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The Transition of Childbearing Patterns from the Cohort Perspective in Relation to Family Policy

Comparison of the Czech Republic and Slovakia

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The general aim of the study

- Compare the recent transition in **childbearing** patterns in the Czech Republic and Slovakia **in relation to family policy changes**
- Analysis of the postponement and recuperation of fertility with a special focus on dynamics of **second order births** and its spacing



Key research hypothesis:

We hypothesize that the postponement of the second childbirth following the first childbirth negatively influences the second birth recuperation rate, and thus reduce the quantum of childbearing and contribute to persistent low fertility.

Effects of parental leave policies on second birth rate – evidence from recent research

Recent empirical research on the impact of PL on fertility shows positive findings.

Aassve and Lappegard (2010) – introduction of **cash-for-car** benefit in Norway increased the risk of having second child

Gerber and Perelli-Harris (2012) – higher second birth risks was observed for women in Russia who returned to work after taking **longer PL** than those who took shorter PL

Matysiak and Szalma (2014) – comparison of Hungary and Poland, **well-paid and universal** PL encourages progression to a second child, but leads to substantial delays in women's entry into employment.

Hoem (1993) – **prolongation** of paid PL in Sweden since 1986 (speed premium) led to an increase in second and third-birth rates at shorter birth intervals

Sobotka et al. (2005), Prskawetz et al. (2008) – **extension** of PL in Austria was followed by an increase in second birth rates at shorter birth intervals

Comparison of the Czech Republic and Slovakia

In our analysis we tried to capture all changes in PL scheme:

length

amount of benefit

Flexibility in use

work limitations when receiving benefits

limits as regards the use of childcare facilities

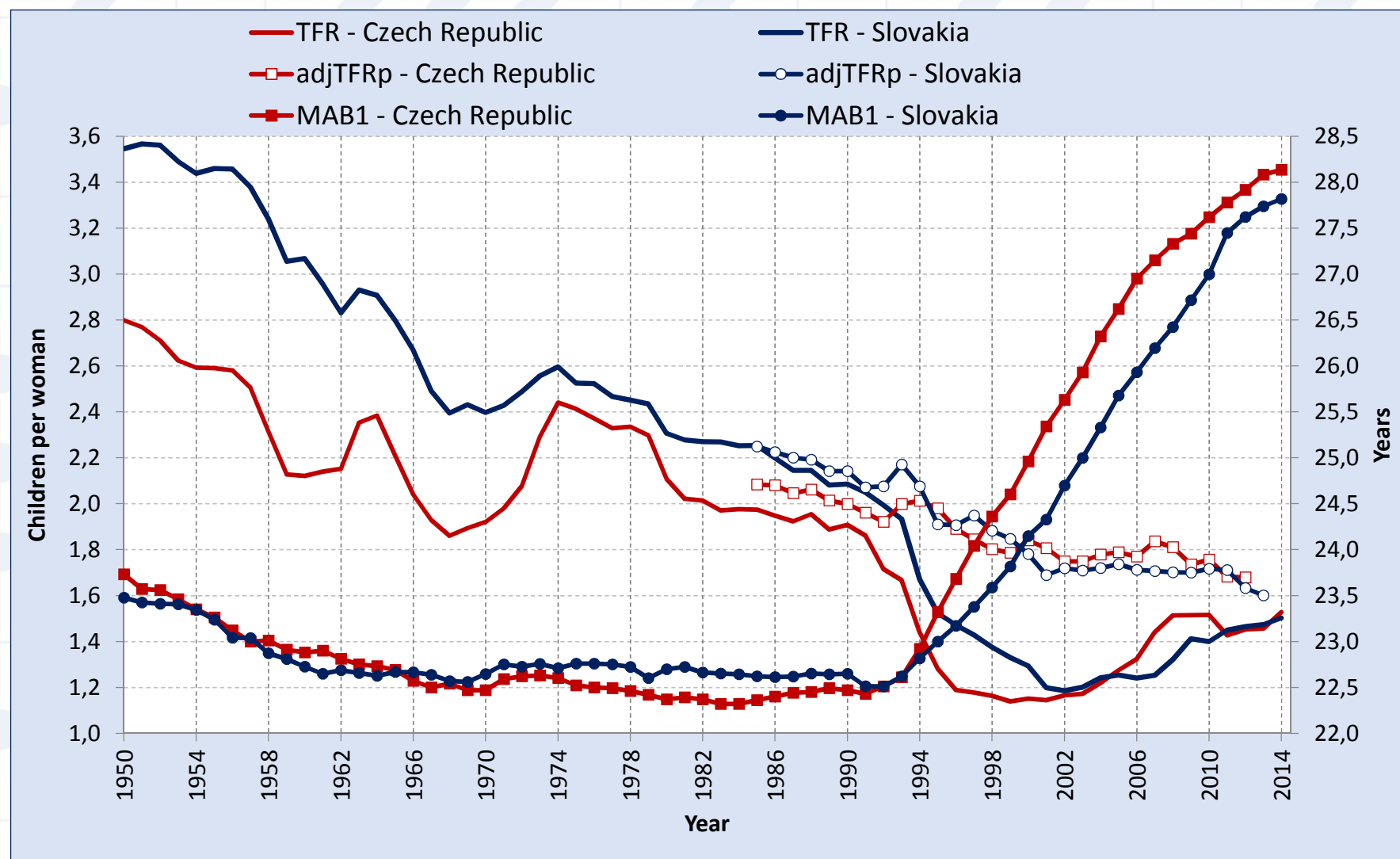
Research aim:

To investigate the effect of changes in PL scheme on *the timing* of the second birth and on the *second birth rate*

Preconditions for comparison of Czech and Slovak Republics

- **Identical** family policies until separation in 1993
- **The common „re-familisation trends“ since the 1990s** – emphasis on the long parental leave and shortage of childcare facilities for children under three.
- Similar developments in fertility - **postponement transition since the beginning of the 1990s in both countries**
 - a sharp drop in the TFR and a sharp rise in the mean age of mothers at first childbirth in the 1990s

Total fertility rate (TFR), tempo- and parity-adjusted total fertility (adjTFRp) and mean age at first birth in the Czech Republic and Slovakia, 1950-2014



Trends in leave policies in summary

Maternity leave	Czech Republic	Slovakia
duration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> since 1987 - 28 weeks (37 multiple births and lone mothers) 2008 - 28 weeks (37 weeks only if multiple births) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2011 - 34 weeks (37 lone mothers, 43 multiple births)
benefit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> since 1987 - 90% of the individual net daily wage 1993-2016: 67-70% of daily assessment base (max 1,171 EUR) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2004-2016: 55-65% of daily assessment base (max 803 EUR)
Parental leave	Czech Republic	Slovakia
duration	since 1990 up to a child's 3rd birthday	
Amount of benefit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1995 - allowance up to a child's 4th birthday 26% of the average wage (beginning of the 1990s), 15% in 2003 2004 - increased by 40% (20% of the average wage in 2004) and abolition of earnings limit 2007 - doubled (37% of the average wage) 2008 - three "speeds" of drawing up to 2nd, 3rd or 4th birthday of the child. 2012 - allowance until the child reached 24-48 months - free choice on the monthly amount 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> around 26 % of the average salary in the early 1990s 28% in 2002 nearly 24% of the average wage in 2015

Data and methods

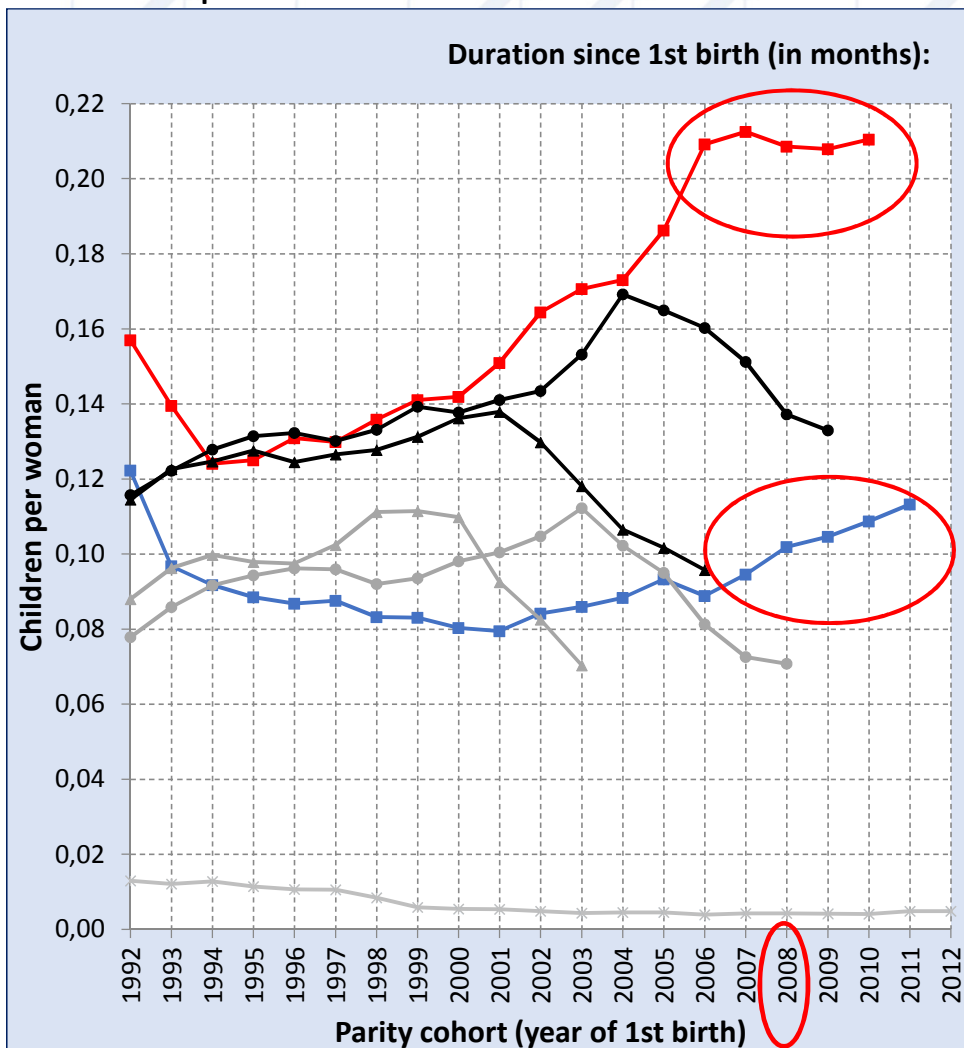
- **Order-specific fertility data** from the Czech Statistical Office, Statistical Office of Slovakia and Human Fertility Database
- **parity-cohort method** - to investigate changes in the spacing and quantum of second births among women who had their first child between 1992 and 2012.
- Focus on **first parity cohorts** - cohorts of women defined by the year of giving birth to their 1st child

Indicators

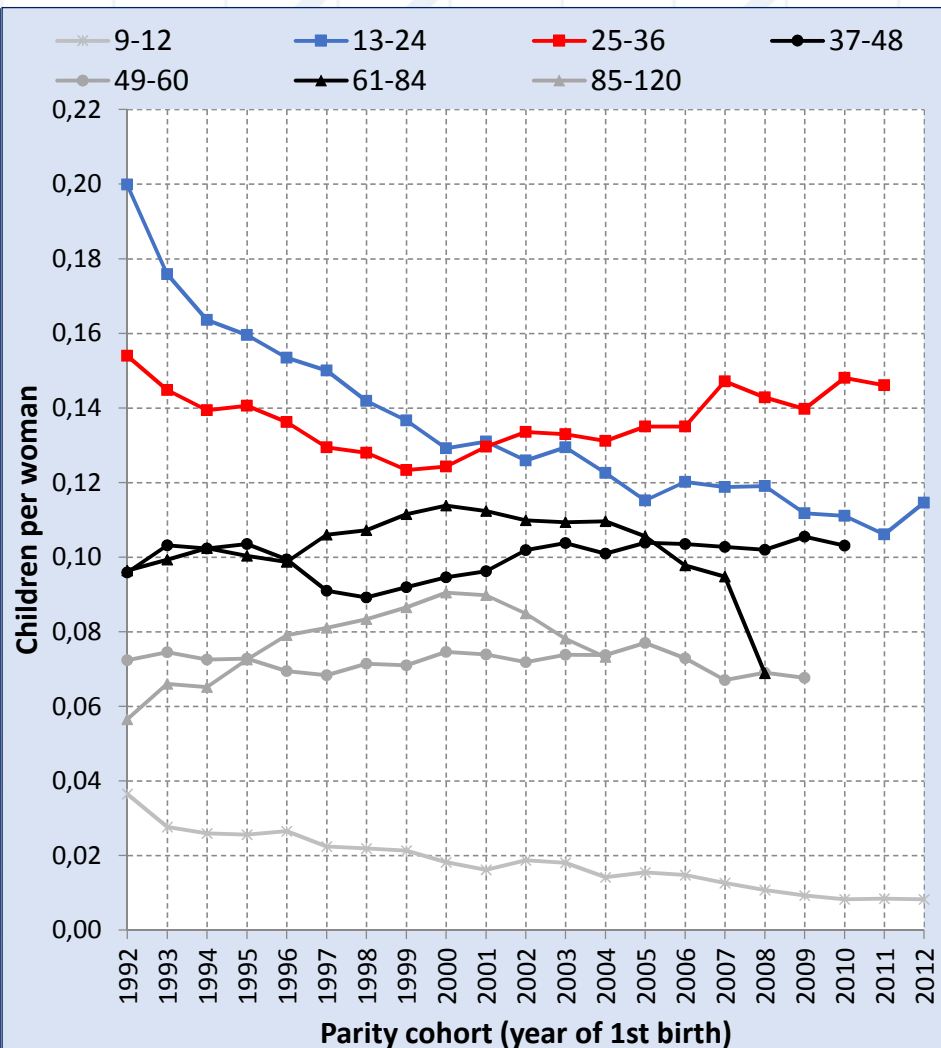
- **Second-birth rates** specified by duration since the previous births
- **Duration-specific progression ratios** to second birth for first parity cohorts 1992-2011 separately for 2, 3, 5 and 10 years after the birth of their 1st child

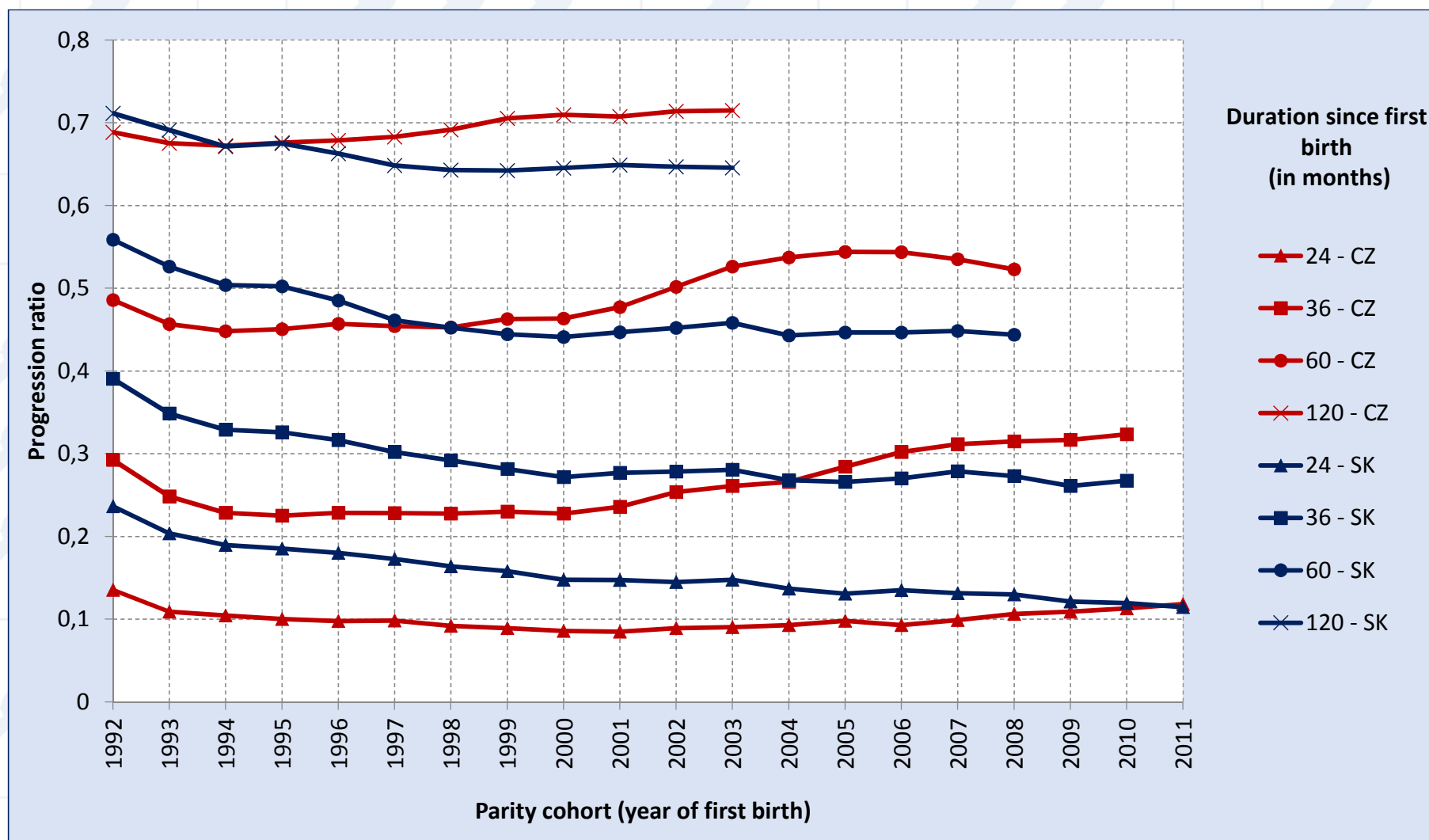
Duration-specific second-birth rates by year at first birth in the Czech Republic and Slovakia, first-birth parity cohorts 1992-2012

Czech Republic



Slovakia

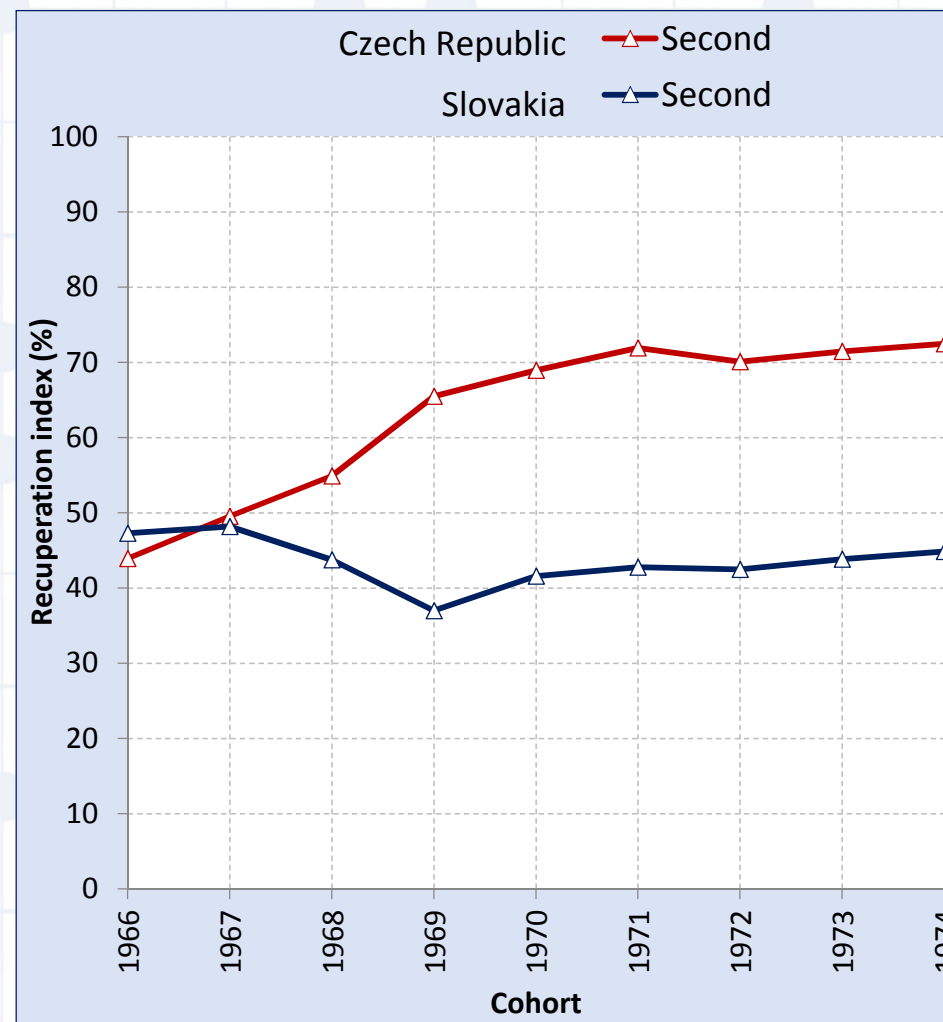
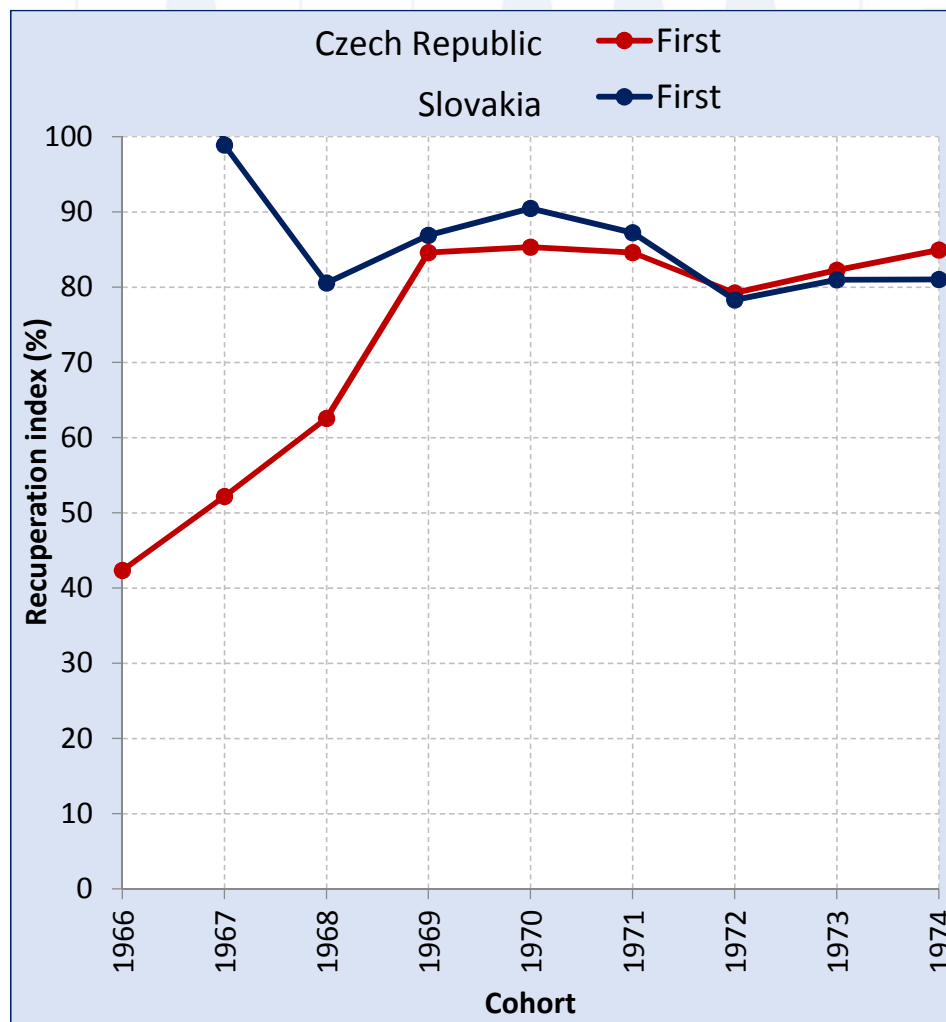




Results

- From 2004 the **Czech Republic outperformed Slovakia** due to a significant **increase in the amount** of the parental benefit and since 2008 also in the **increase in flexibility of PL**
- Progression ratios to second birth largely depend on the fertility quantum in shorter birth intervals.
- An **increase in second birth rates** during the 3rd year (25-36 months) following the first birth **was reflected in an increase in progression ratios** in each subsequent birth interval in the Czech Republic.
- As there was **no increase in second birth rates in short intervals** after the first birth in Slovakia, **progression ratios** to second birth showed **steady slight decline**.

Fertility recuperation - Recuperation index by age 40 by birth order in the Czech Republic and Slovakia for women born in 1966-1974 (benchmark cohort 1965)



Conclusions relevant to family policy

Shortening of birth interval between the first and second child for Czech cohorts 2006 and younger coincided with the significant **increase in parental benefit and flexibility** – **we found the effect on tempo and quantum of fertility**

- Suitably adjusted parental leave system can stimulate the second childbirth until three years after the first childbirth and thus inhibit further postponement.
- As fertility rate **increasingly depends on recuperation rate of delayed second births**, we confirmed that in the Czech Republic the recent PL policies have become the important part of state support to families and probably contributed to the realization of fertility plans as regards the second child.