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Drop-out mayors and graduate farmers: Educational fertility differentials by occupational status and industry in six European countries

By [Bilal Barakat](#), [Rachel Durham](#)



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Abstract

Background: Understanding the relationship of education to fertility requires the disentangling of the potentially confounding effect of social status, which is highly correlated with education.

Objective: We contribute to this aim by examining educational fertility differentials within occupational groups and industries across a broad swath of Central and Eastern Europe, specifically Austria, Greece, Hungary, Romania, Slovenia, and Switzerland.

Methods: Cross-sectional individual-level census samples from the Integrated Public Use Microdata Series (IPUMS) are sufficiently large to contain sizeable numbers of unusual combinations, e.g., university graduates in low-status jobs or primary school dropouts in professional categories. Completed cohort fertility, as well as the share childless and with high parity, are regressed on effects for educational attainment, occupation, industry, and all their interactions within a Bayesian framework, and the contributions to the outcome variation are analysed.

Results: Education has a strong, consistent association with fertility outcomes when industry and occupation are held constant. Furthermore, fertility by industry and occupation yields fairly disparate patterns. We also find that differences in completed fertility across countries can be attributed to country-specific compositional differences in education, industry, and occupation, and to interaction effects. However, differences by country in the baseline rate of childlessness and high parity cannot be attributed to such compositional effects.

Conclusions: The educational fertility gradient in the settings studied cannot be attributed to an occupational composition effect.

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