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New family values and increased childbearing in Sweden?

Joint Eurostat/UNECE Work Session on Demographic Projections
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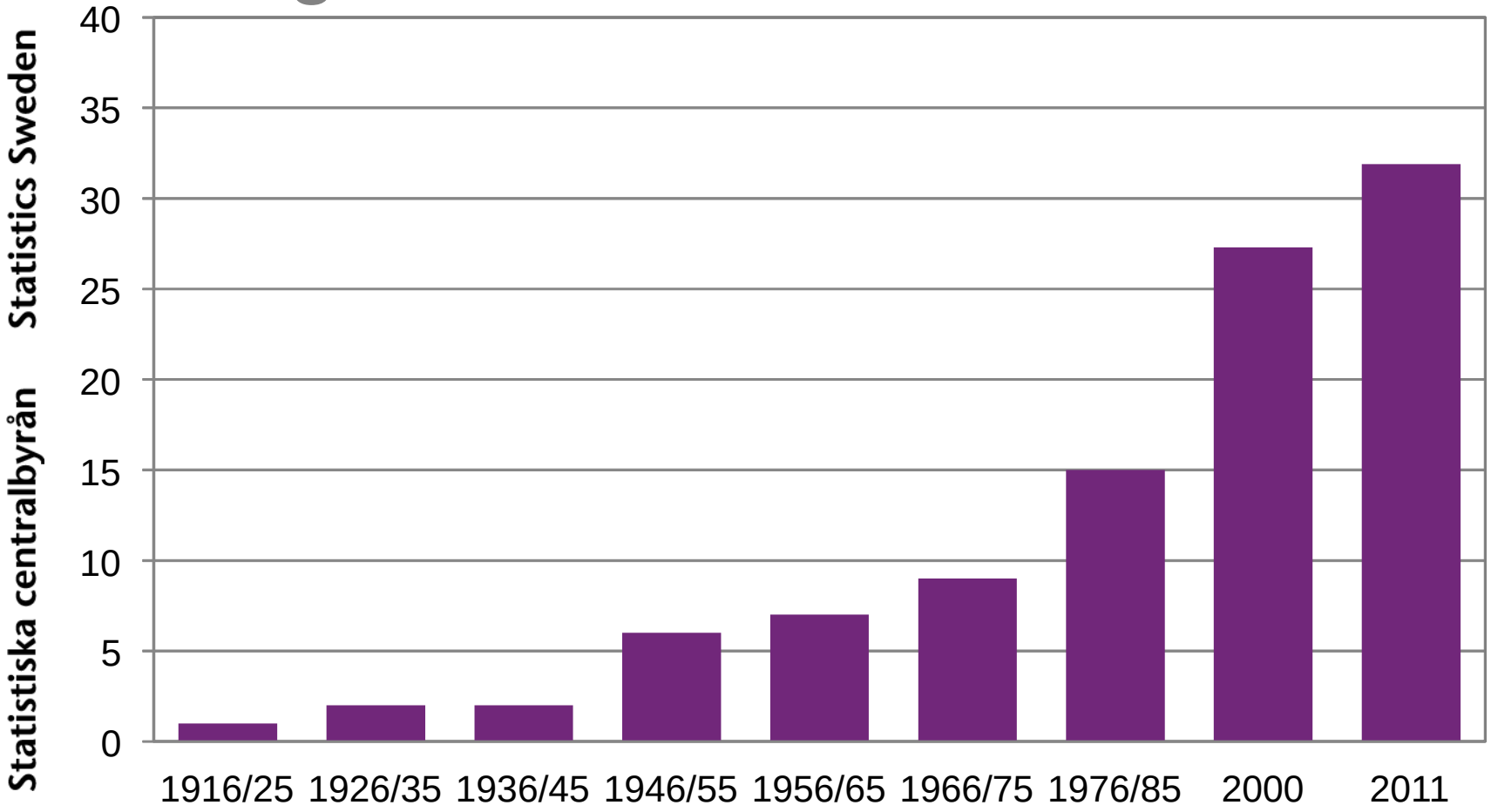
Percentage of children aged 16/17 whose parents have separated during childhood



Source: 1916/25-1976/85 Living Conditions survey, 2000, 2011 Total Population Register

About the studies

- In the first study we analyze differences over time of parental separations

- In the second study we analyze childbearing in new relationships

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Children, parents and separations

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About the study

- Studying parental separations, from the children's perspective
- The purpose of the report is to describe the trends of the percentage of children whose parents have separated, and to try to explain the variations
- Register study with all children 0-17 years in Sweden living with both their parents (biological or adoptive) 1999-2011
- Around 1.4 million children every year and 40 000 to 50 000 of them have parents that separate during the year
- In this study it’s a separation if the parents lived together in the end of one year but not at the end of the year after (not just divorces)

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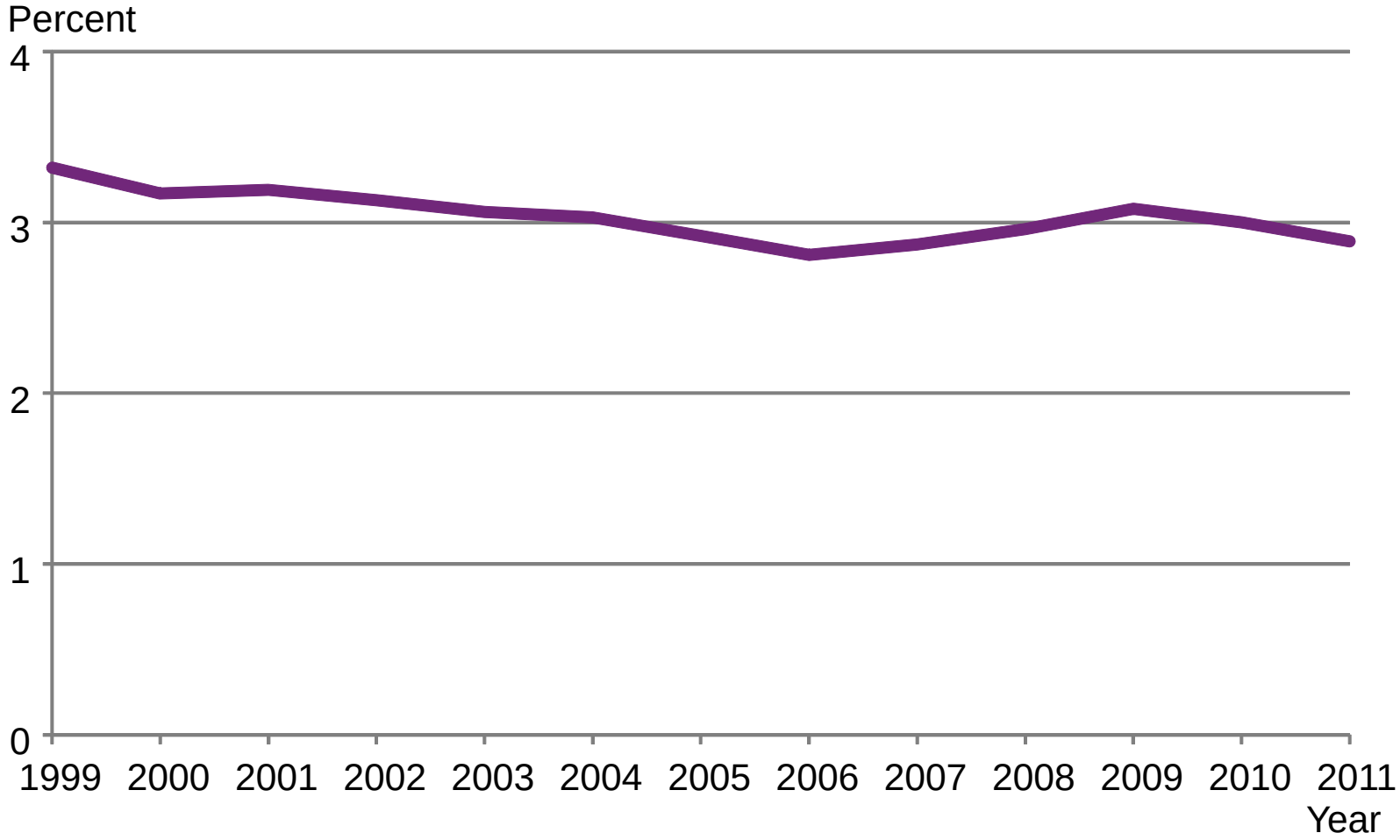
Proportion of children whose parents have separated during the year. 1999–2011



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Change of population structure during 2000s

- Older at childbirth
- Higher educational level
- More children with one or both parents foreign born

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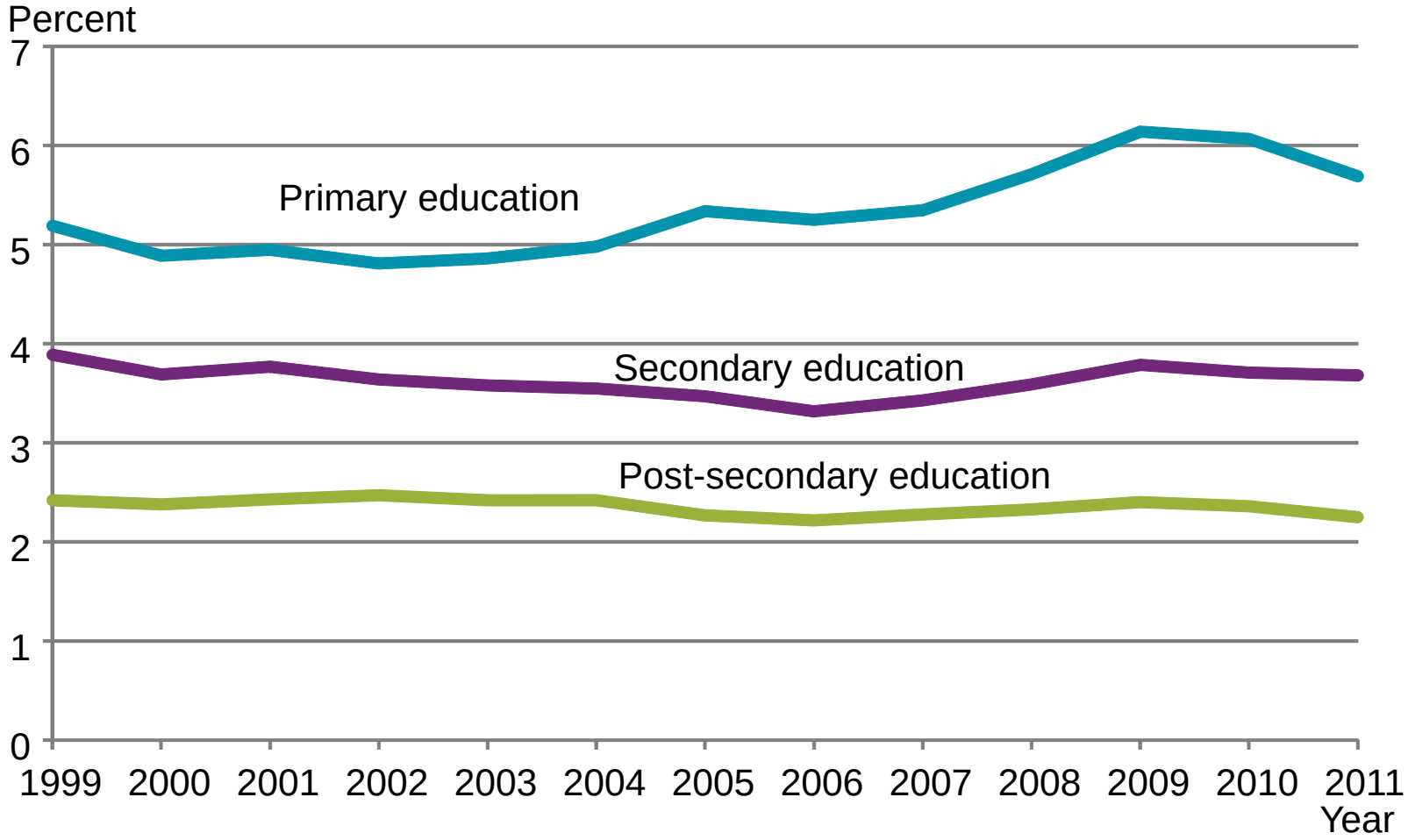
Parental separations by parents highest educational level



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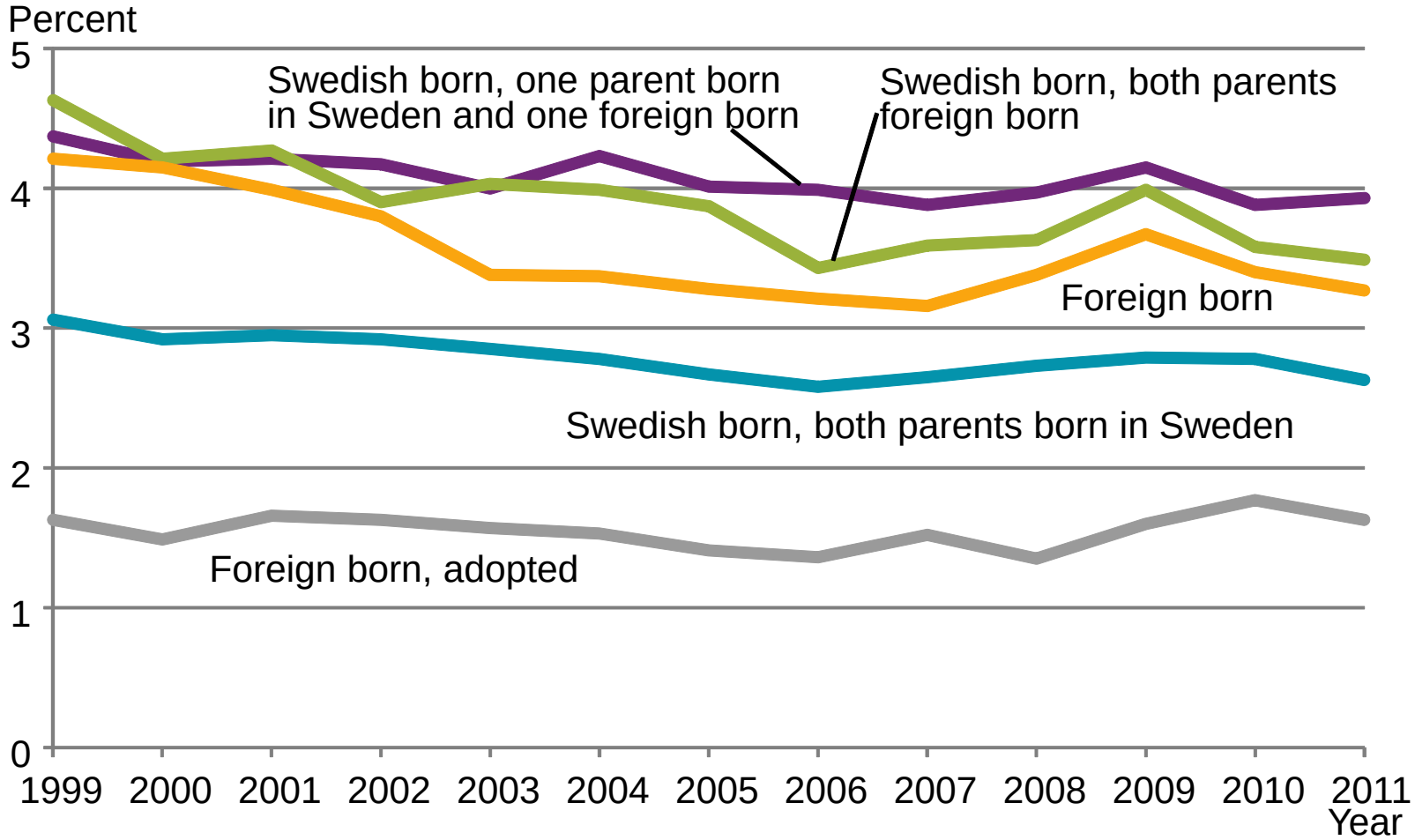
Parental separations by own and parents country of birth



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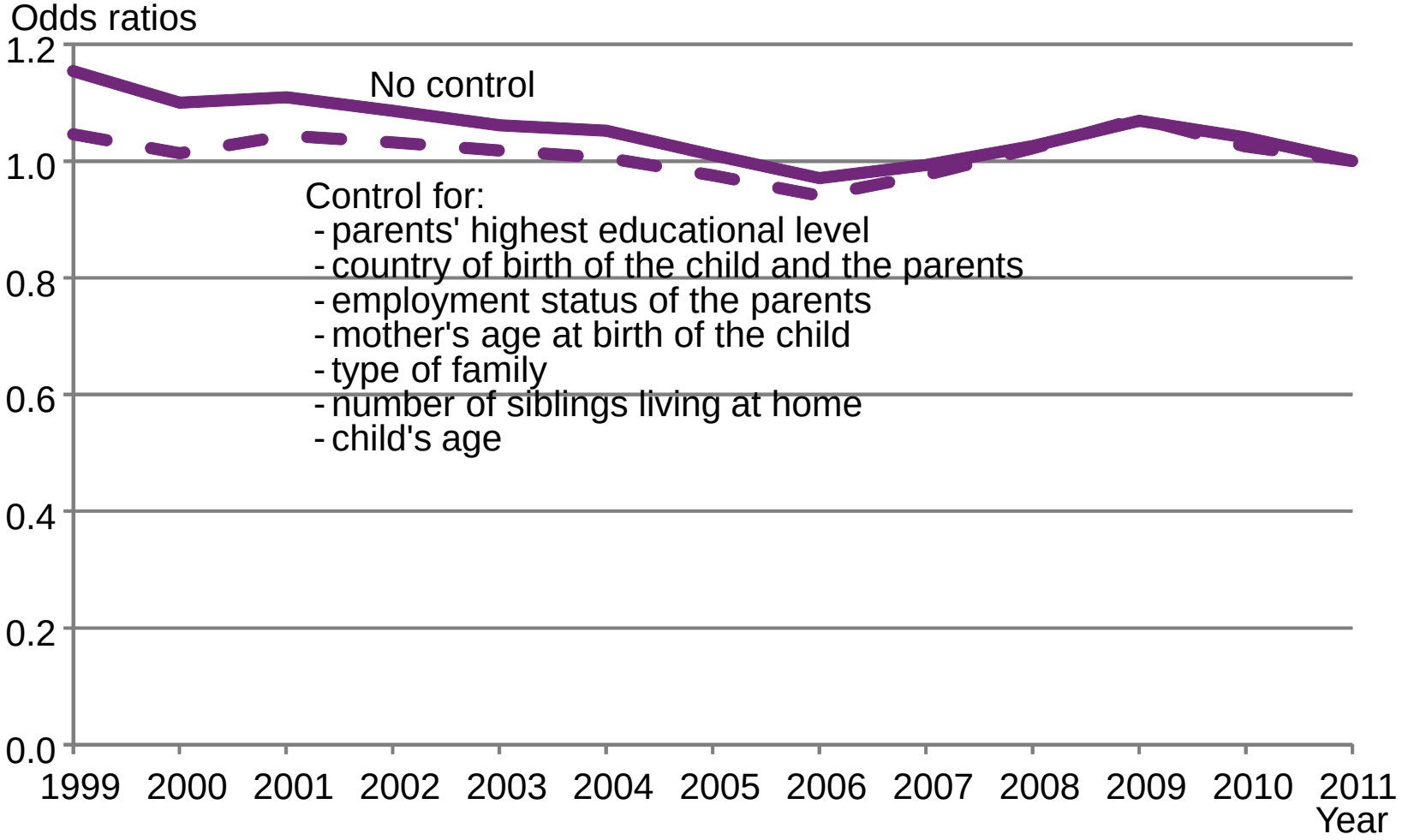
Relative risk for parental separation



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Having children in new relationships

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About the study

- Childbearing that is due to new relationships is studied for the period 1970-2011
- Register based study (Historic Population Register, Multi-Generation register).
- Children's perspective: study the number of children who have half-siblings when they are born
- Parent's perspective: study the number of mothers and fathers who have children with several partners

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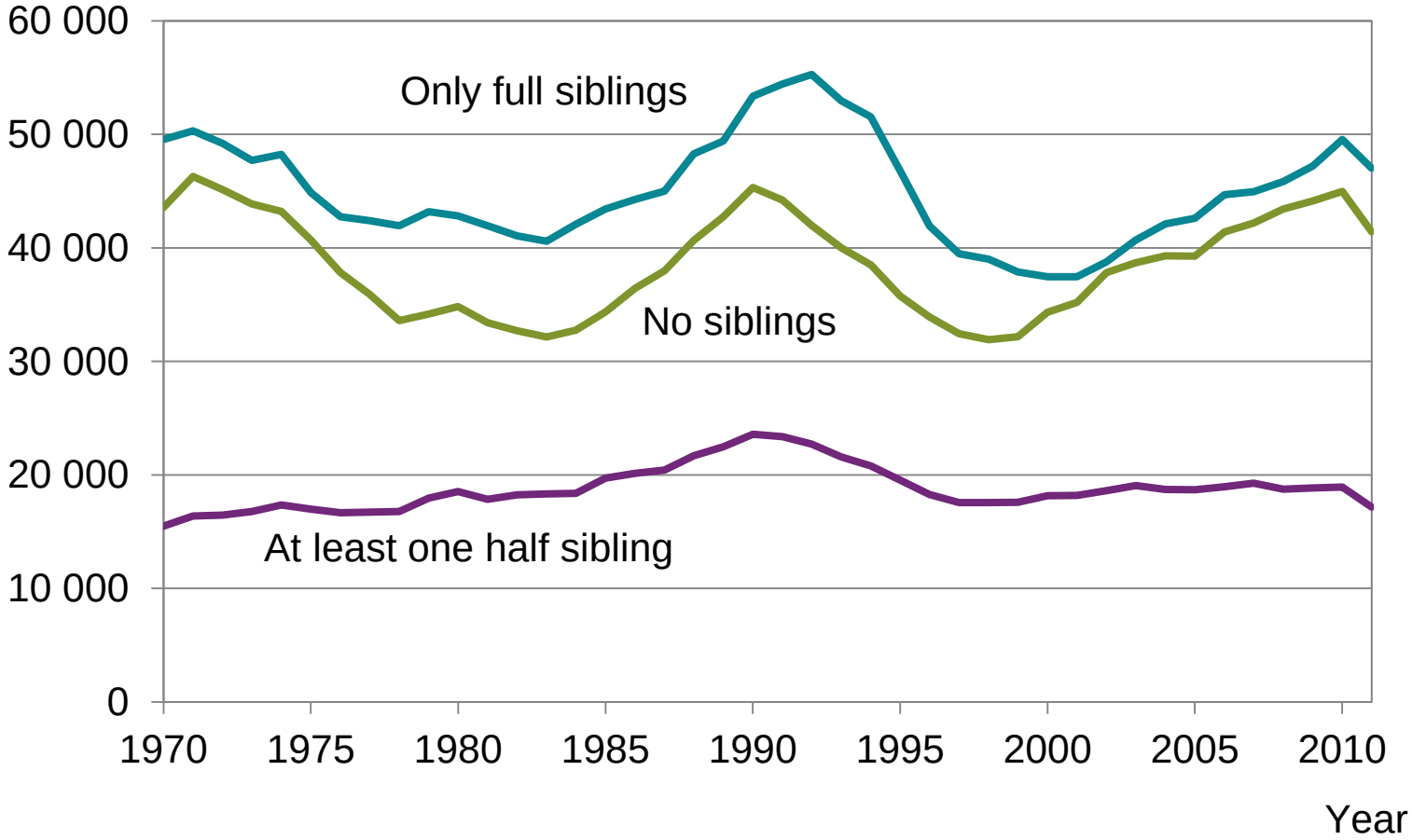
Children's perspective

Number of children who at birth do not have any siblings, who only have full siblings or have at least one half-sibling 1970-2011



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Half-siblings less common again

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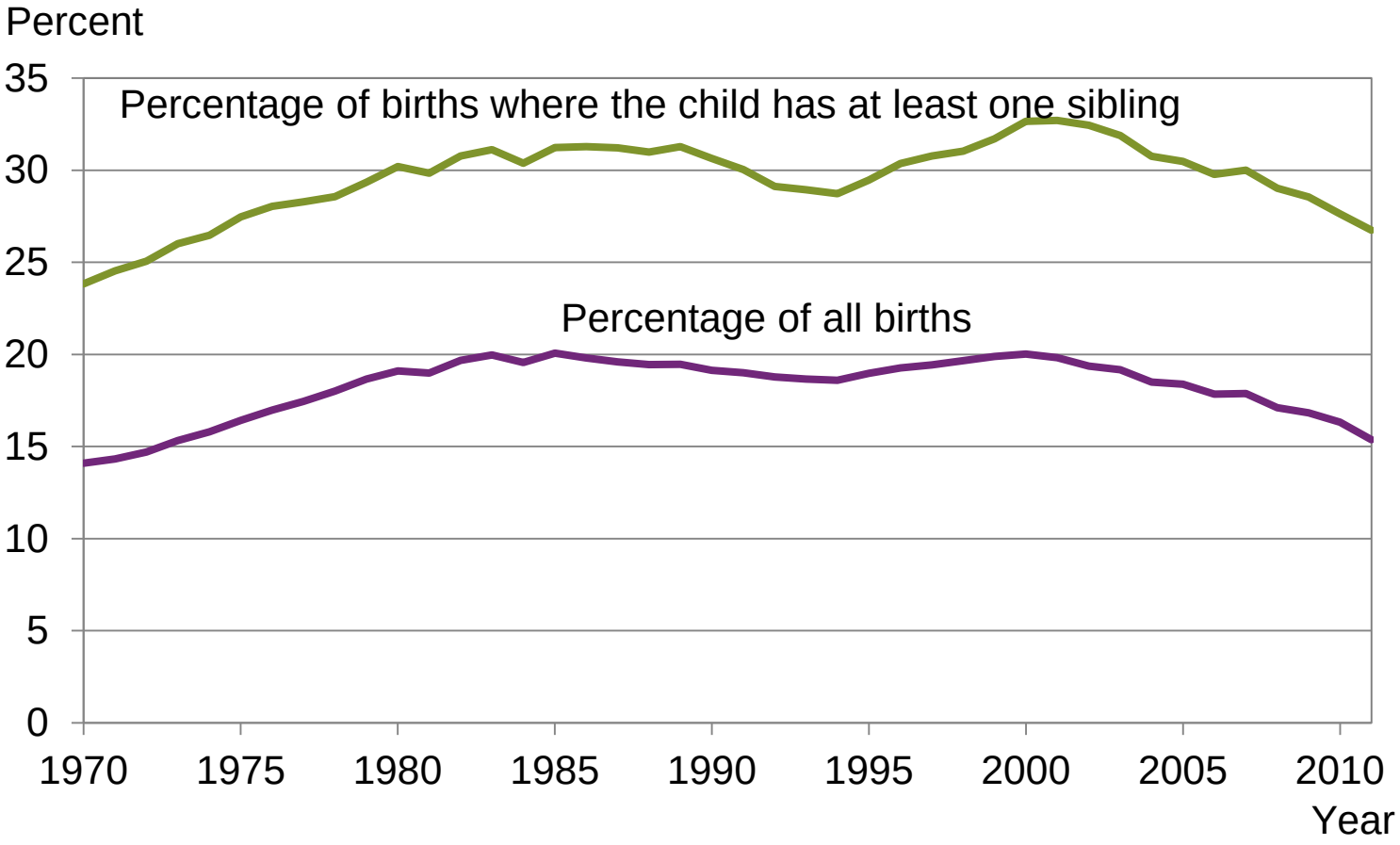
Births where the child has at least one half-sibling 1970-2011



Parents perspective

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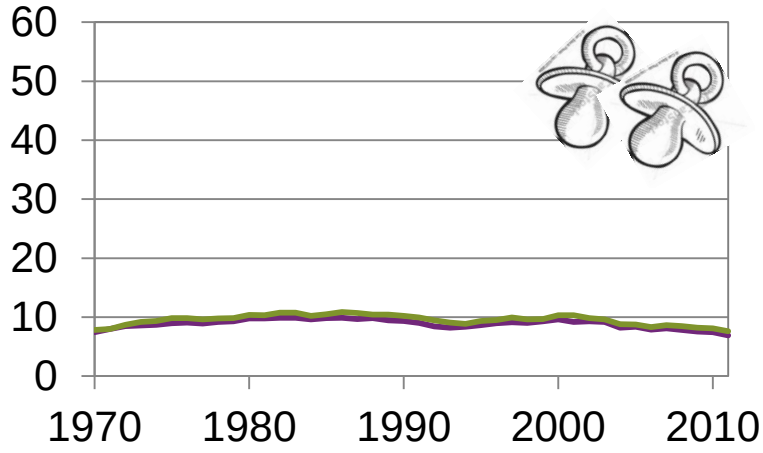
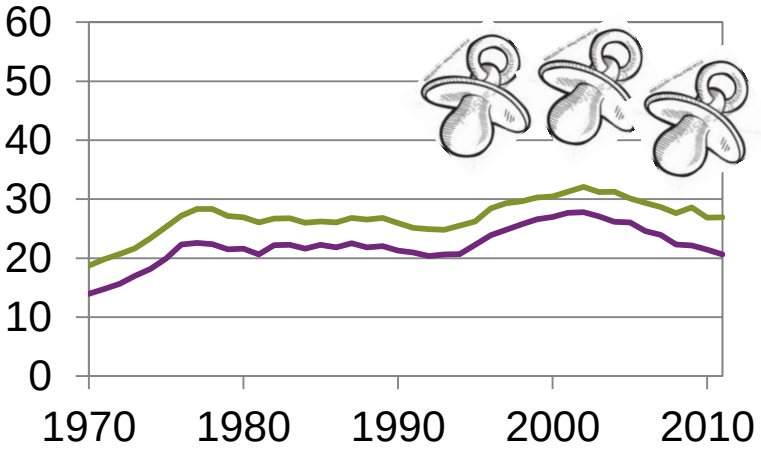
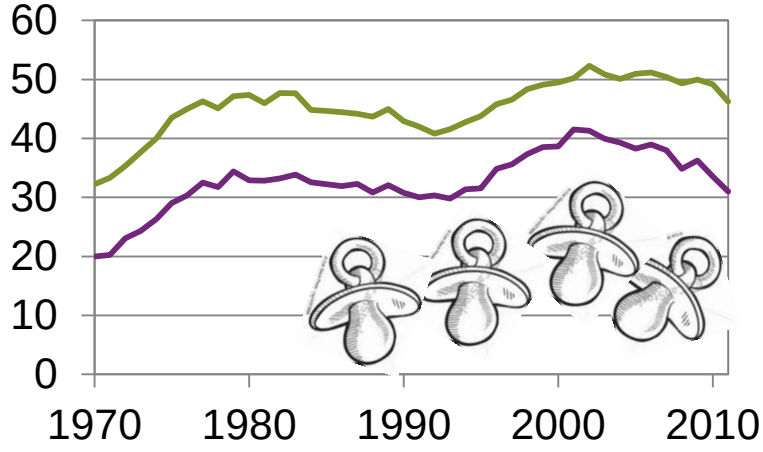
Proportion of women's and men's **second children** that are obtained with a new partner



Proportion of all born **third children** where the woman/man has at least one with another partner



Proportion of all born **fourth children** where the woman/man has at least one child with another partner



In the 2000s:
Less common to have children with many partners

Half-siblings less common again

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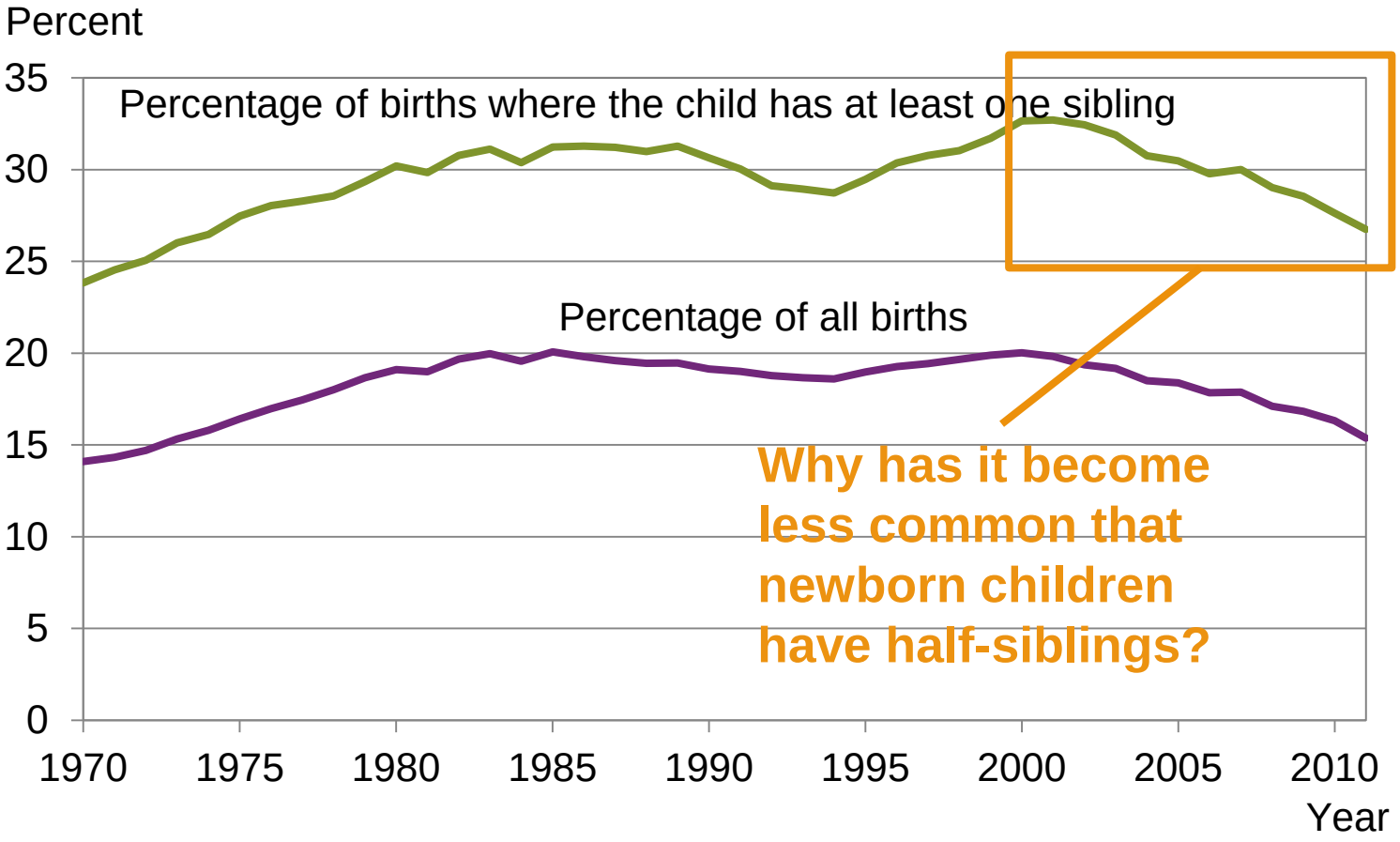
Births where the child has at least one half-sibling 1970-2011



Why less common?

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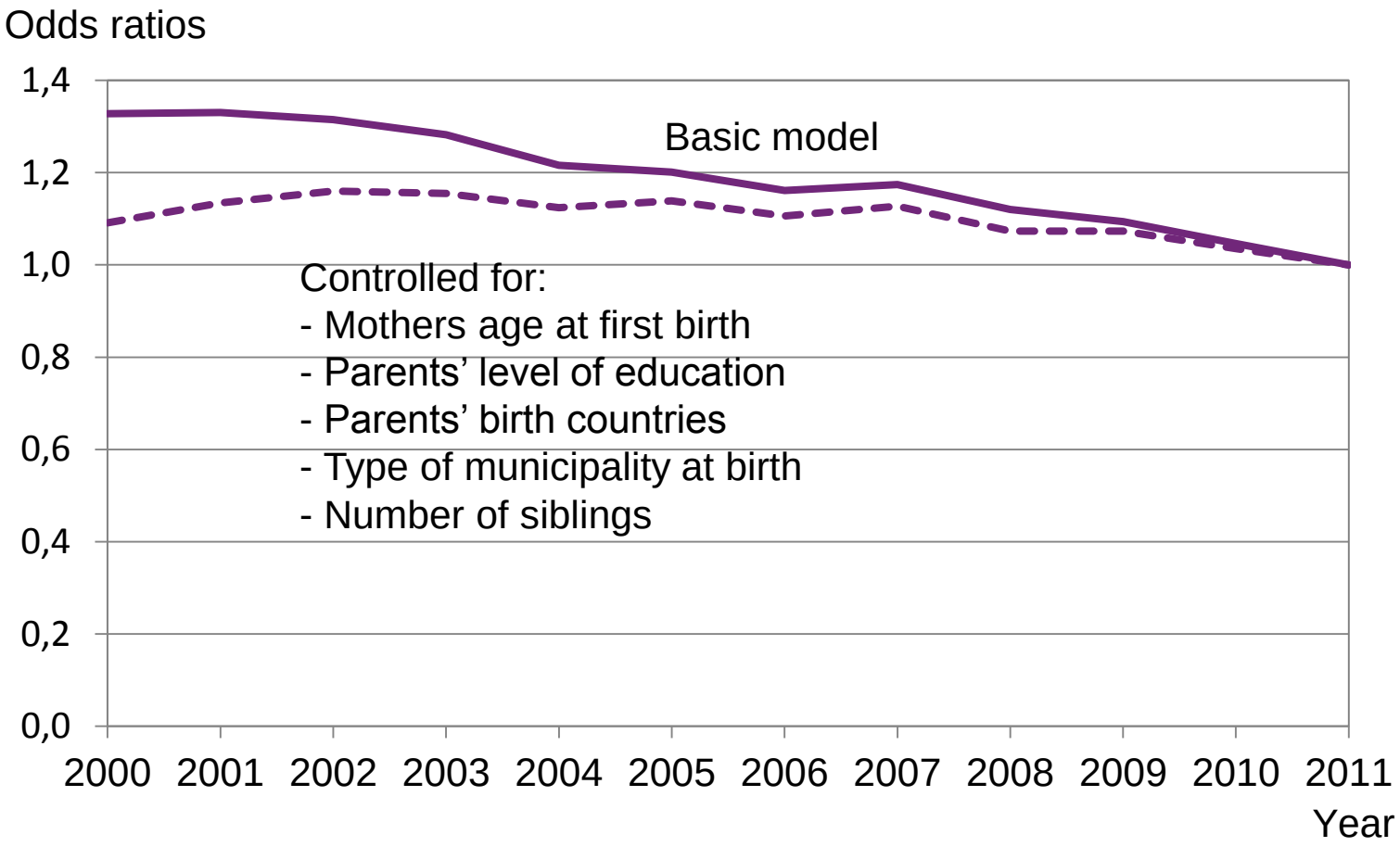
Comparison over time that children at birth have half-siblings. The years 2000-2010 are compared with 2011.



Other explanations?

- Increased gender equality?
- More family-oriented values?

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In the future?

- Increased level of education – increased family stability and increased childbearing?
- Increased gender equality – increased family stability and increased childbearing?
- More foreign born in the population – decreases family stability but increases childbearing?

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Thanks!

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