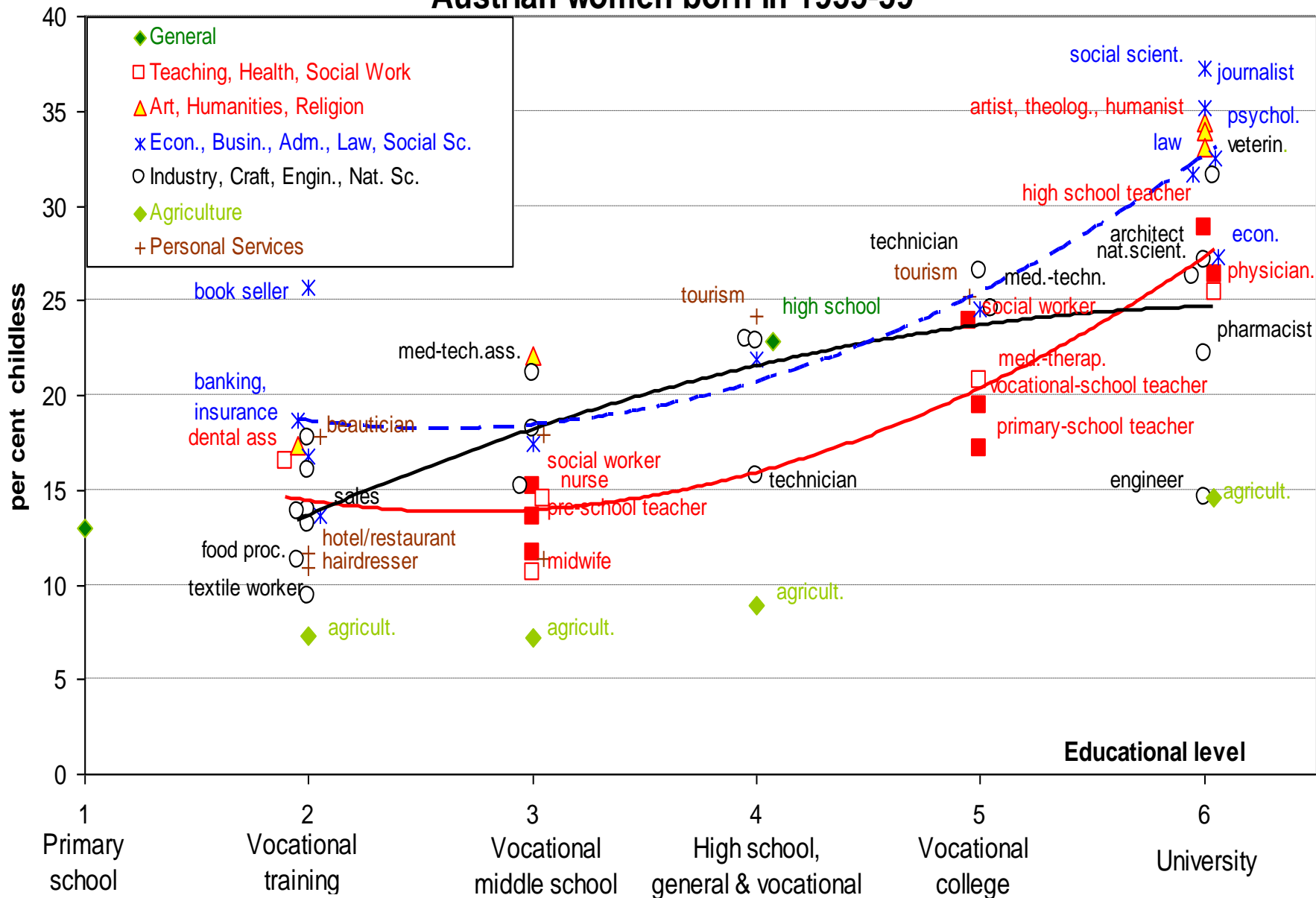
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# Per cent permanently childless, by educational group; Swedish women born in 1955-59

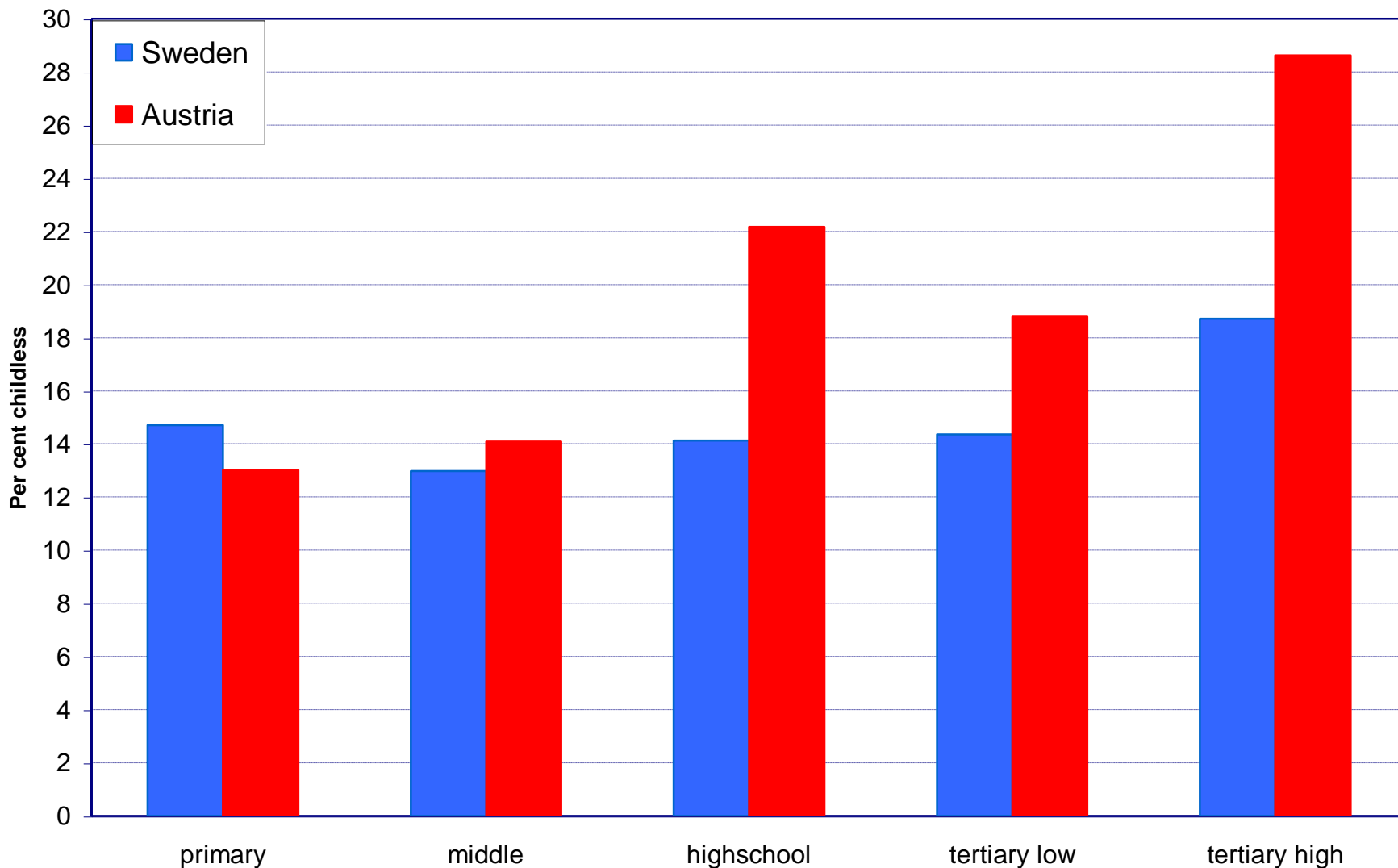


# Percent permanently childless, by educational group; Austrian women born in 1955-59



# Childlessness by Educational Level

## Swedish and Austrian Women, cohort 1955-59



# Explanations – Institutional Differences

## Sweden

### educational system

flexible  
equality oriented  
gendered

### labor market

horizontally gendered  
vertical „gender equality“

### welfare state

equality oriented

### family policies

compatibility  
gender equality

## Austria

### educational system

inflexible  
class oriented  
gendered

### labor market

horizontally gendered  
vertical male dominance

### welfare state

class oriented/conservative

### family policies

incompatibility/choice  
mother-oriented/choice

# Conclusion

- ➔ institutional factors shape fertility behavior
- ➔ Interaction of welfare state, labor market, family policies and fertility
- ➔ Expansion of policies beyond „core“ family policies with focus on employment-gender-family
- ➔ Welfare state change towards gender equality, employment maintenance, work-life reconciliation for all



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13-16 June Stockholm, Sweden



Stockholm 2012 Conference Theme  
Gender, Policies and Population

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## Example 3 – Equality in caring

2-child risks by father's uptake of parental leave at the first birth

