



Reproductive decision-making
in a macro-micro perspective

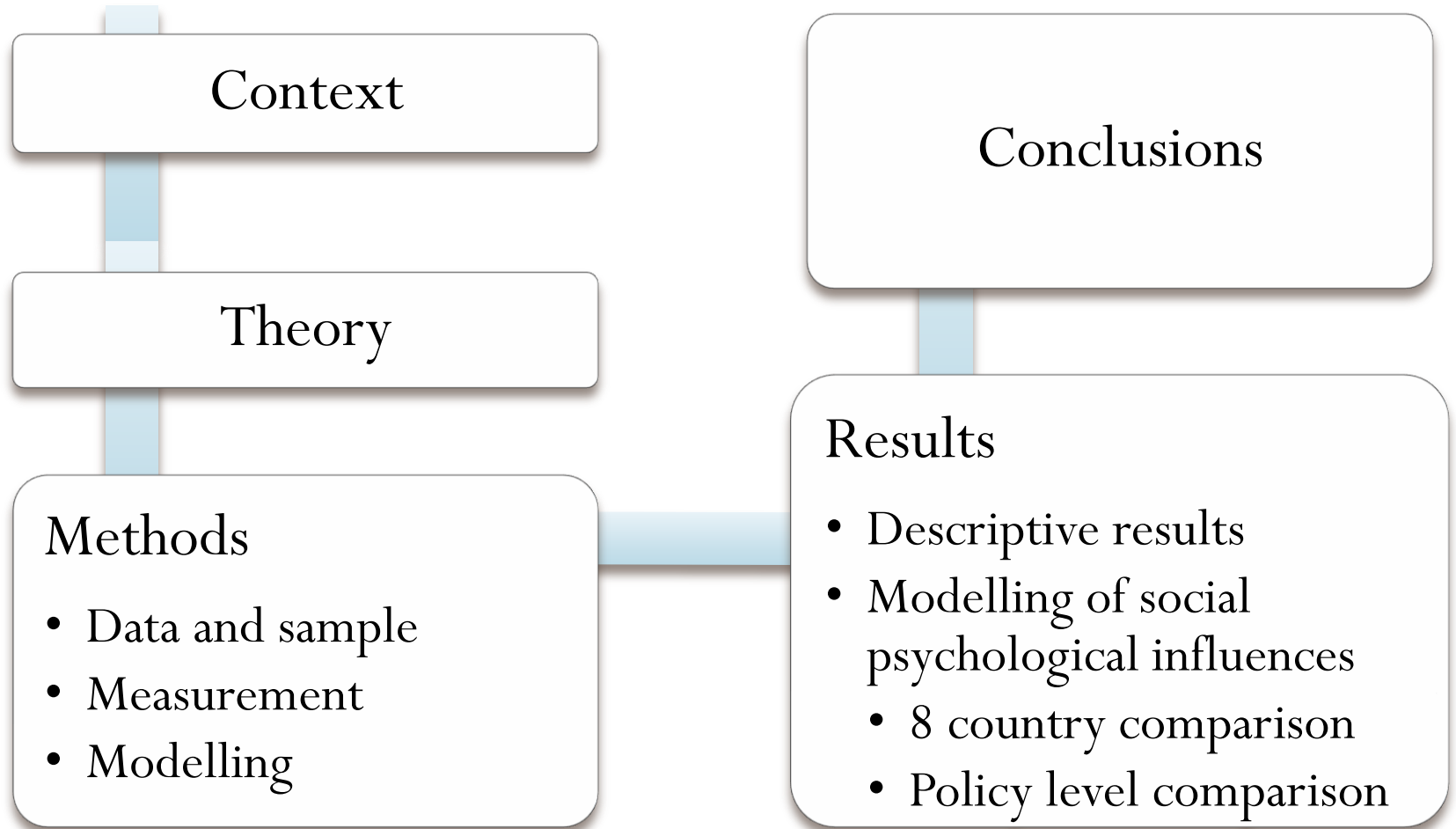
Social psychological influences on fertility intentions across eight countries

Jane Klobas*, **Francesco Billari***, Icek Ajzen**, Marta Marzi*

*Dondena Centre, Bocconi University, Milan, Italy

** Department of Psychology, University of Massachusetts, Amherst, USA

Outline



European Parliament Resolution on the Demographic Future of Europe, 2008

[The European Parliament] ...

4. Stresses that the average birth rate in the European Union, which at 1.5 is abnormally low, is not a reflection of women's choice or of European citizens' actual aspirations for creating a family, and may therefore also be linked to the **difficulty** of reconciling work with family life (lack of child care infrastructures, social and economic support for families, and jobs for women), the **anxiety-inducing** social environment (unstable work situation, expensive housing) and a **fear** of the future (late access to employment for young people and job insecurity)...

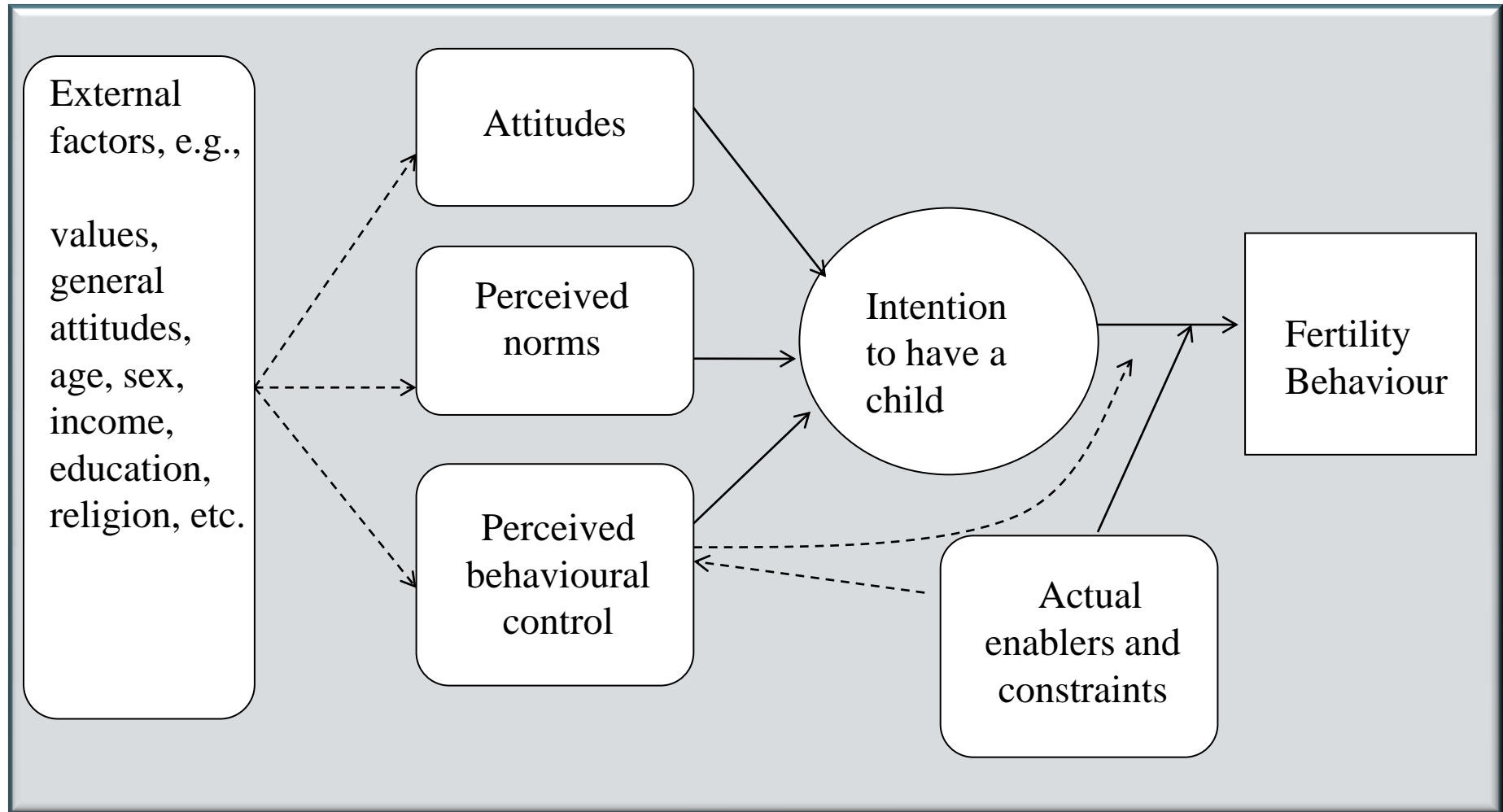
14. Recognises that ... it is possible to influence birth rate curves favourably through coordinated public policies, by creating a family- and child-friendly material and emotional environment; recognises that, along the lines advocated by the European Economic and Social Committee in its proposed European pact for the family, those measures should be applied over the long term and should provide the necessary framework of stability and protection for **parenthood decisions**.

The TPB as a model of intentions to have a child

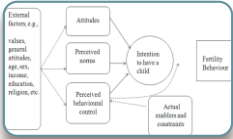
Brings together and extends three elements of psychological and cognitive research on formation of intentions to have a child

- **Attitudes** (Tickamyer, 1979; Schoen et al, 1997; Barber, 2001)
- **Norms** (Axinn et al., 1994; South & Baumer, 2000; Bernardi et al., 2007)
- **Constraints** (Aassve, 2003; Call, 2008)

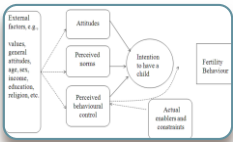
A TPB model of having a child



What the TPB adds

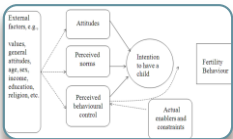


Brings the three elements of attitudes, norms and constraints together in a **single model**.

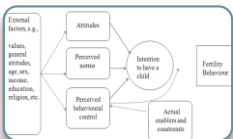


Focuses on the **individual decision maker and their cognitions**, resulting in precision and insight in prediction of decision making by an individual, in particular:

- **Norms**, as perceived by decision maker, not as measured at a general or societal level
- **Perceived control** refers not to constraints in themselves, but to the decision maker's sense that they are able to perform the behaviour and that they are able to overcome constraints



Has a refined definitional and **measurement** tradition.



Enables **beliefs** underlying attitudes, perceived norms and perceived control to be uncovered.

Data

Gender and Generations Survey (GGS)

- Wave 1 (2003-2006)
- Eight countries available

This study

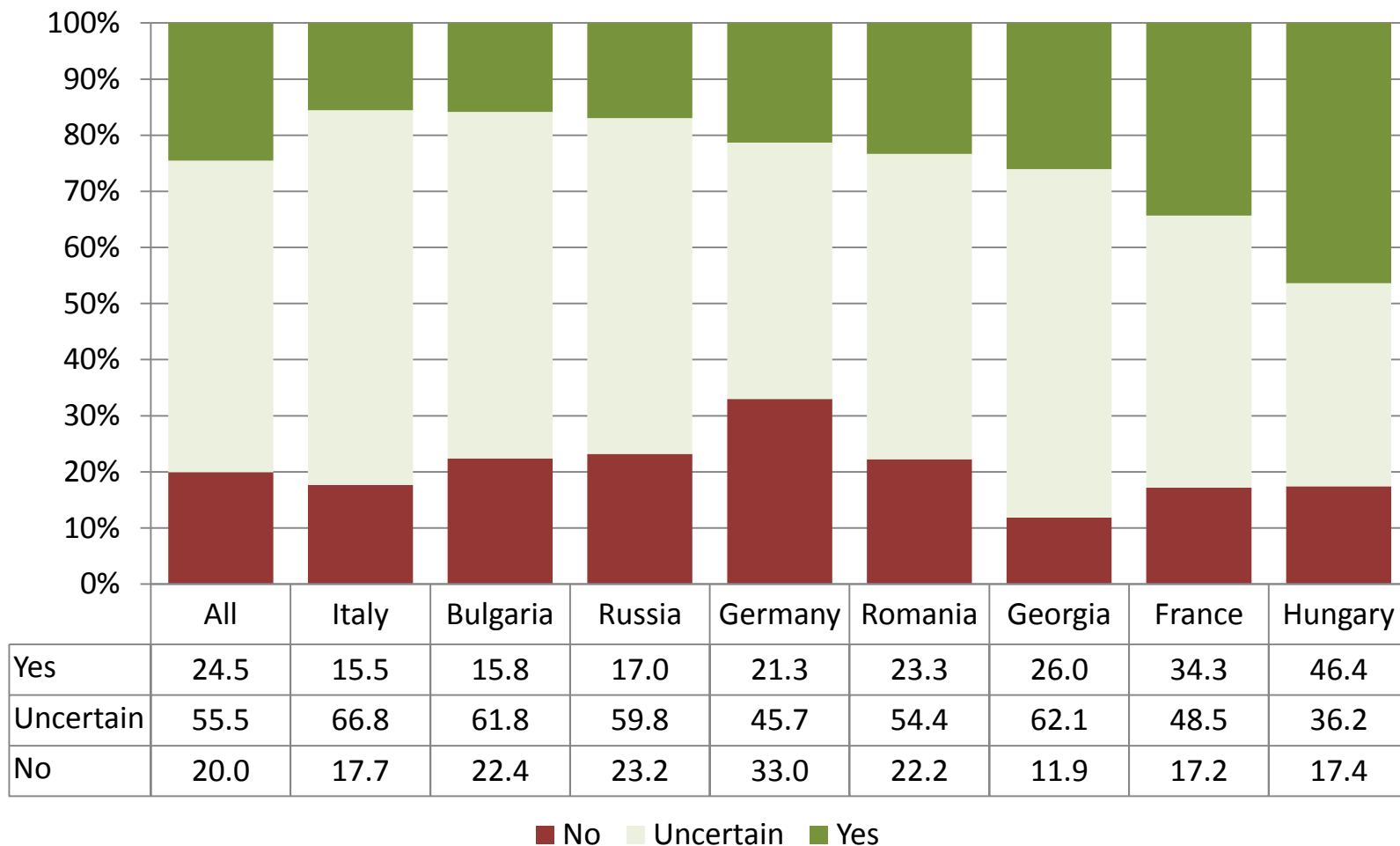
- Males and females aged 25-34, able to have a child but not expecting a child at time of survey
- Parity 0 and parity 1

Sample

25-34 year olds, parity0+1 combined

	<i>n</i>
Italy	2,710
Bulgaria	1,920
Russia	1302
Germany	755
Romania	1268
Georgia	953
France	955
Hungary	2014
All	11,877

Intention to have a child during next 3 years by country, 25-34 year olds, parity0+1



Dependent variables (TPB) draw on beliefs

Attitudes :

Having a child would be better or worse for

- the possibility to do what you want
- your financial situation
- female's employment opportunities
- the joy and satisfaction you get from life
- the care and security you may get in old age
- ...

Perceived norms:

Most of your ... think you should have a(nother) child

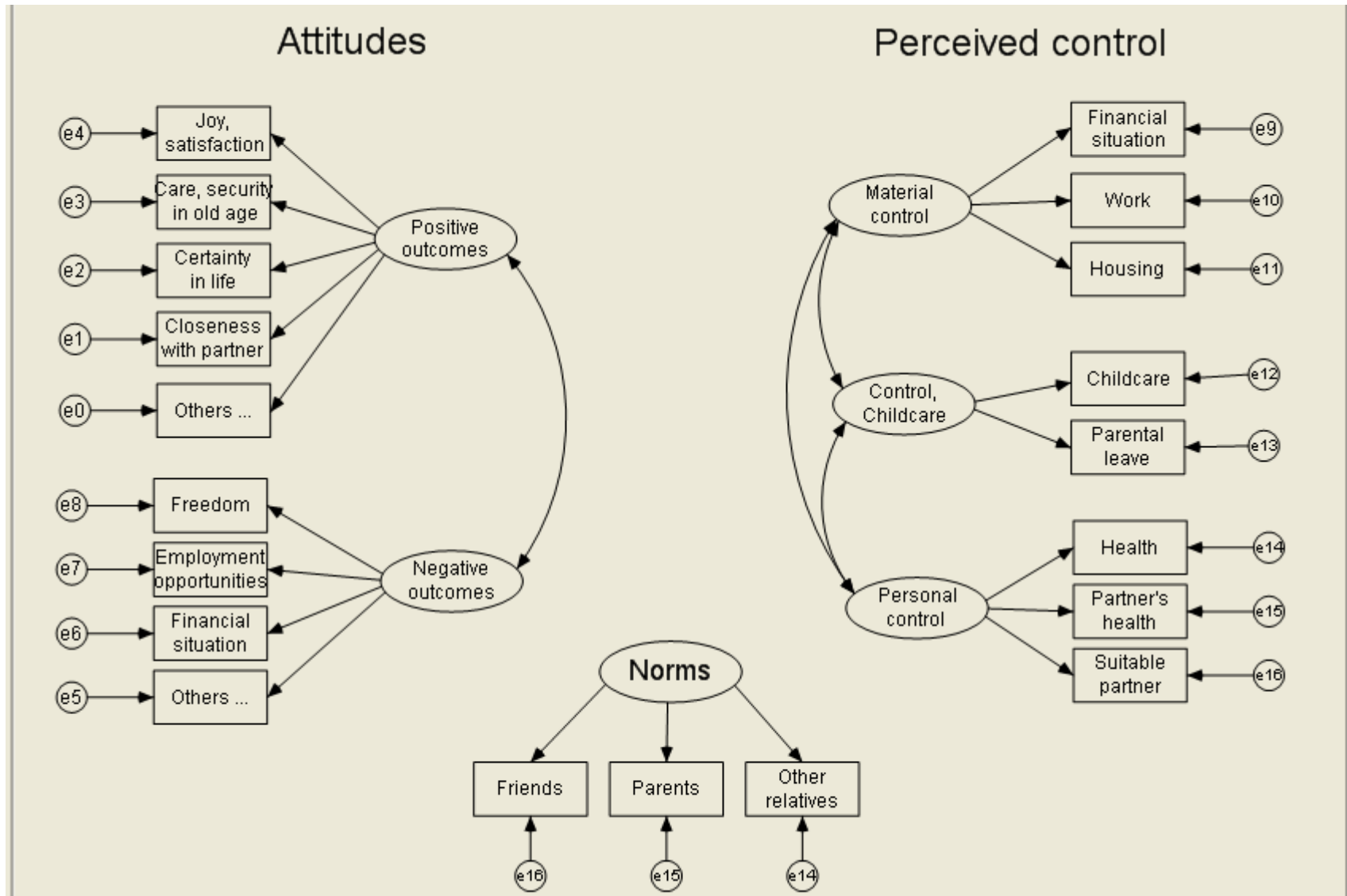
- your friends
- your parents
- other relatives

Perceived control:

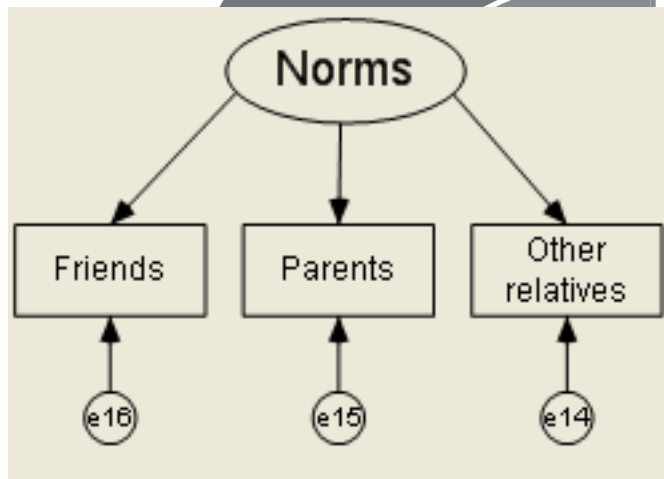
How much would your decision depend on ...

- your financial situation
- your housing conditions
- your / your partner's work
- your health
- availability of childcare
- ...

Measurement models developed with SEM



Cross-national measurement



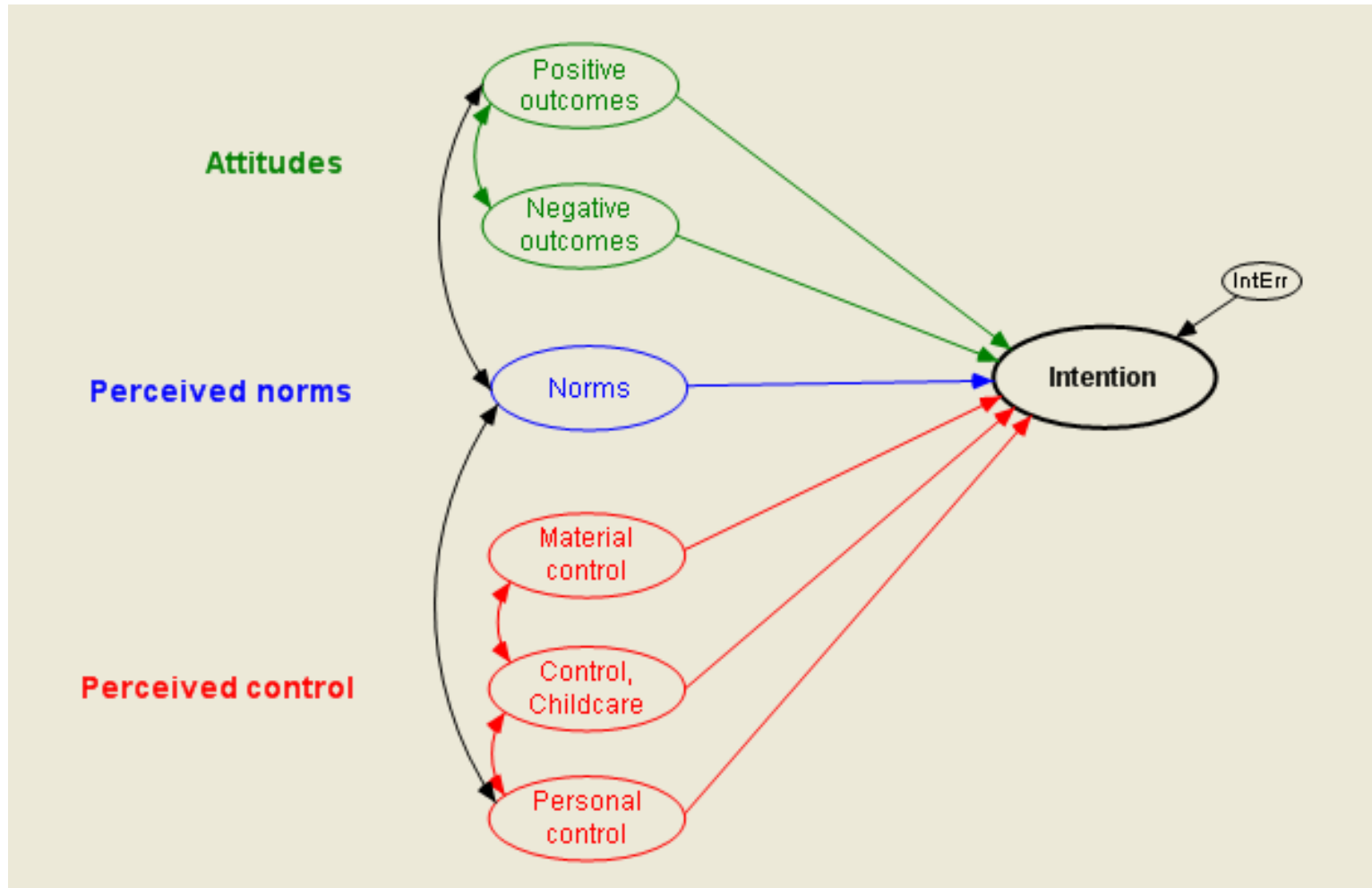
Assume the concept 'exists' in all countries.

Beliefs **reflect** the concept (with some degree of error).

Identify a set of beliefs that reflect the concept well across all countries
→ concept has same 'meaning' in each country.

Any belief with a low weight in a country, is not a salient (relevant) belief in that country.

SEM model of social psychological influences on intentions



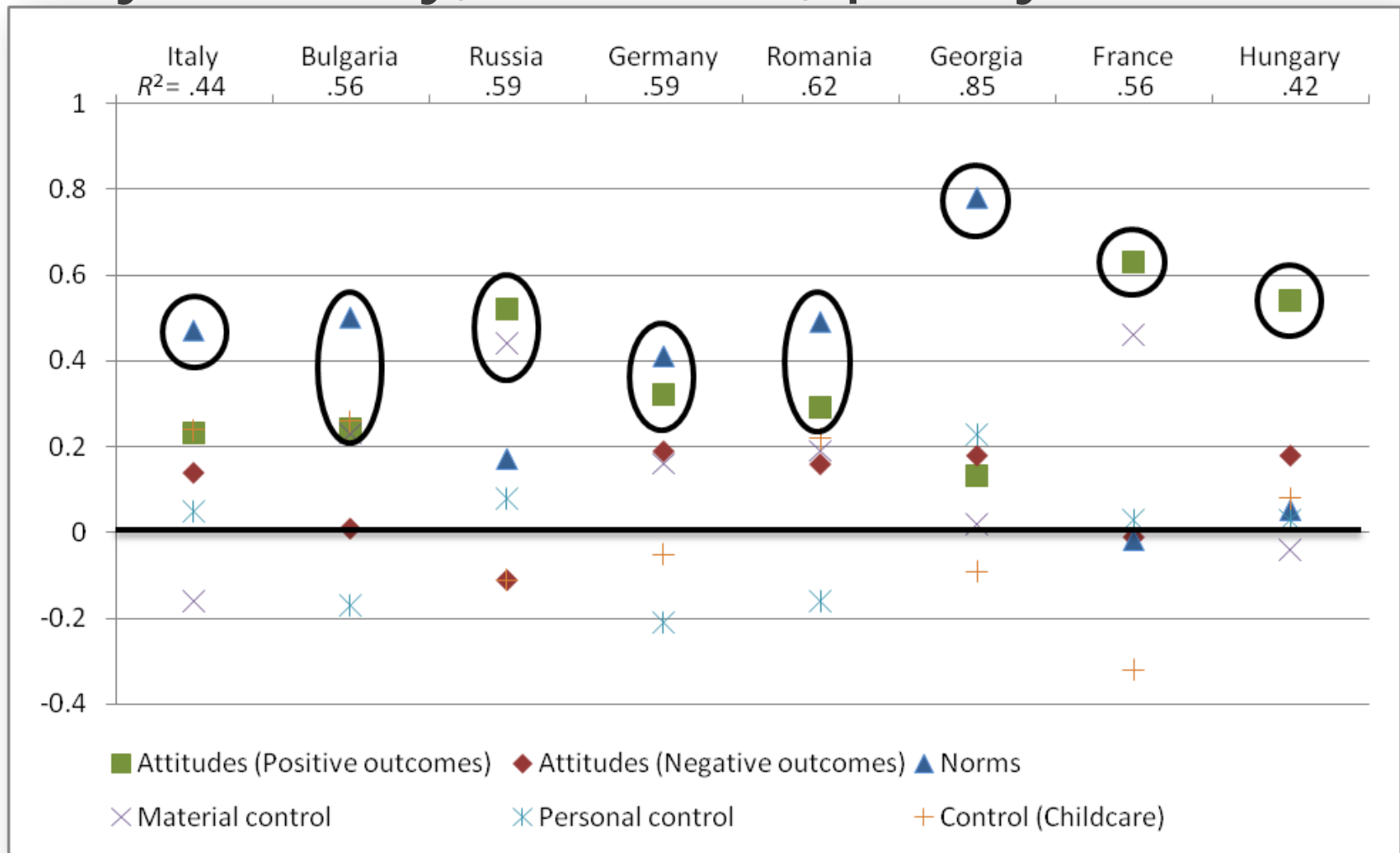
Beliefs: Attitudes and Norms

Row Labels	Italy	Bulgaria	Russia	Germany	Romania	Georgia	France	Hungary
% yes	15.5	15.8	17.0	21.3	23.3	26.0	34.3	46.4
Attitudes (Positive outcomes)								
Males Parity 0	better	better	better		better	better	better	better
Females Parity 0	better	better	better		better	better		better
Males Parity 1	better	better	better		better	better		better
Females Parity 1	better	better				better		
Attitudes (Negative outcomes)								
Males Parity 0		worse	worse	worse	worse			worse
Females Parity 0		worse	worse	worse	worse			worse
Males Parity 1		worse	worse	worse	worse			worse
Females Parity 1		worse	worse	worse	worse	worse		worse
Perceived norms								
Males Parity 0	agree	agree				agree		
Females Parity 0		agree	agree			agree		agree
Males Parity 1	agree					agree		
Females Parity 1				disagree		agree		

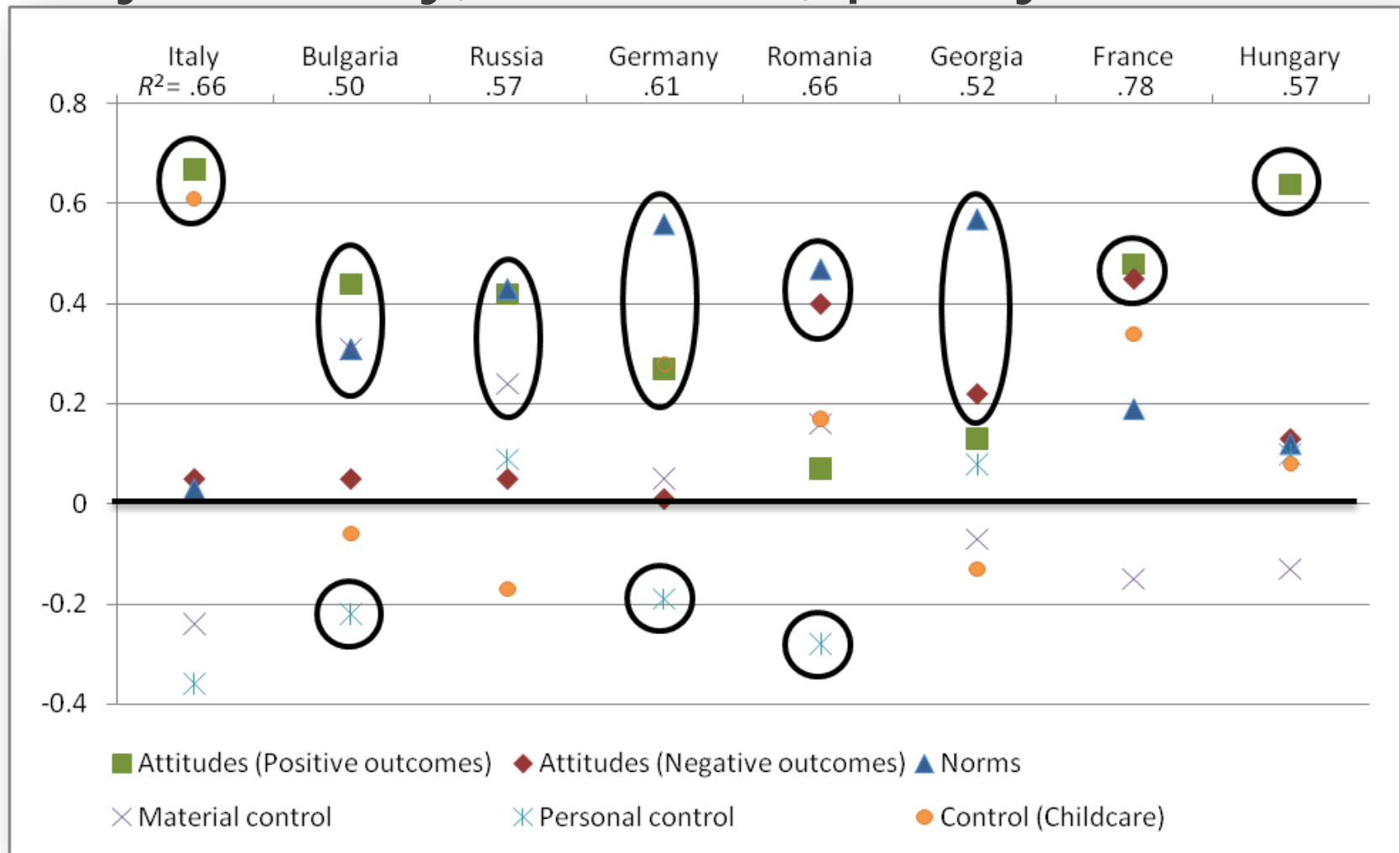
Beliefs: Control

Row Labels	Italy	Bulgaria	Russia	Germany	Romania	Georgia	France	Hungary
% yes	15.5	15.8	17.0	21.3	23.3	26.0	34.3	46.4
Perceived material control								
Males Parity 0	a little	a little	quite a lot	a little	quite a lot	a little	a little	a little
Females Parity 0	a little	a little	a little	a little	quite a lot	not at all	a little	a little
Males Parity 1	a little	a little	quite a lot	a little	quite a lot	a little	not at all	a little
Females Parity 1	a little	quite a lot	a little	a little	quite a lot	not at all	a little	a little
Perceived control (Childcare)								
Males Parity 0	a little	quite a lot	a little	a little	quite a lot	a little	not at all	not at all
Females Parity 0	a little	quite a lot	a little	a little	quite a lot	a little	not at all	not at all
Males Parity 1	a little	quite a lot	a little	not at all	quite a lot	a little	not at all	not at all
Females Parity 1	a little	quite a lot	a little	a little	quite a lot	a little	not at all	not at all
Perceived personal control								
Males Parity 0	a little	quite a lot	a little	a little	quite a lot	a little	not at all	a little
Females Parity 0	a little	quite a lot	a little	not at all	quite a lot	a little	not at all	a little
Males Parity 1								
Females Parity 1	a little	a little	not at all	not at all	quite a lot	not at all	not at all	a little

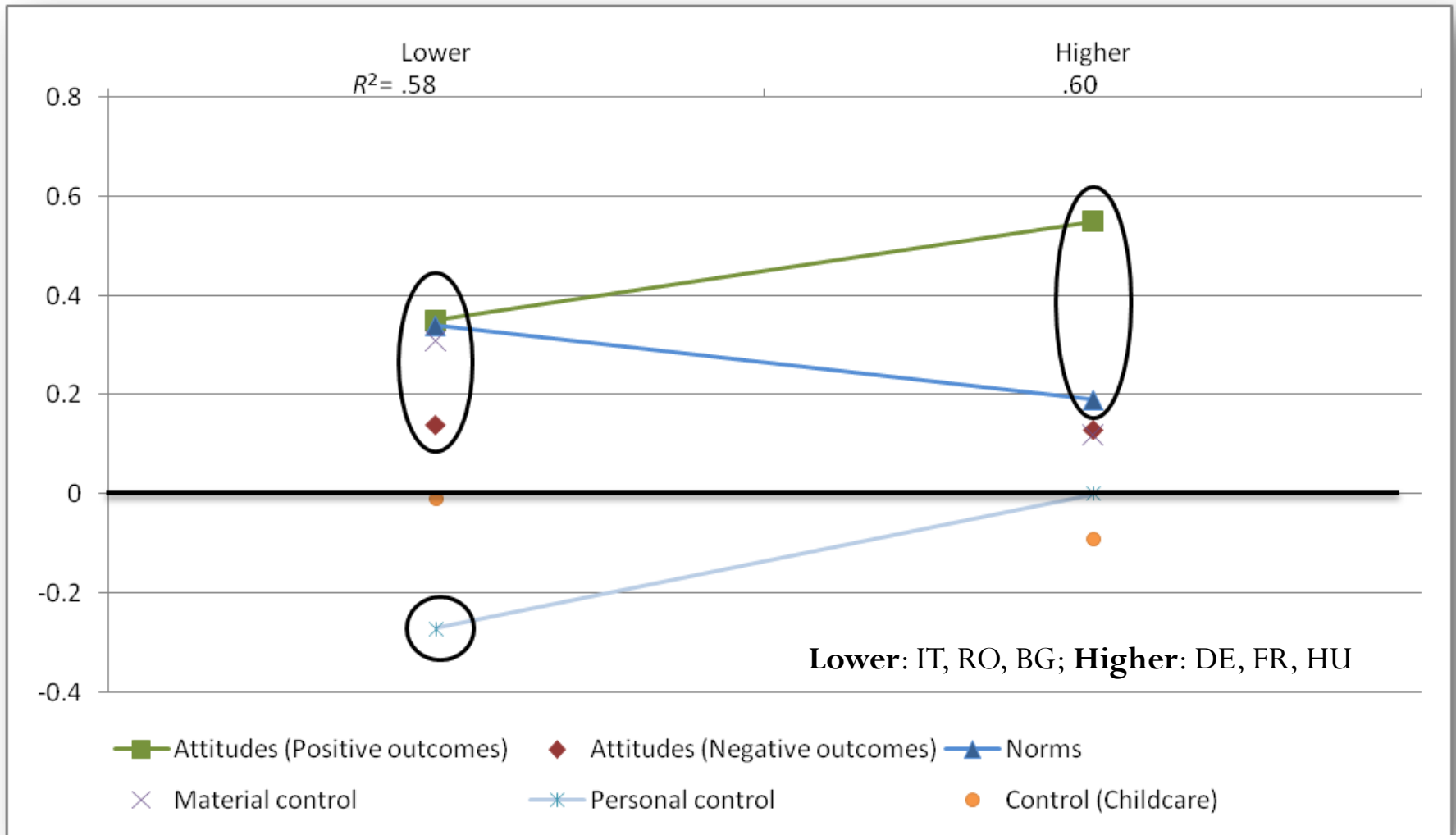
Relative influences on intention by country, females, parity 0



Relative influences on intention, by country, females, parity 1



Exploration of policy effects



Conclusions

A social psychological model of fertility decision making provides a good explanation of variance in intentions to have a(nother) child.

Formation of intention to have a second child is cognitively more complex than formation of the decision to become a parent.

Child- and family-friendly policies appear to make a difference by providing the freedom to focus on the positive aspects of having a child.

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