

RESEARCH HIGHLIGHTS N° 31

THE APPEARANCE OF 'FATHERHOOD PREMIUM' DURING SECOND UNION FORMATION IN NORWAY, FRANCE AND HUNGARY

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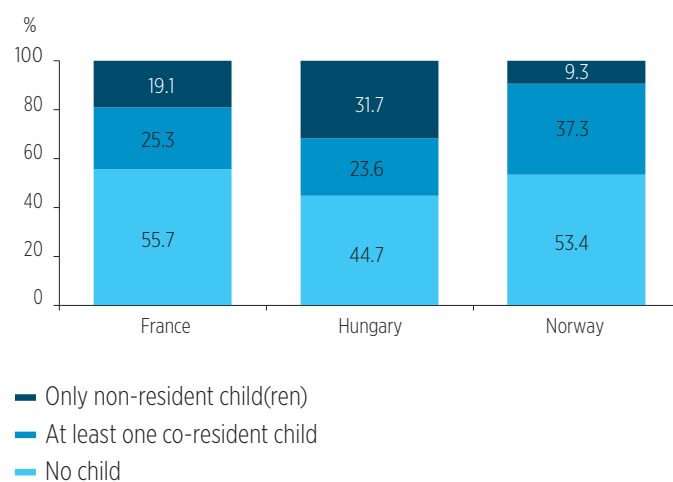
Do childless men or fathers find a new partner faster after union dissolution? Does residing with their children make re-partnering more difficult for fathers, like in the case of mothers? These questions have become more relevant since more and more people experience union dissolution and enter the 're-partnering market', many with children. The slowly increasing involvement of fathers in family life and childcare, together with the availability of joint physical custody after separation call for an analysis of the changing effect of fatherhood on re-partnering and also for international comparison.

We examined changes in France, Hungary and Norway between the 1980s and the 2000s using the Generations and Gender Survey. We differentiated between the following categories of men who have experienced a union dissolution by the age of 50: men who were childless at the end of their first union, fathers who had only non-resident children, and fathers who lived together with at least one of their children on either a part-time or full-time basis (Figure 1).

Our results show that the probability of re-partnering has not changed among childless men and fathers, with the exception of Norway, where all fathers have become more likely to enter a new union. More interestingly, there are no other groups of men who re-partner more easily in the new millennium than fathers who live with their children either full- or part-time (see Figure 2). 'Fatherhood premium' has emerged in the 1990s in Norway, followed by France and Hungary in the 2000s. How can we explain this trend? We think that there have been positive changes in the opportunities and attractiveness of fathers with co-resident children.

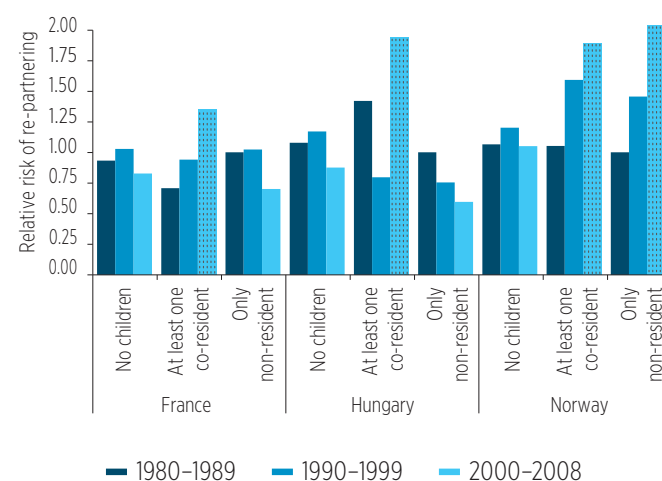
The number of women searching for a new partner has increased and the increasing supply of childcare facilities make it easier for fathers with small children to re-partner by allowing parents more free time as well as possible places to meet. Moreover, new marriage markets have emerged such as online dating, in which divorced people are more likely to be involved. Being perceived as an involved father probably increases men's attractiveness for potential partners and fathers whose children reside with them demonstrate the highest level of involvement. Public opinion has also become more permissive towards union dissolution when children are involved.

Figure 1. Fatherhood status of men at the end of their first union, 1980s–2000s (%)



Source of data: Generations and Gender Survey, Wave 1, 2004–2008

Figure 2. The changing effect of parenthood status on the re-partnering of men by country



Source of data: Generations and Gender Survey, Wave 1, 2004–2008

Notes: regression results, discrete-time event history analyses, relative risks; dotted bars indicate statistically significant coefficients on the $p < 0.1$ level (reference category: no children in the 1980s for each country); co-residence with children is a dynamic variable; other control variables include age at the end of the first union, time since the end of the first union, length and type of the first partnership, death of the first partner and education.