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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. Low fertility in developing countries: causes and implications. Journal of Biosocial Science, Vol. 49, Issue. S1, p. S1. In many countries in Europe this shift to a late childbearing pattern has negatively affected the TFR for more than four decades. Many emerging post-transitional countries and regions are likely to experience a similar shift over the next two to three decades, with a depression of their TFRs to very low levels. Postponement of Childbearing and Low Fertility in Europe. Article. Jan 2004. In Europe, where the decline is more advanced than in the U.S., governments are concerned that population growth will be too low and have instituted social welfare measures to induce and facilitate childbearing and childrearing. As women become more career-oriented, greater incentives will have to be provided.