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## Fertility developments in Norway and Sweden since the early 1960s

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### Abstract

The purpose of this paper is to give an overview of recent trends in childbearing in neighboring Norway and Sweden. We use indexes produced by applying indirect standardization to register data of these two countries in order to describe and contrast their fertility developments over the last four decades. Our indexes enable us to decompose overall fertility trends into birth-order specific components, and by combining the same kind of data from two countries we get a very accurate picture of various cross-country differences in fertility levels. We demonstrate how Swedish fertility has fluctuated relatively strongly during the whole period while Norwegian fertility has evolved more gradually, at least during the last two decades. A turnaround from decreasing to increasing levels of childbearing is evident in 1977 in both countries while a sudden shift to shorter birth intervals is specific to Sweden in the 1980s and contributed to its more spectacular increase in fertility during that decade.

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