

Social Context and Human Fertility: The Nordic Countries



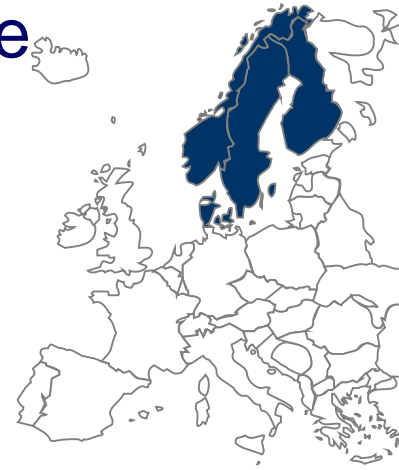
Gunnar Andersson, Stockholm University

Fertility, social change, policy change

Nordic countries with “highest-low” fertility

Universalistic welfare state:

- With a set of policies that support the reconciliation of parenthood and labor-force participation of women and men
- Individual taxation, parental leave, childcare
- Focus on social and gender equality



Nordic projects

- Childbearing dynamics in the context of the Nordic welfare-state regime
- Impact of specific policies on childbearing?

Data: childbearing histories derived from population registers of Sweden, Norway, Denmark, and Finland



Outline of presentation

- 1) Fertility developments in Sweden and the Nordic countries
- 2) Inequalities in fertility?
- 3) Effects of social policy?

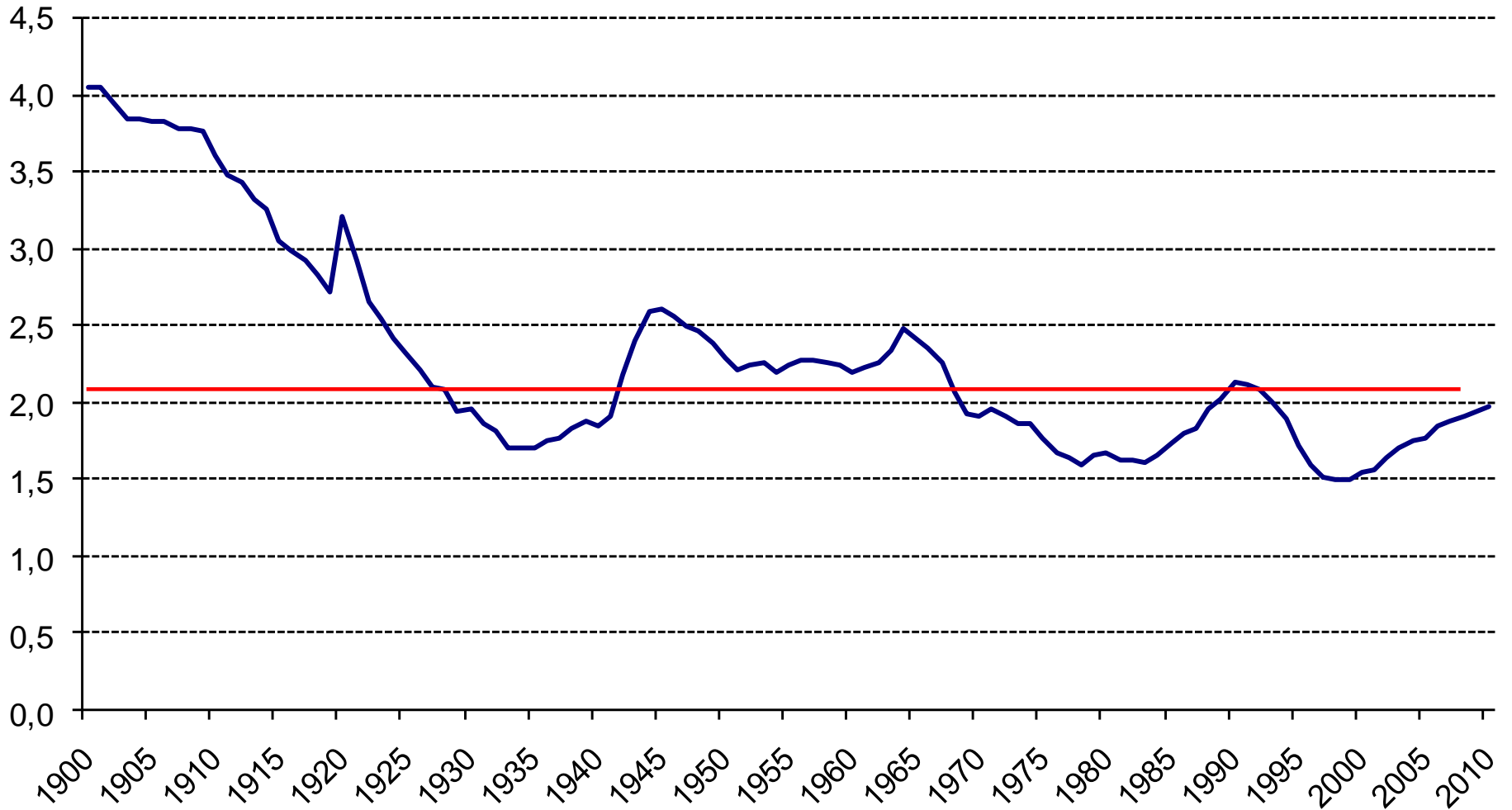


Outline of presentation

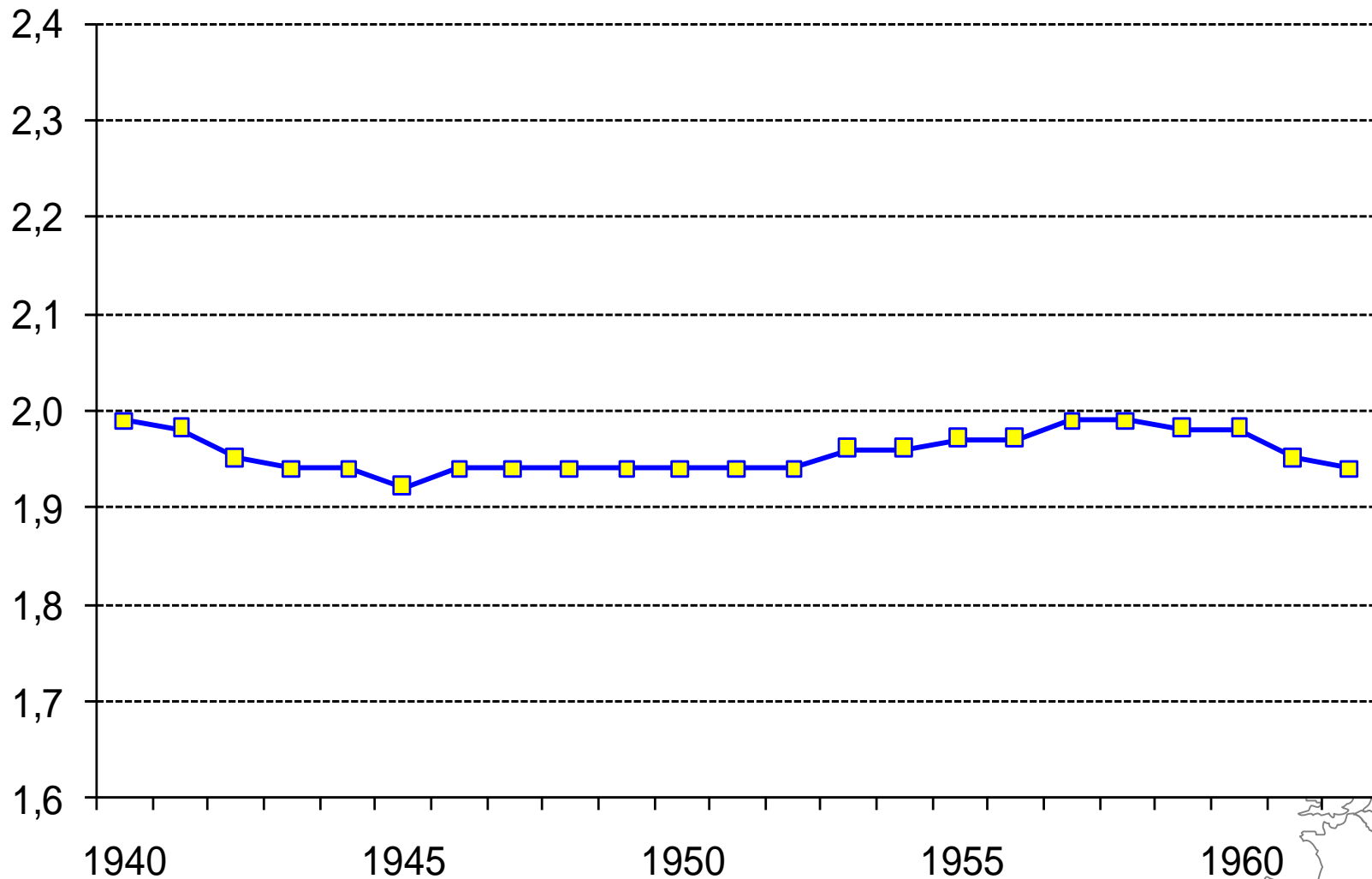
- 1) Fertility Developments in Sweden and the Nordic Countries: The “Highest-low” Example**
- 2) Inequalities in fertility?
- 3) Effects of social policy?



Period Total Fertility in Sweden

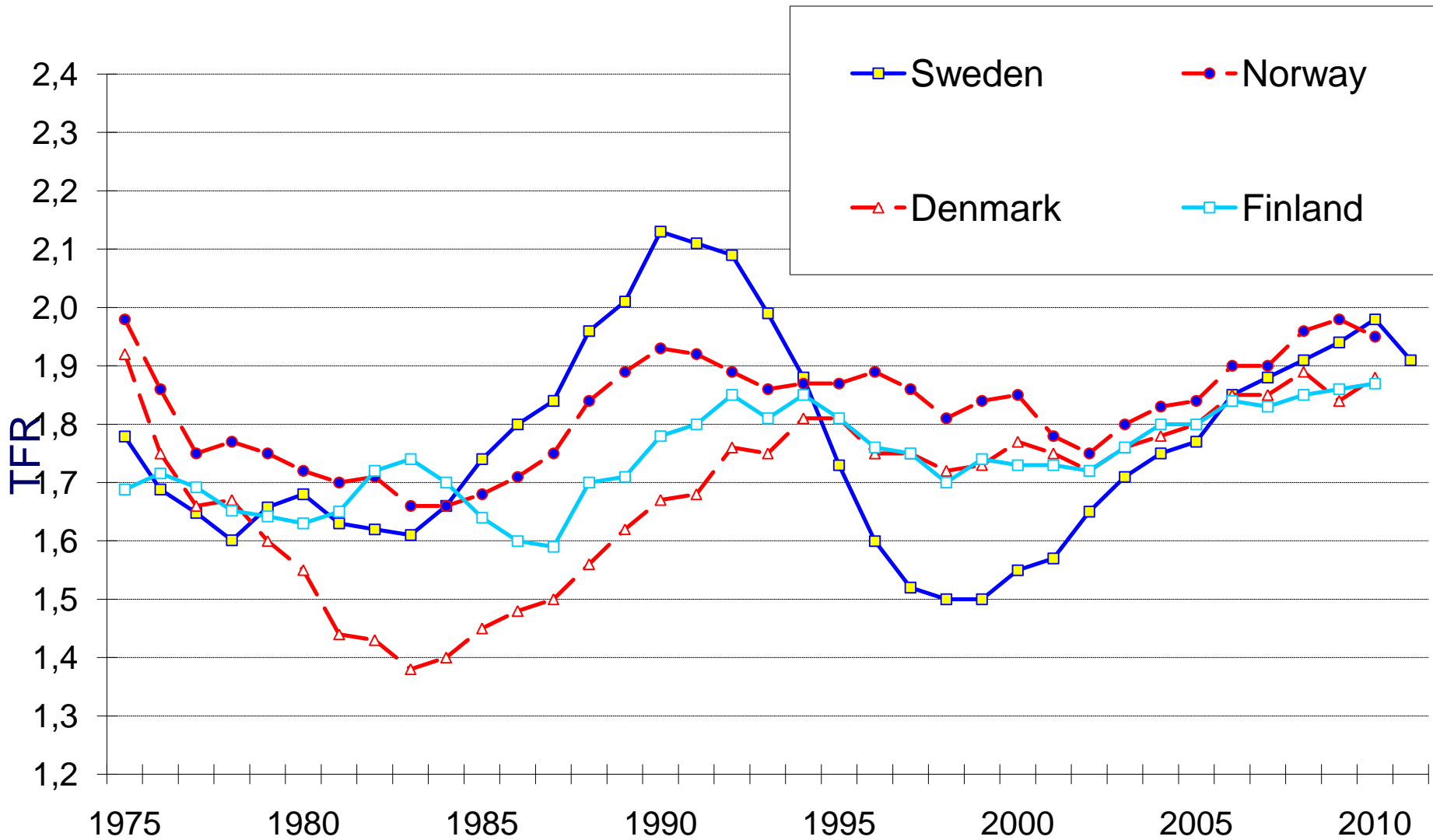


Cohort Total Fertility in Sweden



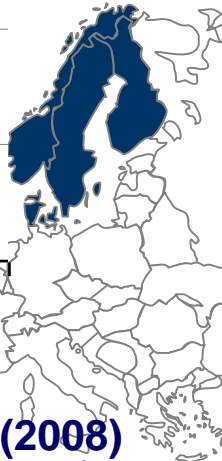
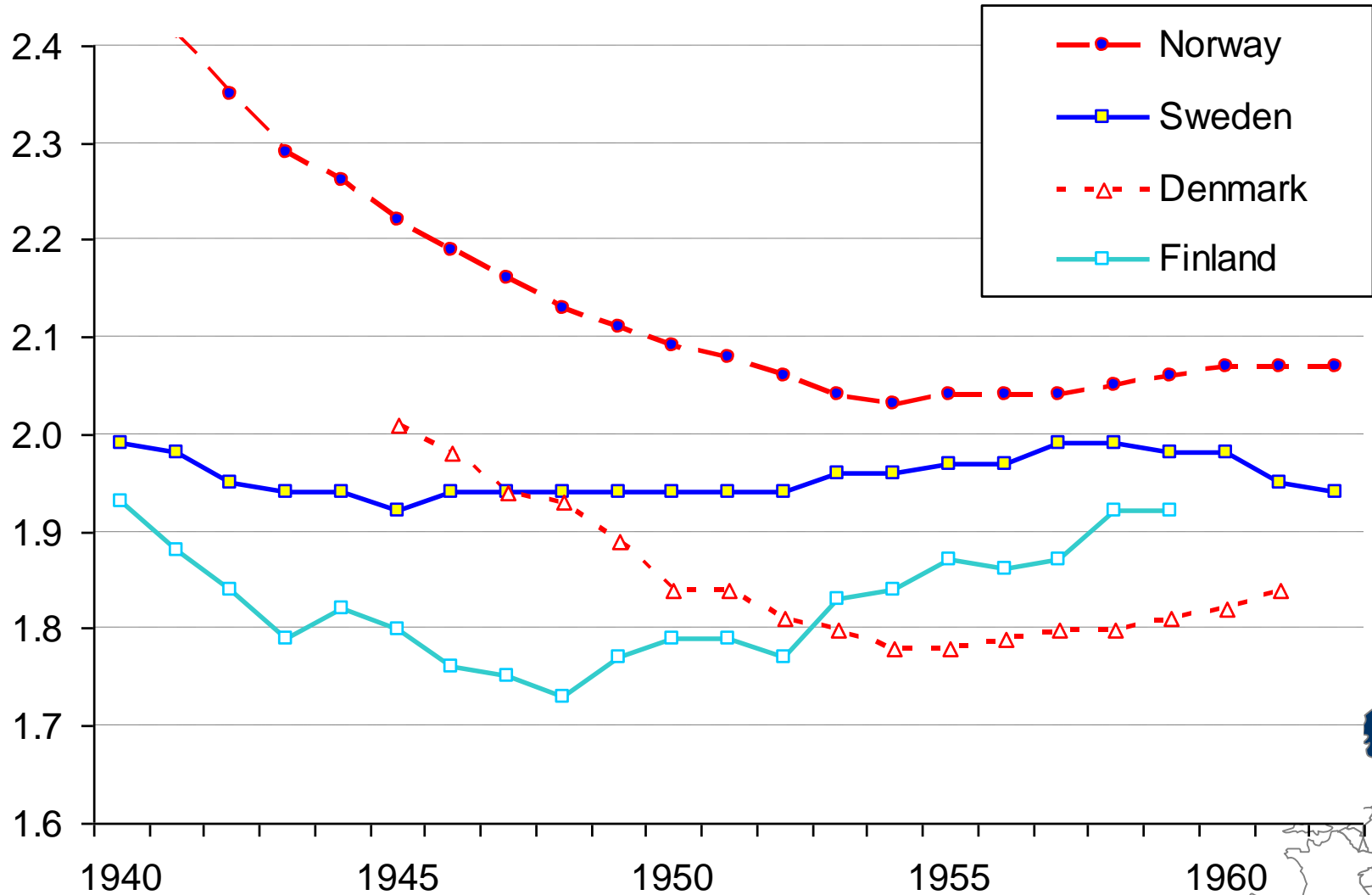
Source: Andersson, Rønsen, Knudsen, Lappegård, Neyer, Skrede, Teschner, Vikat (2008)

Period Total Fertility: The Nordic Countries



Source: Statistics Denmark, Finland, Norway, Sweden

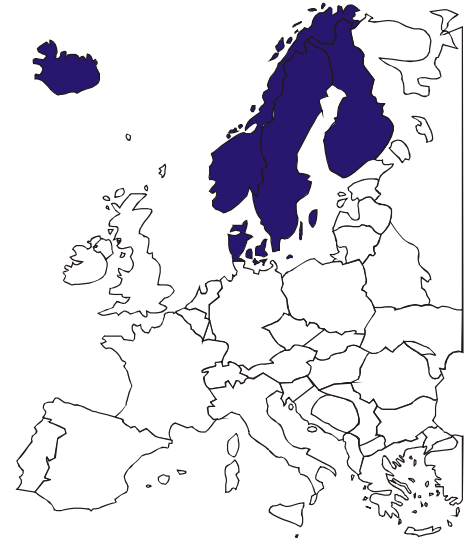
Cohort Total Fertility: The Nordic Countries



Fertility timing

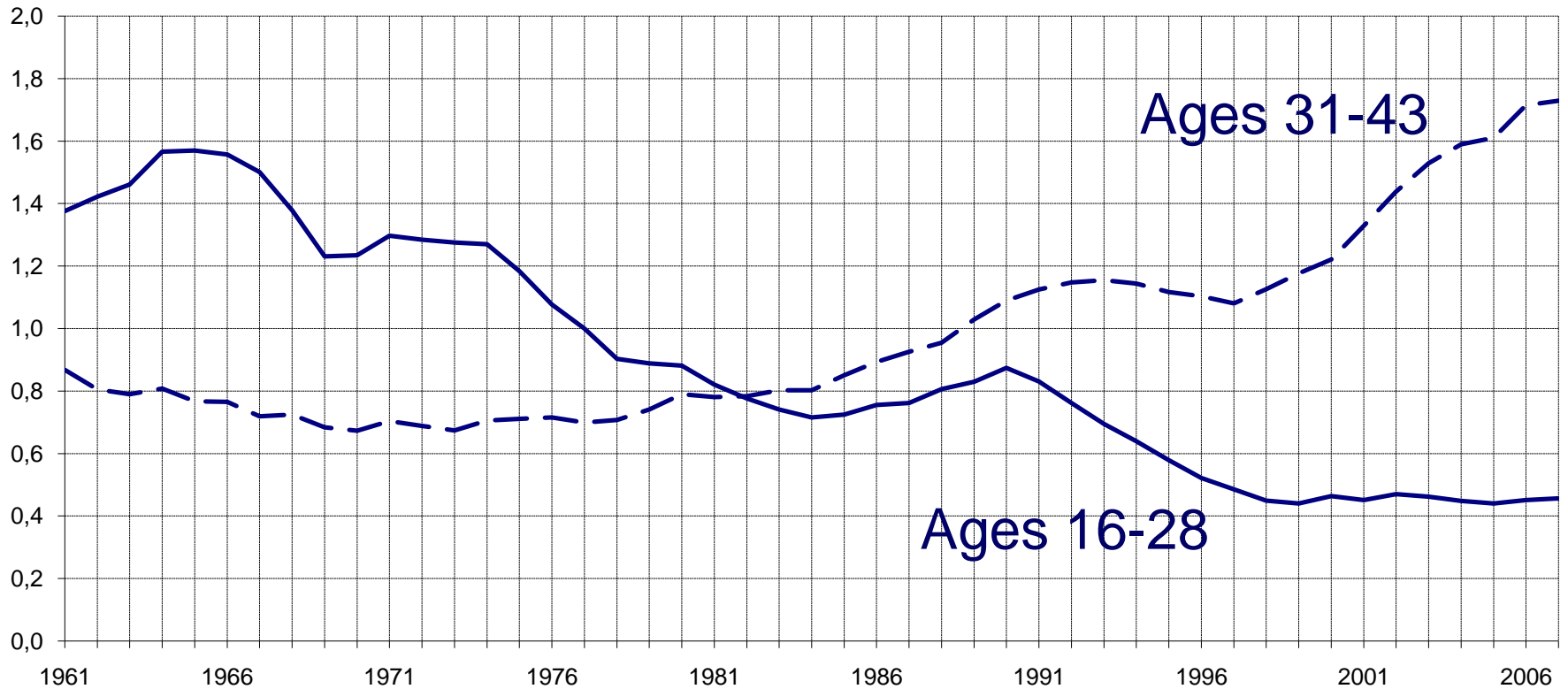
Fertility postponement

Fertility recuperation

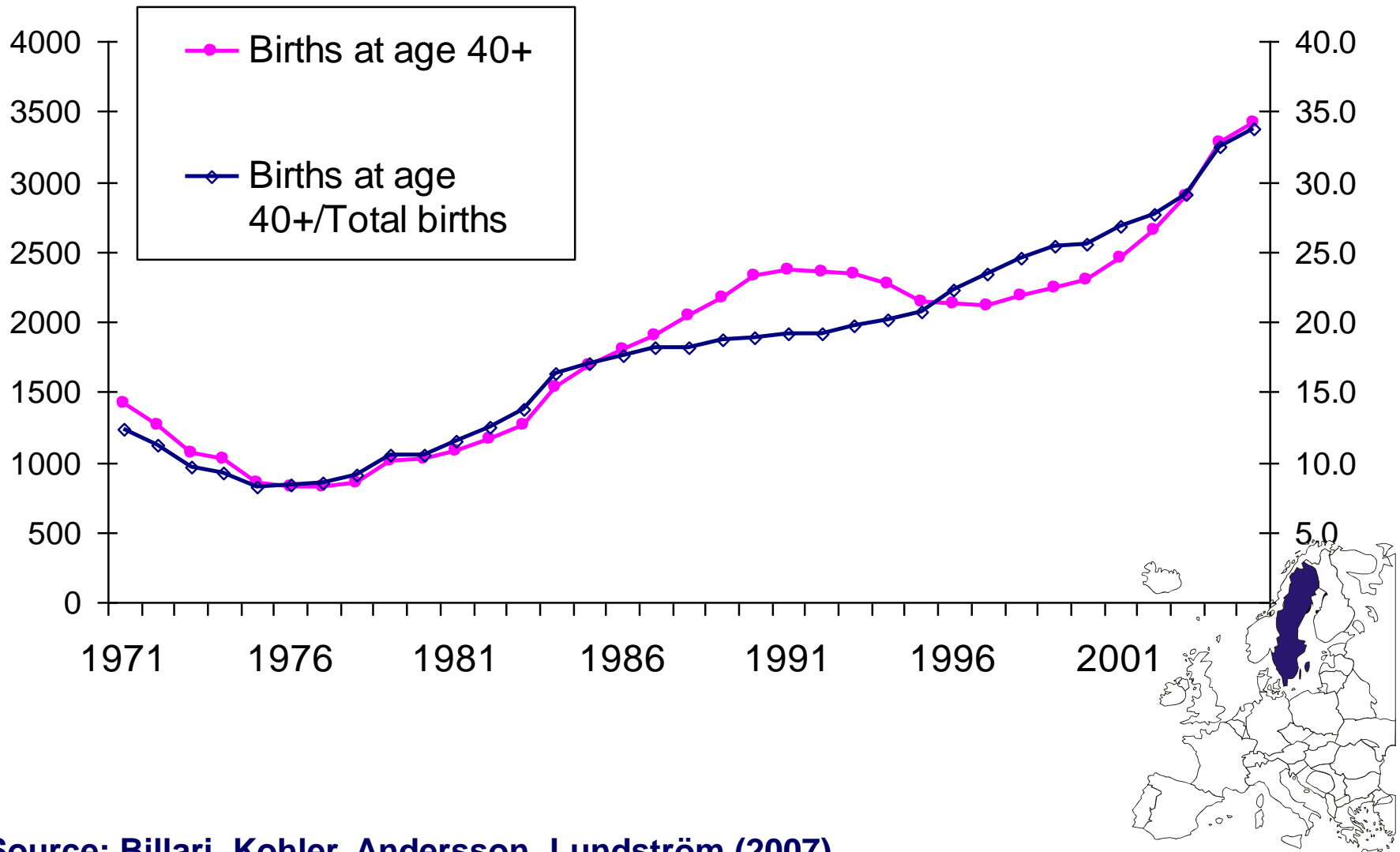


Standardized first-birth rates 1961-2007

(childless women aged 16-28 and 31-43)

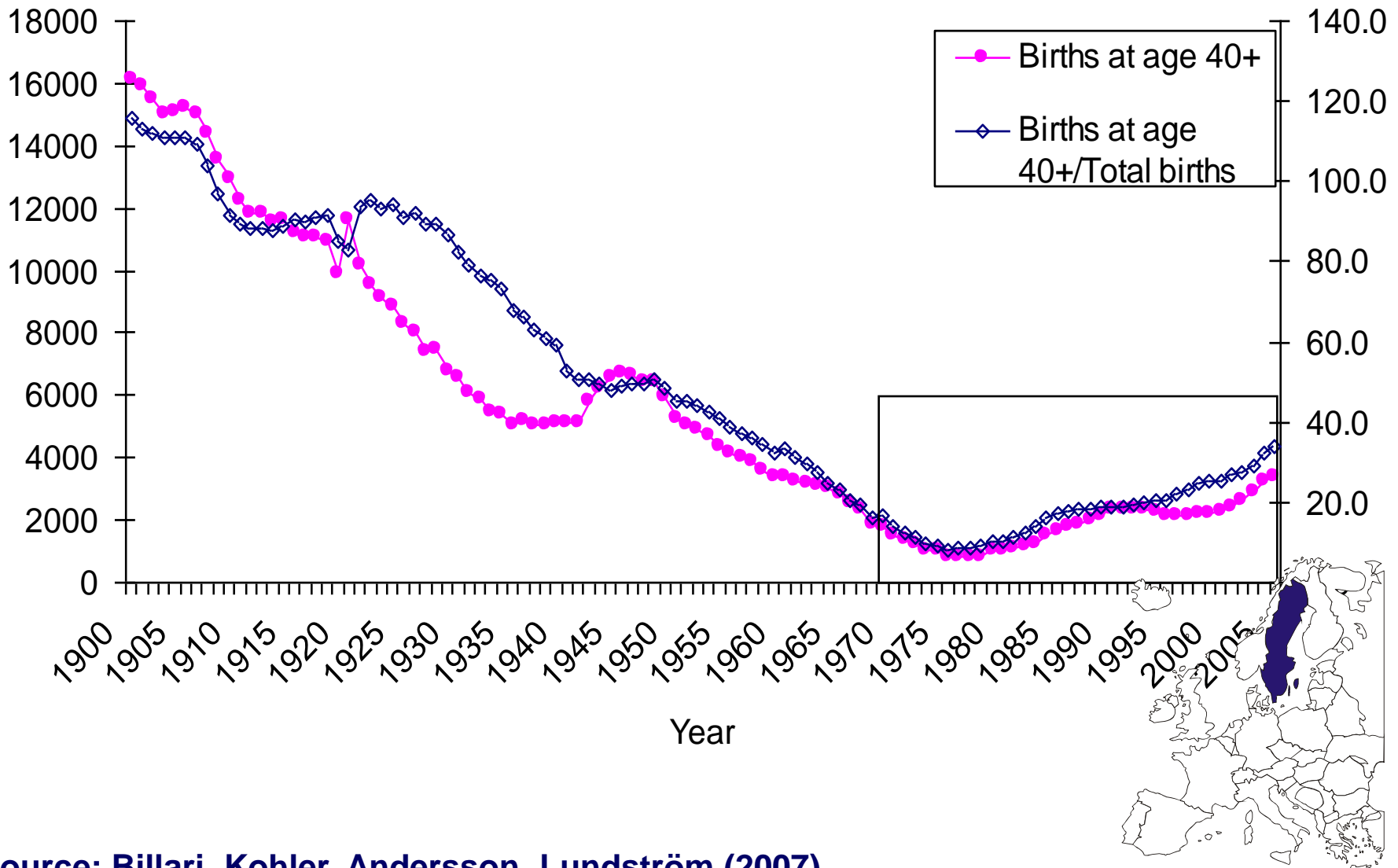


New trends: Latest-late fertility



Source: Billari, Kohler, Andersson, Lundström (2007)

New trends or old trends?



Source: Billari, Kohler, Andersson, Lundström (2007)

Outline of presentation

- 1) Fertility developments in Sweden and the Nordic countries
- 2) Social and Gender Equality: Inequalities in Fertility?**
- 3) Effects of social policy?



Gender equality and high fertility

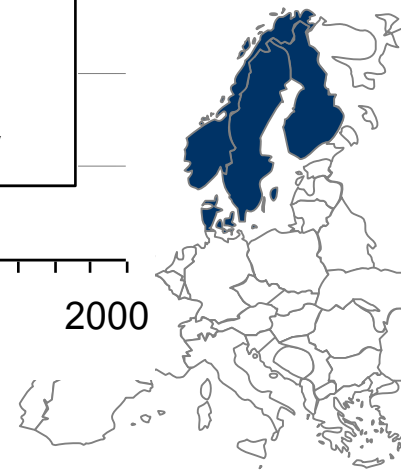
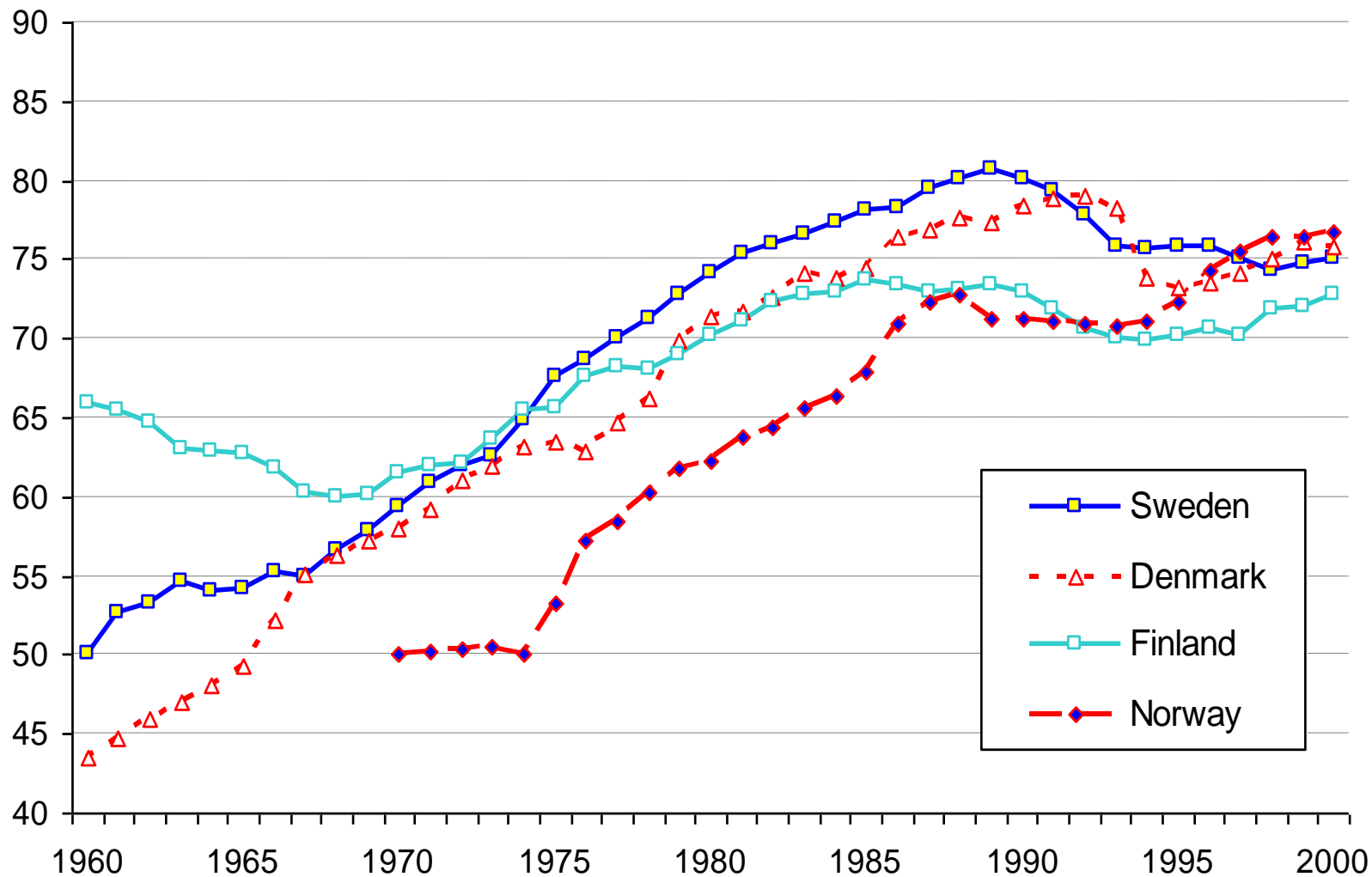
Reconciliation of family and work:

Women established in the labor market

Men increasingly active in the family sphere

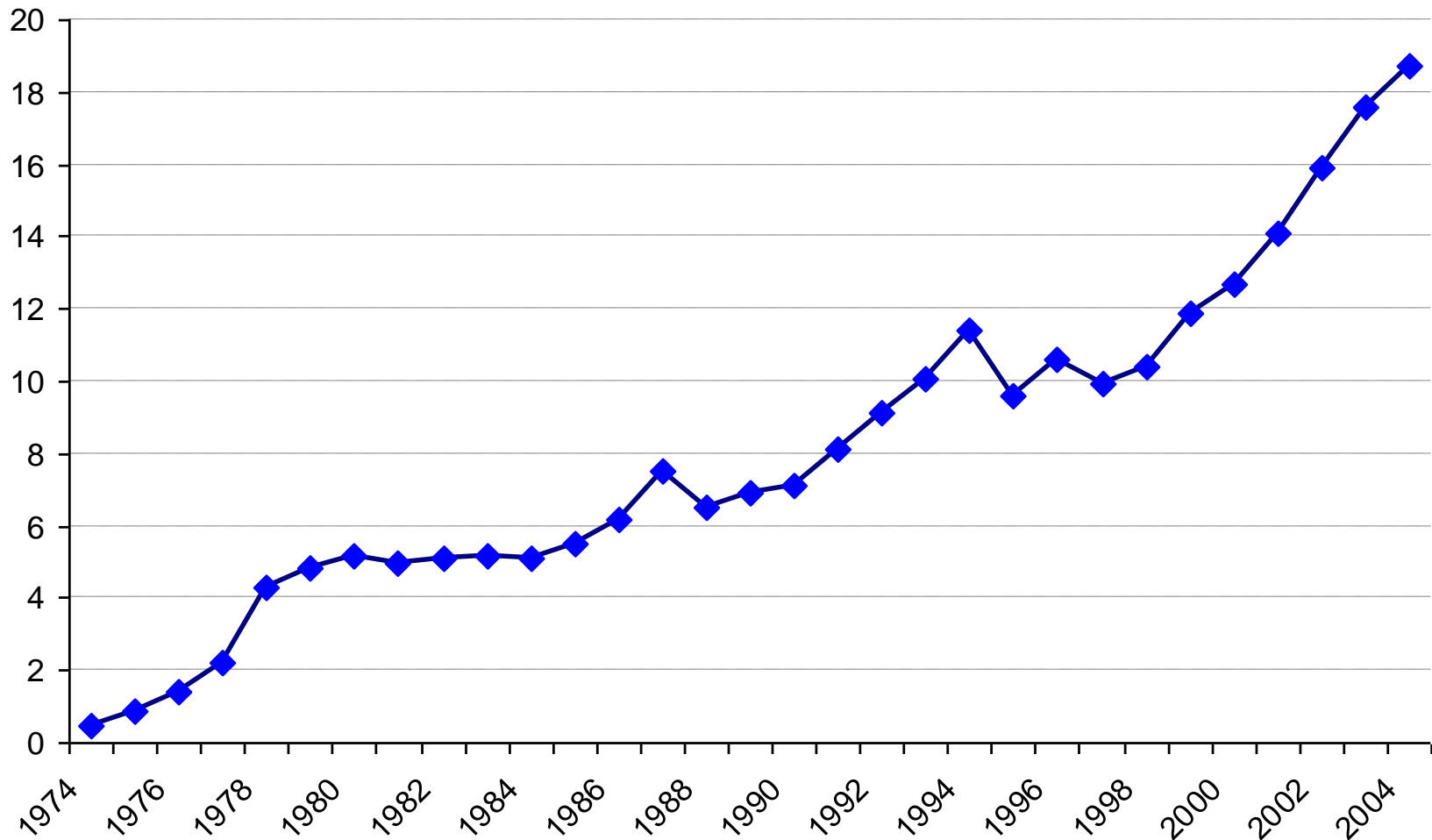


Female labor-force participation 1960-1999

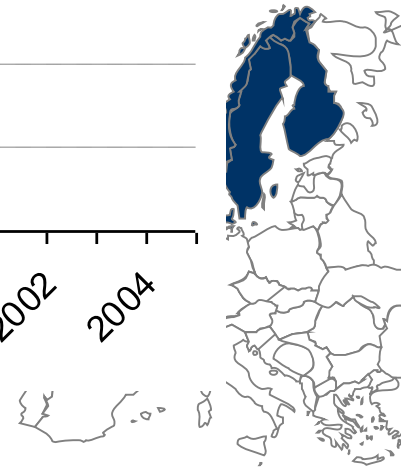


Fathers' uptake of parental leave: Sweden

Percent of benefit days used by fathers



Source: Duvander and Andersson (2006)



Compatibility of work and family:

Similar associations of women and men's labor-market attachment with childbearing propensities (Andersson 2000, Andersson and Scott 2007)



Social equalities in Nordic childbearing

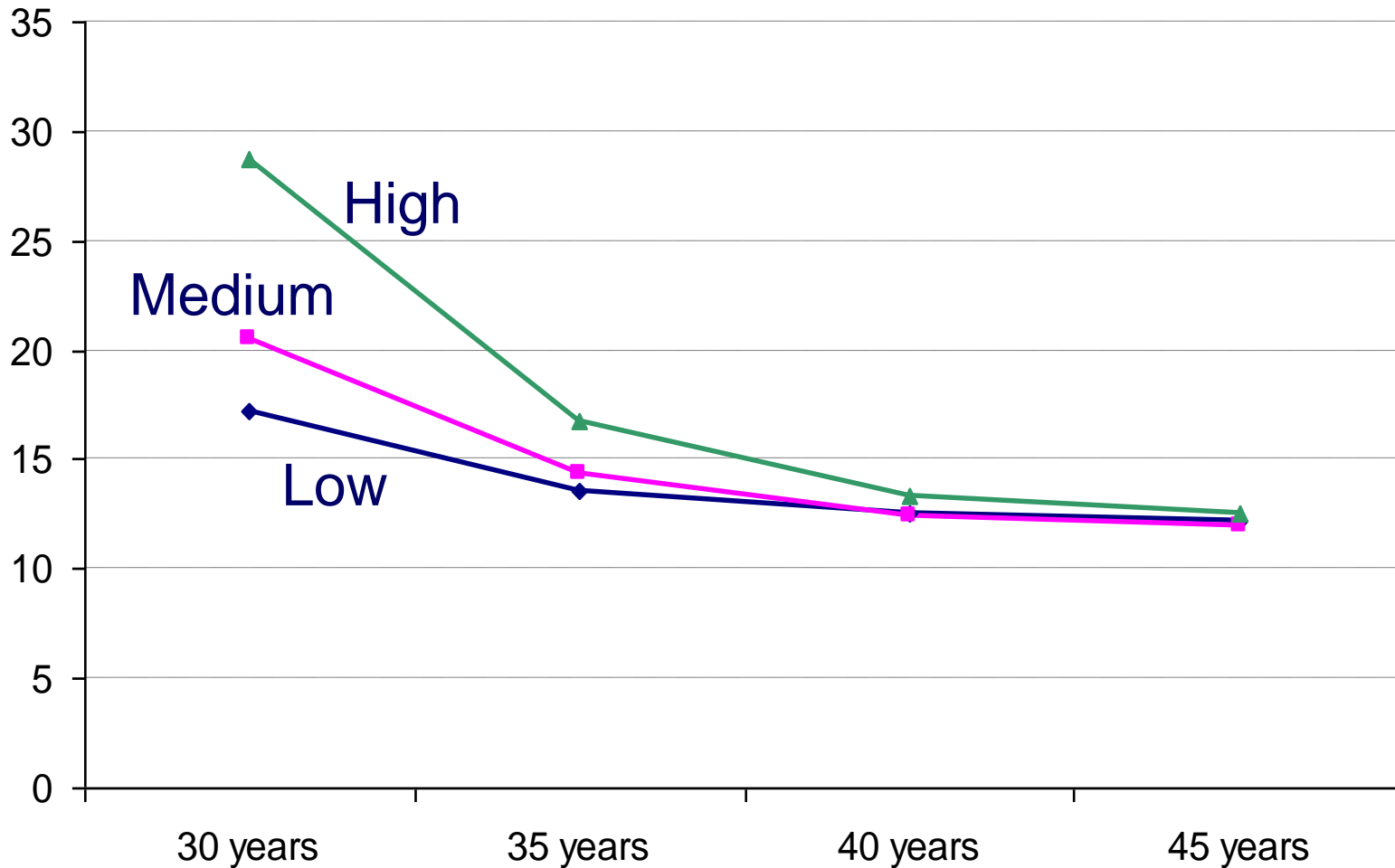
Fertility recuperation reflects:

Social equalities in Nordic childbearing



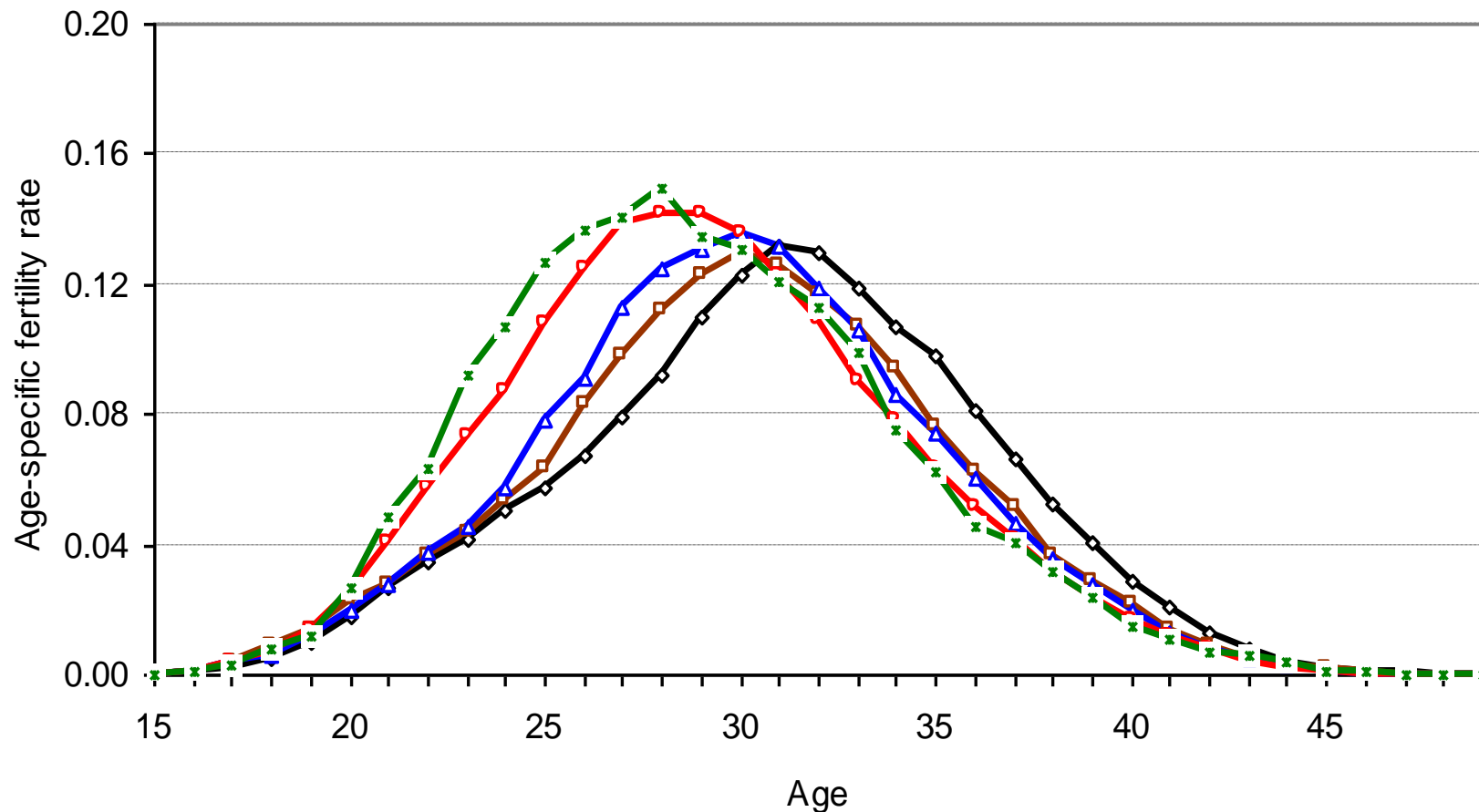
Social equalities in fertility

Percent childless by education and age, Denmark



Metropolitan fertility

Age-specific fertility, by settlement size, Sweden 2001–03



—◇— Large city regions

—□— City regions

—△— Towns

—○— Medium-sized towns

—×— Small towns and rural areas

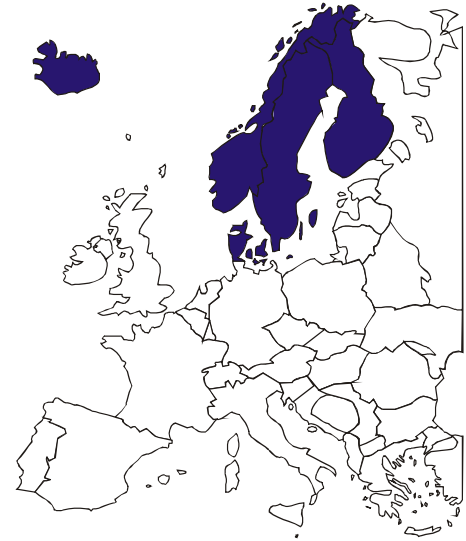
Source: Kulu, Vikat, Andersson (2007)

Inequalities and equalities

Third equality:

Striking similarities in the childbearing behavior of Swedish- and foreign-born people in Sweden

(Andersson 2004; Andersson and Scott 2005, 2007)



Outline of presentation

- 1) Fertility developments in Sweden and the Nordic countries
- 2) Inequalities in fertility?
- 3) Effects of social policy on fertility?**

**Stockholm University Linnaeus Center on
Social Policy and Family Dynamics in Europe
(SPaDE)**



Compatibility of work and family:

Positive association of women's labor-market attachment with childbearing propensities (Andersson 2000, Hoem 2000)

- Strong similarities between the Nordic countries
- Strong similarities between foreign- and native-born in these countries (Andersson and Scott 2005, 2007)



Impact of specific policies on childbearing?

- Difficult to sort out direct impact of macro-level policies on individual childbearing behavior

Prerequisite:

- Life course data on fertility

linked to

- Policy data with variation across individuals

Impact of specific policies on childbearing?

- Use policy variation across **time, space and usage** (Neyer and Andersson 2008)

Time: Critical juncture, policy intervention

- ex: Speed premium in Sweden in the 1980s (Hoem 1993, Andersson, Hoem and Duvander 2006)

Impact of specific policies on childbearing?

- Use policy variation across **time, space and usage** (Neyer and Andersson 2008)

Space: local and regional policy variation

- ex: differences in local childcare characteristics
(Andersson, Duvander and Hank 2004)

Impact of specific policies on childbearing?

- Use policy variation across **time, space and usage** (Neyer and Andersson 2008)

Usage: individual use of a policy

- ex: fathers uptake of parental leave

(Duvander and Andersson 2006; Duvander, Lappegård, Andersson 2010)

Family Policy and Fertility

- Methodological issues
- Yes, policy effects can indeed be demonstrated
- Sustainable Nordic model: high fertility and high labor-force participation



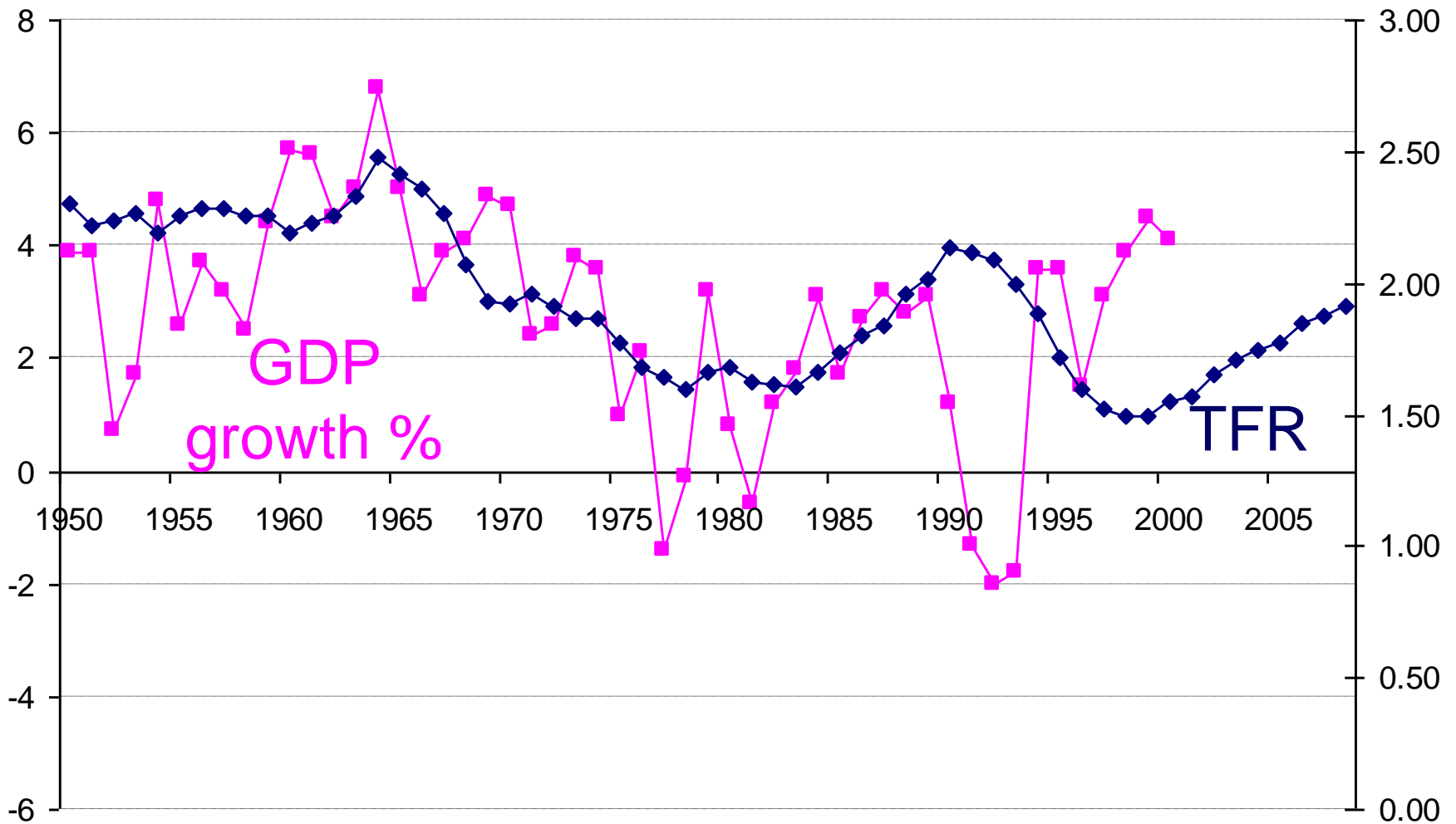


End of talk: Tack så mycket!

Stockholm University
Demography Unit SUDA



Fertility and the Business Cycle: Pro-cyclical Fertility in Sweden, 1950-2000



Source: Rodney Edvinsson @ historia.se / Statistics Sweden