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How fertility and union stability interact in shaping new family patterns in Italy and Spain

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VOLUME 18 - ARTICLE 4

PAGES 117 - 144

Date Received: 15 Apr 2005

Date Published: 18 Mar 2008

<http://www.demographic-research.org/volumes/vol18/4/>

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Abstract

In this paper we investigate the interrelationships between fertility decisions and union dissolution in Italy and Spain. We argue that there might exist a spurious relationship between these two life trajectories. The analysis is based on the 1996 Fertility and Family Survey data for Italy and Spain. Results show that there is a spurious relationship between fertility and union dissolution in Italy but not in Spain. Nevertheless, in both countries, there is an evident direct effect of each process on the other: union dissolution decreases the risk of further childbearing, while childbirths decrease the risk of union dissolution.

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Keywords

[fertility](#), [Italy](#), [Spain](#), [union dissolution](#)

Word count (Main text)

6474

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