

Level and postponement of fertility intentions and their realization: a study of Bulgaria

Dimiter Philipov, *Vienna Institute of Demography*

This research analyses fertility decision-making in Bulgaria. It consists of two parts: (i) fertility intentions, and (ii) their realization. The analysis is based on panel survey data from 2002 and 2005.

The first part of the report presents empirical analyses of four types of fertility intentions: whether to have or not to have a first or a second child (similar to a level of fertility); and, if yes, whether to have this child within the next two years or later (similar to postponement of fertility, or a timing of a birth). This distribution of intentions into level and postponement is a selection that is described with adequate selection models. Our analysis of survey data for women indicates that explanatory factors of fertility intentions differ significantly by order of intended birth and its timing. We find that the intentions to ever have a first child do not depend on the explanatory variables because nearly every woman would like to become a mother. However the timing of intentions to have the first child depends on a number of variables, for example studying. Views that having children confronts the work for pay have a negative effect on all types of intentions. Religiosity defines the "level" but not timing of positive intentions. Other variables are significant for either the level or the timing of the intentions. We attribute particular emphasis to anomie and social capital as important factors in shaping fertility intentions and in timing a desired birth.

The second part of the analysis studies realization of intentions, again divided by level and postponement. The data from the second wave are used to check what intentions get realized and analyses similarities and differences between construction of intentions and behavior. This part of the research is under process towards 1 May 2006 because the 2nd wave data have become available for our research in the end of April.