



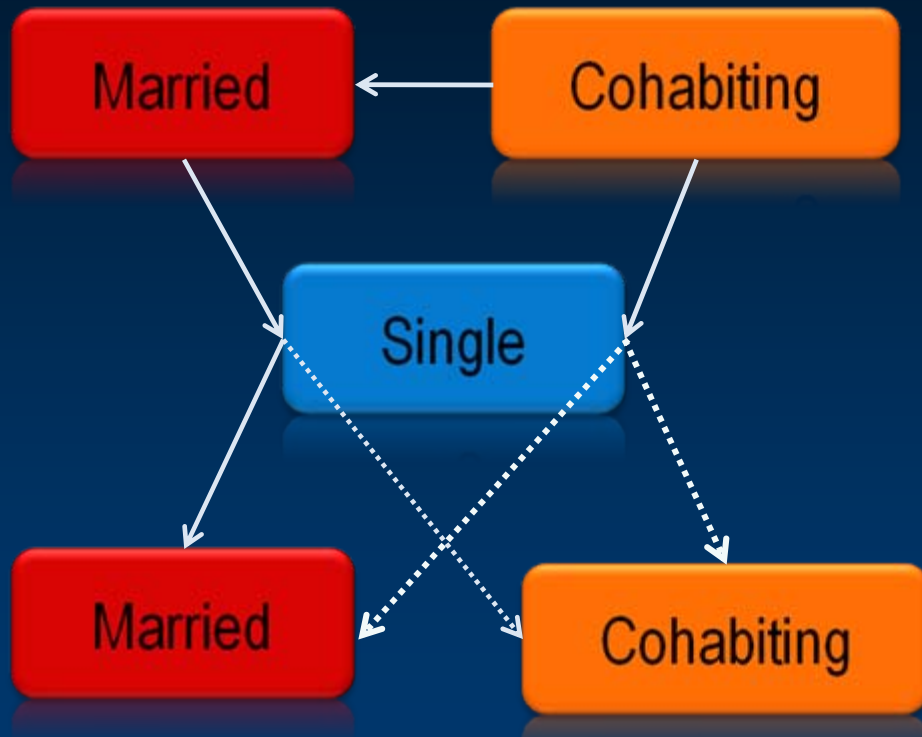
Factors affecting repartnering in Australia and the United Kingdom

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- The United Kingdom and Australia: a comparison of two countries that are similar in terms of family measures
- Similar levels of cohabitation, marriage and divorce
 - Around 9% cohabiting and 50% of adult population married in both countries
 - Median age at marriage:
 - ▶ UK: 31.1 (women); 33.7 (men)
 - ▶ Aus: 29.3 (women); 31.6 (men)
 - Most marriages are preceded by cohabitation
 - Divorce rates are around 12 per 1,000

What is repartnering and why study it?



We define repartnering as forming a new 'live-in' relationship following the dissolution of a previous cohabitation or marriage.

Research mainly considers repartnering after the breakdown of a *marriage*.

Repartnering research tends to focus on re-marriage and does not include transitions into cohabiting unions.

Limited research on repartnering behavior after the dissolution of a *cohabiting* union.

- A life course approach (Elder 1974; 1983; Harevan 1982; Settersten 2009)
- Individual and historical time
- Past relationships
- Childbearing
- A comparative perspective

The data – BHPS and HILDA

United Kingdom	Australia
British Household Panel Survey (BHPS)	Household, Income and Labour Dynamics in Australia Survey (HILDA)
c. 5,000 households & 10,000 interviews	c. 7,000 households & 13,000 interviews
<p>Individuals are selected by merging successive waves of each panel dataset. Transition into being single and 'at risk' of repartnering are determined by observing a change in partnered status between two consecutive waves.</p>	
Waves 9 to 15 (1999-2005)	Waves 1 to 6 (2001-2006)
Analytical sample: 768 individuals (1,720 person-years)	Analytical sample: 924 individuals (2,342 person-years)

Determinants of repartnering

- We investigate a range of life course factors which are hypothesized to be associated with the probability of repartnering after a relationship breakdown.
- A number of known socioeconomic controls are also included.

Life course factors	Socio-economic controls
Previous relationship history	Income
Residency and ages of children	Employment
Age	Education
Sex	Other factors (geographic, housing tenure, health)

- These characteristics influence:
 - A person's *own behaviour* or attitude towards forming a new union.
 - A person's *suitability* as a potential partner to others.

Previous relationship history or 'relationship career':

- Duration of previous relationship (Koo et al. 1984; De Graff & Kalmijn, 2003; Wu & Schimmele 2005)
- Number of previous unions (Poortman 2007)
- Type of previous relationship (Goldscheider & Sassler 2006)

Children: Generally presence of children has a negative effect on repartnering.

- Age of children (Goldscheider & Sassler 2006)
- Resident vs. non-resident children (Bernhardt & Goldscheider 2002)

Age: Increasing age lowers the chance of repartnering.

Sex: Men are more likely to repartner than women (Poortman 2007)

NB: Interaction effects between sex and other characteristics e.g. -ve effect of age on women's probability of repartnering is stronger for women than men.

Strong evidence base that socio-economic variables such as income, employment and education are associated with *remarrying* (but not known for *repartnering*). There are also different effects for men and women.

Marriage: A 'capstone achievement' (Cherlin 2004; Smock, Manning & Porter 2005)

- Women: A woman with her own economic independence would have less of a need to partner (Becker *et al.* 1977).
- Men: Higher incomes make them more attractive partners.

Other views: In modern times changing gender roles and labour markets mean that two incomes are increasingly seen as necessary to maintain a good standard of living (Hughes 2000). Employed women with own incomes attractive.

Positive effect of employment- social interaction and potential to meet partner?
(Hughes 2000; De Graaf and Kalmijn 2003)

The variables

Dependent variable:

Whether or not an individual had repartnered (that is formed a cohabiting relationship or a marriage) in each of the time periods they were at risk.

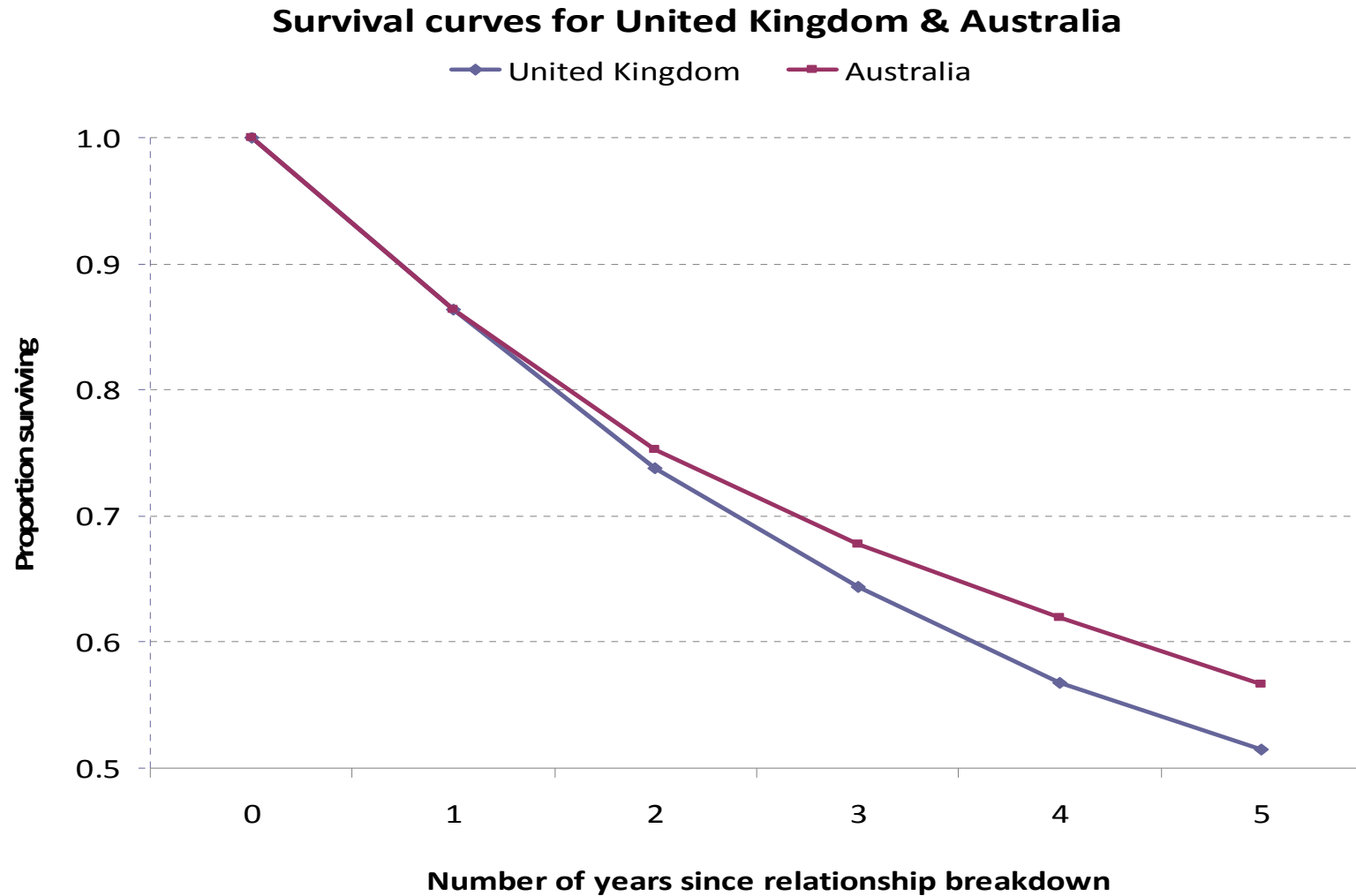
Key independent variables (fixed & time-varying):

- Length of most recent co-residential partnership
- Number of previous partnerships
- Type of previous partnership
- Age & presence of children (composite variable)
- Gender
- Socio-economic variables included as controls

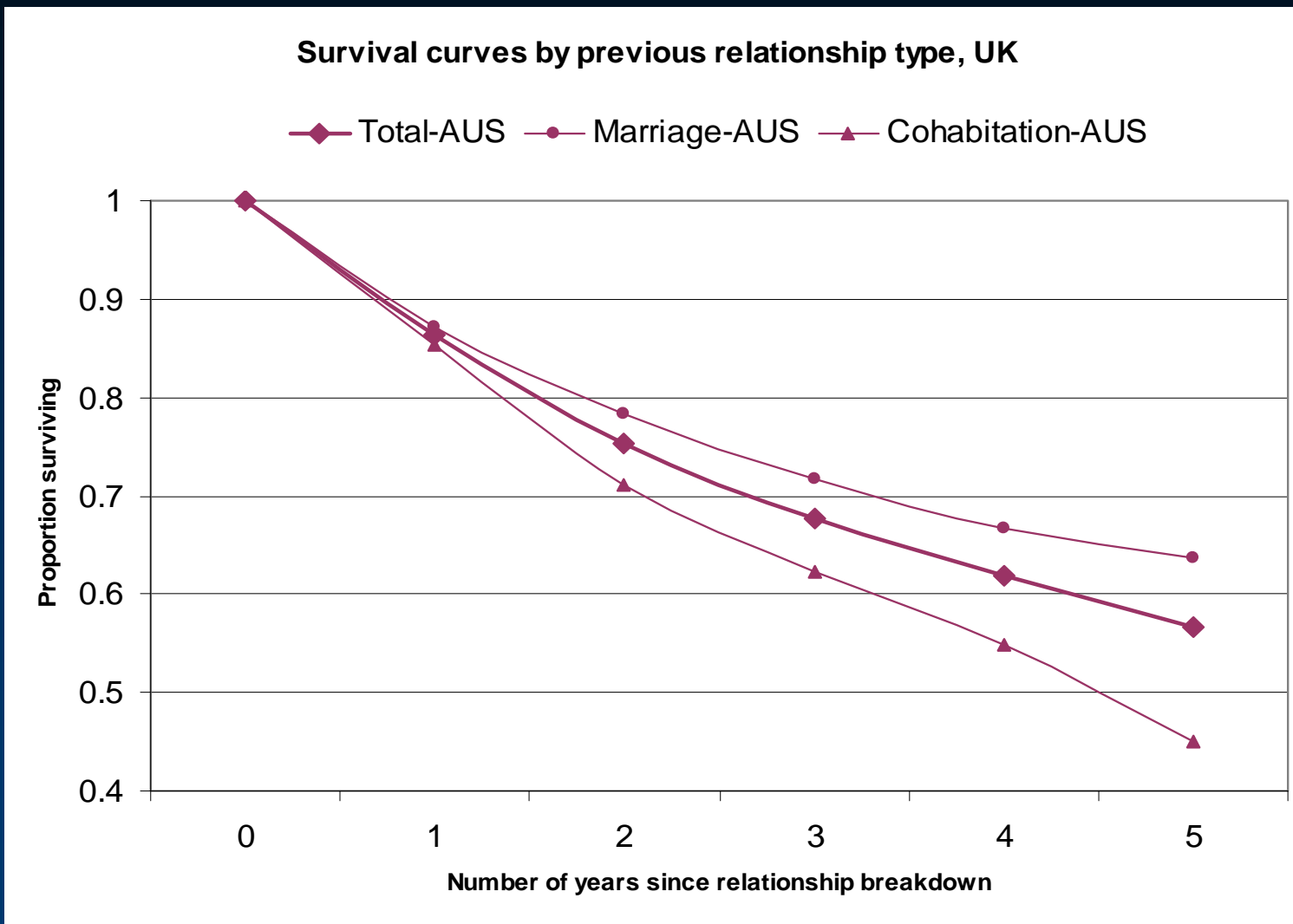


- **Life table approach:** Descriptive statistics of the median duration spent single after the breakdown of a union in each country.
- **Multivariate analysis:** Discrete-time hazard model.
 - Conditional probability of the event (repartnering) occurring in the interval t , given that it has not already occurred in a previous time period.
 - Logistic regression fitted to estimate the response probability.

Life table survival curves



Life table survival curves

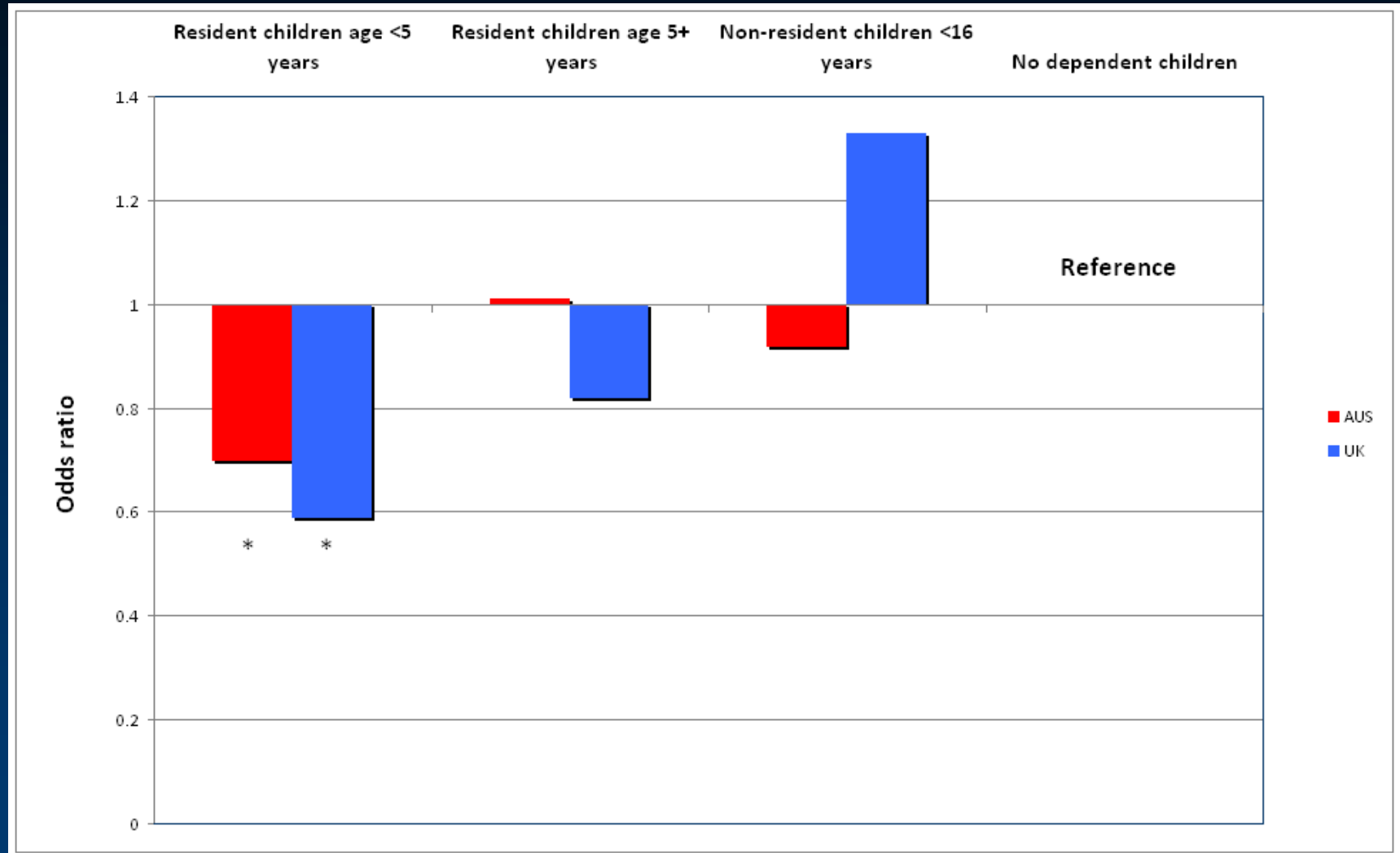




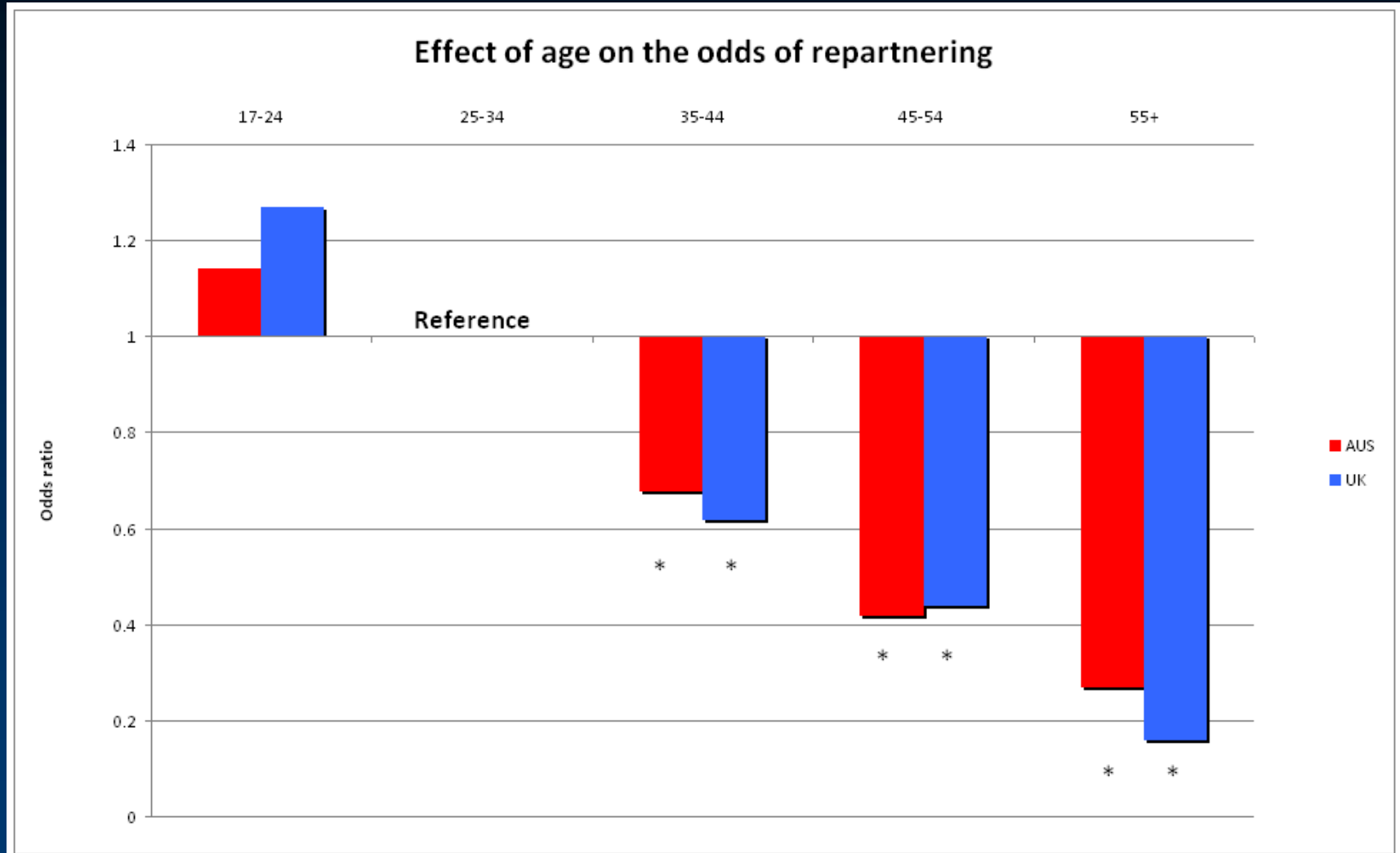
Effect of main life course and socio-economic variables on the odds of repartnering.

	UK	Australia	
Life course variables			
Prior partnership duration	•	•	+ Positive relationship
No. of previous partners	•	•	- Negative relationship
Married	•	•	• No significant relationship
Resident children	-	-	
Age	-	-	
Gender (Male)	•	+	
Socio-economic variables			
Employment	•	•	
Education	•	•	
Income	•	•	
Housing tenure (renting)	•	+	
Region	-	•	
Health	+	+	

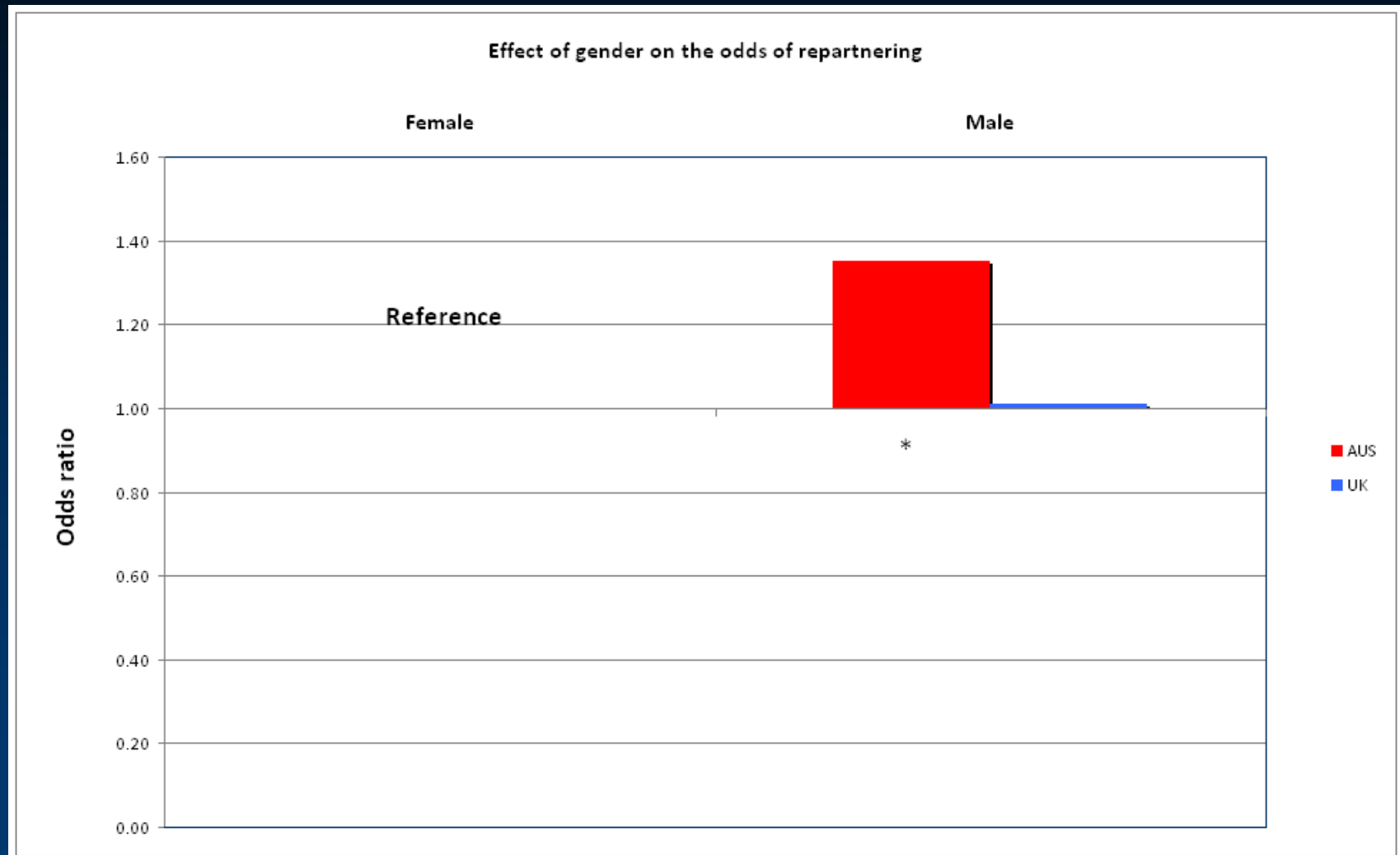
Effect of **children** on odds of repartnering



Effect of **age** on odds of repartnering



Effect of **gender** on odds of repartnering



Model for repartnering with detailed previous partnership type, AUSTRALIA

Age

17-24 years	1.11
25-34 years (ref)	1.00
35-44 years	0.67**
45-54 years	0.43**
55+ years	0.30**

Gender

Female (ref)	1.00
Male	1.35*

Children

Resident children age <5 years	0.69*
Resident children age 5+ years	1.01
Non resident children < 16 years	0.91
No dependent children (ref)	1.00

Previous partnership type

Direct marriage (ref)	1.00
Marriage preceded by cohabitation	1.57*
Cohabitation	1.48

Model for repartnering with detailed previous partnership type, AUSTRALIA

Housing tenure

Owner occupier	1.00
Renter	1.26*

Region

NSW & ACT	1.00
Victoria	0.74*
Queensland	0.74*
SA & NT	0.72
WA	0.72
Tasmania	0.85

Health

Excellent	1.00
Good	0.81
Fair	0.64*
Poor/very poor	0.65
Missing	1.19

Discussion, continued

- Similar results for both the United Kingdom and Australia, but some differences in the effect of key life course variables.

Life course variables

- Measuring cohabitation prior to marriage is important. People who marry directly without prior cohabitation are less likely to repartner.
- Length of the previous union or the number of partners ever had was not significant in either country.
- Negative relationship between age and the probability of repartnering in both countries.
- Gender difference present in Australia, but not in the United Kingdom. May be related to difference in residential patterns for children in the two countries.
- In both countries those with resident children aged 5 or under were less likely to repartner compared to those with no dependent children.

Discussion

- Effect of socio-economic characteristics were less conclusive than research on *remarriage*. But we look at all repartnerships.
- Geographic differences: pool of possible partners, possibly related to socio-economic differences between regions not controlled for in the model.
- Those with good or fair health were less likely to repartner compared to those with excellent health, in UK and Australia respectively.

Further research

- Our results highlight the need for further investigation into the differential effect of children on men and women. Something we cannot explore fully with the data used in this paper. Further research into who people are partnering may also help to explain the lack of any socio-economic effects.

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