



Addressing Fertility Decline in the European Union through Reproductive Rights

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Baby, and a car! Russians hold conception day

Russian region tries to stem declining birthrate by rewarding procreation



The Kartuzovs, shown in June, drive away in their new UAZ-Patriot SUV, which they won as a grand prize in a regional contest titled "Give Birth to a Patriot on Russia's Independence Day."

MSNBC video



Associated Press

updated 8:20 p.m. ET, Tues., Sept. 11, 2007

ULYANOVSK, Russia - Don't be surprised if the streets are empty and curtains drawn in this central Russian region Wednesday as residents take up an offer by the regional governor to help stem Russia's demographic crisis.

Ulyanovsk Gov. Sergei Morozov has decreed Sept. 12 a Day of Conception and is giving couples time off from work to procreate. Couples who give birth nine months later on Russia's national day — June 12 — will receive money, cars, refrigerators and other prizes.

It's the third year that the Volga River region, about 550 miles east of Moscow, has held the contest. Since then, the number of competitors — and the number of babies born — has been on the rise.



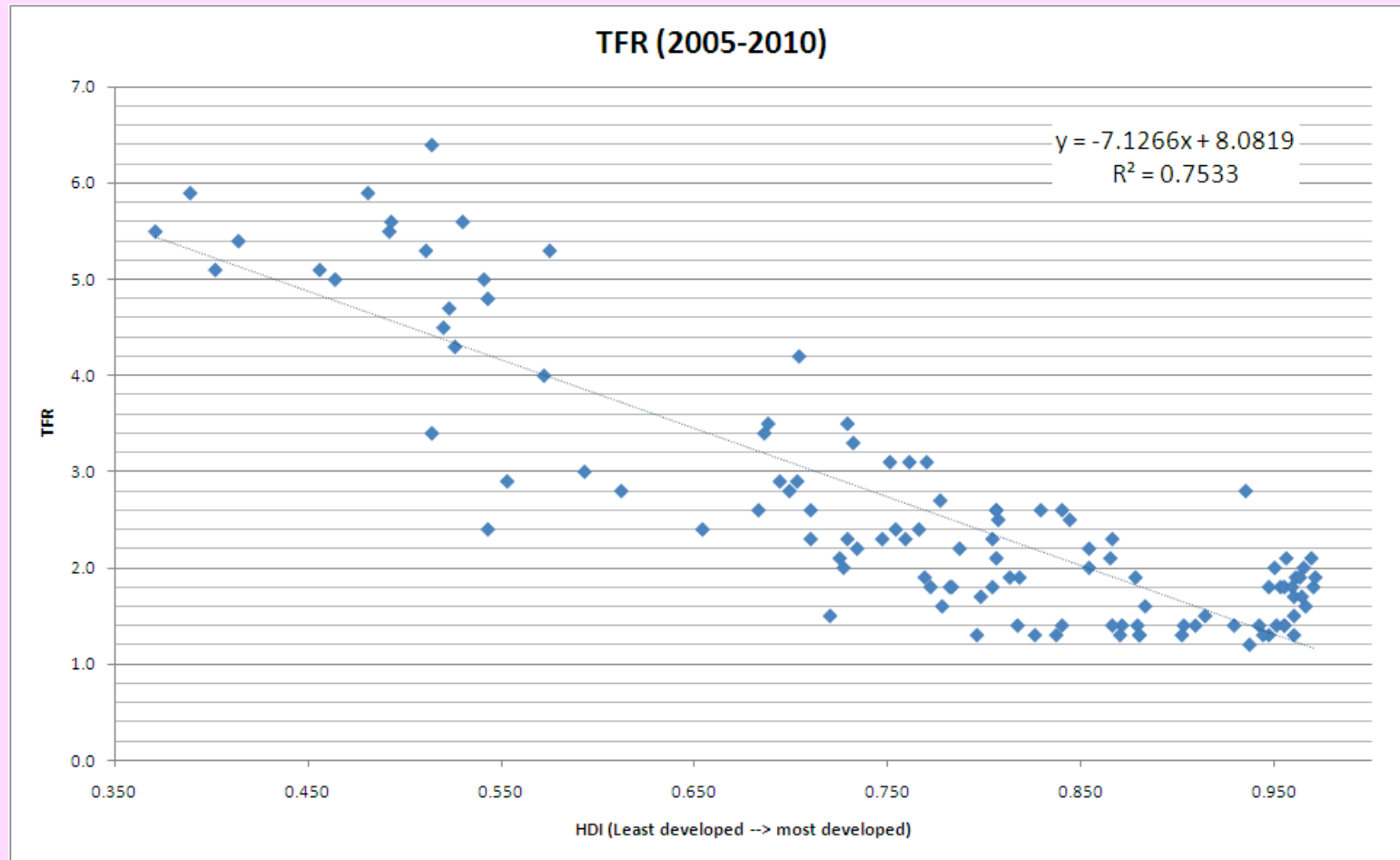
Why is fertility decline bad?

- Ageing population + Fertility decline = heavily skewed dependency ratios
- Not enough workers to sustain current systems
- Lack of taxable income
- But, most important....does not reflect individual desires



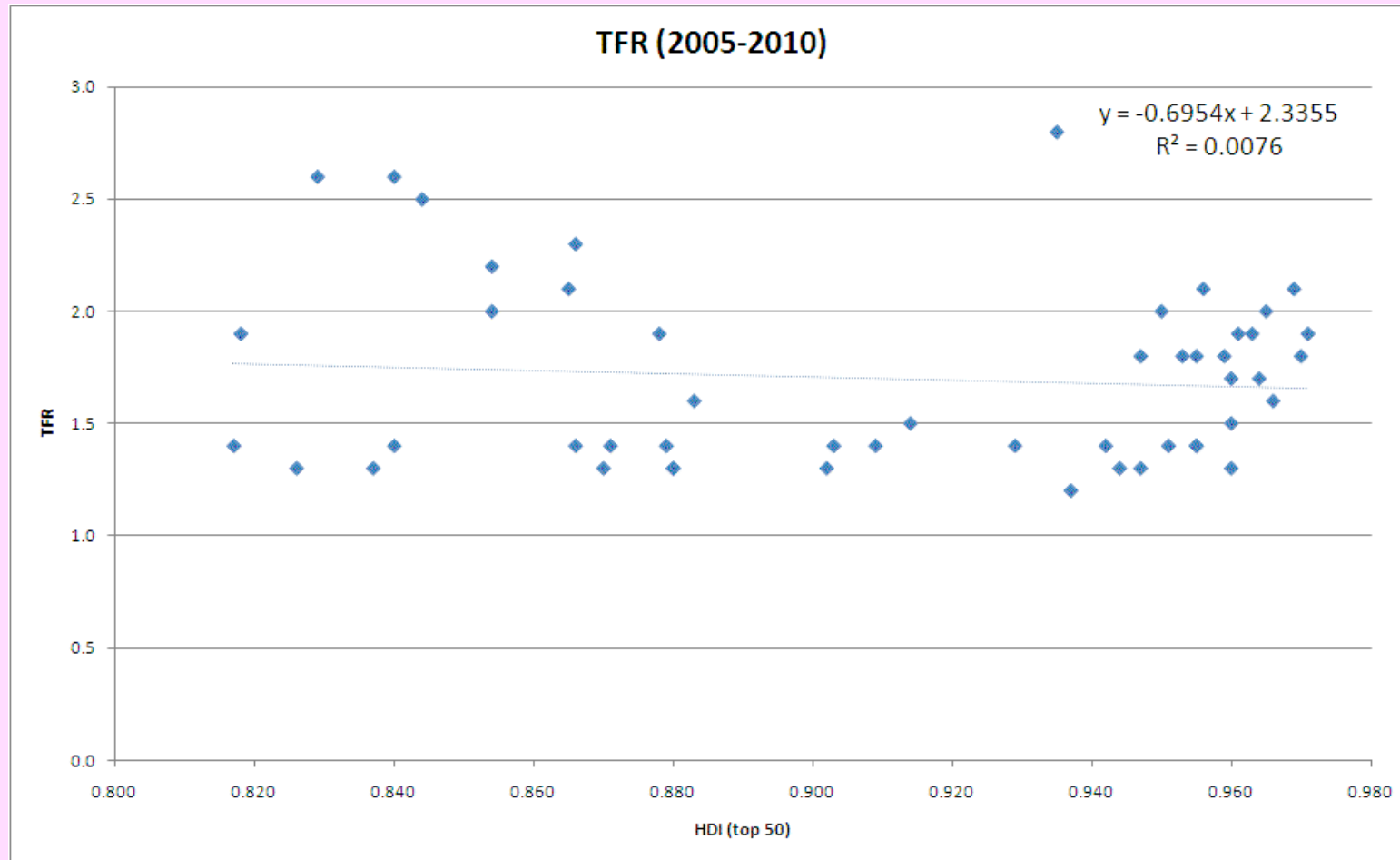


Development



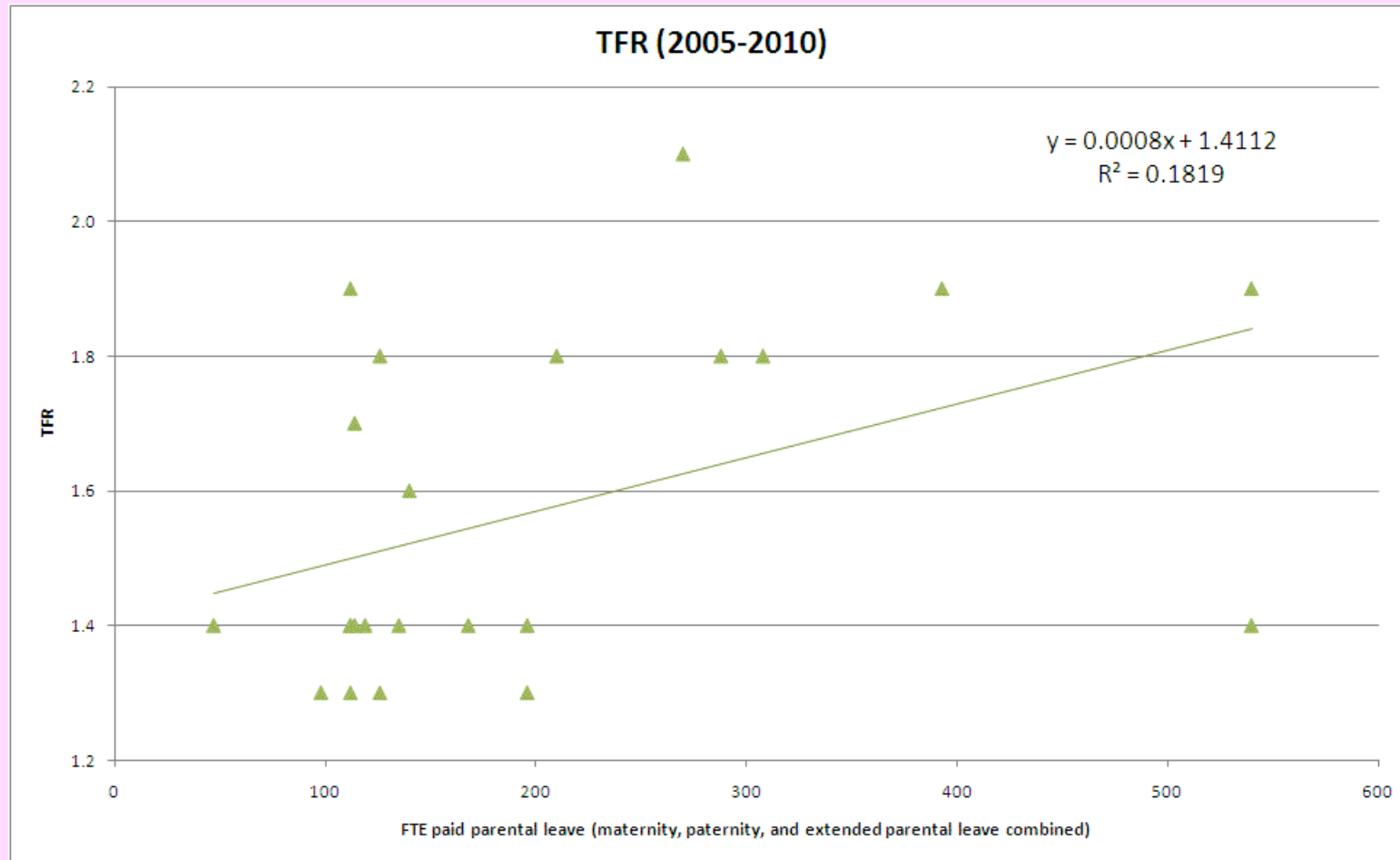


Development



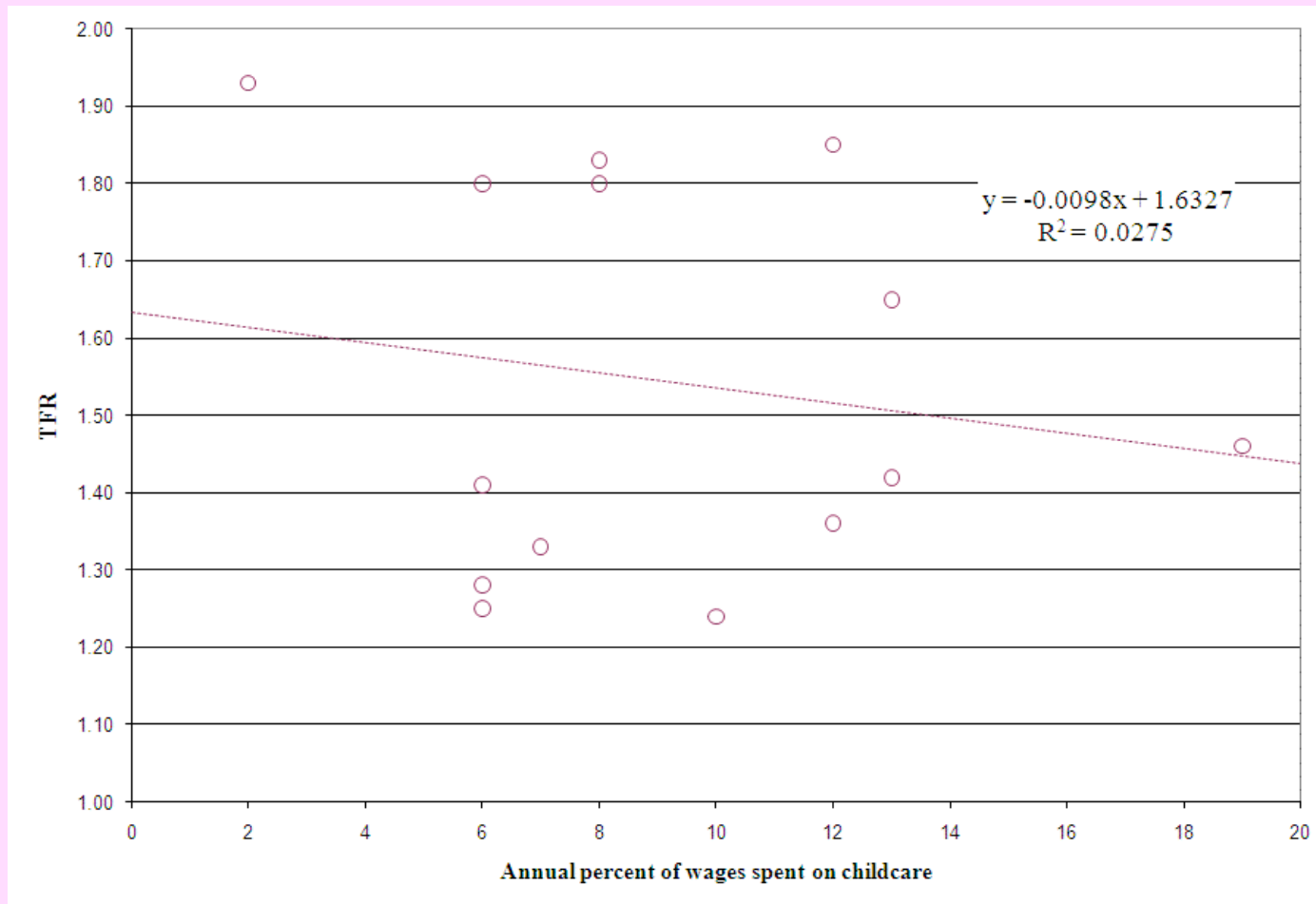


Employment





Cost of childcare





What are repro rights?

“Reproductive health...implies that people are able to have a satisfying and safe sex life and that they have **the capability to reproduce and the freedom to decide if, when and how often to do so.** Implicit in this last condition are the right of men and women to be informed and to have access to safe, effective, affordable and acceptable methods of **family planning** of their choice, as well as other methods of their choice for regulation of fertility which are not against the law, and the right of access to appropriate health-care services that will enable women to go safely through pregnancy and childbirth and provide **couples with the best chance of having a healthy infant...**It also includes sexual health, the purpose of which is the enhancement of life and personal relations...”





Elements of SRHR

1. Freedoms
2. Entitlements
3. Guard against vulnerability, discrimination, and stigma
4. Available, accessible, acceptable, and of good quality
5. Participation and accountability





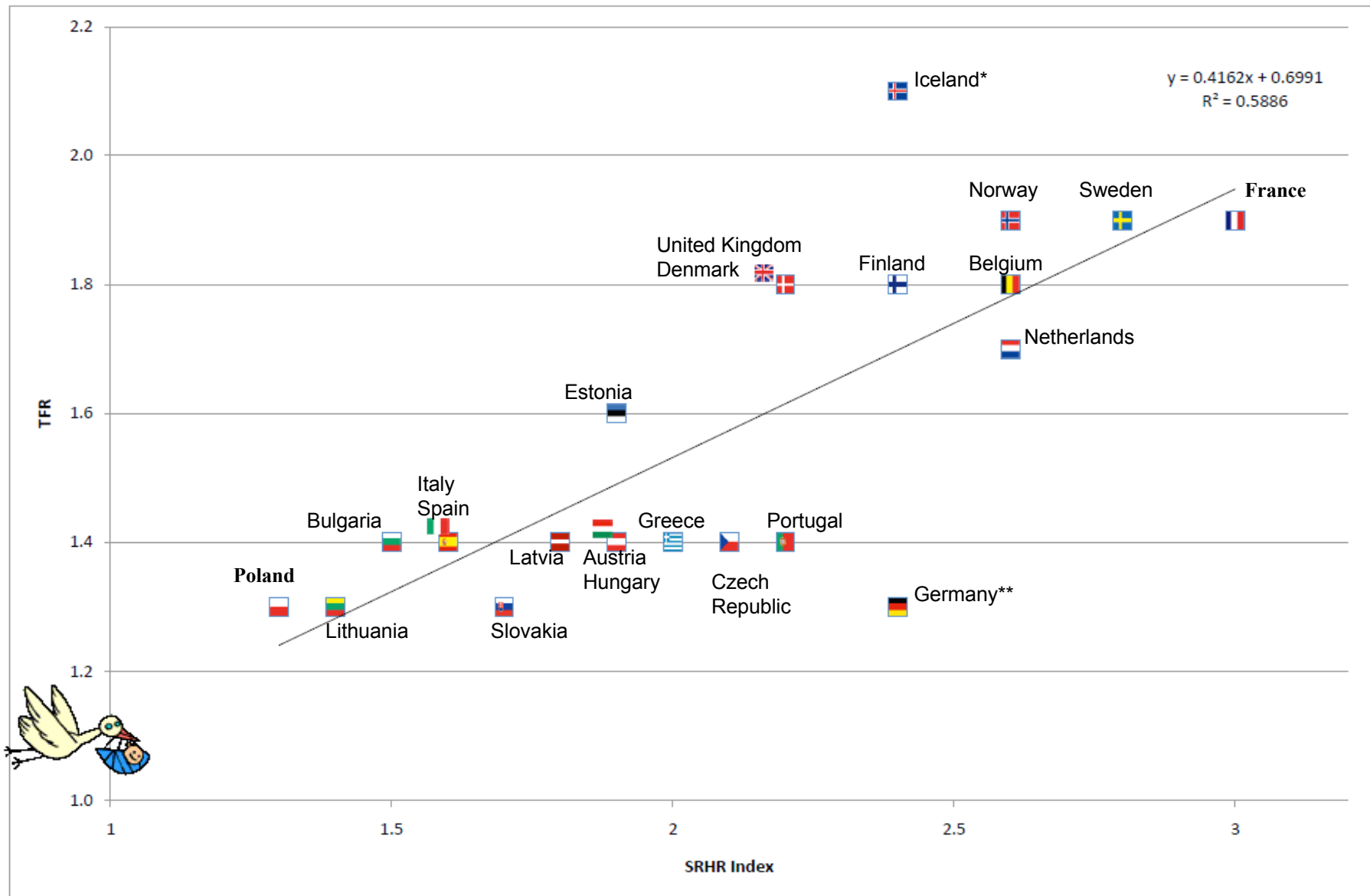
What is the SRHR Index?

1. Access to abortion services
2. Teenage birth rates
3. Sex education
4. Modern contraception
5. Access to emergency contraception





What is the relationship between the SRHR index and TFRs?





What does this mean for policy makers?

In short, these quantitative models prove three important points:

- Sexual and reproductive health and rights have a statistically significant relationship with total fertility. Countries with excellent access to a wide range of sexual and reproductive health care report higher fertility than countries which have restrictive policies on reproductive rights.





What does this mean for policy makers?

- Sexual and reproductive health and rights have a stronger relationship with fertility than employment policies alone, which have been the focus of most government responses to date.





What does this mean for policy makers?

- Countries which have average access to sexual and reproductive health care but favourable employment policies tend to have higher fertility, while countries with an average SRHR index but poor employment policies tend to have lower fertility.





Questions?

Many thanks for your attention and interest!

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