Probabilistic Projections of the Total Fertility Rate

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TFR time series since 1950 can be described with 3 phases:

- Pre-transition high fertility
- Pertility transition
- Ost-transition low fertility

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 → All countries are currently in phase II or III

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- Within observation period: Start of phase III is approximated by the midpoint of earliest two subsequent increases below 2
- Start of phase III before 2005-2010 observed in 20 countries



⁽Singapore, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Russian Federation, Channel Islands, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Latvia, Norway, Sweden, United Kingdom, Italy, Spain, Belgium, France, Germany, Luxembourg, Netherlands, United States of America)





Phase II: The fertility transition

2 Phase III: Post-transition low fertility



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 - $f_{c,t}$ the TFR for country c, 5-year period t
 - $d(\theta, f_{c,t})$ the 5-year decline given by decline function $d(\cdot, \cdot)$
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Post-transition low fertility

Results

Room for improvement on $f_{c,t+1} = f_{c,t} - d(\theta, f_{c,t})$

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Random walk with drift:



$$f_{c,t+1} = f_{c,t} - d(\theta_c, f_{c,t}) + \varepsilon_{c,t},$$

with
$$\begin{cases} f_{c,t} & \text{TFR for country } c, \text{ 5-year period } t \\ d(\theta_c, f_{c,t}) & \text{ 5-year decrement} \\ \varepsilon_{c,t} & \text{ Random distortions} \end{cases}$$





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$$d(\theta_c, f_{c,t}) = {}_{d_c} \left(\frac{-1}{1 + \exp(-\frac{\ln(81)}{\triangle_{c1}}(f_{ct} - \sum_i \triangle_{ci} + 0.5 \triangle_{c1}))} + \frac{1}{1 + \exp(-\frac{\ln(81)}{\triangle_{c3}}(f_{ct} - \triangle_{c4} - 0.5 \triangle_{c3}))} \right)$$

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• Estimate these parameters with a Bayesian hierarchical model

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Bayesian hierarchical model

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• Assume that d_c^* 's are exchangeable between countries

$$d_c^* \sim N(\chi, \psi^2),$$

with χ the world mean, and ψ^2 the variance of the d_c^* 's.

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Bayesian hierarchical model

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Post-transition low fertility

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- Many sets
 - \rightarrow Many TFR trajectories
 - \rightarrow Median projection and projection intervals

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Post-transition low fertility

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- Repeat until start of Phase III: earliest t such that $\min\{f_{c,s} : s = 1, ..., t\} \le \triangle_{c4}$, AND $f_{c,t} > f_{c,t-1}$



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Phase III: What happens post-fertility-transition?

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TFR projection that starts at 1.5 in 2005-2010

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Post-transition low fertility

Results

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AR(1) simulations

UN (Dec 4, 2009)

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4 Median 95% PI Traiectories e TFR 2 -TFR = 2.1 TFR = 1.850 2010 2035 2060 2085 2110 2135

Period

AR(1) simulations

Asymptotic 95% projection interval (PI) given by [1.7,2.5]

Increased uncertainty in long range Phase III projections

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 $(s^{(a)} = 0.203 \text{ after 4 periods in phase III})$

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AR(1) simulations

UN (Dec 4, 2009)

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2 Phase III: Post-transition low fertility



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Projections

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Projections



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Projections



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Decline curve; world level

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Decline curve; country-specific

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Decline curve; Burkina Faso

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• Summary of model validation results:

Project	Above	Coverage	
	Median	95%PI	80%PI
from 1980	43%	91%	77%
from 1995	36%	93%	79%

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Summary Bayesian TFR Projection Model

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• Probabilistic projection model for 5-year changes during and after the fertility transition

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- During the fertility transition:
 - the 5-year decreases are modeled as a function of TFR level and decline parameters, with random distortions added to it
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- Results: Country-specific projections that include an uncertainty assessment