Postponement of childbearing and low fertility in Europe
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The Postponement of Childbearing in Europe. Edward. At the present time some 66 countries have fertility rates which are below the level necessary for population replacement (TFR 2.1). One of the characteristic features of this most recent fertility decline is that it is driven largely by a delay in childbearing: couples (and obviously in particular this means women) wait longer and longer before taking the decision to have a child. In the first place it is important to bear in mind that the currently registered low levels of fertility - and in particular what is known as lowest-low fertility (sustained fertility rates of 1.3 or below) - may not be taken to mean that completed cohort fertility is as low as it seems at first glance since what is involved is in part.