

Status of the study

The Career Tracker Cohorts (CTC) study is currently in its 4th year and has so far introduced four cohorts. The latest one, the CTC-21 cohort, was launched this spring. **We thank all survey participants for their valuable contribution to this study!**

This newsletter focuses on the compatibility of career, partnership, and family. The results presented in the following are based on the module on this topic, which was added to follow-up surveys conducted in fall 2020 and spring 2021.

First results on career, partnership, and family

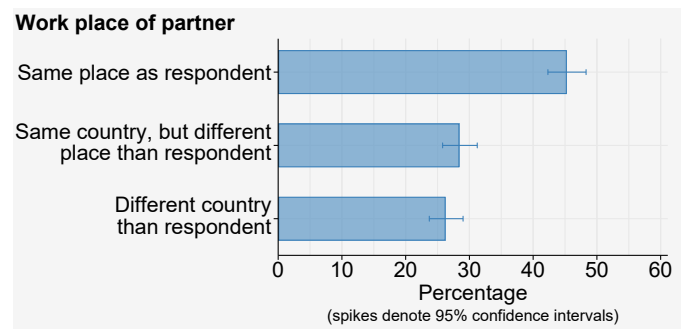
The survey participants

The sample for the following analyses includes (former) applicants for Early Postdoc.Mobility and Postdoc.Mobility, Ambizione, Eccellenza, and PRIMA, who are part of the CTC-18, CTC-19, or CTC-20 cohorts. It includes all the (former) applicants, irrespective of whether they received a positive funding decision or not. We invited 2356 people to participate, and 70% com-

pleted the survey. Out of all the respondents, 93% were engaged in paid employment at the time of the survey, of whom 90% were doing academic research. The majority (87%) worked full-time (i.e., 90–100%), and 43% had a leadership position. On average, they were 36 years old. Moreover, 82% of the respondents reported that they were in a partnership, and 37% had children.

A quarter of the partners work abroad

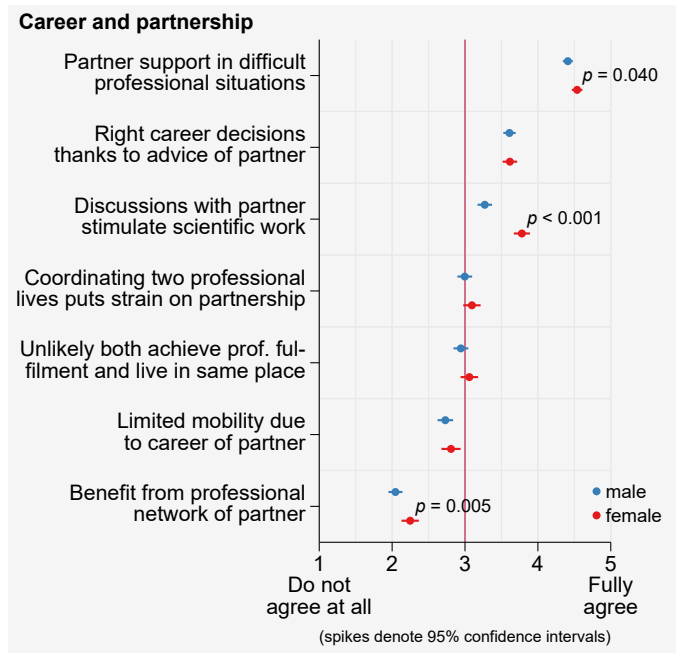
Most of the respondents' partners were engaged in paid employment at the time of the survey (81%), 40% of whom were doing academic research. Similar to the participants themselves, the majority of the partners (73%) worked full-time, and 40% had a leadership position. As for the partners' work places, 45% worked in the same place as the respondents. Additionally, 28% worked in the same country but in a different place than the respondents, and 26% worked in a different country.



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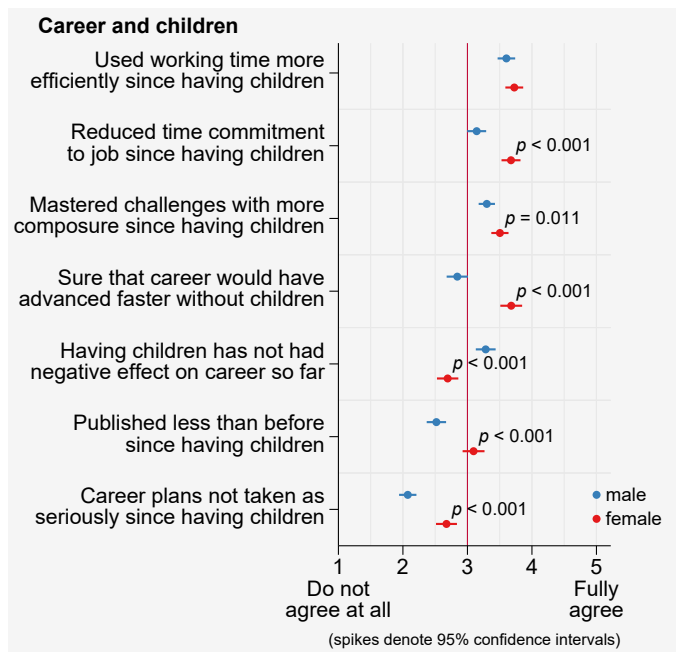
Respondents receive support from partners

Survey participants who have a partner were asked to what extent they agree with specific statements on careers and partnerships. The respondents agreed that their partners support them in difficult professional situations, women slightly more so than men. They also tended to agree with the statement that they made the right career decisions thanks to the advice of their partner or that discussions with their partner stimulate their own scientific work – regarding the latter, women agreed more strongly than men. Neither women nor men agreed with the negative statements that attempting to coordinate two careers is a heavy strain for the partnership, or that it is unlikely that both can achieve professional fulfilment and live in the same place. They also generally did not agree that they are less mobile than would be required for their own career because of the career of their partner. Lastly, the respondents appear not to benefit from the professional networks of their partners, men even less than women.



Women and men experience the compatibility of careers and children differently

Respondents who have children were further asked to what extent they agree with specific statements on careers and family. Both women and men tended to agree that since having children, they use their working time somewhat more efficiently and master professional challenges with more composure – concerning the latter, women even slightly more so than men. The reduction of time commitment for the job appears to be stronger for women than for men. In contrast to men, women indicated that their career would have advanced faster had they not had children. Similarly, while men somewhat agreed that having children had not had a negative effect on their careers so far, women slightly disagreed. Also, publishing less than before having children appears to be less of an issue for men. Finally, while neither men nor women believed that their career plans are not taken as seriously in their professional environment as before having children, this appears to be a bigger issue for women.

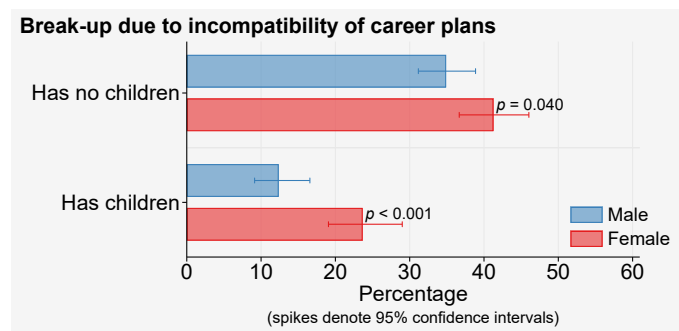


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Women and people without children more often experience break-ups because of career plans

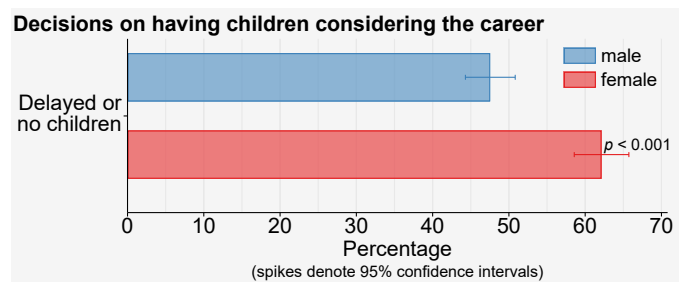
The majority of the survey participants (70%) has not experienced a break-up of a partnership due to the incompatibility of career plans. However, among those who have, there are differences between people with and people without children, as well as between women and men. Having experienced a break-up because of different career plans is more common among people without children (41% of women and 35% of men) than among people who have children (24% of women and 12% of men). Furthermore, among both parents and people without children, women reported more often than men that they had experienced

break-ups due to different career plans.



Women more often decide to delay having children or not to have children

The respondents were further asked whether they had ever decided to delay having children or not to have children because of their career. Analyses show that 62% of all the female participants had decided to delay having children or not to have children due to their career – in contrast to 48% of men. Among those who already had children, women also reported more often than men that they had delayed having children because of the career (47% vs. 32%).



Up next

We will continue with the follow-up surveys in fall 2021. Specifically, we will conduct the first follow-up survey among the CTC-20 cohort, the second follow-up survey among the CTC-19 cohort, and the third follow-up survey among the CTC-18 cohort. These surveys target people

who originally applied for (Early) Postdoc.Mobility. The questionnaire has recently been extended to include a set of questions on aspects that have become particularly relevant in the context of the pandemic. We are looking forward to introducing the updated survey this fall.

About

The Career Tracker Cohorts (CTC) project of the Swiss National Science Foundation (SNSF) is a longitudinal panel study with yearly cohorts. It aims at tracking the career paths of young researchers applying for SNSF career funding schemes at the postdoctoral level (Early Postdoc.Mobility, Postdoc.Mobility, Ambizione, Eccellenza,

and PRIMA). The main goals of the CTC are to monitor the careers of these researchers and to evaluate the impact of the different career funding schemes of the SNSF. The Career Tracker Cohorts study is affiliated to the Interfaculty Centre for Educational Research (ICER) at the University of Bern.

For more information see: <http://careertrackercohorts.ch/>

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