

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

Reto Bürgin, Reto Schumacher and [Gilbert Ritschard](#)

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

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

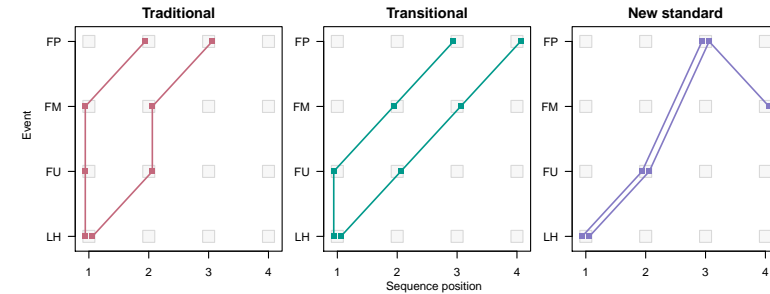
Synchronized vs unsynchronized events

- 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

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Expected shifts in European family event sequences

Hypotheses: SDT, Shift through 3 patterns



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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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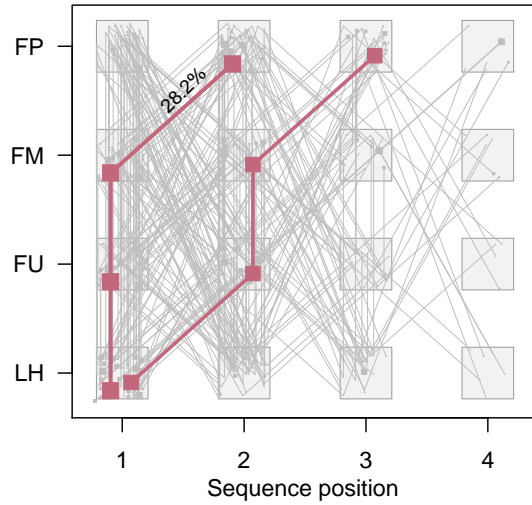
Data

- 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.

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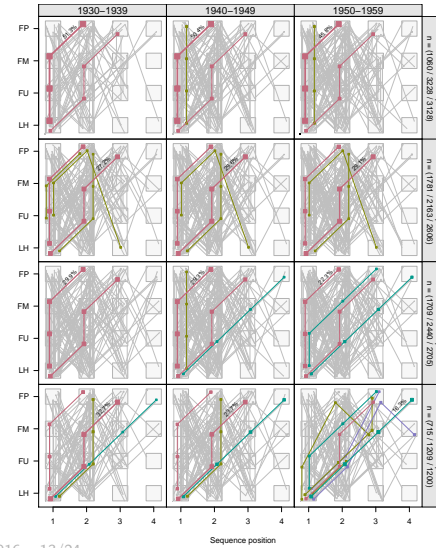
Decorated parallel coordinate plot: Overall Europe

All regions, all cohorts



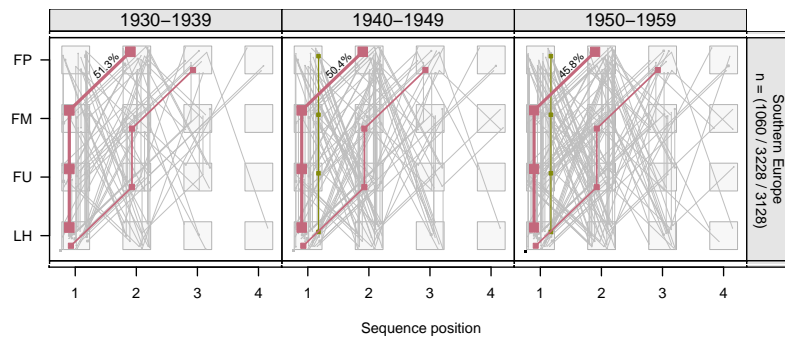
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Family life sequences by regions and birth cohorts



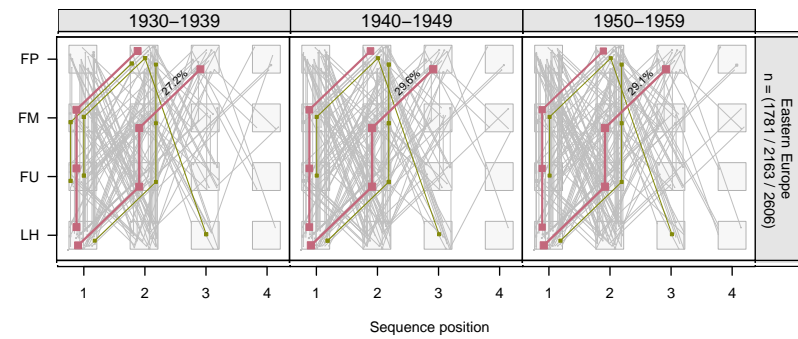
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Southern Europe



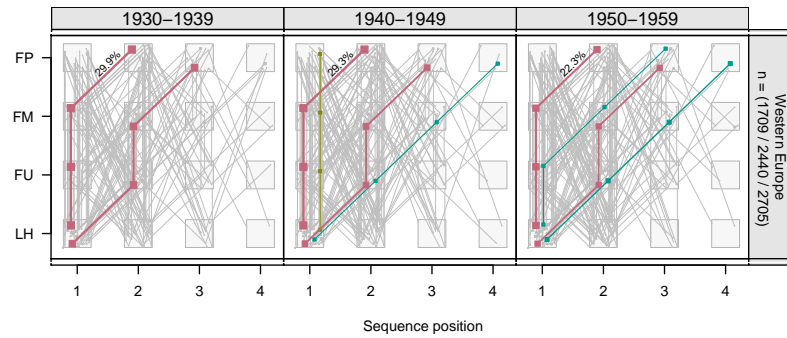
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Eastern Europe

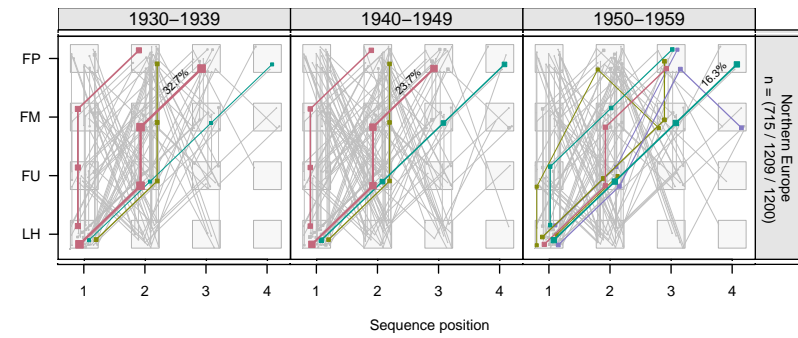


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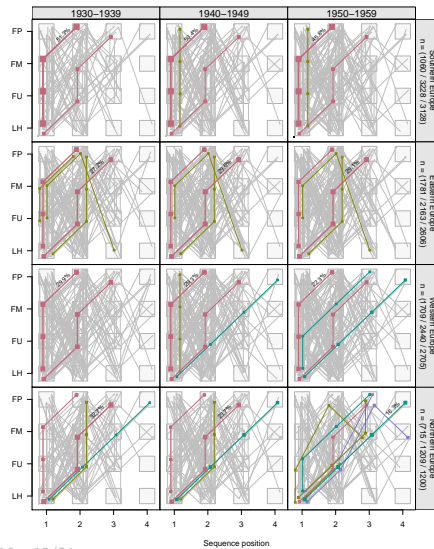
Western Europe



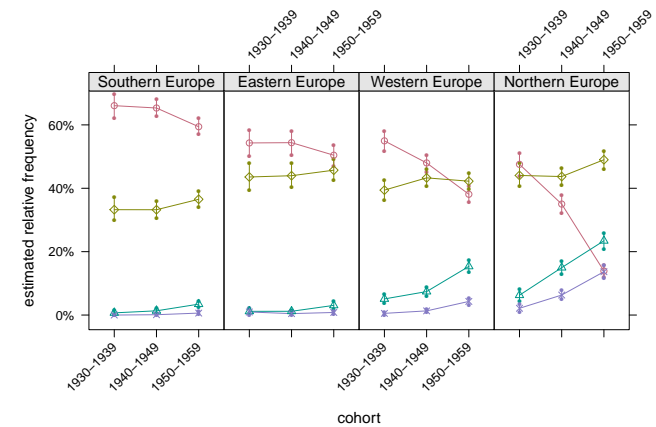
Northern Europe



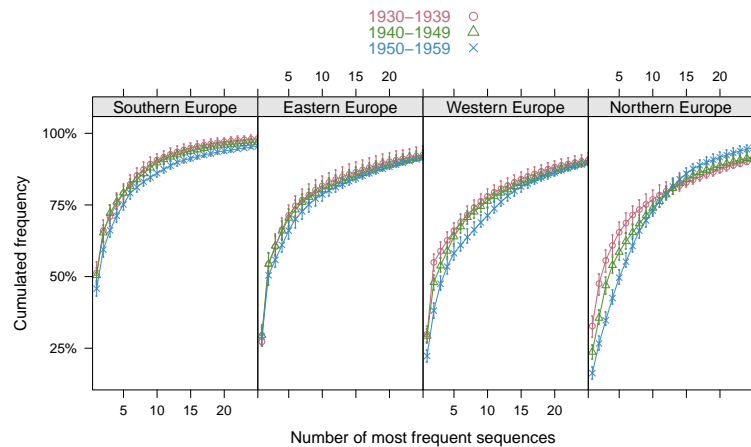
Family life sequences by regions and birth cohorts



Frequencies of hypothesized event order patterns

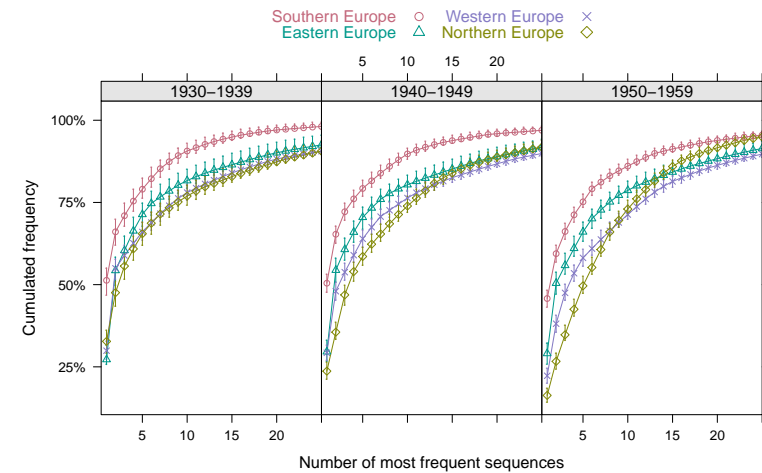


Cumulative frequencies of most frequent patterns By region



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Cumulative frequencies of most frequent patterns By cohort



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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.

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Thank you!

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References I

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