

Do you need to be well-off to plan children? Fertility intentions in Poland

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INTRODUCTION

Recurrent finding: Poles want to have children, but... they have fewer and fewer of them



It's important to understand how childbearing desires translate into actual planning

RESEARCH AIMS

- > We investigate what factors determine childbearing plans (intention to have a child in the next three years) of partnered men and women in Poland
- > We pay special attention to material aspects: objective and subjective measures of couple's financial situation

SAMPLE & METHOD

- > Data source: First round of the Polish Generations and Gender Survey 2010/2011
- > Analytic sample: Men and women aged 18-40 years, in a union
- > Method: Ordered logistic regression
- > Dependent variable: Intention to have a(nother) child during the next three years
- > Separate models for men and women, and for the intention to have a first or second child

Structure of childbearing intentions in the analytic sample

	Intention to have a first child during the next 3 years		Intention to have a second child during the next 3 years	
	Women	Men	Women	Men
Definitely not	18.6%	15.9%	26.0%	18.3%
Probably not	16.3%	19.4%	23.7%	23.1%
Probably yes	32.3%	35.3%	28.3%	33.8%
Definitely yes	32.9%	29.4%	21.9%	24.8%
n	560	504	889	666

RESULTS

FIRST CHILD

Intention to have a first child during the next three years

	Women	Men
RELATIONSHIP		
Married	0	0
Cohabiting	-0.77 ***	-0.19
Living-Apart-Together	-1.34 ***	-0.99 ***
EMPLOYMENT		
Both partners work	0	0
Respondent doesn't work – partner works	-0.50 **	-1.16 ***
Respondent works – partner doesn't work	-0.46	-0.55 **
Both partners don't work	-1.07 ***	-1.33 ***
FLAT		
Own flat	0	0
Rented flat	-0.61 ***	-0.63 ***
Living by a family	-0.11	-0.23
Other	-0.40	-0.10
Subjective evaluation of material situation		
Household material situation (subjective)	-0.03	0.07
Quality of a relationship (subjective)	0.08	0.18 ***
Importance of children for (self)fulfilment	0.33 ***	0.38 ***
Importance of religion	0.37 ***	0.14 *

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Models controlled for age and education

Highlights

Intention to have a first child – more certain in marriage
Especially for women – cohabitation is not a context for fertility planning
No such effect for a second child

Intention to have a first child is most certain when **both partners have a job**
The pattern for a second child – less clear (but men seem to care!)

A rented flat does not provide a good context for starting a family
It does not matter for a second child

Subjective evaluation of material situation – **insignificant**

No effect of a quality of a relationship for women's plan to have a first child
Otherwise: It encourages child-planning

If children are valued – the intention to become a parent is more certain
No clear effect for a second child

SECOND CHILD

Intention to have a second child during the next three years

	Women	Men
RELATIONSHIP		
Married	0	0
Cohabiting	-0.13	-0.23
Living-Apart-Together	-0.21	-0.82 **
EMPLOYMENT		
Both partners work	0	0
Respondent doesn't work – partner works	-0.14	0.24
Respondent works – partner doesn't work	-0.07	-0.37 **
Both partners don't work	-0.46	-2.26 ***
FLAT		
Own flat	0	0
Rented flat	0.19	-0.20
Living by a family	-0.11	0.08
Other	0.11	-0.34
Subjective evaluation of material situation		
Household material situation (subjective)	0.06	0.08
Quality of a relationship (subjective)	0.19 ***	0.12 **
Importance of children for (self)fulfilment	0.00	0.14 *
Importance of religion	0.19 ***	0.21 ***

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Models controlled for age and education

CONCLUSIONS

- > Childbearing intentions for a first child become more concrete if partners are married, they live in their own flat and both have a job
- > Most of the effects disappear when it comes to a second child. Still, men remain concerned with employment
- > Subjective evaluation of household's financial situation – insignificant in all models. Other measures of financial status / wealth have been tested with the same outcome!
- > When it comes to starting a family – one does not need to be well-off to plan parenthood, but stable material situation is crucial (a job, a flat)
- > Factors decisive for expanding a family – remain to be discovered

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Acknowledgements:

The study was conducted within the research project "Family Change and Subjective Well-Being" (FAMWELL) financed by the National Centre for Research and Development, under the Program Lider.