

# Are surveys on fertility intentions useful in projections?

A wooden pier or dock extends horizontally across the right side of the image, set against a background of dark, rippling blue water. The pier is made of vertical wooden planks and is supported by several blue floats or buoys.

Eurostat-UNECE Work session on demographic projections

Belgrade 25 - 27 November 2019

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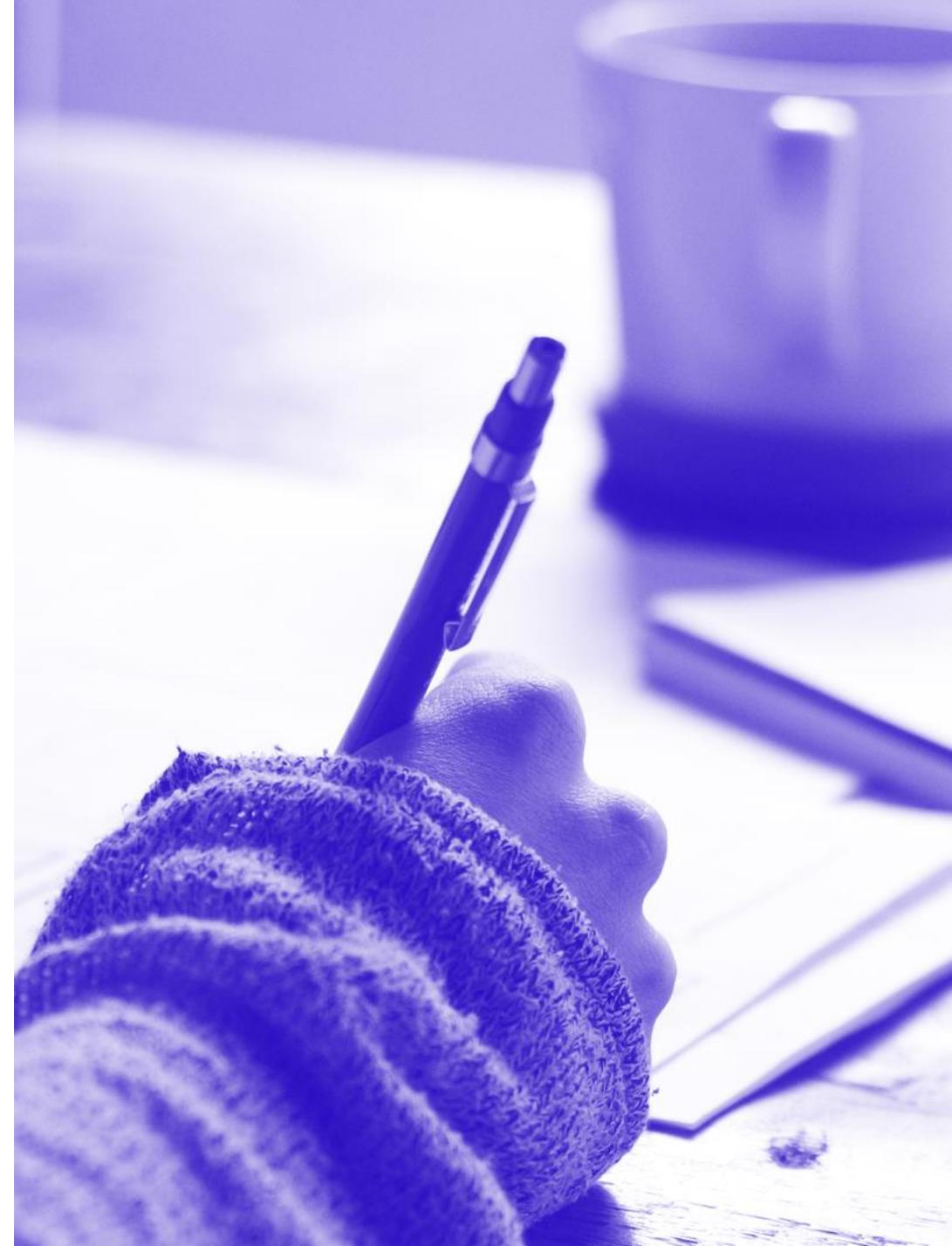


# Background

## - a survey 2009

During the spring year 2009 Statistics Sweden conducted a questionnaire survey regarding attitudes to having children.

- Sample of 7 000 persons
- Stratified by sex, age and parity
- Response rate 51 percent



# Register-based follow-up

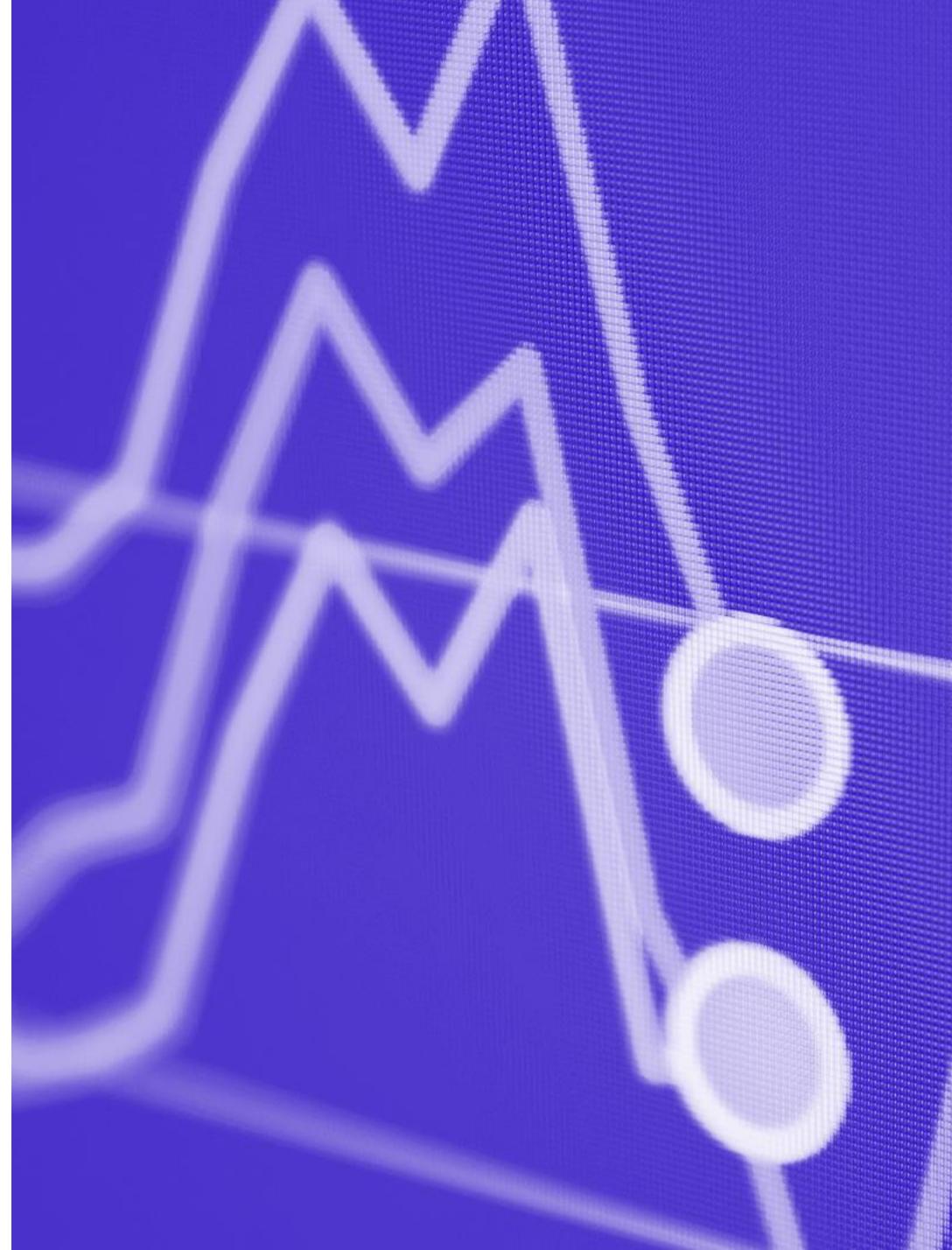
Was the childbirth what the respondents answered?

- A register-based follow-up of the actual outcome of childbearing in the period of 2009–2015 for the respondents to the questionnaire.
- The primary aim with this study is to investigate whether the attitudes of individuals towards having children in the near future could be used to support assumptions on childbearing in the national population projection of Sweden.



# Method

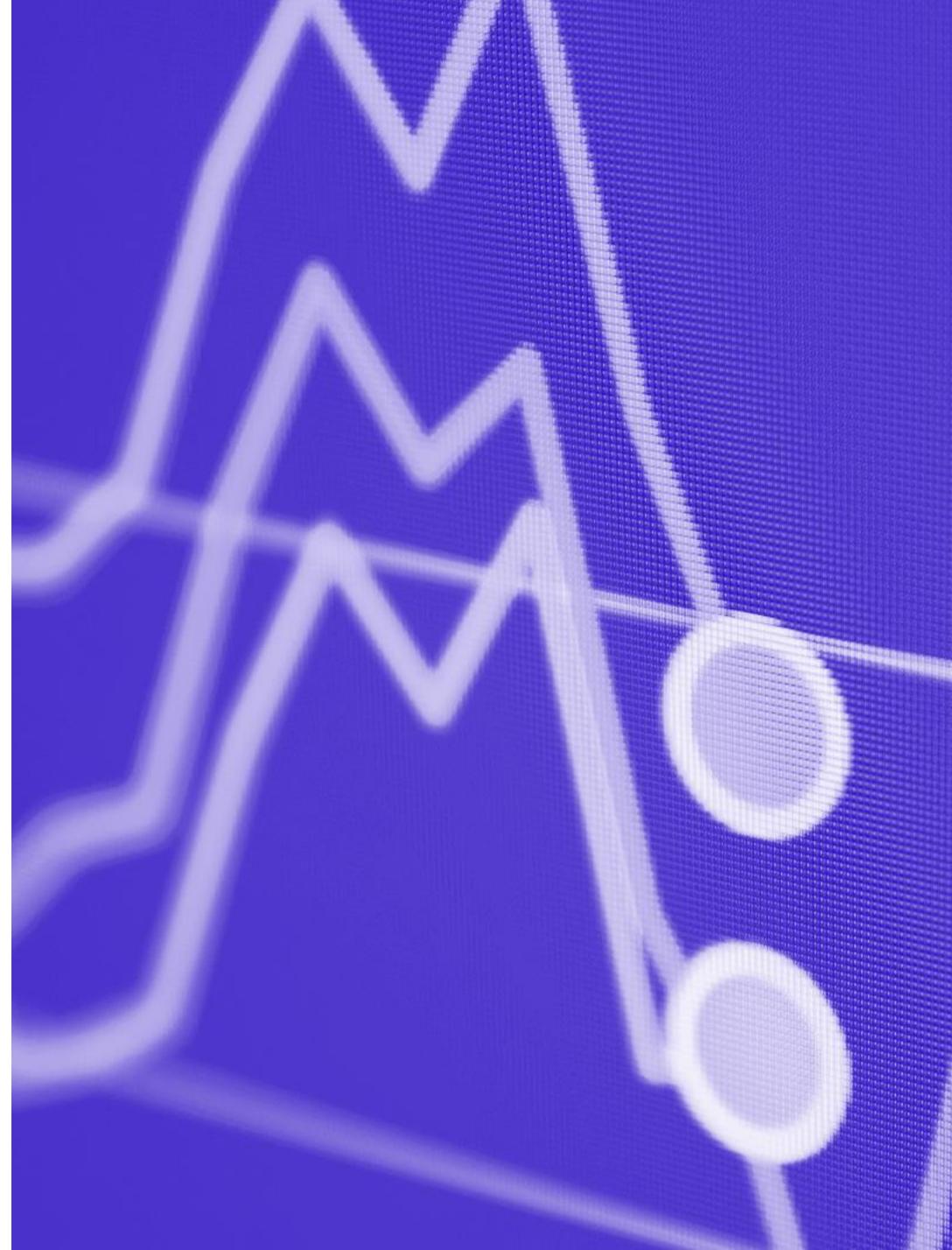
- 3 579 respondents of the survey 2009
  - Women 20–40 years old
  - Men 20–44 years old
- The register-based follow-up included all births to respondents in the period 2009 to 2015 from administrative data with all children born in Sweden.
- Use of interaction analyses to describe the association between fertility intentions and actual childbearing by various socio-demographic variables.



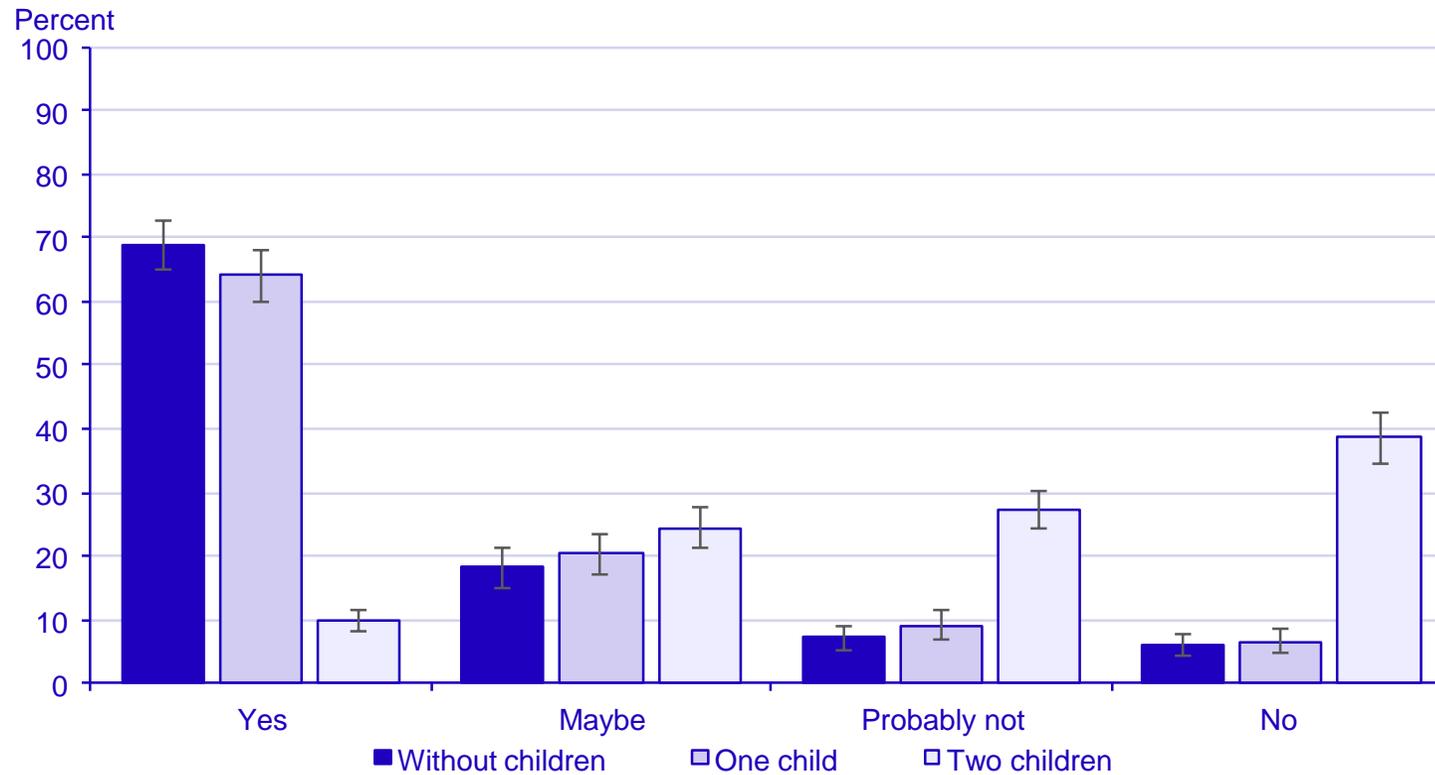
# Method

- Question to respondents who already had at least one child :
  - “Do you believe you will have more children within the next 5–6 years?”
- Question to childless respondents:
  - “Do you believe you will have children someday?”

For both question the possible answers:  
“Yes”, “Maybe”, “Probably not” and “No”



# Response distribution according to attitude to future childbirth

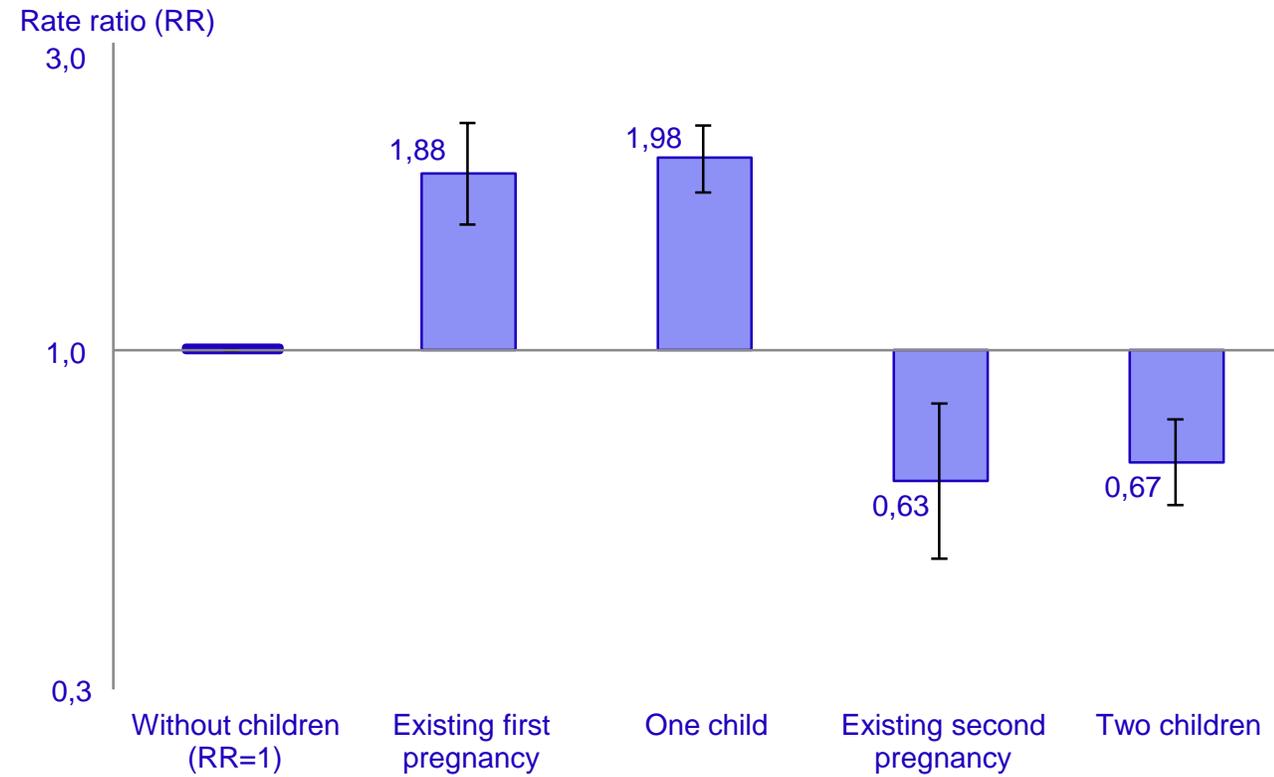


Without children: “Do you believe you will have children someday?”

One/two children: “Do you believe you will have more children within the next 5–6 years?”

# The propensity to have at least one child between 2009 and 2015

Differences by parity and pregnancy in 2009

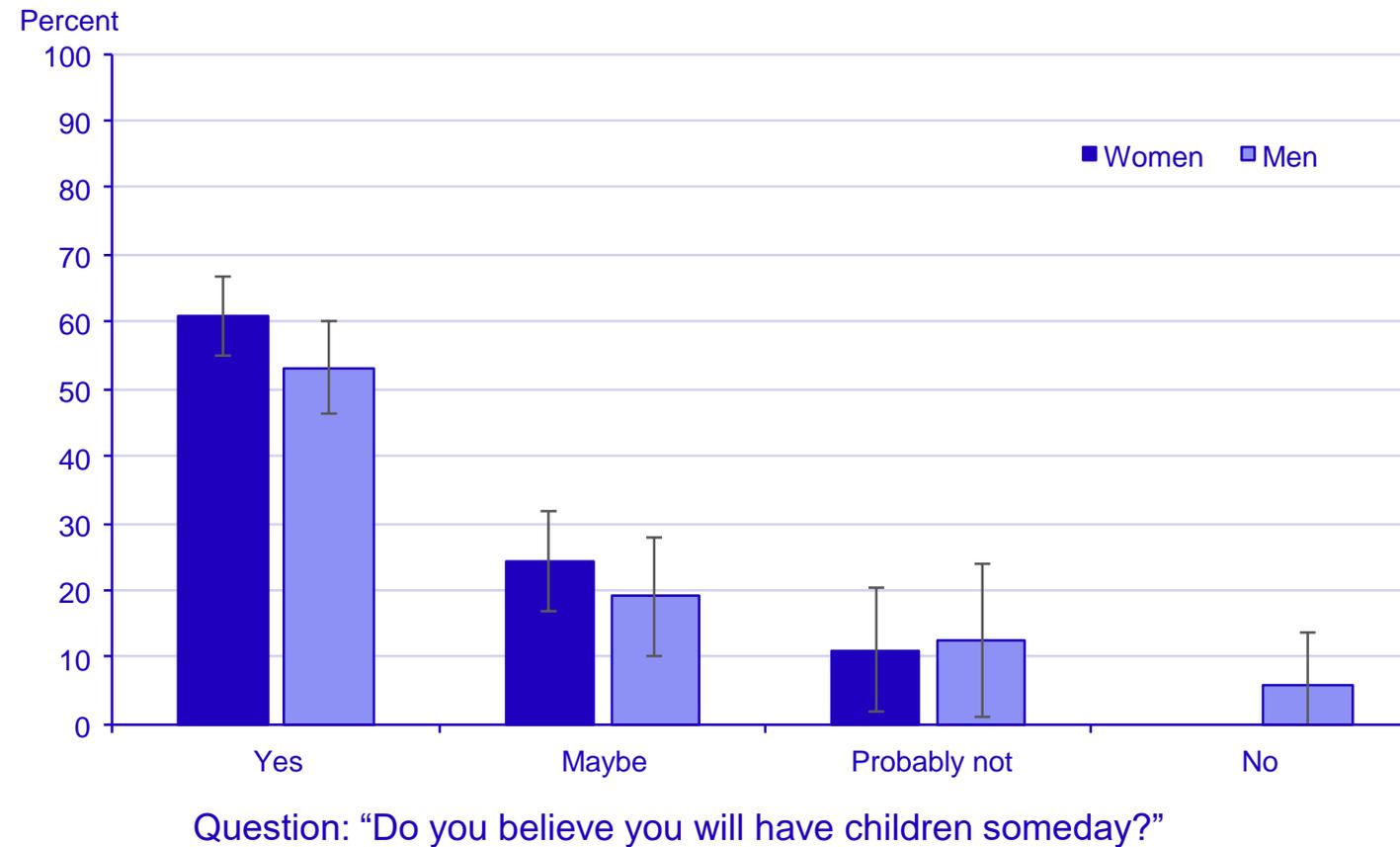


Childbirth within 6 years by parity:

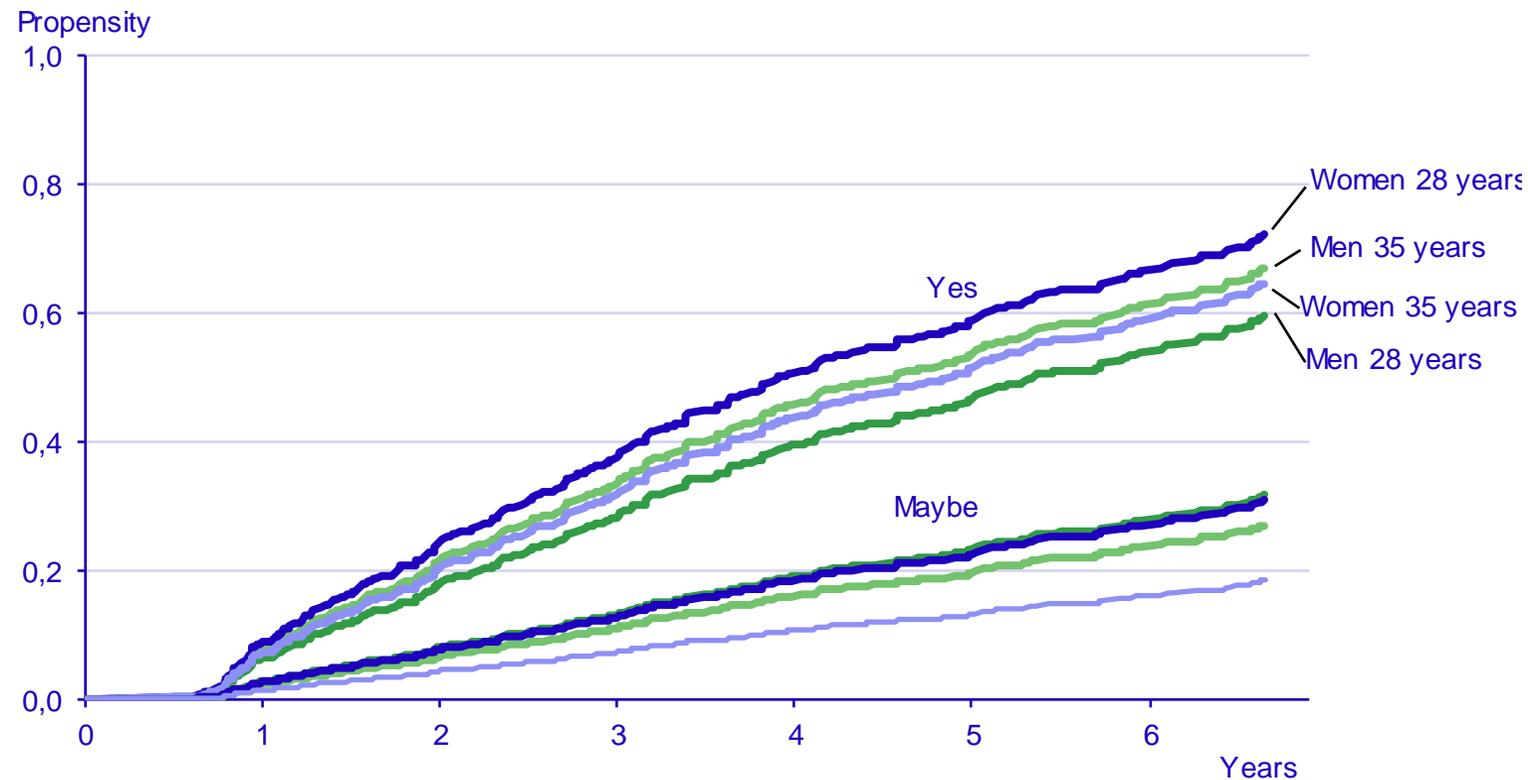
- 40% of childless respondents
- 77% of one-child parents
- 25% of two-children parents

# Women and men without children 2009

# Proportion who had a child before 2015 by attitude towards childbirth in 2009

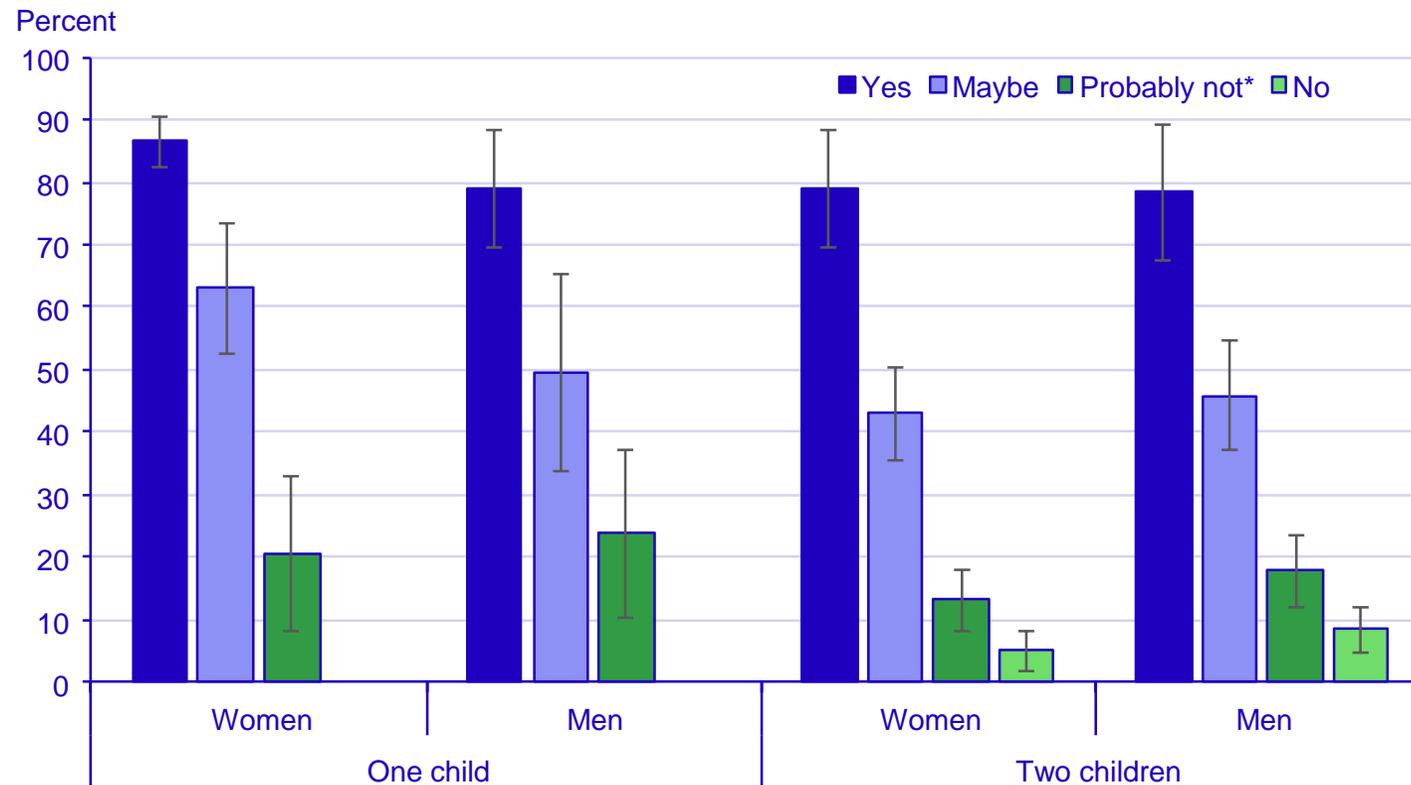


# Propensity to have a child by time since survey and attitude towards childbirth in 2009

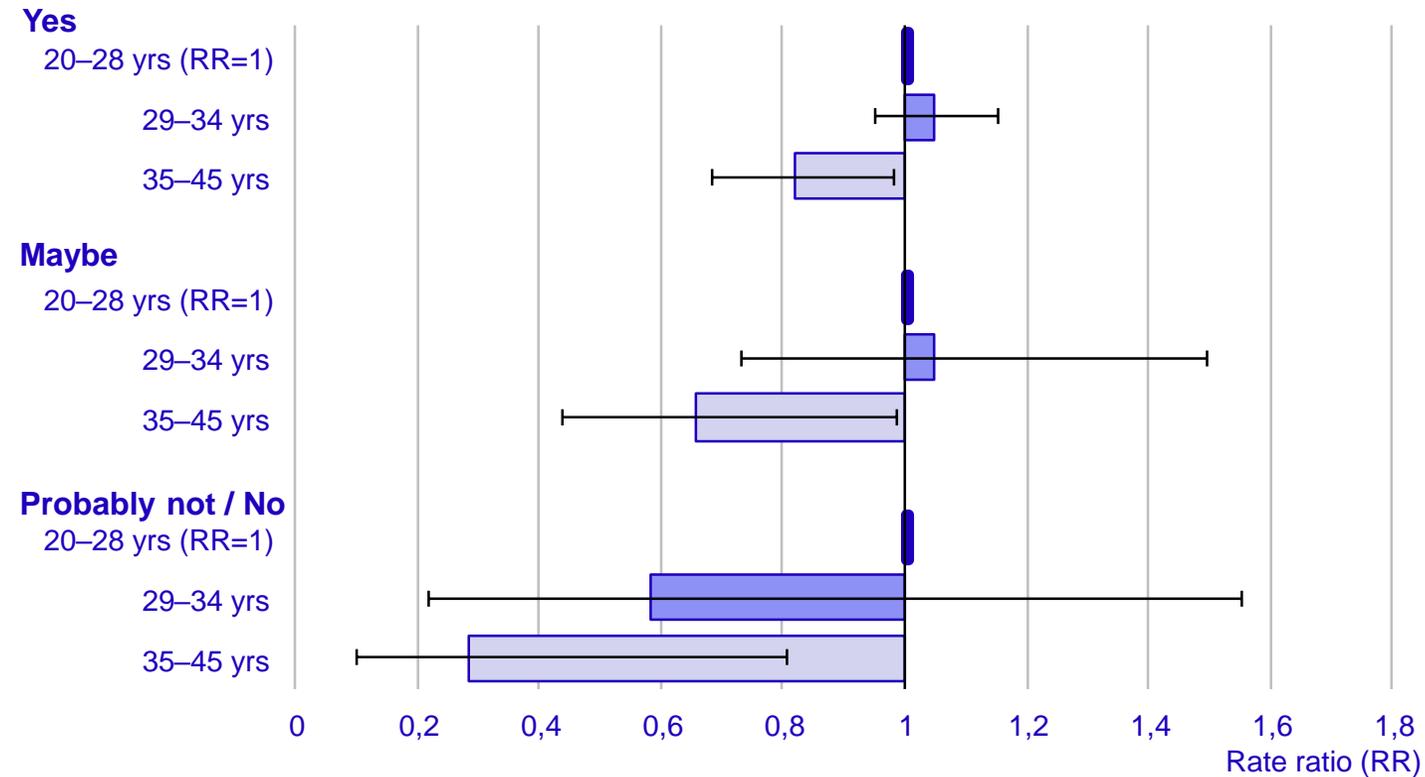


# Women and men with children 2009

# Proportion who had a child before 2015 by attitude towards childbirth in 2009

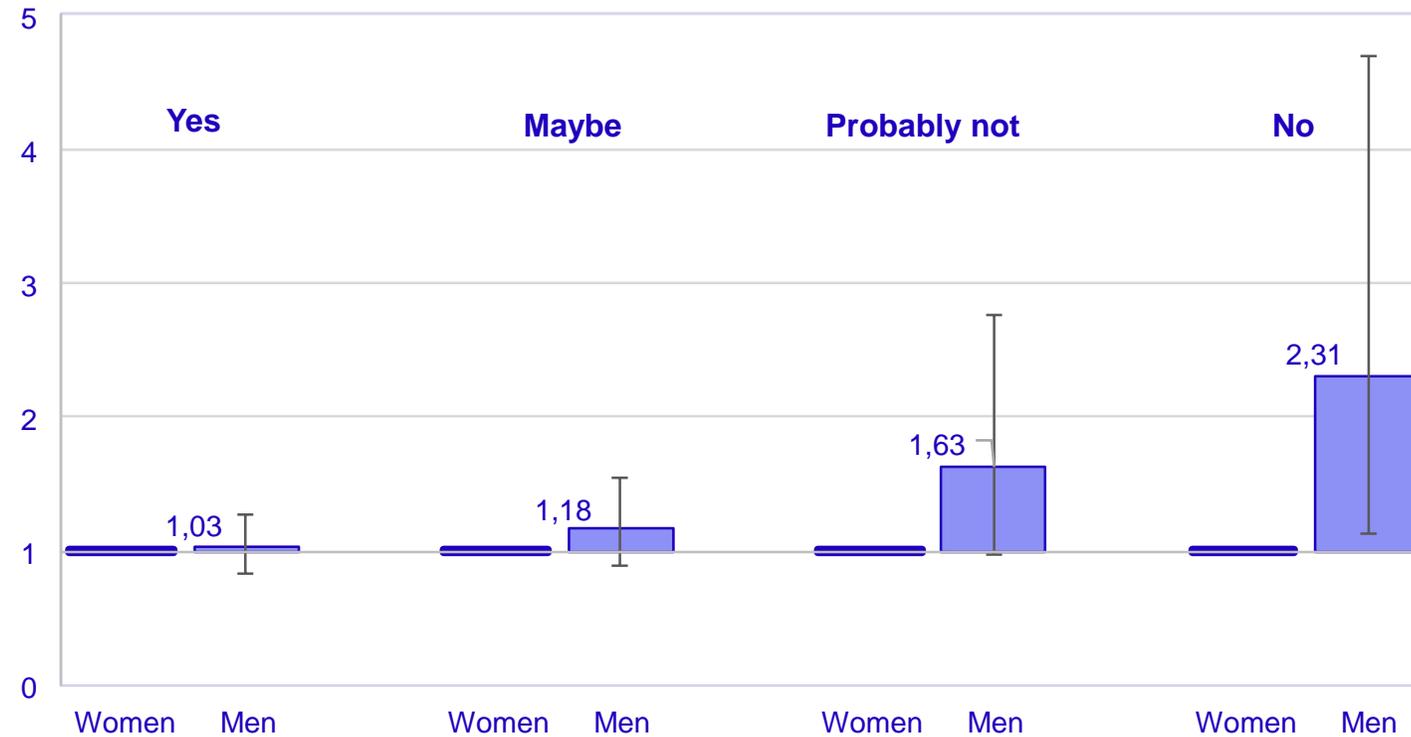


# One child 2009, propensity to have at least one more child before 2015



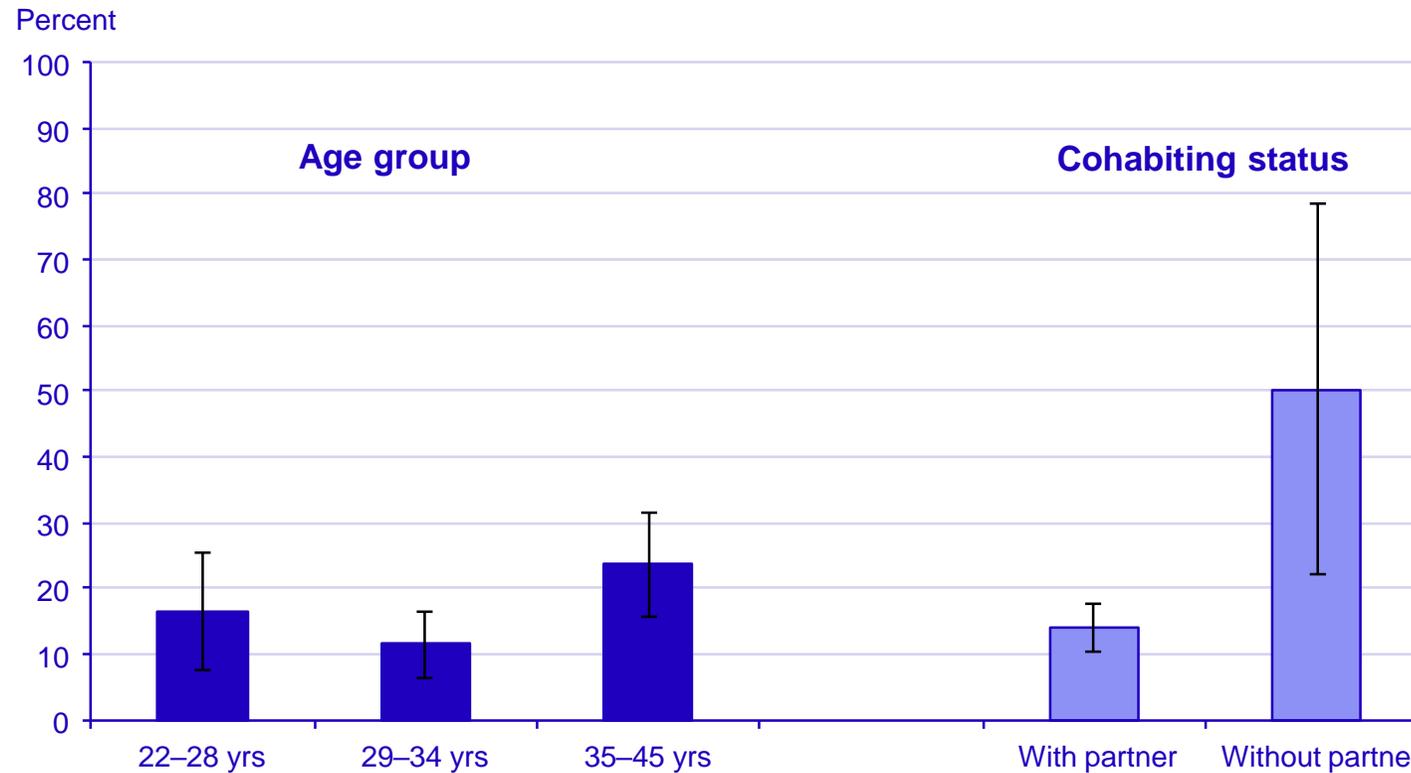
# Two children 2009, propensity to have at least one more child before 2015

Rate ratio (RR)



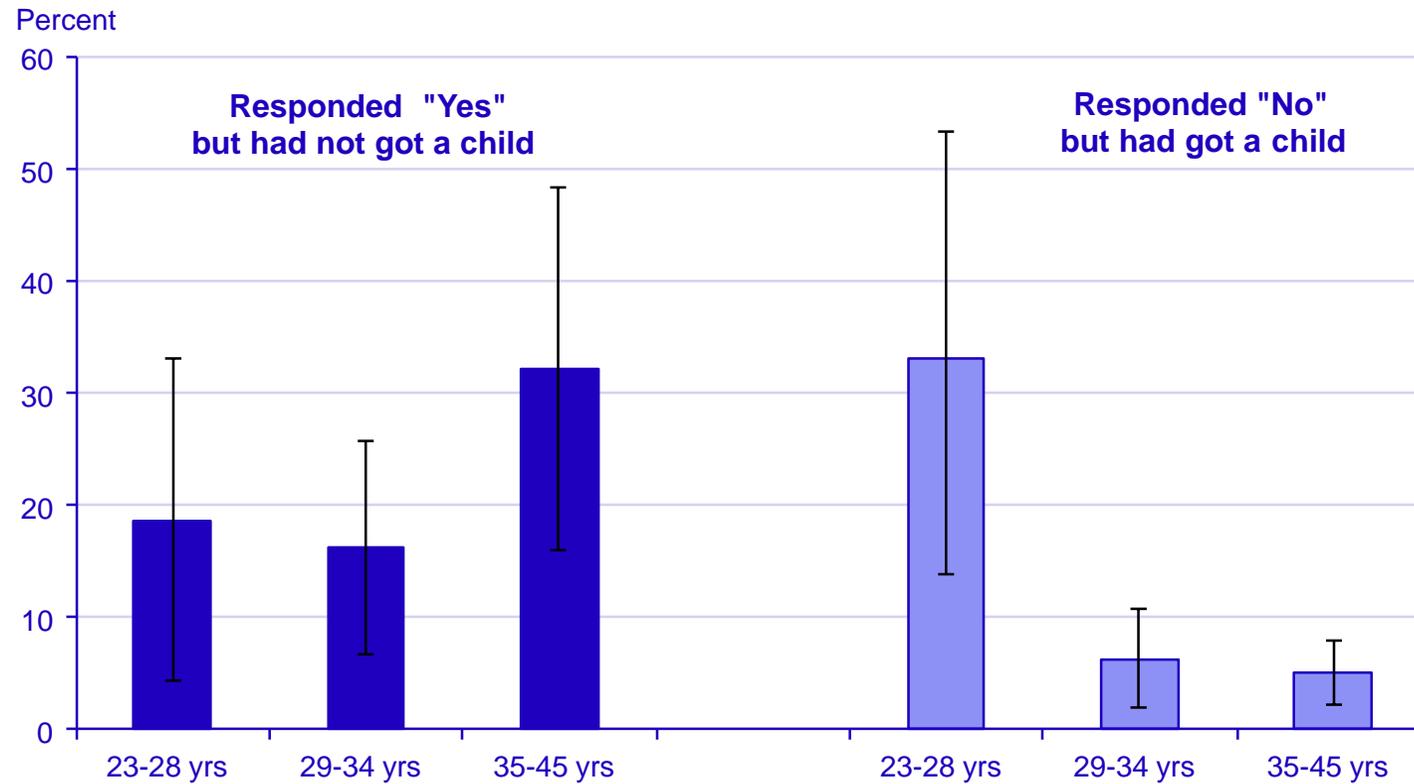
# Usefulness and uncertainty

# One child 2009, answered “Yes” to have additional children but who had not have a child until 2015

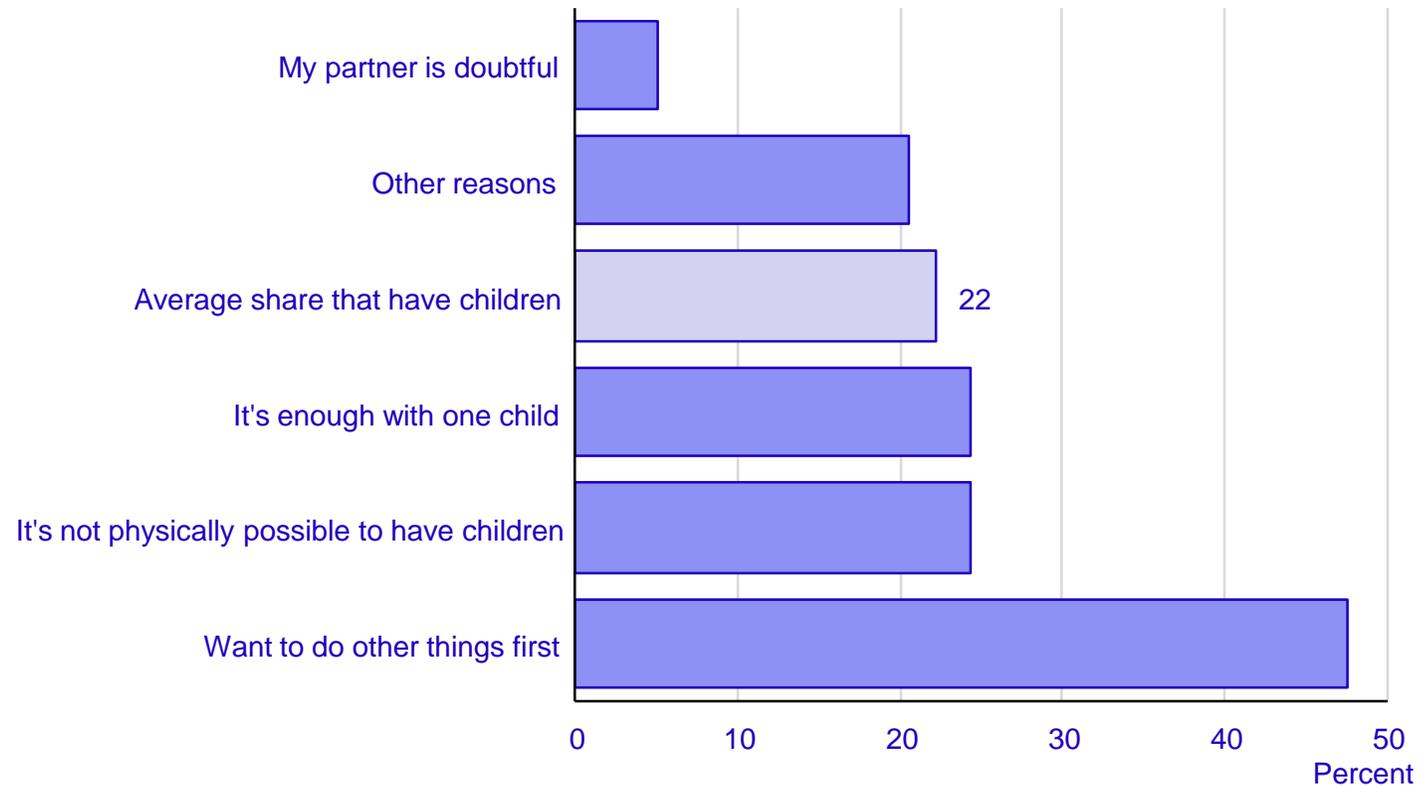


# Two children 2009

How common is it that actual childbirth does not match what is expected?



# One child 2009, percentage that have child by reason to uncertainty



# Conclusion

- After six years, more than 80 percent of those who wanted more children had at least one more child.
- "No" is best matched.
- Fertility intentions can be used in population projections. However, the results are limited to relatively short-term use.
- Findings for childless persons who responded the questionnaire suggest that their propensity to have children is greater than for the entire childless Swedish population.



# Thanks

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