Consequences of the COVID Pandemic for Fertility and Family Behaviour in Germany

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Mehr Haushalt und Kinderbetreuung – Frauen tragen die Last

Homeback der Familie in der Corona-Krise: Werden wir um 30 Jahre zurückgeworfen?

Die Frauen ver

In der Krise erleben wir eine neue Aufteilung von Sorgenarbeit und Haushaltsverantwortung. Alle Stufen der Familienleben - von der Vaterschaft über die Mütterlichkeit bis hin zu den Großeltern - ergeben sich neue Rollenverteilungen.


„Frauen werden eine entsetzlich Retraditionalisierung erfahren“
Corona: Re-Traditionalisation of Gender Roles?

• The Corona-Crisis has resulted into a *re-traditionalization* of care patterns and lead to an even more unequal gendered division of care.

Corona: A Push for Gender Equality?

• Men were strongly affected by *short-work*. They had more time to engage with their children.
Germany: Unemployment and Short Time Work in 2020

Source: IAB (2021)
Care Work (in hours per day) by Mothers and Fathers

Source: Kreyenfeld/Zinn (2020)
Care Work (in hours per day) by Mothers and Fathers

Source: Kreyenfeld/Zinn (2020)
Division of Child Care of Couples with Children

Before Corona: 25
- Father (exclusively or mainly)
- Both equally
- Mainly mother
- Exclusively mother

During Corona: 26
- Father (exclusively or mainly)
- Both equally
- Mainly mother
- Exclusively mother

Source: Naujoks et al. (2021)
Changes in the Division of Child Care of Couples

Changes in division of care
Comparison of before and during Corona

- Father decreases “care share”
- No change
- Father increases “care share”

Source: Naujoks et al. (2021)
The coronavirus pandemic has people rethinking their plans for having kids.

There probably won’t be a “coronavirus baby boom.”

Coronavirus crisis ‘likely to reduce’ birthrate, predicts top demographer

Demographer warns of coronavirus 'ripple effects', predicts drop in birthrate and taxpayers

By Caroline Winter
Updated about 11 hours ago

Don’t Expect a Quarantine Baby Boom

Not only do disasters have little effect, if any, on birthrates, the coronavirus pandemic will probably discourage couples from having children, experts say.
Total Fertility Rate (TFR)

Sweden

France

Germany

Source: INSEE, Swedish Statistical Office, German Statistical Office. BiB
Note: only West Germany after 1945
Sweden: „Roller Coaster Fertility“

Unemployment Rate

TFR

The 1990s: The Swedish Case
The 2000s: The Global Financial Crisis

The scatter plot shows the relationship between the ratio of Total Fertility Rate (TFR) in period t to TFR in period t-1 (TFR(t)/TFR(t-1)) and the ratio of unemployment rate in period t to unemployment rate in period t-2 (Unemployment rate (t)/Unemployment rate (t-2)) for Latvia in 2009 and Lithuania in 2009. Spearman's Correlation Coefficient for this relationship is -0.31***.

Source: Goldstein et al. (2012)
The 2000s: The Global Financial Crisis

Source: Goldstein et al. (2012)
Since 2010: High Age at First Birth

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<th>Year</th>
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<th>Germany West</th>
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<th>Italy</th>
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</tbody>
</table>

Source: HFD (2020)
Since 2010: Low Fertility

Cohort Fertility at Age 40

Quelle: HFD (2020)
Family

- Consistent evidence that pandemic had severe effects on families (family well-being, stress etc.)
- But: No “role reversal” for Germany

Fertility

- Strong correlation between unemployment and fertility in European countries since 2000
- “Pandemic effect“ will depend on recovery of economy
- Positive for Germany: Major family policy reforms were launched well before pandemic
Many thanks for your attention!