New family values and increased childbearing in Sweden?

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Percentage of children aged 16/17 whose parents have separated during childhood

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
Children, parents and separations
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)
Proportion of children whose parents have separated during the year. 1999–2011
Change of population structure during 2000s

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

- Primary education
- Secondary education
- Post-secondary education


Percent: 0, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
Parental separations by own and parents country of birth

- Swedish born, both parents born in Sweden
- Swedish born, one parent born in Sweden and one foreign born
- Swedish born, both parents foreign born
- Foreign born
- Foreign born, adopted

Year
Relative risk for parental separation

- No control
- Control for:
  - parents' highest educational level
  - country of birth of the child and the parents
  - employment status of the parents
  - mother's age at birth of the child
  - type of family
  - number of siblings living at home
  - child's age

Year: 1999 to 2011
Having children in new relationships
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
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
Half-siblings less common again

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

- Percentage of births where the child has at least one sibling
- Percentage of all births

Year


Percent

0 5 10 15 20 25 30 35
Parents perspective

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

Why has it become less common that newborn children have half-siblings?
Comparison over time that children at birth have half-siblings. The years 2000-2010 are compared with 2011.

Odds ratios

Controlled for:
- Mothers age at first birth
- Parents’ level of education
- Parents’ birth countries
- Type of municipality at birth
- Number of siblings
Other explanations?

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

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