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The association between parity, age at first pregnancy, breast-feeding and the risk of breast cancer in the European continent

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Europe as a continent is considered one of the regions in the world with a high incidence of breast cancer. High incidence rates were estimated in Western European countries, notably in Belgium, France and The Netherlands in Northern Europe, particularly in the United Kingdom and in the Nordic countries like Denmark, Iceland and Finland. In comparison, incidence rates in Eastern European countries such as the Ukraine and Moldova were much lower as reported by GLOBOCAN 2012. Survival rates, mortality rates and hospital discharges are increasing as the result of improved treatment, screening and access to health care that can result in over diagnosis hence the increase in incidence. However, the chance of a breast cancer death being avoided by population-based mammography screening of appropriate quality is more than that of over diagnosis by screening (Pac, et al., 2014). Reproductive factors are associated with hormonal types of breast cancer. Parity, age at first pregnancy, rather than breast-feeding is reproductive factors and is usually not classified to be preventable according to some sources that are accessible to the general population. Those factors are associated with individual behavior, social, financial and many other determinants. So, the complexity and the interaction of those determinants defines that both partners and/or one of them to decide when and how many children to have. Considering those factors as related to the increase of incidence and that they could be prevented and intervening upon that, would prevent about half of breast cancer cases of full term pregnancy between the age of 20 and 30 for women who have given birth to children. This risk reduction however is limited to hormone receptor-positive breast cancer, in addition to the reason that Europeans have generally been having fewer children. A study with an updated collective knowledge of the association between parity, age at first pregnancy, and breast-feeding and breast cancer risk in the European continent countries is more important and hence is the aim of this study.

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