

The transition of the sequencing of family life events in Europe: a cross-regional perspective

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NCCR LIVES – Overcoming vulnerability: life course perspectives

<http://mephisto.unige.ch/traminer>

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Outline

- 1 Aims of presentation
- 2 The data
- 3 Exploring the sequencing patterns

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Aims

- **Compare** Second Demographic Transition (SDT) in four (Southern, Eastern, Western, Northern) **European regions**
- Focus on **sequencing** of four family life events (LH, FU, FM, FP)
 - rather than timing of events and duration of states
- Demonstrate the potential of a new analysis tool: the decorated parallel coordinate plot (Bürgin and Ritschard, 2014)

Evolution of order with Second demographic transition

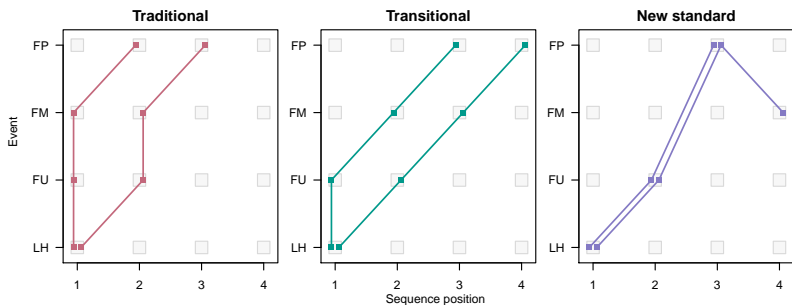
- SDT: new demographic behaviors such as single living, pre-marital cohabitation, delayed fertility, high prevalence of non-marital fertility and high rates of union disruption.
- SDT through the ordering of four family life events
 - (LH) Leaving Home
 - (FU) First Union
 - (FM) First Marriage
 - (FP) First Parenthood

Synchronized vs unsynchronized events

- For yearly data, time granularity is the **year**
- **Synchronized events**: occurring the same year
 - e.g., LH - FU means starting cohabiting the year when leaving home
- Elapsed time between unsynchronized events is ignored
 - e.g., FM -> FP means FP occurs one or more years after FM

Expected shifts in European family event sequences

Hypotheses: SDT, Shift through 3 patterns



Four regions

From previous studies, differences in family life trajectories between four regions

- Southern Europe (less advanced SDT)
- Eastern Europe
- Western Europe
- Northern Europe (most advanced SDT)

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Data

- Main source is 2006 European Social Survey (ESS)
 - Its Timing of Life module records our four events
 - We consider only cohorts 1938-1959 (> 46 years old or more)
 - 25 countries (with case numbers ranging from 995 for Cyprus to 2916 for Germany)
 - Lacks Italy
- Generation and gender program survey (GGP) (Rev. 4.1) for Italy (4751 cases)
- Two pieces of information per event:
 - Did you experience the event? And if yes, when?
- Respondents who did not answer for one of the four events were omitted.

Data

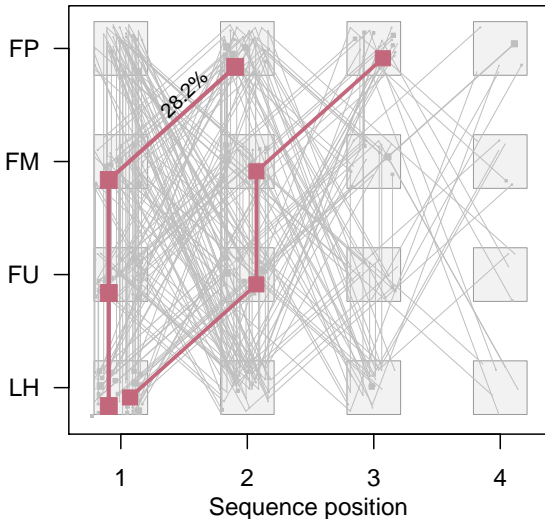
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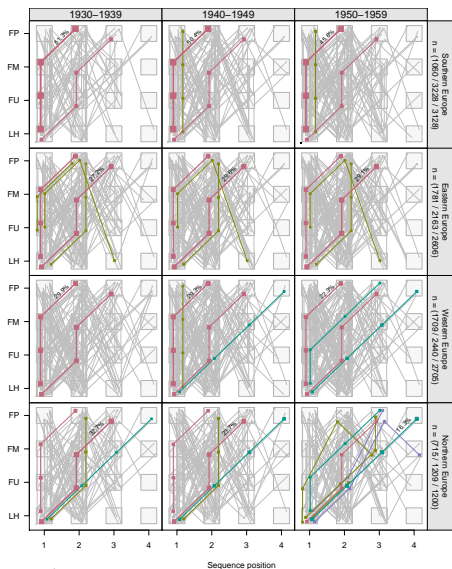
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Decorated parallel coordinate plot: Overall Europe

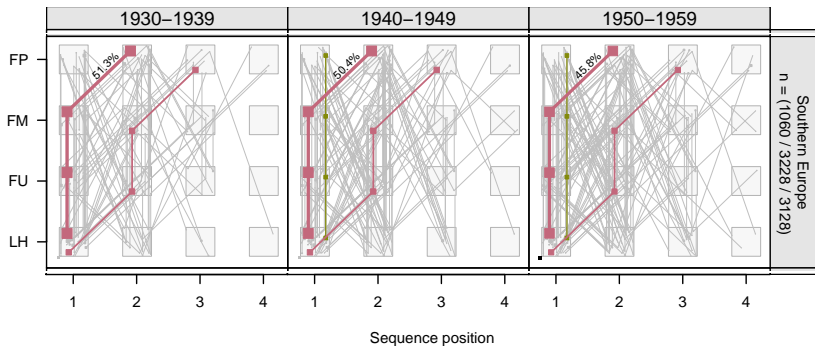
All regions, all cohorts



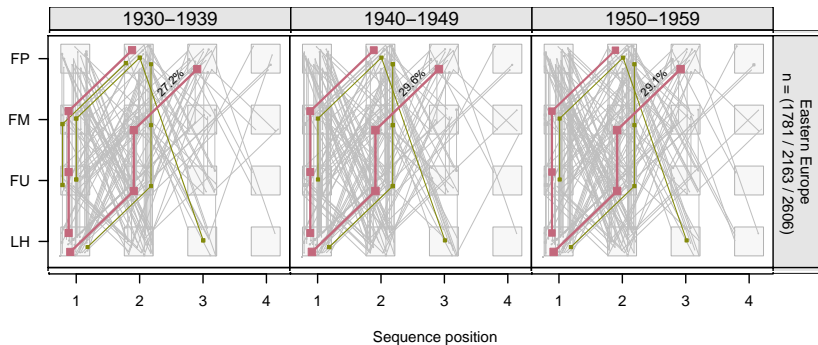
Family life sequences by regions and birth cohorts



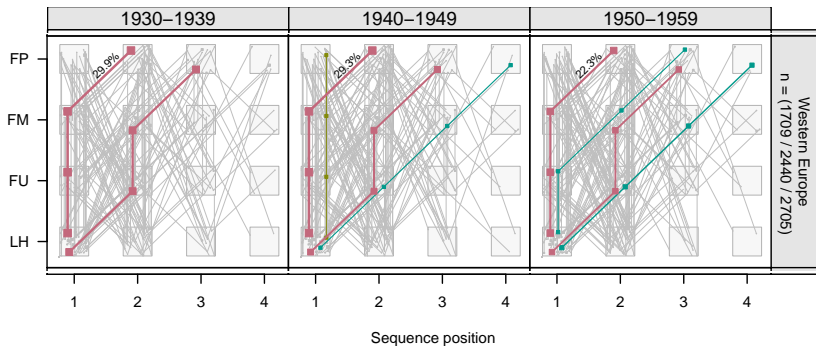
Southern Europe



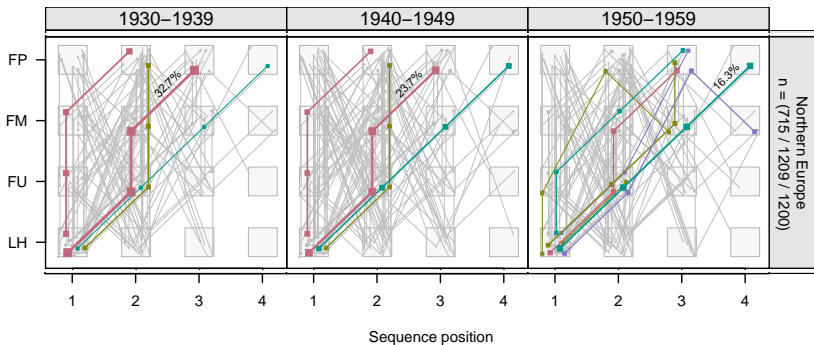
Eastern Europe



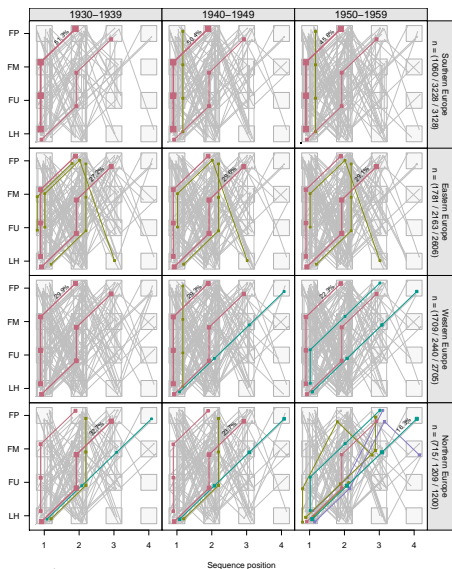
Western Europe



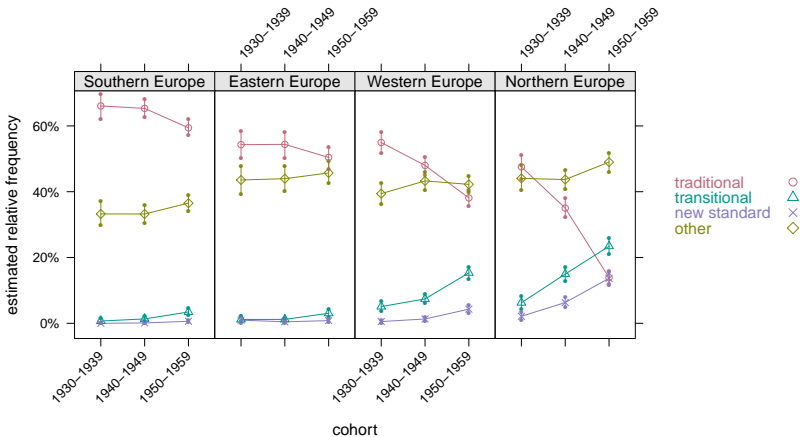
Northern Europe



Family life sequences by regions and birth cohorts

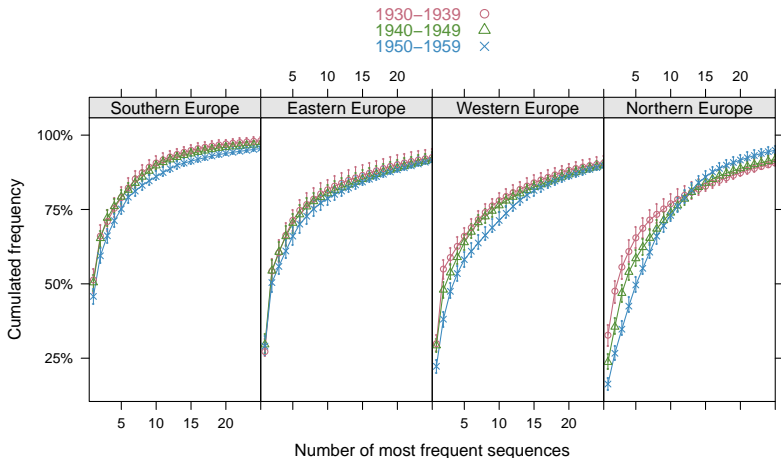


Frequencies of hypothesized event order patterns



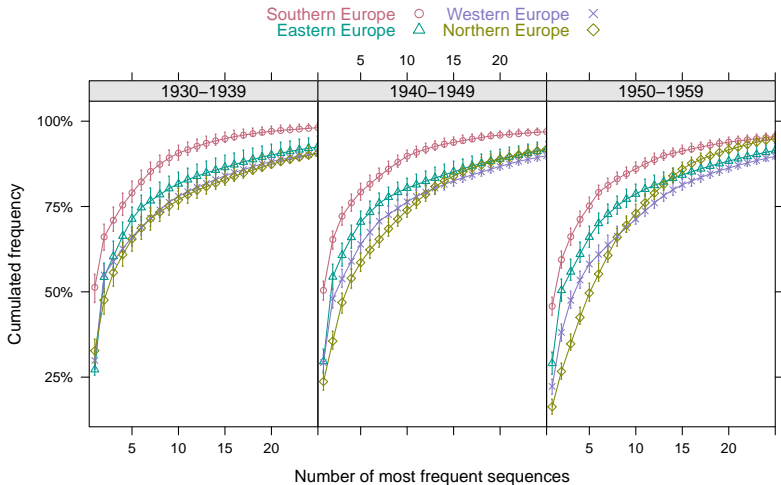
Cumulative frequencies of most frequent patterns

By region



Cumulative frequencies of most frequent patterns

By cohort



Conclusion

- Clear regional differences in the evolution of the family event sequencing.
 - Traditional model persists in Southern and Eastern Europe while decreasing more importantly in Western and Northern Europe
 - Frequent LH after FP in Eastern Europe
 - Emergence of Transitional model in Western Europe
 - Shift towards New Standard model in Northern Europe
- SDT more advanced in Northern Europe
- Towards multiple standards rather than unstandardized patterns.

Thank you!

References I

Bürgin, R. and G. Ritschard (2014). A decorated parallel coordinate plot for categorical longitudinal data. *The American Statistician* 68(2), 98–103.