

POST DIVORCE TRAJECTORIES

“Trayectorias familiares después del divorcio.
Género, parentesco y territorio”

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Aim:

Bibliographical review of existing knowledge and data sources on individual biographical trajectories, post-dissolution, of union members

Relatively established literature on single parents and on impact on children of divorce.

More work in countries where levels of divorce and separation have been higher for longer.

Interest in phenomenon of family recomposition only really starts in the 1970s

Our focus :

demographic aspects for *parents* :
transition to *new* union,
biological or social
parenthood (likelihood,
velocity)

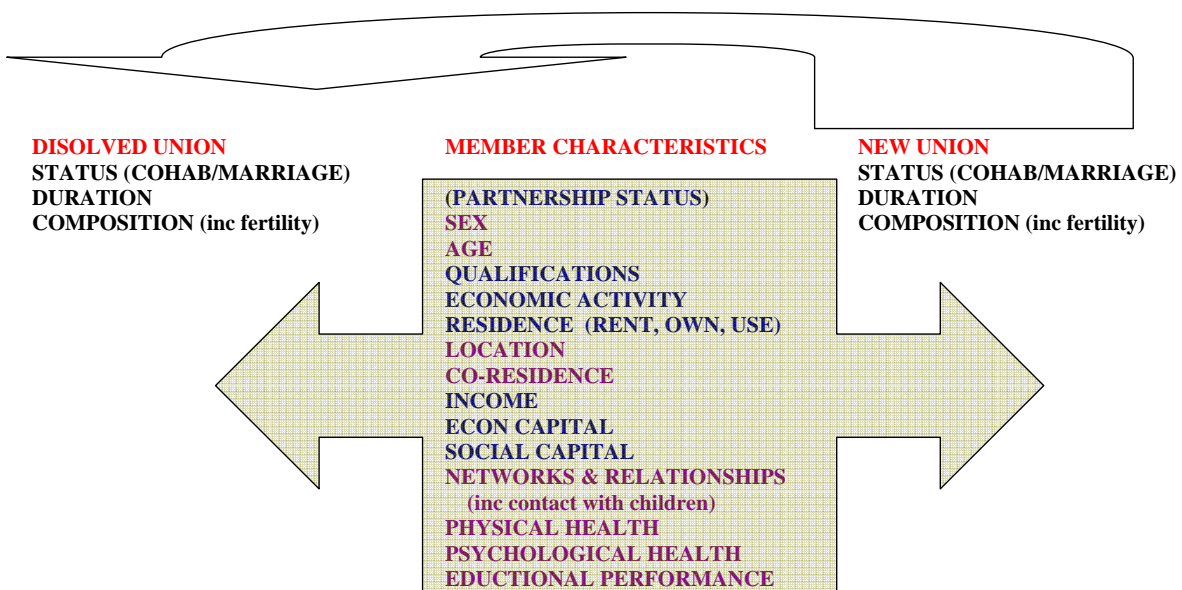
relationship to former partner and
children
new household arrangements
social networks
economic activity and resources
health

Inter -state or regional
differences,
Impact of overall divorce rate,
nature of family law, and social
policy.

(Diagram one)

Once we move beyond single parenthood analysis becomes much more complex.

Diagram two



Some findings from our literature review (ongoing)

- Risk of residing with children higher for women (single parenthood), especially mothers with girls, and for fathers of *older* children.
- Quality of relationship of non-resident parent with child deteriorates
- Likelihood of *non residential* intimate relationship higher for women
- Likelihood of forming new union much higher (+.05) for men, and for women *without* co-resident children (esp. young children).
- Likelihood of forming a new union, and velocity of such formation *declines* with age for both men and women, especially after 50.
- *Increases* with educational level, economic activity and social capital for *men*.
- Educational level and economic activity may have *negative* effects for women.
- Child, and more so young child, has *negative* effect on women but not men
- Better social networks increases likelihood of transition.
- Incidence of non resident **father's** contact with children subject to period increase, increases with income and education,
- *declines* with formation of new partnership for *father* and
- birth of children within it,
- *increases* with formation of new partnership for *mother* and
- birth of children within it No independent relationship to age for fathers.

- Men (not women) with *sons* from their first union experience a faster transition to a new union.
- Likelihood of conceiving children within new union *lower* for both men and women if there are children from their 1st union or co-resident children from a previous union of their new partner
- Intentions to conceive children within new union are lower if either partner has children from a previous union, but effect is much greater for *women*.
- Post dissolution female fertility depends on mother's age, on entry into new union (+) and lower age (<5) of any previous child.
- Social network social capital education and support are reinforcing

(METHODOLOGICAL) CONCLUSIONS & ISSUES

- After dissolution, household and family are no longer contiguous, and each person is a member of more than one family.
- Lack of symmetry between household and family complicates analysis
- Complexity of defining and following reconstituted families means we know less about women in reconstituted families, and in particular their role as social as opposed to biological mothers, in comparison to either single parent women or fathers in reconstituted families

- Limitation of transversal data sources that collect information only on *current* relationship status.
- Brief questions on past unions or conceptions and non resident family members would be extremely useful (e.g. have you ever been divorced)
- Only (relatively meagre) LONGITUDINAL data is of much use, and much of it is retrospective (e.g FFS; ESE 1991) or dated or both.

