

Fatherhood and Changes in Men's Second Union Formation in Norway, France and Hungary

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Abstract

We investigate the changing influence of fatherhood on the re-partnering of men in three European countries, building hypotheses for different subgroups of men on the three general arguments of need, attractiveness and opportunity. Data from the first wave of the Generations and Gender Survey for France (2005), Norway (2007/8) and Hungary (2004/5) are analysed using piecewise exponential event history models. The analysis complements earlier literature by focusing on men, taking a comparative perspective, looking at change over time, considering both cohabiting and marital unions, and also differentiating between residential and non-residential fatherhood. Findings show that the probability of re-partnering has not changed for childless men since the 1980s but it has increased for Norwegian fathers and for men with co-resident children in all the countries. Non-residential fatherhood has a negative effect in Hungary and France. Findings are discussed in view of country-specific family-related attitudes, child care policies and parenting practices.

Introduction

As part of past decades' profound changes in partnership behaviour, more and more people enter the "re-partnering market" after the dissolution of their first stable relationship and many of them already have children. In this context re-partnering offers a burgeoning area of research that could help us understand the implications of demographic change for family life (Sweeney 2010).

Most studies on re-partnering focus only on women and disregard men. It is usually women who are the main caretakers, and data on female fertility and partnerships is often more readily available, more complete and accurate than on males (Beaujouan 2011; Breton/Prioux 2009; Meggiolaro/Ongaro 2010). Moreover, it is mostly women who stay with the children after separation or divorce (de Graf/Kalmijn 2003; Poortman 2007; Wu/Schimmele 2005). In the present paper we focus on men for two main reasons. Firstly, men's and fathers' involvement in family life and child care has been documented to increase in a number of societies, while women's growing participation in the labour market has strained traditional gendered division of family responsibilities (Cabrera et al. 2000; Williams 2008). Secondly, many divorced or separated fathers do not live together with their children, with probably different effects on men's demographic behaviour after separation than on women's. This question is especially relevant because more and

more couples choose joint physical custody after union dissolution, thus more men will co-reside with their children on a part-time basis.

Regarding change over time, prior studies have found that the general rate of re-marriage has decreased, partly because many people establish a LAT or a non-married cohabiting union as their next relationship, and partly because more people stay single (Spijker/Solsona 2012). Most of these results apply to married unions and women; however, fewer studies focus also on cohabiting unions and men. Moreover, most studies suppose that the factors that affect re-partnering are constant in time.

The aim of the present study is to investigate how the effect of fatherhood on re-partnering has changed since the 1980s in three European societies, Hungary, France and Norway. We wish to complement previous research by focusing on change over time, analysing men, comparing different countries, and also taking re-partnering after a cohabiting union and cohabitations as second unions into consideration.

The three analysed countries, *France, Norway and Hungary* belong to different fertility regimes, divorce rates are similar, while significant differences can be found in attitudes and family policies, which may lead to different outcomes in re-partnering. While fertility in France and Norway is among the highest in Europe, with 1.99 and 1.96 total fertility rates in 2008, respectively, Hungary with its 1.35 total fertility rate belongs to the low fertility countries (VID 2010). Childlessness and non-marital births are somewhat less common in Hungary than in the other two countries (OECD 2011). In all of the three countries the institution of marriage has undergone significant changes, such as the postponement of marriage and decreasing marriage rates (Coleman 2013). Divorce rates are similar (around 0.5) in all of the three countries and more than half of them involve children. Only a small proportion of single-parent households include the father and his child(ren): this rate is higher in Norway (18%) than in France (14.7%) and Hungary (12.6%) (OECD 2011). The proportion of children placed in alternating residence after parental separation is around 10% in France and Norway (Council of Europe 2014) but negligible in Hungary (Weiss/Szeibert 2014). In all three countries separated parents have to contribute to the cost of raising a child by paying maintenance benefits. Courts are involved in determining child maintenance payments and there is no different arrangement between children of married or unmarried parents. There is considerable difference in the proportion of non-widowed sole-parent families receiving child maintenance in the three countries: it is 81 % in Norway, 46% in France and 40% in Hungary (OECD 2011). Re-marriage rates of the divorced population have decreased since the 1980s, partly because of the spread of cohabiting unions. In 2006 around 25-30% of divorced men re-married in the three countries (Spijker/Solsona 2012).

The following section provides the main theoretical considerations and empirical studies on men's re-partnering. We also present our hypotheses and describe relevant country differences. Subsequently, we move on to describing our data and methods, and finally we present and discuss our empirical findings.

Background and hypotheses

Parenthood status and custody arrangements are important aspects when looking at the re-partnering behaviour of separated and divorced men (de Graaf/Kalmijn 2003; Ivanova et al. 2013). Need, attractiveness, and opportunity are three general arguments that help understand how the

re-partnering behaviour of men with and without children may differ and change over time (Becker 1981; de Graaf/Kalmijn 2003; Goldscheider/Waite 1986; Oppenheimer 1988).

In this section we use the considerations of need, opportunity and attractiveness to present our expectations regarding the changing effect of fatherhood and the changing probability of re-partnering among different sub-groups: men in general, childless men, fathers in general, fathers with only non-resident children and fathers with at least one co-resident child. These expectations are summarised in Table 1. We suppose that they apply to all the three countries if not otherwise indicated. We add country-specific arguments when we suppose that the expected relationship does not hold for all the examined societies.

*Table 1
Expected changes in the effect of fatherhood and the chances of re-partnering for different sub-groups based on the considerations of need, opportunity and attractiveness*

	<i>Need</i>	<i>Opportunity</i>	<i>Attractiveness</i>	<i>Chances of re-partnering</i>
<i>Men in general</i>	Men develop skills for housework and child care; singlehood is more accepted → decreasing need	The number of single women has increased → increasing opportunity	No change	No change
<i>Childless men</i>	Childlessness has become more accepted → decreasing need for re-partnering in order to become fathers	The number of single women has increased → increasing opportunity	No change	No change
<i>Fathers</i>	Men have become more involved in child care → decreasing need	Increasing number of single mothers → increasing opportunity Increasing involvement with children → decreasing opportunity	Increasing acceptability of childlessness; being already a father as a sign of child- and family-centred attitudes and fecundity → increasing attractiveness	No change
<i>Father with only non-resident children</i>	Already have children → decreasing need	Increasing involvement with children → decreasing opportunity	Involved fatherhood as the new expectation → decreasing attractiveness	Decreasing probability to re-partner
<i>Fathers with co-resident children</i>	Men have become more involved in child care → decreasing need	Increasing involvement with children → decreasing opportunity Increasing help from the welfare state and widely available child care institutions → increasing opportunity	Being perceived as a “good father”, involved fatherhood → increasing attractiveness	Increasing probability to re-partner

The first basic argument is that people enter a union because it improves their emotional, financial or social well-being, and the greater their *need* in these respects, the more likely they are to re-partner. We assume that the emotional need to re-partner is constant across genders, social groups and time. The financial need for re-partnering is probably less relevant for men than for women due

to the gender role expectation that men should provide for themselves. However, other domains like domestic work may play a role.

Studies that consider longitudinal trends in men's and women's time on housework and childcare show a slow convergence between the two sexes (Bianchi et al. 2006; Neilson/Stanfors 2014). Since men have become more likely to develop the necessary skills for reconciling the responsibilities of paid work, household tasks and child care, their need for re-partnering may have decreased. This pattern can be more visible in Norway, where fathers are expected to play a more active role in their children's upbringing (Ellingsæter et al. 2013), and less visible in Hungary, where the traditional family model is still dominant (Hobson/Fahlén 2009; Murinkó 2014).

Changing social norms and expectations also point towards a decreasing need to re-partner. Alternative living arrangements, such as being single or living apart together relationships have become more common and accepted (Lesthaeghe 2010). Consequently, fewer and fewer people may establish a new union only to fulfil social expectations.

Relationship with children may take priority over a new couple relationship, thus decrease the need to re-partner among fathers. A new partner may be viewed as a source of extra demands and a disruption in the relationship between father and children (Lampard/Peggs 1999). Conversely, men without children may need a new relationship more than fathers if they want to have children (Lampard/Peggs 1999). However, the prevalence and social acceptance of childlessness have increased in the recent decades (Merz/Liefbroer 2012), so the need to re-partner in order to become a father might have decreased as well. Merz and Liefbroer (2012) found that the approval of voluntary childlessness was lower in Eastern-European countries including Hungary (with a disapproval rate over 50%) than in Western European countries including Norway and France. Thus the need of childless men to re-partner is probably higher and has decreased less in Hungary than in the other two countries.

The second argument is that the probability of re-partnering depends on the *opportunity* to meet potential partners. Opportunities to find a new partner probably play a greater role in the case of second than first unions because re-partnering market may be less effective for separated or divorced people due to their lower level of social integration (Kalmijn/Uunk 2007). Compared to younger singles, they are probably less involved in typical marriage markets such as schools, voluntary associations and leisure locations. The number of single people at later ages is limited, especially for women, because men partner somewhat younger women and at later ages there are more women than men (de Graaf/Kalmijn 2003; Wu/Schimmele 2005). However, more and more people terminate their first unions, so the number of people searching for new partners has increased in all of the examined countries which increase their opportunities (de Graaf/Kalmijn 2003; Ivanova et al. 2013). Separated fathers probably do not have a strong preference against re-partnering with lone mothers, further enlarging their potential pool of new partners.

Re-partnering for divorced and separated parents is more difficult than for their childless counterparts because parents might go out less often, especially when the children are still young and the parent is more involved with child care activities (Munch et al. 1997). It may negatively affect fathers' chances of re-partnering, even if they do not live with the children. However, the increasing supply of childcare facilities makes it easier for lone fathers (especially for those with resident children) to re-partner. Child care institutions are one of the possible places to meet potential partners, and parents whose children are in school or child care also have somewhat more time. In Norway and France there is almost practically universal coverage in enrolment of formal

child care for pre-school children. In Hungary the enrolment of children under 3 is only 10.9% but it is 86.7% for children aged between 3 and 5 (OECD 2011). In Hungary coverage declined gradually after 1983, it dropped sharply during the early 1990s, and a steady improvement started only in the early 2000s (Blaskó – Gábos 2012). In France and Norway childcare facilities have gradually developed since the beginning of the 1980s (European Commission 2009). In the French welfare system transfers to parents are generous and childcare is relatively well subsidised (Toulemon/de Guibert-Lantoine, 1998). Norwegian family policy has gradually expanded from only supporting mothers' employment to also emphasising father's involvement in childcare. In spite of the fact that dual earner families are common in all of the three countries, the dual carer model is only widespread in Norway (Letablier 2013; Róbert et al. 2001). At the same time Hungarian mothers can count on less help from the state and from the fathers of their children, and the reconciliation of family responsibilities and paid work is the most difficult there (Fodor et al. 2002; Szalma/Matysiak 2012; Saxonberg/Sirovatka 2006; Spéder 2011). Norway is one of the countries with the smallest difference between the two genders regarding reproductive health, empowerment and the labour market, while Hungary is among those countries where women are considerably less equal than men, and France is situated in between (Human Development Report 2014).

The third argument is that re-partnering prospects depend on how *attractive* a person is to the opposite sex¹. Fatherhood may have two contradictory effects. On the one hand, it reflects the man's experience with, and interest in, children. Being perceived as a "good father" (or being able to father a child) increases men's attractiveness for potential partners (Goldscheider/Sassler 2006; Prioux 2006; Stewart et al. 2003; Wu/Schimmele 2005). Fathers whose children reside with them demonstrate the highest level of involvement (Stewart et al. 2003). Having children might also make a man more attractive in cases when the prospective female partner is older and childless but still would like to have a family (Lampard/Peggs 1999). The attractiveness of divorced fathers has probably increased also because public opinion has become more permissive to divorce and separation when young children are involved and divorced people are less and less stigmatised (Liefbroer/Fokkema 2008; Scott 2006). Conversely, it is possible that fathers who do not live with their children after separation, at least on a part-time basis, fail to live up to the emerging expectation of involved fatherhood and thus have become less attractive for potential partners.

On the other hand, potential partners may be less interested in someone who already has children, either because prior children can serve as a source of conflict in the new relationship, or because such a person is less likely to want to have additional children (Meggiolaro/Ongaro 2008). A potential partner may also expect the child to be a financial burden and a competitor for the attention, affection and time of the partner (Stewart et al. 2003). Rearing children requires substantial time and financial investment, especially from those parents who live with their young children (Becker 1981; Gauthier/Hatzius 1997; Ongaro et al. 2009; Zagheni/Zannella 2013). We expect that there has been no change in the degree of viewing children from the previous relationship as a potential source of conflict. Moreover, the attractiveness of childless men probably has not changed either.

Considering the contrasting implications of fatherhood for re-partnering, it is not surprising that the empirical results are not conclusive. These mixed results might be due to the different methods used, the different conceptualisations of union and parenthood status, and the different contextual background of the examined countries. It is also possible that the role of fatherhood have changed over time.

¹ Here we only consider heterosexual relationships.

Some studies found no relationship between having children and re-partnering for men in Canada (Wu 1994), France, Germany, Romania and the Russian Federation (Ivanova et al. 2013). Others found a negative association in the U.S. (Sweeney 1997), the Netherlands (de Graaf/Kalmijn 2003; Poortman 2007) and Norway (Ivanova et al. 2013). A number of studies found that fathers re-partner faster than non-fathers. Stewart et al. (2003) found a positive association between having and being involved with non-resident children and the formation of non-marital union in the U.S.; Wu and Schimmele (2005) found the same in Canada. Goldscheider and Sassler (2006) for Sweden and Barre (2003) for France found a positive relationship between men having co-residential children and union formation. Studies that differentiate between having co-resident and non-resident children showed that not parenthood itself but the presence of children in the household slows down re-partnering (Bernhardt and Goldscheider 2002 for Sweden, Földházi 2010 for Hungary, Beaujouan 2012 for France, and Ivanova et al. 2013 for France, Germany, Norway, Romania and Russia).

Based on the above considerations, we have formulated the following hypotheses:

1. The probability of men to re-partner has not changed.
2. The probability of childless men to re-partner has not changed.
3. The probability of fathers to re-partner has not changed.
4. The probability of re-partnering has decreased for fathers with only non-resident children.
5. The probability of re-partnering has increased for fathers with at least one co-resident child.

There are some country-specific characteristics that may modify the above hypotheses. Firstly, Norwegian men actively participate in childrearing; their share of child care tasks and time spent with children is relatively high in a European comparison (Craig 2005; Murinkó 2014). The Norwegian policy context explicitly encourages gender equality in parenting and fathers' involvement in child care, even after parental separation. The "father-friendly welfare state" makes it easier for non-resident parents to maintain contact with their children. For example travel costs of visits must be shared between the parents and maintenance payments of a parent can be reduced on account of visitation with the child (Skevik 2003, 2006). The relatively high rate of union dissolution, the general availability of child care institutions and the relatively liberal family and gender role attitudes of the Norwegian population may also play a role. Secondly, all international comparisons show that Hungarians are very family- and child-centred and they prefer traditional family models (Hobson/Fahlén 2009; Murinkó 2014; Oláh 2011; Saxonberg/Sirovatka 2006; Szalma 2010). For example, 74% of Hungarians and 59% of the French agree with the statement that a man has to have children in order to be fulfilled, while less than 10% of the Norwegian respondents think the same (data from Generations and Gender Survey, 2007/8 and 2004/5, authors' calculations). Child care institutions are less available and men's involvement in domestic tasks is lower in Hungary than in France and Norway.

These differences between the three examined countries probably affect the need, opportunity and attractiveness of men and fathers. However, it is hard to assess how these differences will manifest in the re-partnering behaviour of men in the three countries. Therefore we do not formulate country-specific hypotheses at this point, but we will refer back to these differences when discussing our results.

Data and methods

For the empirical analysis we use data from the first wave of the *Generations and Gender Survey* (GGS) for France (2005), Norway (2007/8) and Hungary (2004/5). The country surveys comprise of nationally representative samples of the population aged 18-79, focusing on family, fertility, partnerships, health, ageing and related attitudes. The data set includes complete fertility and partnership histories with monthly information. Individual weights adjust the distributions by gender, age and place of residence.

The sample that we used for the analysis includes men aged 50 or less² whose first (heterosexual) relationship ended in 1980 or later. The risk period starts when the first union ends, is censored at interview or when the respondent becomes 50. The number of cases is summarised in Table 2.

Table 2
Number of cases

	Original sample size	Analysis sample, number of persons	events	person-months
France	10 079	884	355	6 676
Hungary	13 540	884	368	5 165
Norway	14 481	1 641	854	11 054

In our study *partnership* is defined as either marriage or unmarried cohabitation that lasted for at least three months. Living apart together and other possible partnership forms are not taken into account. Partnership dissolution is defined as either when the couple stopped living together or when they officially got divorced, whichever happened earlier. When looking at re-partnering, so far most studies have disregarded people whose first long-term union was non-marital and/or who did not get married with their second partner (for exceptions, see: Beaujouan 2012 and Wu/Schimmele 2005). Releasing these restrictions is an important contribution to the literature, considering that about every second child is born outside marriage in the three examined countries (OECD 2011).

Our main explanatory variable is *parenthood status* of the male respondent. Several alternatives for the parenthood status variables have been tested. The simplest approach is to use a dummy variable (whether someone has any children or not), and there are several other possibilities that previous research has found to be useful predictors. We may make a distinction by the number of children, their residential status or age. The variables may either refer to the start of the risk period (time-constant) or they may be dynamic. Moreover, these criteria may be combined. We had to make a compromise between maximising information and minimising complexity. Different regression models (results not shown) indicate that the major distinctions are between having any children or not and whether any of the children live with the respondent. The age of the children only marginally matters, and moreover, only few people with children above 18 are included in the two subsamples.

In the regression models we use two parenthood status variables. The first one differentiates between fathers and childless men. The second one further differentiates between cases (time periods) when at least one of the children is co-resident and cases when all children live somewhere

² We limit the age of men in the sample to 50 because we are mainly interested in re-partnering while the man has children under 18. We are aware that having children of any age may affect re-partnering but we believe that the mechanisms are different in the case of adult and under-age children. Studying the effect of having adult children (or even grandchildren) would require a different study.

else. If parents share physical child custody after separation, both parents report that they live together with the child³, so children are treated as living with the father also when parents share physical custody and they spend some of the time with the mother.⁴ The second parental status variable is dynamic in the sense that we keep track of children entering or leaving the parental home. However, we do not allow changes in the number of children who were born from previous or other relationships.

Three sets of *models* were tested. The first one looks at how the general probability of re-partnering has changed for men. Thus they include no interaction between period and fatherhood status and the dummy parenthood status variable is used only as a control. The second set of models tests if the effect of fatherhood on re-partnering has changed, consequently the dummy parenthood status variable is interacted with period. And finally, the third set of models differentiates between men with co-resident and only non-resident children to see if these groups are affected and have changed differently. Event history analysis with piecewise exponential models is used.

The other control variables are the same in all the models. They include period (calendar year) and age at the end of the first union, time since the end of the first relationship (dynamic variable), length and type of the first partnership, and level of education of the respondent. Independent variables are summarised in the Appendices (Tables 5).

Our analytic approach and the data pose some *limitations* to the analysis. Firstly, couples with (small) children are less likely to separate than childless ones (Andersson 1997; Waite/Lillard 1991), so they are probably under-represented among divorced and separated men. Moreover, we have no information on a possibly important factor that men and women consider when they re-partner: fertility intentions. People who want (more) children, people who are satisfied with their current number of children or intentionally childless people may select a partner with complementary intentions. And thirdly, since we focus on change and the difference between having co-resident and non-resident children, we cannot take factors like the number and the age of children into account.

Results

In the empirical part of the paper we look at how parenthood status affects the partnership behaviour of men after the dissolution of the first cohabiting partnership or marriage. First we present some descriptive results, then the regression analyses.

Table 3 shows some *characteristics of men* aged below 50 after the dissolution of their first union. These men typically were in the beginning of their 30s. On average, their first union lasted for 7–8 years, even though the distribution is large. Two thirds of these relationships were marriages in Hungary, while only 38% were marriages in France and Norway.

³ A child is co-resident with the respondent if he listed the child as a member of his household. According to the questionnaire manual, “[a] household consists of persons who live in the same dwelling-unit for at least four days in a normal week over a period of at least three months. In addition to them, there are dependent children with joint custody, and others who mainly live in the same dwelling-unit, but study or work at non-daily commuting distances or are temporarily in hospital, jail or military service. Visitors whose main place of residence is somewhere else do not belong to the household” (Vikat et al. 2005: 5). Non-resident children include all biological or adopted children who are not listed as household members.

⁴ Our data do not make it possible to differentiate between full-time and shared paternal custody.

About every second men whose first stable relationship ended has children – this rate is the highest in Hungary. In all the three countries about half of the fathers have one child, one third have two children, and only every fifth separated or divorced father has three or more children. After separation about every fourth French and Hungarian and every third Norwegian men lived together with at least one of their children. Compared to the number of fathers, co-residential parenting is the most common in Norway, where 73% of fathers live with their children right after separation. The corresponding figures are 59% and 44% in France and Hungary, respectively. The ratio of separated men who have only non-resident children is lower in Norway (13%) and in France (19%) than in Hungary (31%).

About half of the men in our sample found a new partner before they turned 50. Re-partnering was the most likely in Norway (55.4%) and less likely in France (43.7%) and Hungary (46.3%).

Table 3
Characteristics of men at the end of the first union

	France		Hungary		Norway	
	mean	SD	mean	SD	mean	SD
Length of the first union (years)	7.3	6.6	8.3	7.1	7.4	6.8
1st union was marriage (%)	37.9		67.4		38.3	
Age (years)	31.1	7.7	31.5	8.0	31.0	7.7
Has child(ren) (%)	45.7		54.6		46.6	
Has at least one co-resident child (%)	27.0		23.9		33.9	
Has only non-resident child(ren) (%)	18.7		30.7		12.7	
Number of children (among fathers)	1.83	0.96	1.64	0.88	1.76	0.83

Table 4 summarises the results of the three sets of *event history models* for the three countries. The detailed numerical results can be found in the Appendices (Tables 6-8).

Regarding the re-partnering of men in general, there has been no significant change in France and Hungary, however, the probability of re-partnering seems to have decreased in the latter country. Contrastingly, the chances of finding a new partner have significantly increased between the 1980s and the 1990s in Norway but have not changed thereafter.

If we look at the difference between fathers and childless men, we can see that the likelihood of re-partnering has not changed for men without children in any of the countries since the 1980s. In France there has been no change in any of the two groups and having fatherhood in general does not influence re-partnering. In Norway fathers have become more likely to enter a new union. Hungarian fathers experienced a temporary drop in their chances of re-partnering in the 1990s. This finding may be explained by the fact that the life circumstances (income, material deprivation, well-being, social network, physical and mental health) of divorced fathers greatly deteriorated after the transition of 1989, while men with families have experienced improving conditions (Vukovich 2006).

In Norway there is no difference between separated fathers who live together with their children and who do not in their chances of re-partnering: both groups have experienced increasing probabilities, especially in the latest period. In Hungary the drop of the 1990s affected both groups of fathers; afterwards, the likelihood of re-partnering has increased among Hungarian men with co-resident children. In France the effect of having co-resident children has changed from negative to positive, and there has been a non-significant decrease for men with non-resident children in the 2000s. To put it differently, fathers with co-resident children find a new partner more easily in the new millennium than before in all the three countries. Norwegian fathers with only non-resident

children have also increased their chances of re-partnering. Non-residential fatherhood has rather become an obstacle to re-partnering in France and Hungary, even though the differences are not significant.

Table 4

Summary of changes in the chances of re-partnering and the effect of fatherhood for different sub-groups in Norway, France and Hungary (regression results; also see the Appendices)

	<i>Norway</i>	<i>France</i>	<i>Hungary</i>
<i>Men in general</i>	Increase between the 1980s and the 1990s, no change later	No change	Non-significant gradual decrease
<i>Childless men</i>	No change	No change	No change
<i>Fathers</i>	Gradual increase, positive effect since the 1990s	No change, no effect	Temporary decrease and negative effect in the 1990s
<i>Father with only non-resident children</i>	Gradual increase, positive effect since the 1990s	Non-significant negative effect in the 2000s	Decrease and negative effect in the 1990s, non-significant negative effect in the 2000s
<i>Fathers with co-resident children</i>	Gradual increase, positive effect since the 1990s	Gradual increase, significant positive effect in the 2000s	Decrease and negative effect in the 1990s, increase and positive effect in the 2000s

Discussion

The present study aimed at enriching our understanding of the re-partnering process of men. We analysed how parenthood status affects re-partnering after the dissolution of the first union in France, Norway and Hungary. We used data from the Generations and Gender Survey and performed event history regression analysis.

We formulated several hypotheses for the changing chances of re-partnering and the effect of fatherhood status. These hypotheses were based on the three general considerations of need, attractiveness and opportunity. However, we did not (and could not) test the effect and importance of these three dimensions directly. Instead, we looked at the overall picture and used the three consideration to explain unexpected results and country differences.

The results of our empirical analysis confirmed some of our hypotheses. Only minor changes took place for men in general: there has been an increase among Norwegian men between the 1980s and the 1990s and a non-significant but visible decrease among Hungarian men. Hypothesis 1 was confirmed for France, where the chances of re-partnering has not changed among men aged 50 or below. Norwegian men may find a new partner easier than one or two decades ago because of their increasing opportunities (increasing instability of unions, increasing number of potential partners, father-friendly welfare state) and the growing attractiveness of involved Norwegian fathers.

Results confirmed hypothesis 2 for all the three countries: there has been no change among childless men. Their chances of re-partnering probably depend on such factors that are stable on time, such as emotional need, or changed in one dimension are counterbalanced by changes in another one.

Hypothesis 3 concerned the unchanged probability of re-partnering of men and it was confirmed for only France. Contrary to our expectations, the likelihood of re-partnering has changed in Norway and Hungary: it has increased in the former country and it has temporarily decreased in the latter society in the 1990s. Changes in Norway may be explained by the trends that we summarised above

(in relation to hypothesis 1). The temporarily decreasing re-partnering probability of Hungarian men in the 1990s was probably due to the abrupt and drastic social and economic changes that took place after the transition of 1989.

We found a non-significant negative effect of non-residential fatherhood in France and Hungary in the 2000s and a significant negative impact in Hungary in the 1990s (Hypothesis 4). For Norwegian fathers it has become easier to find a new partner, regardless of the residential situation of the children.

Hypothesis 5 was confirmed: having co-resident children has an increasingly positive influence on the re-partnering of fathers. This positive effect appeared the earliest in Norway, followed by the other two countries in the new millennium.

Fatherhood had a significant negative effect on re-partnering only in Hungary and only in the 1990s, and the effect of co-residential fatherhood has even become positive in the new millennium. This lack of negative impact is in contrast with findings regarding the re-partnering of lone mothers and also some of the results on men (e.g. de Graaf/Kalmijn 2003; Poortman 2007; Sweeney 1997) but it is in line with some other results (e.g. Wu 1994 and Ivanova et al. 2013 – except for Norway). The “good father” effect (Goldscheider/Sassler 2006; Prioux 2006; Wu/Schimmerle 2005) and changing attitudes towards divorce and separation (Liefbroer/Fokkema 2008) may play an important role in this trend.

The finding that the rate of re-partnering of men with co-resident children has increased coincides with the result of Bernhardt and Goldscheider (2002) – the only other study that has examined the changing effect of fatherhood status on re-partnering. As they put it, “[t]his increase may reflect the greater willingness of some women to care for ‘someone else’s’ children; men’s lack of increase, in contrast, suggests men’s continued resistance to having to support them” (Bernhardt/Goldscheider 2002: 295). However, the question of how single fatherhood affects the life course of men clearly requires more scholarly attention.

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Appendices

Table 5
Exposure and occurrence table of the independent variables by country

	<i>France</i>		<i>Hungary</i>		<i>Norway</i>	
	<i>Person-month</i>	<i>Event</i>	<i>Person-month</i>	<i>Event</i>	<i>Person-month</i>	<i>Event</i>
Parenthood status						
No children	35045	203	25736	195	65446	460
At least one co-resident child	9632	58	11223	76	27302	243
Only non-resident child(ren)	17273	94	24991	97	23814	150
Period of the end of the first union						
1980-1989	26747	118	31373	164	48642	272
1990-1999	28016	180	25513	155	50652	408
2000-2008	7188	56	5065	50	17268	173
Age at the end of the first union						
< 25	16568	100	14033	126	29556	237
25-29	16477	110	16700	110	34381	275
30-34	14495	74	16391	61	23309	163
35-39	8141	34	7489	43	17667	94
40-49	6269	37	7337	27	11649	85
Time since the end of the first union						
< 1 year	9667	99	9461	145	18473	164
1-2 years	7865	82	7497	81	15165	187
2-3 years	6613	45	6276	36	12501	130
3-5 years	14303	91	14190	69	27169	235
5+ years	23503	38	24526	37	43254	137
Length of first partnership						
0-6 years	37121	202	34147	238	75031	555
7+ years	24829	153	27803	130	41532	298
Type of first partnership						
Cohabitation	36917	215	17025	135	71367	520
Cohabitation, then marriage	14255	86	7264	42	31118	235
Direct marriage	10778	54	37662	191	14077	99
Level of education						
Primary	15774	68	11457	56	32632	199
Secondary	30548	179	40308	237	40454	327
Tertiary	15628	108	10186	75	43477	328

Table 6
Determinants of the re-partnering of men after the dissolution of their first relationship: General change

	<i>France</i>	<i>Hungary</i>	<i>Norway</i>
Period at the end of the first union			
1980-1989	(ref.)	(ref.)	(ref.)
1990-1999	1.135	0.851	1.301 **
2000-2008	0.953	0.767	1.305 *
Parenthood status			
Had no children	(ref.)	(ref.)	(ref.)
Had child(ren)	0.968	0.865	1.248 *
Age at the end of the first union			
< 25	1.895 **	2.025 **	1.361 *
25-29	1.813 **	1.661 **	1.267 *
30-34	(ref.)	(ref.)	(ref.)
35-39	0.759	1.295	0.678 **
40-49	0.746	0.679	0.695 *
Time since the end of the first union			
< 1 year	(ref.)	(ref.)	(ref.)
1-2 years	1.022	0.706 **	1.389 **
2-3 years	0.663 *	0.376 ***	1.181
3-5 years	0.616 **	0.318 ***	0.993
5+ years	0.152 ***	0.090 ***	0.370 ***
Length of first partnership			
0-6 years	(ref.)	(ref.)	(ref.)
7+ years	1.707 **	1.052	1.074
Type of first partnership			
Cohabitation	0.888	0.941	0.872
Cohabitation, then marriage	1.049	0.996	0.999
Direct marriage	(ref.)	(ref.)	(ref.)
Level of education			
Primary	0.826	0.903	0.840
Secondary	(ref.)	(ref.)	(ref.)
Tertiary	1.102	1.166	1.013
Intercept	0.006 ***	0.013 ***	0.007 ***
Log likelihood	-1016.9	-1072.7	-2081.4

Notes: regression results, discrete-time event history analyses; relative risks; significance: ***p<0.001 **p<0.01 *p<0.05 †p<0.1

Table 7

Determinants of the re-partnering of men after the dissolution of their first relationship: Difference in change among fathers and childless men

	France	Hungary	Norway
Period at the end of the first union (had no children)			
1980-1989	(ref.)	(ref.)	(ref.)
1990-1999	1.107	1.078	1.136
2000-2008	0.895	0.804	0.995
Parenthood status (in 1980-1989)			
Had no children	(ref.)	(ref.)	(ref.)
Had child(ren)	0.919	1.052	0.975
Parenthood status & period			
Had child(ren) & 1990-1999	1.057	0.605 †	1.316 †
Had child(ren) & 2000-2008	1.175	0.985	1.901 **
Age at the end of the first union			
< 25	1.912 **	2.043 **	1.394 *
25-29	1.826 **	1.653 **	1.300 *
30-34	(ref.)	(ref.)	(ref.)
35-39	0.760	1.354	0.694 *
40-49	0.743	0.713	0.695 *
Time since the end of the first union			
< 1 year	(ref.)	(ref.)	(ref.)
1-2 years	1.021	0.707 *	1.390 **
2-3 years	0.662 *	0.378 ***	1.179
3-5 years	0.616 **	0.320 ***	0.989
5+ years	0.152 ***	0.091 ***	0.367 ***
Length of first partnership			
0-6 years	(ref.)	(ref.)	(ref.)
7+ years	1.716 **	1.057	1.052
Type of first partnership			
Cohabitation	0.881	0.925	0.849
Cohabitation, then marriage	1.040	1.023	0.978
Direct marriage	(ref.)	(ref.)	(ref.)
Level of education			
Primary	0.821	0.885	0.833
Secondary	(ref.)	(ref.)	(ref.)
Tertiary	1.105	1.168	0.998
Intercept	0.007 ***	0.012 ***	0.008 ***
Log likelihood	-1016.8	-1070.1	-2076.2

Notes: regression results, discrete-time event history analyses; relative risks; significance: ***p<0.001 **p<0.01 *p<0.05 †p<0.1

Table 8

Determinants of the re-partnering of men after the dissolution of their first relationship: Difference in change among fathers with co-resident and non-resident children

	France	Hungary	Norway
Period at the end of the first union (no children)			
1980-1989	(ref.)	(ref.)	(ref.)
1990-1999	1.104	1.076	1.137
2000-2008	0.890	0.803	0.996
Parenthood status (in 1980-1989)			
No children	(ref.)	(ref.)	(ref.)
At least one co-resident child	0.762	1.326	0.994
Only non-resident child(ren)	1.071	0.910	0.958
Parenthood status & period			
Co-resident child & 1990-1999	1.212	0.527 †	1.322 †
Co-resident child & 2000-2008	2.150 †	1.697 †	1.821 *
Non-resident children & 1990-1999	0.927	0.697 †	1.278
Non-resident children & 2000-2008	0.786	0.741	2.042 *
Age at the end of the first union			
< 25	1.925 **	2.014 **	1.396 *
25-29	1.826 **	1.689 **	1.303 *
30-34	(ref.)	(ref.)	(ref.)
35-39	0.755	1.319	0.698 *
40-49	0.750	0.708	0.697 *
Time since the end of the first union			
< 1 year	(ref.)	(ref.)	(ref.)
1-2 years	1.022	0.708 *	1.390 **
2-3 years	0.665 *	0.380 ***	1.180
3-5 years	0.617 **	0.324 ***	0.991
5+ years	0.149 ***	0.094 ***	0.369 ***
Length of first partnership			
0-6 years	(ref.)	(ref.)	(ref.)
7+ years	1.722 **	1.004	1.052
Type of first partnership			
Cohabitation	0.888	0.923	0.853
Cohabitation, then marriage	1.064	1.003	0.982
Direct marriage	(ref.)	(ref.)	(ref.)
Level of education			
Primary	0.823	0.851	0.835
Secondary	(ref.)	(ref.)	(ref.)
Tertiary	1.112	1.154	0.999
Intercept	0.007 ***	0.012 ***	0.008 ***
Log likelihood	-1014.8	-1065.3	-2076.1

Notes: regression results, discrete-time event history analyses; relative risks; significance: ***p<0.001 **p<0.01 *p<0.05 †p<0.1