

NORBERT NEUWIRTH
ISABELLA BUBER-ENNSER
BEAT FUX (EDS.)



Families in Austria

Partnerships, fertility intentions and
economic situation in challenging times

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The *Generations and Gender Programme* (GGP) is an international survey program to record the background of demographic change in Europe. The Netherlands Interdisciplinary Demographic Institute (NIDI) is in the lead of the international GGP, the Austrian Institute for Family Studies (OIF), University Vienna, is in charge of the Austrian part. All institutes represented in the GGP-Austria consortium are listed in the list of authors (page 80). This survey wave of the GGP-Austria was conducted by Jaksch & Partner, Linz.


Further information on www.ggp-austria.at.

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Austrian Institute for Family Studies (OIF)
University of Vienna
Grillparzerstraße 7/9
A-1010 Wien

 +43 1 4277 489 01

 info@oif.ac.at

 www.oif.ac.at

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Norbert Neuwirth, Isabella Buber-Ennser, Beat Fux

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Preface

Although demographic developments are perceived to be slow, they are sustainable: they shape not only the current social development, but also that of future generations. They interact with the social system, economic development and hence the development of prosperity, in that they affect these key factors of social cohesion but are also conditioned by them. The results of changes in these parameters are reflected in demographic trends, which in turn influence these parameters.

While the ongoing changes in family structures and gender roles, the shift in the age structure and migration are clearly visible, they do not receive the attention they deserve from the public and politicians. For this very reason, it is important to measure the behavioural parameters that are essential to demographic change with appropriate tools, so that the associated developments can be identified and responded to in good time.

The international *Generations and Gender Programme* (GGP) was developed precisely for this purpose. Participants are not only asked questions about their current situation, but also targeted retrospective and prospective questions that map their past and planned individual biographical development. As a panel study, the GGP also records the implementation of these plans after a few years, so that systematic patterns of the realisation, postponement or revision of individual plans, which are crucial for social demographic change, can be worked out against the background of personal development. Assuming that one of the central tasks of a democratic system is to enable people to fulfil their life aspirations, these data are not only an important key to understanding demographic change, but also to legitimising the political system.

This volume provides a first look at some of the issues raised. Some chapters also compare the results with those of previous waves of the survey. Although the volume contains only compact, selective observations, it outlines the analytical potential of the GGP. All researchers are encouraged to make use of these data!

Once again, the Austrian Institute for Family Studies (OIF) led the Austrian part of the international GGP. The project was developed in close cooperation between the Universities of Vienna and Salzburg, the Austrian Academy of Sciences and the international cooperation partners. Moreover, contributors to this volume include staff from all participating institutes.

I would like to thank all those involved, including the funding ministries, for their commitment, cooperation and time discipline in carrying out the countless individual tasks that are essential for the success of such a project!

Wolfgang Mazal
Head of Department OIF

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1 The international Generations and Gender Programme

NORBERT NEUWIRTH • ISABELLA BUBER-ENNSER

The *Generations and Gender Programme* was launched by the United Nations (UNECE) in the early 2000s. It is an international project for studying family formation, family life, family stability and their mutual influences on other areas of life. The programme includes mostly European countries and permits comparisons of demographic developments. Moreover, countries and regions outside Europe are also involved in the GGP.

Standard tool in empirical family research

The GGP has become an empirical standard tool in the field of family and fertility research. It is designed in such a way that people are interviewed twice at an interval of at least three years. Among other things, this facilitates comparing surveyed plans with later developments and a systematic study of deviations.

Starting in the mid-2000s, the first wave of the survey was implemented in a total of 19 countries. The second survey was conducted three to four years later. Austria took part in this round (GGP-I) in 2008/09 and 2012/13. Based on the collected data, it was possible to reveal structural connections in family research and to compare and analyse them internationally.

Second round (GGP-II) just started

Ever since the second half of the 2010s, but especially due to the current European and global crises, people's living conditions have changed significantly. Drastic demographic shifts are to be expected and will prevail for many years. In order to be able to systematically record and analyse these developments in a comparable way, a second round of surveys (GGP-II) comprising two waves was developed. It will provide researchers with a structured data pool that permits comparative analyses both internationally and intergenerationally.

Most of the countries that implemented the GGP-I currently conduct or prepare the first wave of GGP-II (dark green in Fig. 1.1). Six GGP-I countries have not yet continued the programme (grey). However, numerous countries (light green) have joined the current programme (GGP-II), others are planning to do so. The GGP is the most important family science survey programme in Europe. It is being continuously developed in terms of content and methodology. The GGP was included as a new project on the ESFRI (European Strategy Forum on Research Infrastructures) Roadmap in 2021 and is in the process of being organizationally and legally constituted as an European research infrastructure.

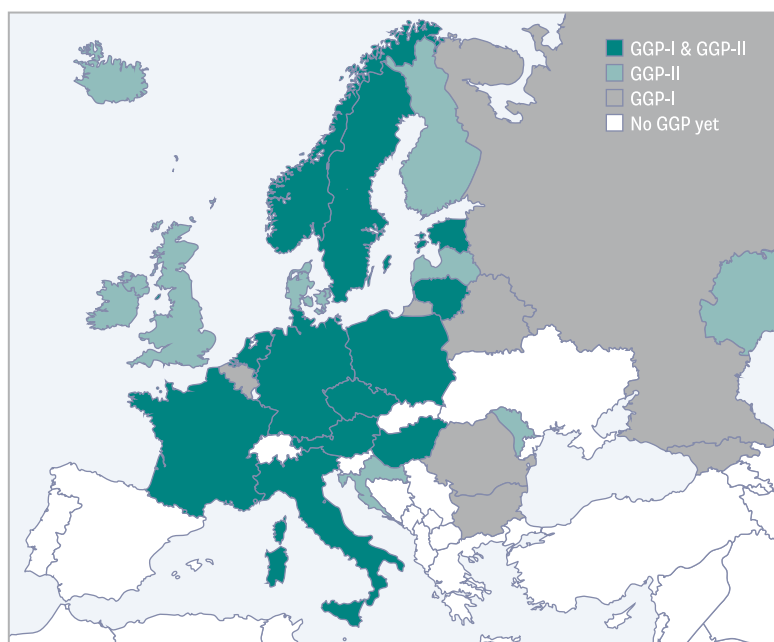


Figure 1.1: GGP countries in Europe, as of June 2023

2 GGP.at – the Generations and Gender Programme in Austria

NORBERT NEUWIRTH

Austria has been involved in the development of the international *Generations and Gender Programme* (GGP) from an early stage and was thus able to share the experience it gained by running the *Family and Fertility Survey* (FFS), i. e. the GGP's predecessor. The Austrian FFS was conducted by the Austrian Institute for Family Studies (OIF) and surveyed by the institute INTEGRAL in 1996. In addition, an accompanying GGP contextual database was set up, in which country- and region-specific macroeconomic and demographic data are processed in a harmonised manner. These harmonised contextual data are analysed in a structured way together with the survey data collected.

GGP-I: a classic field survey covering the entire federal territory

The first wave of the survey (GGP-I, wave 1) was conducted in 2008/09. Statistics Austria was commissioned to conduct the field survey with 5,000 face-to-face interviews. The data were subsequently harmonised and implemented under the leadership of the OIF and in cooperation with the Austrian Academy

of Sciences (OEAW). These data have been available for international research since the end of 2009.

In Austria, the second wave of GGP-I was carried out in 2012/13. With a re-interview rate of almost 80% and the frequently attested high data quality including detailed weighting and extrapolation procedures, Austria made a valuable contribution to the international GGP. Meanwhile, GGP.at has become a standard tool for family research with a focus on Austria.

GGP-II: a comprehensive online survey

In the second half of the 2010s, the institutes of the University of Vienna, the Austrian Academy of Sciences and the University of Salzburg, all part of the GGP.at consortium, realised that only a follow-up survey could capture recent developments. After detailed negotiations with the responsible bodies, the current survey was commissioned at the end of 2021. Again, ÖIF is leading this GGP round in Austria. The field survey was conducted by Jaksch&Partner.

As in all participating countries, the sample for the current survey round (GGP-II) was newly drawn, but the questionnaires are comparable to those used in the first survey. This means that the shifts in the life circumstances of the cohorts studied can be tracked in the best possible way. Respondents aged 18-59 on the reference date in mid-September 2022 were interviewed. The field phase was successfully completed by 15 March 2023.

The short studies contained in this publication are based on the checked and adjusted data (Fig. 2.1). They will be followed by detailed analytical work on fertility intentions, fertility, forms of partnership, conflict potential and stability of couples' relationships as well as their respective correlations with labour force participation, intra-family division of labour, intergenerational cohesion, complexity of family structures and much more. These analyses will either refer exclusively to Austria or be internationally comparative. Interested researchers can obtain data access via www.ggp-austria.at.

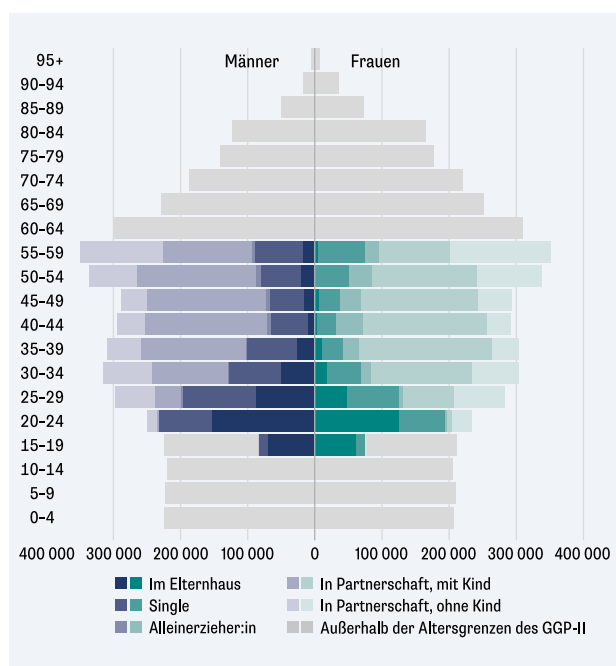


Figure 2.1: Population group (age: 18-59) covered in GGP-II by current role in the family

3 Cohort fertility and parity distribution

KRYŠTOF ZEMAN • TOMÁŠ SOBOTKA

Most Austrian women born in the twentieth century had a small family with up to two children. Data from the “Birth Barometer Austria”, updated to 2022 when the latest GGP survey was conducted, provide a detailed picture of long-term changes in fertility and family size in the country.

Mean number of children per woman fell from 2.5 to 1.6

Relatively low fertility rates in Austria have been closely linked to high levels of childlessness. Only women born between the late 1920s and the early 1940s show a different pattern of higher fertility and lower childlessness. These women married, started families, and had children during the period of rising prosperity after the Second World War. They also participated in the baby boom of the late 1950s and 1960s. Fertility rates peaked among women born around 1935, who had an average of 2.5 children, with more than 40% having three or more children. Among mothers, the average family size reached 2.8 children (Fig. 3.1).

Subsequently, fertility rates fell among the younger cohorts of women who started families later in life: women born in the late 1940s had two children on average, while those born in the late 1950s had about 1.8 children. Fertility then stabilised at around 1.65 children per woman for those born in the 1970s. This

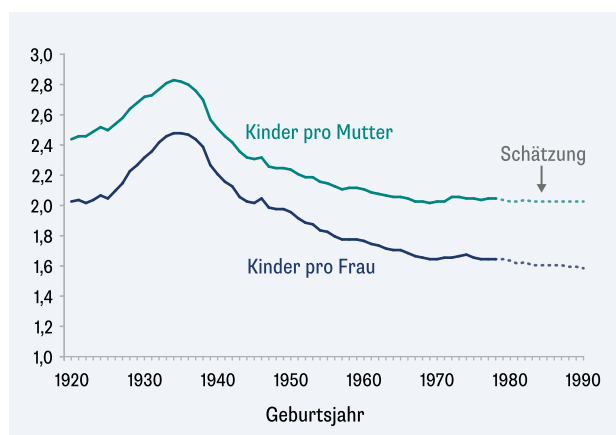


Figure 3.1: Mean number of children per woman (completed fertility rate) and per mother, women born 1920-1990

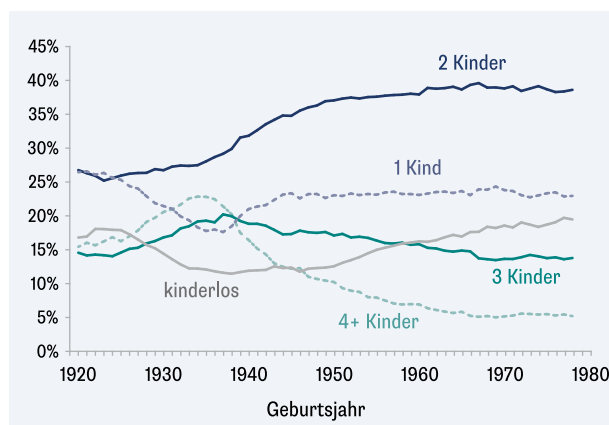


Figure 3.2: Number of live births of children (parity) to women born 1920-1978 (%)

is well above the period total fertility rates, which were around 1.4 in the 2000s, when these women were in their prime childbearing years. Part of the fertility decline was due to an increase in permanent childlessness. Among mothers, family size has been remarkably stable, hovering just above two children on average.

The two-child norm prevails

Figure 3.2 shows the changing family size of Austrian women in greater detail. The fertility decline among women born since the mid-1930s was mainly driven by a steep drop in the share of women with larger families. The proportion with four or more children fell to only 5% , while the share of women with two children continued to rise, and two-child families became much more common than other family configurations. Childlessness also rose from a low of 12% among women born in the 1930s and 1940s to the much higher level of 18-19% among cohorts born in the late 1960s.

Preliminary estimates for the 1980s cohorts suggest that childlessness will continue to increase, reaching 23-24% for those born in the 1990s.



Family and Partnership

4 Where do couples meet?

MARIE-CAROLINE COMPANS • EVA BEAUJOUAN

Where couples first meet provides an interesting picture of the places people go to and the society in which they live. GGP respondents were asked where they met their current and former cohabiting partners. Individual characteristics also play an important part in determining where partners meet.

Where partners first meet varies by educational level and birth cohort

Among people born in the 1960s, highly educated men and women (short-cycle tertiary education, bachelor's degree or higher) often met their first partner during their studies or at work (Fig. 4.1). This was less often the case for those with lower levels of education, who were more likely to have met in public places (especially bars or clubs). However, these specificities have diminished across cohorts. Instead, it has become more common for all educational groups to meet their first partner

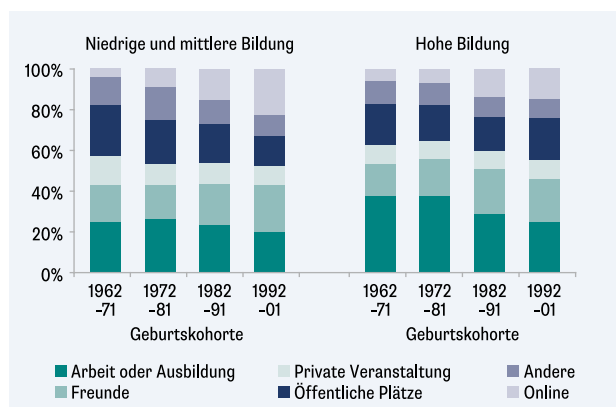


Figure 4.1: Places where men and women met their first cohabiting partner, by level of education and birth cohort (%)

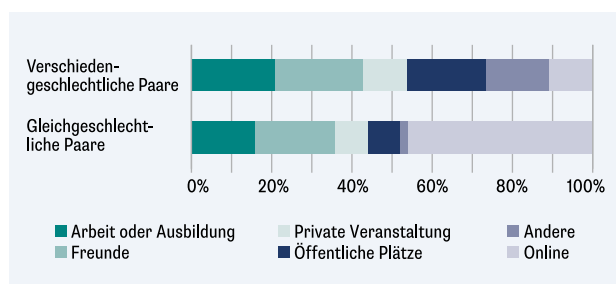


Figure 4.2: Places where men and women in same-sex and opposite-sex couples met their current partner (%)

through online settings (mostly dating apps). Among men and women born between 1992 and 2001, 15% of the highly educated and 23% of the less educated met their first partner online. Online dating has somehow replaced meeting in public places, through work or in education, but not meeting at private events or through friends as it has remained fairly common across all educational groups and cohorts.

Same-sex partners meet more often online and less often in public places

At the time of the survey, more than one hundred respondents were in a same-sex cohabiting partnership. Meeting through friends, at private parties or social events, through work or in education is slightly more common for opposite-sex couples than for same-sex couples: 53% of current opposite-sex couples and 44% of current same-sex couples met in one of these ways (Fig. 4.2). Interestingly, same-sex partners met mostly through online settings (46%), far more than heterosexual couples (11%). Most people who are currently in a same-sex partnership were born in the 1980s or later, but the prevalence of meeting online is higher among all the surveyed cohorts. Lesbian, gay and bisexual people face smaller “markets” for potential partners. Conversely, heterosexual people have many more opportunities to meet a potential partner: compared to people in same-sex partnerships, they were more likely to have met in public places (20% vs. 8%) such as bars or clubs, on vacation or on business trips, through a social organisation, health club, gym or volunteer group, at church or through their family (included in “Other”).

5 Couples in Austria: birds of a feather flock together

BERNHARD RIEDERER

While it is often said that opposites attract, in Austria partners are in many ways very similar.

Similar levels of education, but different occupations

Looking at the educational level of the partners, the similarity between them is obvious. According to the *International Standard Classification of Education* (ISCED 0-8), both partners have the same ISCED level in 48% of couples. There is little difference between heterosexual couples (48%) and other couples (46%) in which either both partners are male or female or at least one partner is gender diverse. When only distinguishing between primary and lower secondary education (low education), upper secondary and post-secondary education (medium education) and tertiary education (high education), the proportion of couples with the same level of education even rises to 64%. However, in terms of the *International Standard Classification of Occupation* (ISCO 1-digit codes 0-9), only about a quarter of the couples (26%) have both partners in the same occupational group.

Differentiating by skill level and responsibility between upper level (ISCO 1 and 2), upper middle level (ISCO 3), lower middle level (ISCO 4, 6, 7, 8) and lower level occupations (ISCO 5, 9), we can observe

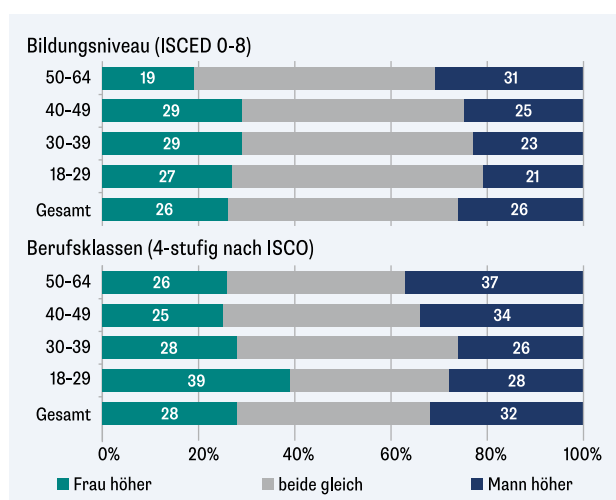


Figure 5.1: Educational and occupational composition of heterosexual couples with an age difference of less than five years by age of the older person (%)

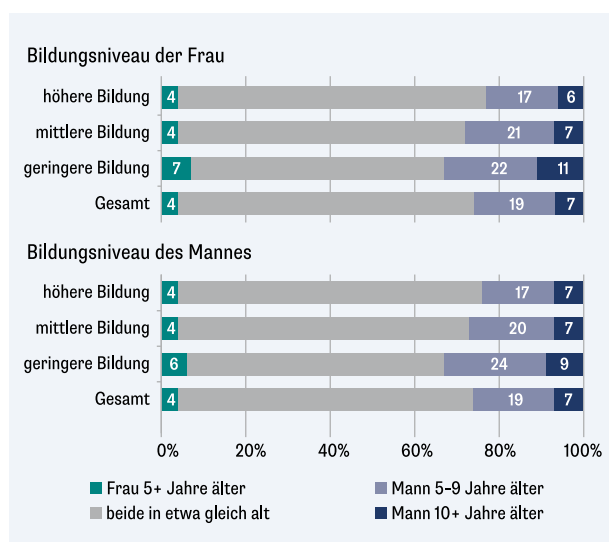


Figure 5.2: Age differences among heterosexual couples by level of education (%)

how the constellation within heterosexual couples has developed over generations: among older couples, male partners are more often in higher educational and occupational groups, while among younger couples it is more often the female partner (Fig. 5.1).

Differences by age and country of birth

Partners are usually not only similar in terms of education. In about 69% of couples, the age difference between partners is less than five years; in 29% it is one year or less. Again, heterosexual couples hardly differ from other couples in this respect. Interestingly, there are, however, substantial differences by educational attainment: the age differences between men and women are much bigger with lower levels of education (Fig. 5.2).

In 70% of the couples, both partners were born in Austria. Non-heterosexual couples are more heterogeneous in this respect (both partners born in Austria: 55%). Among heterosexual couples, the educational level of both partners is particularly high in couples where only one partner was born in Austria. Moreover, the age difference is bigger in couples where only the man was born in Austria.

6 Partnership status and marriage plans

ANDREAS BAIERL

Of the 18-59 year olds surveyed, 72% are in a relationship. Of these, 84% live in a joint household and 66% are married.

As expected, partnership status is highly age dependent (Fig. 6.1). The proportion of those who have never cohabited falls sharply in young adulthood, from almost 100% among 18-year olds to around 12% among 40-year olds. Thereafter, it remains stable at around 11%. This means that people who have never cohabited by the age of 40 are less likely to move in with a partner later on.

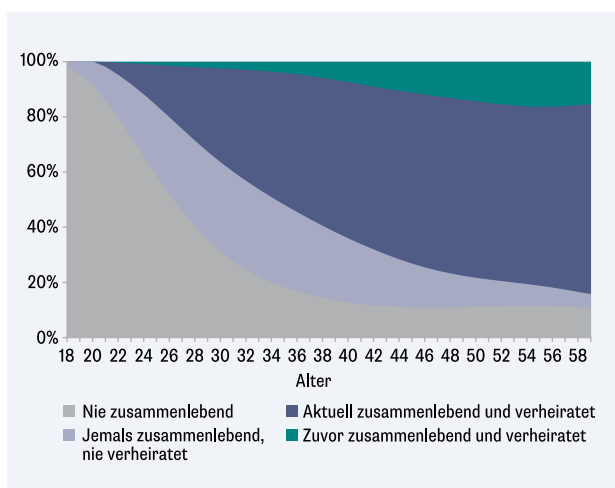


Figure 6.1: Change in partnership status with age (%)

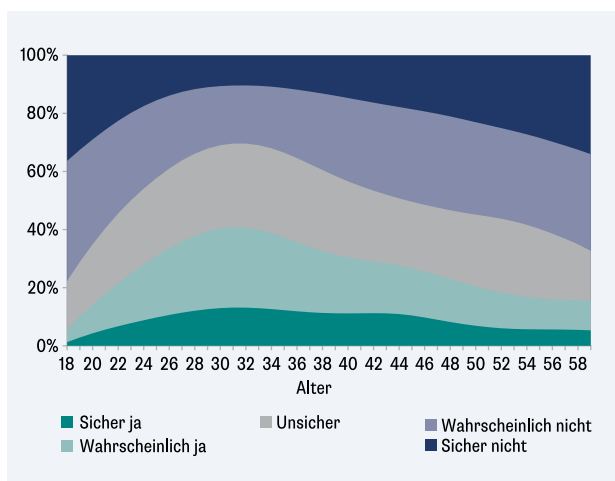


Figure 6.2: Marriage plans of people in couple relationships (%)

By their late 50s, over 80% have already married

This development is reflected in the proportion of those who have ever cohabited, which rises to 88% among 40-year olds. The proportion of those who have also been married rises steadily with age. Among the 40-year olds, some 64% have already lived together in a marriage; among the 59-year-olds, the figure is 84%.

The proportion of people who currently are *no longer* living together in a marriage is low until the mid-30s. As the likelihood of divorce naturally increases with age, the proportion gradually rises, reaching 15% for those over 50.

30-year olds most likely to have marriage plans

In the GGP survey, all unmarried people living in a relationship were asked whether they intended to marry in the next three years. Overall, 9% of this group say “definitely yes” and another 19% “probably yes”. Men are slightly more likely to express a definite (11% vs. 8%) or probable (20% vs. 18%) intention. Cohabiting couples are much more likely than LAT couples to indicate definite (14% vs. 4%) or probable (24% vs. 11%) marriage plans.

Intention to marry varies with age. Unmarried people aged 30-33 are by far the most likely to say they intend to get married in the next three years. In this age group, around 40% of the respondents say marriage is likely or certain. Among the 40-year olds, this proportion falls to around 30%, and among the 59-year olds, 16% still express the intention to get married (Fig. 6.2).

Looking at partnership status over time shows that by the end of their 50s, about one tenth of those surveyed have never cohabited. Of the nine tenths who have cohabited, only 5% have never married.

7 Living Apart Together – couple relationships across household boundaries

MARKUS KAINDL

Couples may live together in a joint household or they may live separately in a “Living Apart Together” (LAT) arrangement. Unlike other household and family statistics such as the microcensus, the GGP offers the possibility of also recording such partnerships.

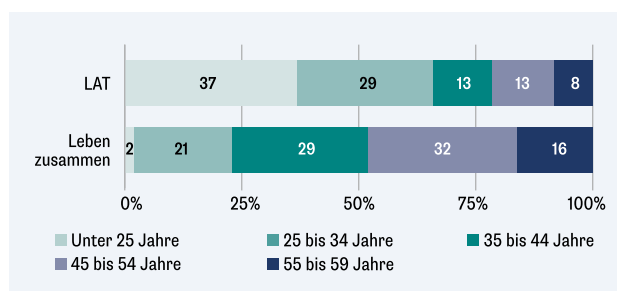


Figure 7.1: Age of respondents who are in a partnership

LAT more common among young couples

People living in a LAT relationship tend to be younger than those living with their partner. Among those in a LAT partnership, more than a third are aged 18 to under 25 and about a fifth are aged 45-59, while among those living with their partner, only 2% are under 25 and 48% are aged 45-59. There are clear differences in sexual orientation: among heterosexual couples 15% live in a LAT relationship, among homosexual couples the figure is 40%. It seems that the heteronormative norms prevailing in society make it difficult for same-sex couples to live together.

For respondents under 35, LAT is largely a temporary living arrangement. Around three quarters want to move in with their partner, less than 10% do not want to do so, the rest are unsure. Among older respondents, the LAT lifestyle is rather seen as a long-term solution. About half of those over 50 are not planning to move in together. In this age group, many people have created their own living environment that is enriched by their relationship, but no longer defined by it.

Spatial proximity and frequent contacts

LAT couples tend to live close to each other. Thirty per cent live within 15 minutes of each other and a further quarter live between 16 and 30 minutes away. Long distances of more than five hours are rare (6%).

LAT couples have very frequent contact. More than three quarters meet every day, and a further fifth meet at least once a week. As expected, the frequency of face-to-face meetings depends on distance: if the partners live within 30 minutes of each other, more than 95% meet several times a week. If they live 1.5 to 5 hours apart, only about half of them meet several times a week. At even greater distances, the frequency of meetings is even lower.

Satisfaction with LAT partnership increases with frequency of meetings

The frequency of meetings has a positive effect on relationship satisfaction. Although respondents are generally very satisfied with their partnership (scores 9 and 10 on a scale of 0 to 10), this proportion is significantly higher among those who meet every day (77%). By comparison, only about half of those who meet once a week report such very high scores.

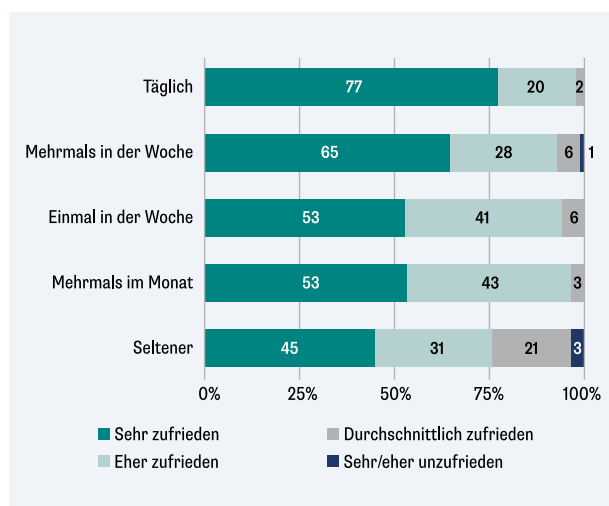


Figure 7.2: Satisfaction with partnership by frequency of meetings (%)

8 Same-sex couples

SABINE BUCHEBNER-FERSTL • ANDREAS BAIERL

Of the respondents in the GGP who were in a couple relationship, 2.4% of men and 1.1% of women reported living in a same-sex partnership. Overall, 3.3% of men and 2.2% of women in current or former couple relationships have had at least one same-sex relationship. Due to the small number of cases, statements about homosexual couples are only possible to a limited extent.

Around 85% of heterosexual couples, but only 58% of gay couples and 64% of lesbian couples, live in a joint household.

While only 28% of men and just under a quarter of women in heterosexual relationships are childless, the proportion is around two thirds for people in homosexual relationships (Fig. 8.1).

Partnership satisfaction

Regardless of the couple type, 87% of the respondents report high satisfaction with their partnership (>7 on a scale of 0 to 10). Female couples do not differ from heterosexual couples in this respect, while men in homosexual partnerships are slightly less likely to report high partnership satisfaction (78%).

Work status

Just over a third of both men and women in same-sex relationships work part-time, compared to only 11% of men in opposite-sex relationships. If there are children

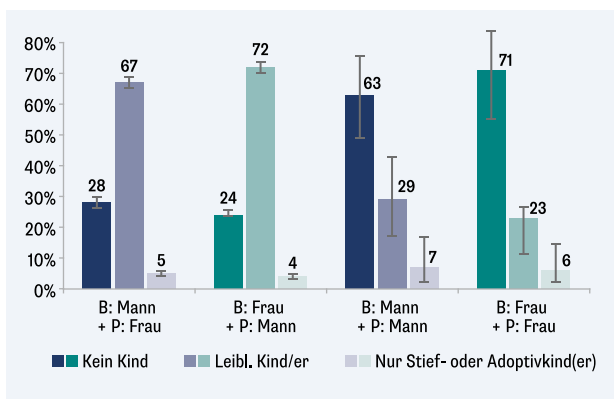


Figure 8.1: Persons with and without children by type of couple (%); R = respondent, P = partner

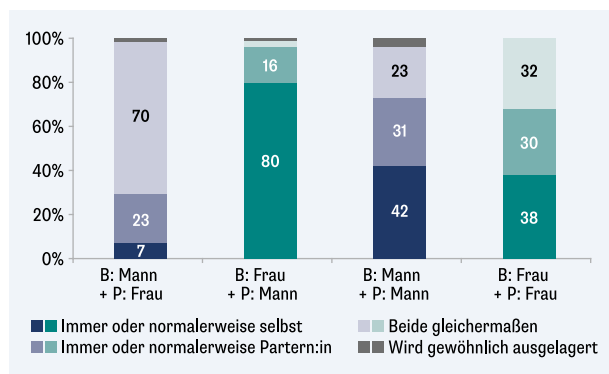


Figure 8.2: Distribution of household task "doing the laundry" among respondents by type of couple (%), R = respondent, P = partner

in the household, the proportion of male (homosexual) respondents working part-time is similar to that of mothers in heterosexual partnerships (around 50%), while female (homosexual) respondents work only part-time or not at all.

Distribution of household tasks

Studies of the division of housework that include same-sex partnerships almost unanimously conclude that homosexual couples consistently share housework more equally than heterosexual couples. The results of the GGP also point in this direction and are particularly strong when it comes to doing the laundry (Fig. 8.2). While in heterosexual relationships 70% of men and 80% of women say that this task is always or mostly done by the woman, in homosexual partnerships it is mainly done by the respondents themselves, by their partner or by both equally with about the same frequency.

Overall, the data support the notion that couples in same-sex relationships have a more egalitarian division of paid and unpaid work than people in heterosexual relationships.

9 Partnership satisfaction and conflicts

SONJA DÖRFLER-BOLT • NORBERT NEUWIRTH • GEORG WERNHART

Partnership satisfaction seems to be primarily dependent on the family phase: both childless men and women show an average partnership satisfaction of 9.0 on a 10-point scale, while persons with children have somewhat lower satisfaction scores (8.9 and 8.8, respectively).

Satisfaction increases after 20 years of partnership

If we look at satisfaction by duration of relationship and sex, we get an almost U-shaped correlation. In the first five years, satisfaction is very high, and slightly higher for women (9.1) than for men (9.0). Thereafter, it begins to decline more markedly for women and subsequently remains consistently below that of men. It takes ten years before men's satisfaction starts to decrease. Once a relationship has lasted for 20 years, partnership satisfaction gradually rises once more for both sexes. In long-term partnerships, women are clearly less satisfied than men. With a score of 9.2, men show the highest satisfaction after 30 years. This development indicates that, on the one hand, partnerships with a high relationship quality last longer and, on the other hand, the lower satisfaction in relationships of medium length could indicate high burdens in the "rush hour of life" resulting from housework, child rearing and paid work (Fig. 9.1).

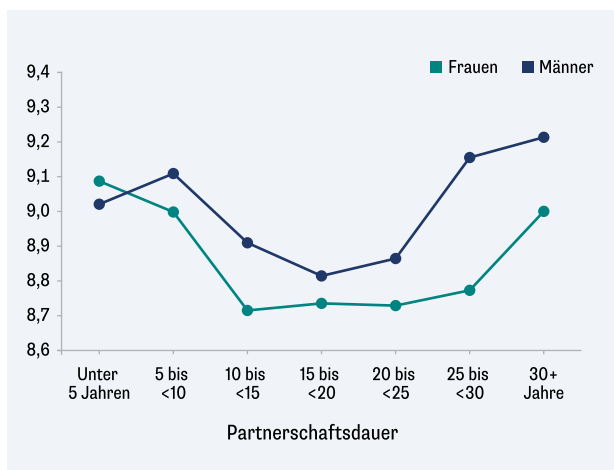


Figure 9.1: Partnership satisfaction by duration of partnership and sex

Housework as the main reason of conflict

Household chores are typically the reason for (very) frequent conflicts in partnerships; women without children state this most frequently (17%) and men without children least frequently (11%) (Fig. 9.2).

Among couples with children, the difference between men and women is less pronounced than among couples without children. Child raising issues are the second most frequent conflict topic (around 10%). Mothers are more likely to mention money as a conflict topic (9%), while fathers experience this as less problematic (6%). The difference between females and males is less pronounced among couples without children (8% vs. 6%). The decision to have a (further) child is only very rarely a source of conflict in partnerships; as expected, it is somewhat more common in partnerships without children.

Provided partnerships last for a long time, they are increasingly satisfying, especially for men. Stumbling blocks are, first and foremost, the division of household chores and raising children.

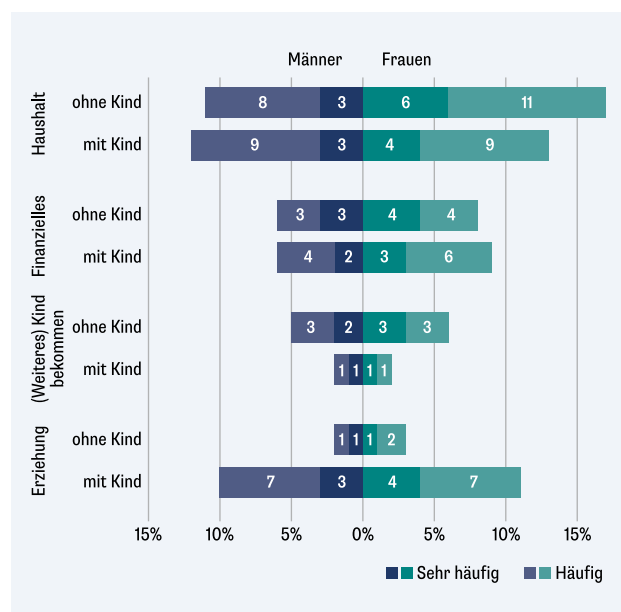


Figure 9.2: Reasons for partnership conflicts by sex and presence of children

10 The beginning of the end? Couples thinking about breaking up

NORBERT NEUWIRTH

Couples come together, their partnership develops over the years, and some of them break up again. The GGP records how and when couples met, when they moved in together and got married, but also addresses the possible end of a relationship. One specific question is: “Even people who get along well with their partners sometimes wonder whether their marriage or partnership will work. Over the past 12 months, have you thought about breaking up your relationship?” The answers show that around 15% of respondents who are currently in a partnership are thinking about ending it. There are clear differences between the sexes: 18% of women, but only 12% of men, have considered breaking up.

Highly educated childless women want to separate more often

Overall, parents are less likely to report having thought about separation. Shared responsibility for children reduces the likelihood of parents seriously considering separation. Nevertheless, our results show that – especially among mothers – thoughts of separation are more pronounced in the medium and high education groups. Thoughts of separation are much more common among those without children and rise sharply among women as their level of education increases. Among men, it is mainly those with compulsory education or less who think about separation more often than average. However, it should be borne in mind that childless respondents are

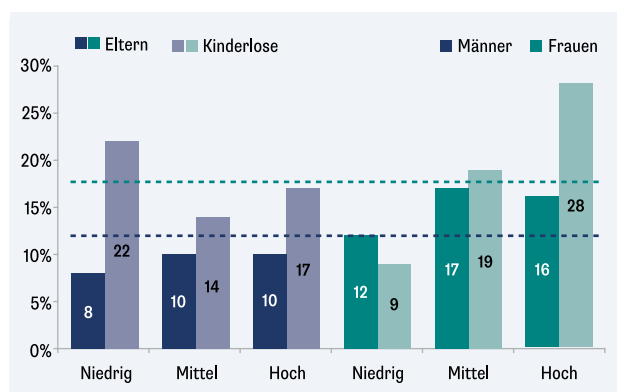


Figure 10.1: Frequencies of men and women thinking about separation by level of education (%)

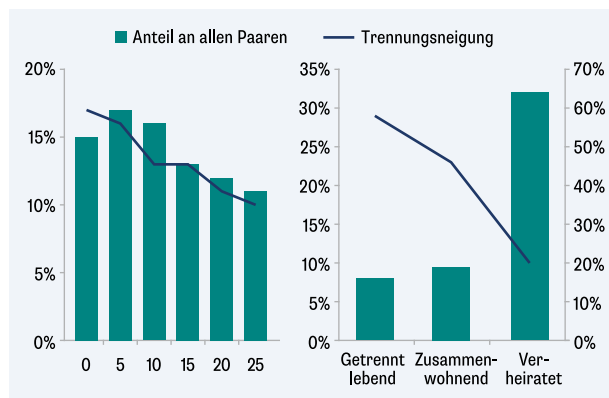


Figure 10.2: Propensity to separate by years of cohabitation (left) and by partnership type (right) (%)

mainly under 40. People with a low level of education are often younger than 25.

As expected, the propensity to separate is strongly correlated with the frequency and nature of relationship conflict. People who often have heated arguments with their partner are more likely to separate (47%). The same goes for people who very often give in or refuse to discuss disagreements altogether (41%). Couples who tend to discuss their disagreements calmly are much less likely to separate (10%).

The longer the relationship, the lower the residual propensity to separate

The propensity to separate decreases almost naturally with the number of years spent together, as couples with a persistent propensity tend to separate in the medium term. It also decreases when analysed by partnership type (living apart, cohabiting without being married, married and cohabiting), which often reflects the successive stages of a partnership (Fig. 10.2).

11 Partnerships and migration background

ISABELLA BUBER-ENNSER

This article focuses on the migrant background of couples in young and middle adulthood by country of birth.

Three in ten couples include at least one person not born in Austria

In 70% of the couples surveyed, both partners were born in Austria. The remaining 30% are divided equally between couples where one partner is an immigrant and couples where both partners are immigrants. In the latter group, both are mostly from the same country (Fig. 11.1). If only one partner is an immigrant, the most common countries of origin are Turkey, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Romania, Italy or Hungary. If both immigrants come from the same country, Turkey tops the list of countries of origin, followed by Bosnia and Herzegovina, Germany and Romania.

Two-immigrant couples more likely to be married

Depending on the origin of the couple, there are differences in marital status and living arrangements. While overall about one third of the couples surveyed are unmarried, non-marital cohabitation is comparatively common among Austrian-German couples (52%). The latter also frequently live in LAT relationships (24%), i.e. they do not live together. Couples where both partners are immigrants from the same country are mostly married (85%).

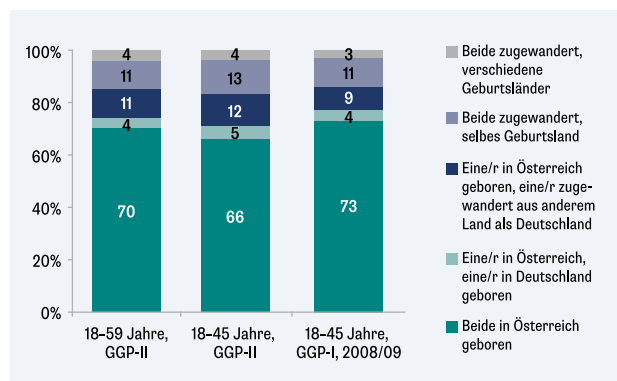


Figure 11.1: Country of origin of couples, 2022/23 and 2008/09 (%)

German spoken at home by 20-40% of couples with two immigrants

Couples comprising one immigrant mostly speak German at home (78%) (Fig. 11.2). This proportion is relatively low for couples in which both immigrants come from the same country (21%), but it is considerably higher for couples in which both immigrants come from different countries (40%).

The GGP-I (conducted in 2008/09) also asked about the country of birth. As persons aged 18-45 were interviewed at that time, the comparison over time is limited to the partnership context of respondents in this age group. By comparison, the share of couples in which both partners were born in Austria has fallen from 73% to 66% over the last decade and a half. The share of couples in which one partner was born in Austria and the other in another country and the share of couples in which both partners are immigrants has increased more (from 9% to 12% and from 11% to 13%, respectively).

As the interviews in the GGP were conducted in German, persons with poor knowledge of German were probably less likely to participate in the survey. The calculations presented on the migrant background of couples should therefore be regarded as rather conservative.

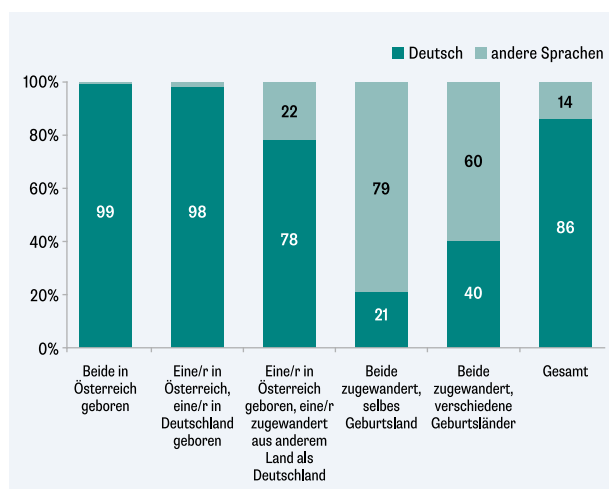


Figure 11.2: Country of origin and language most frequently spoken at home (%)

12 Partnership trajectories

LORENZ WURM • NORBERT NEUWIRTH

How many partnerships have Austrians aged 18-59 ever had? At what age do people start living together? How long do relationships last? The GGP provides an insight into the partnership trajectories of Austrians. This article only covers coresidential partnerships; so-called LAT partnerships are not considered.

Majority currently in a relationship

Three quarters of all respondents were in a partnership at the time of the survey. The proportion is lower among the younger age cohorts, where on average only one in two respondents lives together as a couple (Fig. 12.1). Moreover, there is a big difference between women and men in this respect among the 18-29 year olds (women: 62%, men: 42%).

The proportion of people living in a partnership increases with age. After age 40, it exceeds 80% and stabilises at 84%. Gender differences also disappear after the age of 40.

On average, 15% of GGP respondents have never had a partner. Among younger respondents, the proportion is 38% and decreases with age. Among those aged 50-59, only 5% have never been in a relationship.

Men lag behind

In 2023, the average age at which people move in with their first partner is 27. There is a marked difference between the sexes: on average, women move in with

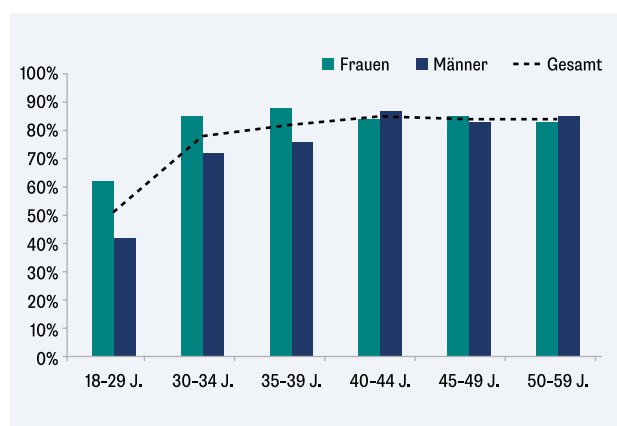


Figure 12.1: Proportion of coresidential couples (%)

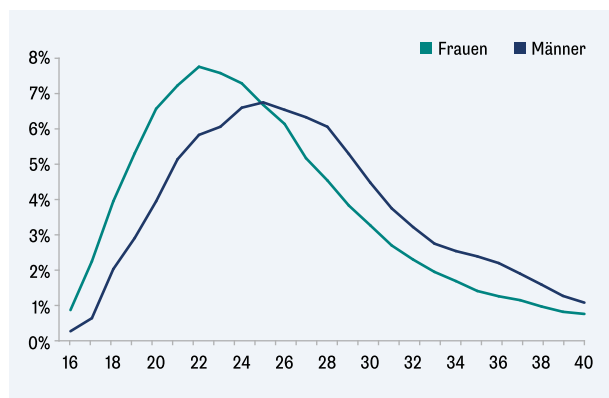


Figure 12.2: Age at which people move in together for the first time (%)

their partner before their 26th birthday, while men do so at the age of 28 (Fig. 12.2).

At least one coresidential partnership

Partnership trajectories vary from person to person. In the GGP, respondents were asked about their partnership history. The answers to the question “[...], how many partnerships did you have where you lived with someone as a couple?” ranged from zero to more than four partnerships. On average, every Austrian has had at least one cohabiting relationship.

Previous partnerships lasted an average of seven years

Some partnerships last for several decades, while others end after a very short time. Among those aged 18-59 who have had at least one coresidential partnership, the average duration of a terminated partnership is just over seven years.

13 Education and women's age at first birth

BRIAN BUH • EVA BEAUJOUAN

Mothers in Austria are having their first child later. The mean age at first birth for women born in the 1970s is, on average, 1.6 years later than for women born in the previous decade. Earlier research finds that prolonged education is an important driver of fertility postponement in several European countries. How important is the level of education for the timing of first birth in Austria?

No change in age of first birth for women with secondary education

Women with a secondary education or less show a similar pattern of age at first birth if they were born in the 1960s or 1970s (Fig. 13.1). In the older cohort, the age of first birth peaks at 24 years old. Women with a secondary education born in the 1970s follow a similar trajectory. However, the composition of education changed over time. Among women born in the 1960s, 67% have a secondary education level or less. With educational expansion, this proportion declined to 59% among those born in the 1970s. However, the age at which these women finished their education did not change (mean age of 19 years old), nor did their birth calendar. The mean age at first birth increased slightly from 25.2 years old for women born in the 1960s to 25.9 years old for those born in the 1970s.

Women with tertiary education are becoming mothers much later

In contrast, it was mainly women with a tertiary education who postponed their first birth. Their mean age of first birth passed from 27.6 years old in the 1960s birth cohort to 30.0 years old in the 1970s birth cohort. However, the mean age at the end of education increased only slightly (from 27.7 to 28.2 years old). This implies that the younger cohort postponed motherhood for reasons beyond the number of years in school. The curves for women with tertiary education illustrate this point. For the older cohort with tertiary education, a plurality of women became mothers between ages 24 and 27 (just over 6% of the cohort per year). For women born in the 1970s, the age of first birth peaks much later at 32 and then falls abruptly.

As a side effect, the gap in the age of first birth between women with secondary and tertiary education widened. Women born in the 1970s with tertiary education had their first child on average 4.1 years later than women with secondary education (compared to 1.7 years for women born in the previous decade). Hence, when decomposing Austrian society by educational attainment, it is clear that the overall increase in the age of first birth is driven almost exclusively by a greater number of women with tertiary education becoming mothers even later.

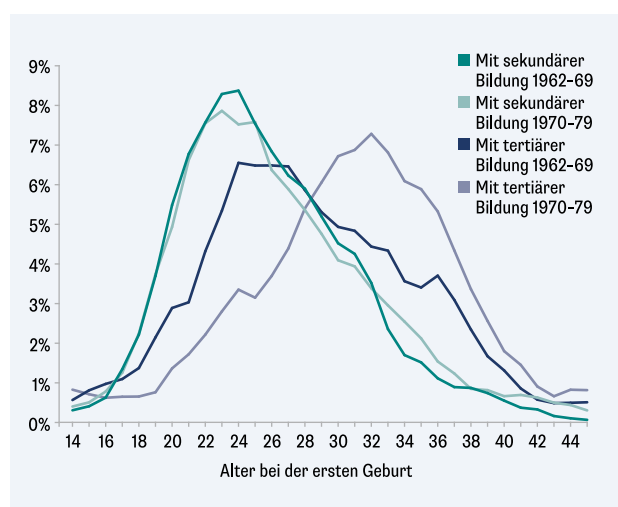


Figure 13.1: Age of first birth for women by education and cohort (%)

14 Biological children, stepchildren, adopted and foster children

ISABELLA BUBER-ENNSER • CLAUDIA HERBST

In the GGP, respondents are asked how many children they have and to specify whether these are their biological children, stepchildren, adopted children and / or foster children. This allows increasingly complex family structures to be depicted and trends to be identified by comparison over time.

As expected, the number of biological children increases with age, reaching a plateau of 1.7 children for women aged 40 and over. A comparison by age groups shows that men become parents at a later point in life than women, and that they continue to have children at the age of 40-44 and beyond (Fig. 14.1). Overall, the average number of children for men

aged 45+ is about 1.5 (Fig. 14.1). The difference in the number of children between women and men may be due, among other things, to the fact that men tend to report children from previous partnerships less often than women. The relatively small group of gender-diverse respondents is characterised by a low number of children. Only few respondents have adopted or foster children: their share is less than 1 %.

Postponing parenthood to a later age

The GGP 2008 / 09 also included similar questions about children, but only for adults up to their mid-40s. Comparisons over time show: among persons under the age of 40, the number of biological children was higher in 2008 / 09 (plus 0.1 children per age group), reflecting a tendency of postponing parenthood (Fig. 14.1). Over time, however, women catch up by the end of their 30s: in both waves, those aged 40-44 have an average of 1.7 children. Men are likely to take longer to catch up, especially as their number of children at age 40-44 is currently lower than in 2008 / 09.

More stepchildren and thus more complex families in 2022 / 23 than in 2008 / 09

As a result of separations and new partnerships in the course of life, the average number of stepchildren also rises with age. However, complex family structures have become much more common over the last 15 years (Fig. 14.2): women aged 40-44 currently have almost twice as many stepchildren as their counterparts in the 2008 / 09 survey (0.5 compared to 0.3). This can be attributed to ongoing changes in partnership structures (e.g. more partnerships over the life course, higher divorce rates).

The continuing postponement of parenthood and increasingly complex family structures from mid-adulthood onwards have been typical features of the last 15 years.

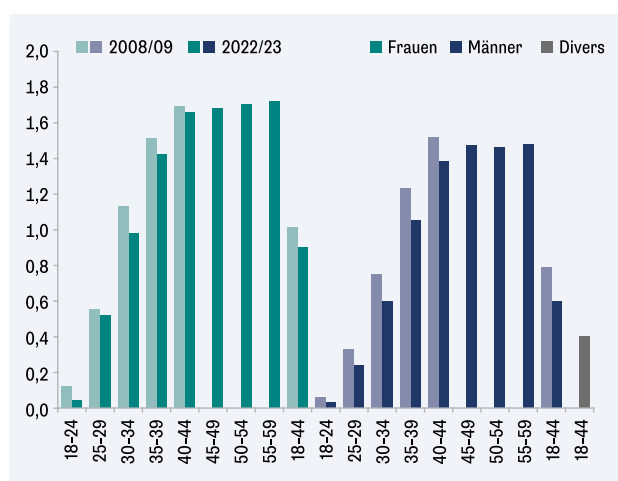


Figure 14.1: Number of biological children

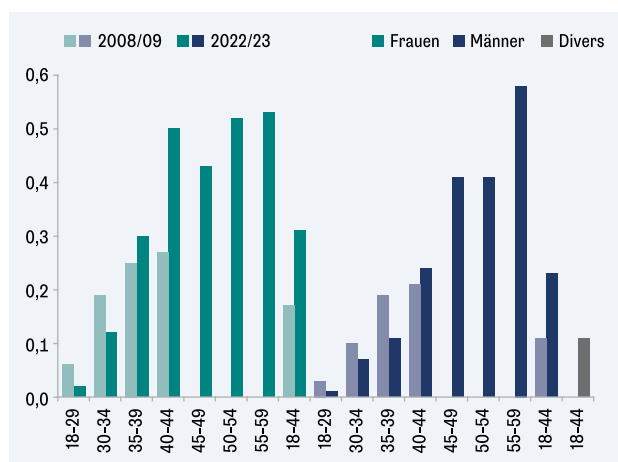


Figure 14.2: Number of stepchildren

15 Who do minors live with?

ISABELLA BUBER-ENNSER • CLAUDIA HERBST

This chapter looks at who minor children live with. In the GGP survey, respondents were asked whether their children lived with them “always”, “most of the time”, “some of the time” or “never”. We restrict our analyses to people with at least one biological child under the age of 18. Due to the small number of cases (4), no analysis is possible for the category “gender diverse”.

As a rule, minors always live with their mother

Most mothers of minors report that their children always live with them (96%) (Fig. 15.1). This proportion is much lower for men (87%). Besides, 9% of men say that their children never live with them and a further 5% say that they live with them most or some of the time.

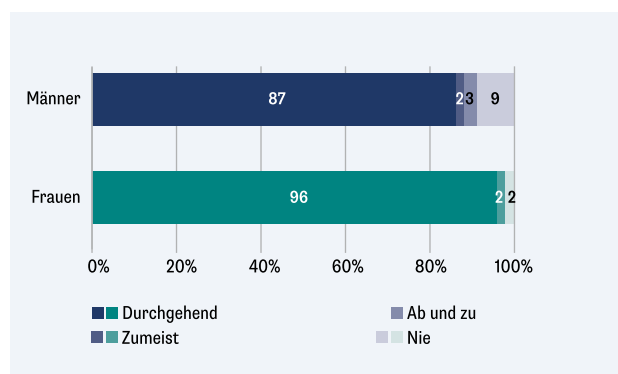


Figure 15.1: Parents cohabiting with their biological minor children (%)

Cohabitation with minor children depends on fathers' partnership context

As living arrangement and partnership context are relevant, we distinguish three groups of parents with biological minors: (1) people cohabiting with a partner who do not have children from previous relationships, (2) people cohabiting with a partner who have at least one minor child from a previous relationship, and (3) people not living with a partner.

This categorisation reveals significant differences. As might be expected, almost all persons living with a partner who do not have children from previous relationships say that their minors always live with them. The situation is quite different for people with

minors from previous partnerships (Fig. 15.2). Although the majority of mothers in this group say that their children always live with them (around eight out of ten), 6% say that their children only live with them most of the time. Few fathers report that their children always live with them. Whether children live with the father at least some of the time also depends very much on the father's partnership context: among men who are currently in a partnership and have children from a previous relationship, a third say that their children never live with them. Among men who are separated from the mother of their minor child and who are not currently in a partnership, almost 80% report that their children never live with them.

For children whose parents are separated, it therefore makes a significant difference whether their father lives alone or in a relationship. If the father lives with a new partner, the children are more likely to live with him – at least some of the time.

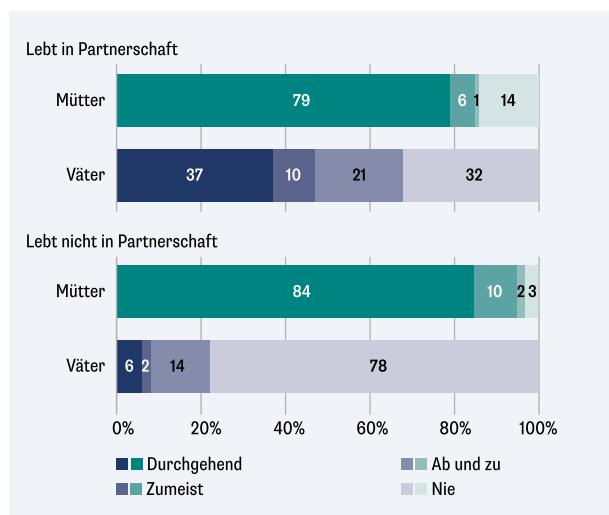


Figure 15.2: Persons with minor children from previous relationships: cohabitation with biological minor children by current relationship status (%)

16 Father-child relationship after parental separation

MARKUS KAINDL

Parental separation has a significant impact on the relationship between children and the separated parent. When parents separate, children usually live with their mothers, rarely with their fathers. In order to show which role the separated parent actually plays, it therefore seems appropriate to limit the following analyses to separated fathers.

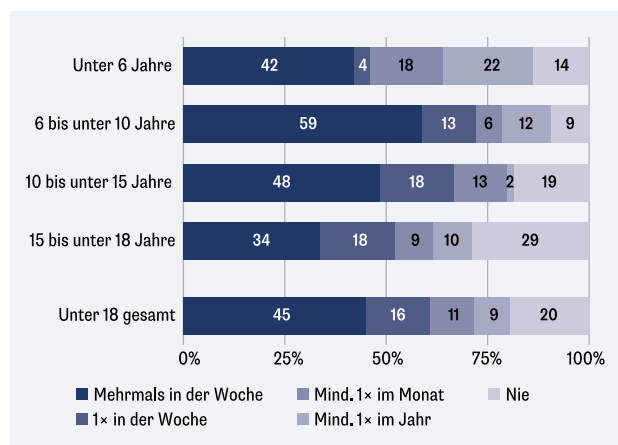


Figure 16.1: How often do separated fathers look after their children? (%)

Separated fathers look after almost half of children at least once a week

The question “How often do you look after (name of child)?” was used to assess the extent to which separated fathers were involved in their children’s everyday lives and worlds. Fathers who had more than one child were asked this question separately for each child. In some cases, there were significant differences between the children in this respect. The analyses are therefore based on the individual dyadic relationship between the father and each of his children.

Fathers who live apart from their minor children answer this rather general question by saying that they look after almost half (45%) of the children several times a week. When it comes to children of compulsory school age, this commitment is even more pronounced. They look after 59% of children of primary school age several times a week and about 13% once a week. For children aged 10 to under 15, the figures are 48%

(several times a week) and 18% (once a week). They are slightly less likely to look after their children aged 15 to under 18. More than a quarter of the children in this age group are never looked after by them.

Separated fathers highly satisfied with their relationships with their children

Separated fathers rate more than 50% of the relationships with their children as very satisfactory (scores 9 and 10 on a scale of 0 to 10). This is particularly true when fathers look after their child at least once a week (64%). In this case, 25% of the relationships are rated as fairly satisfactory (scores 7 and 8). When fathers look after their child less than once a month, only less than half of the relationships are rated as fairly or very satisfactory. A third of these infrequent relationships are rated as unsatisfactory (scores 0 to 3) by the fathers.

Separated fathers thus play a fairly active role in their children’s lives. This contributes to a largely positive perception of the father-child relationship, at least from the fathers’ point of view.

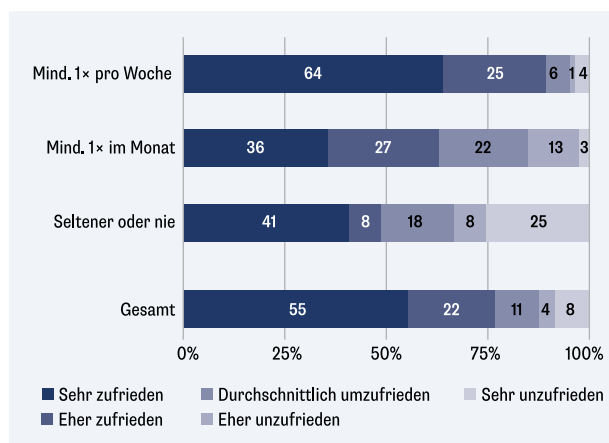


Figure 16.2: Satisfaction with relationship with children

17 Upward intergenerational mobility in education in Austria

BERNHARD RIEDERER

The expansion of education has led to an increase in the number of highly educated people in Austria. Nevertheless, education and the social position associated with it remain to some extent “hereditary”. Downward educational mobility is rare.

More upward than downward mobility in education

While the parents of 27% of today’s 30- to 59-year olds have a low level of education (primary or lower secondary) (Fig. 17.1, left), this applies to only 12-14% of the respondents (14% of all respondents, 12% of persons with information on their parents’ education; Fig. 17.1, right). Conversely, the share of people with higher (tertiary) education has risen from 23% to 34-36%. For men, this proportion increased from 20% to 34% compared to their fathers, and for women from 11% to 33% compared to their mothers. For women aged 30-39, the figure jumps to 42% (37% for men).

Despite the expansion of education and intergenerational upward mobility, educational attainment in Austria is still strongly linked to parental background. Overall, 54% of children have the same level of education as their parents (8% both low, 31% both

medium, 15% both high education). Upward mobility tends to be a move to the next level: 14% move from low to medium education and 16% from medium to high education (Fig. 17.1).

The role of parental background in children’s educational opportunities can also be expressed as follows: children of parents with a low level of education have less than a 17% chance of obtaining a tertiary degree. In the case of medium and higher education, the probability is 32% and 66%, respectively.

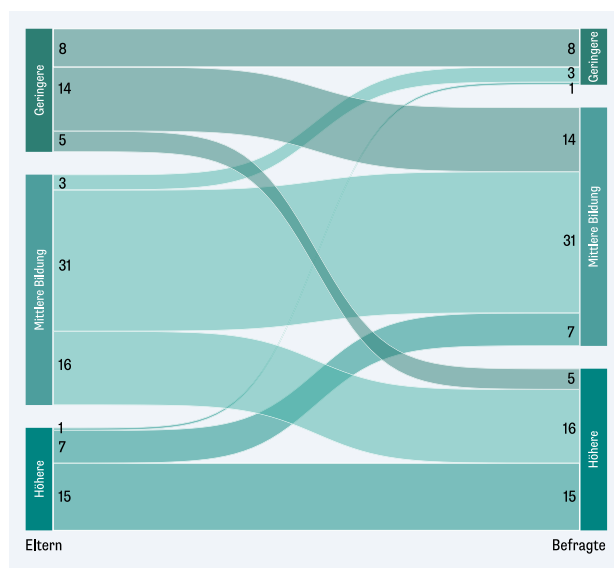


Figure 17.1: Intergenerational transmission of education between parents and children (%)

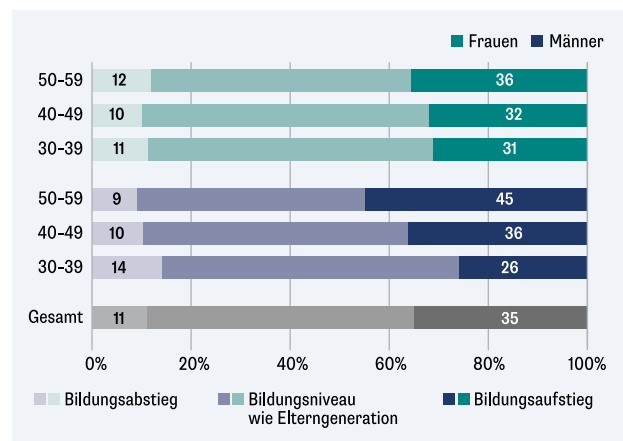


Figure 17.2: Intergenerational mobility in education by age and gender (%)

Different trends for women and men

Looking at educational mobility in more detail (Fig. 17.2), we see that intergenerational upward mobility has been higher among the older generations, especially among men. This is mainly due to the fact that the share of less educated fathers and mothers is still significantly higher among the 50- to 59-year olds than among the younger respondents. However, intergenerational downward mobility has actually increased, as it is larger for men aged 30-39 than for older age groups. Moreover, there is hardly any difference in the degree of downward mobility between men born in Austria and men born abroad, while men from EU Member States and Switzerland (40%) as well as from third countries (37%) have a slightly higher degree of upward mobility than native Austrians (23%).

18 Young adults living with their parents

CHRISTINE GESERICK

In Austria, 22% of all men aged 25-34 live with at least one parent, while only 12% of women do (Microcensus 2021). They are often referred to as “basement dwellers” or kids who have not yet “flown the nest”, which conjures up the image of a person who is not yet fully independent in economic terms, but who is also reluctant to start a family. Does this image correspond to reality? We studied the group of 25-34 year olds.

More men, more often single

As already known from many previous surveys, the typical basement dweller is male. Almost two thirds of those who live with their mother and / or father are men (64%). In terms of work and occupational status, there are hardly any differences between basement dwellers and their peers. Sixteen per cent of those living with their parents are in education (vs. 11%), 70% are doing paid work (vs. 68%) (Fig. 18.1). This shows that basement dwellers are not more economically dependent; they are in the labour force to the same extent as their peers who live without their parents. Moreover, young adults living with their parents hardly do more care work, as one might assume due to their housing situation.

The differences tend to be more pronounced when comparing partnerships and starting a family. Among 25-34 year olds, significantly more than one in two currently do not have a partner (57%), whereas among those who do not live with their parents, it is only

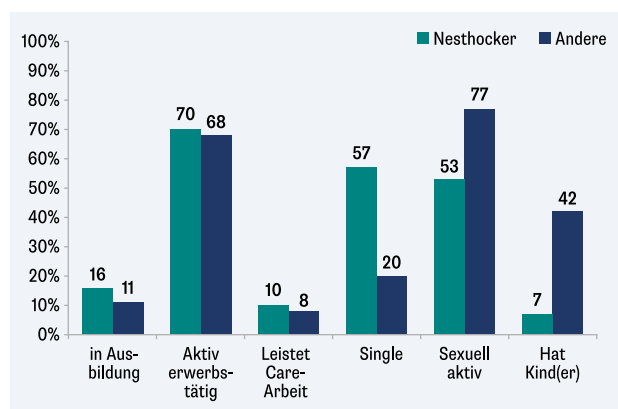


Figure 18.1: Work status, partnership, children (25-34 year olds, %)

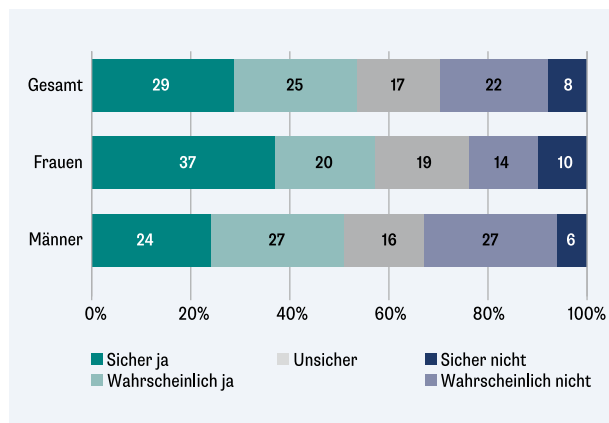


Figure 18.2: Plans to move out (25-34 year olds, %)

one in five (20%). Similarly, basement dwellers are somewhat less likely to be sexually active. Regardless of their relationship status, 53% say they had sexual intercourse within the last four weeks, compared to 77% among those living without parents. Basement dwellers are also less active when it comes to starting a family: not even one in ten (7%) already has a biological child, compared to 42% of their peers who have already left the parental home.

Men clearly less likely to move out

Basement dwellers seem to be quite satisfied with their current place of residence, at least more satisfied than those who live without parents. On a scale of 0 to 10, their average satisfaction score is 8.3 (7.7 among their peers). More than three quarters of the basement dwellers (76%) even award the maximum score of 10 to their place of residence, while just under two thirds (65%) of their peers do so. Nevertheless, almost one in two plans to move away from their parents within the next three years. Men are clearly less likely to move out than women: one in three men (probably) wants to stay, among women it is just under one in four (24%) (Fig. 18.2).

19 Families and household types

BEAT FUX

Households are living arrangements defined by a common dwelling. They are not only units characterised by joint economic activity, but also primary social groups in the socio-psychological sense. The following analyses of the Austrian GGP will show that the family and kinship dimension is dominant in the composition of households. It should be noted that our analyses are limited to coresidential households and do not include (temporary) bilocal living arrangements (e.g. living apart together).

We distinguish four main household types (Fig. 19.1). Across all respondents, the proportion of people living in one-person households is 14%. There is little change in this proportion across age groups. Significantly

more men (57%) than women (43%) live alone. The second main type is the single parent household. This is a small group, accounting for 4% of the total, which, however, almost doubles in the middle age groups as a result of separations and divorces. The third main type is by far the largest group of people living in couple households, accounting for 55% of the total sample. Over the age course, only a fifth of people under 30 live with a partner. This proportion triples with increasing age. Broken down by number of children, people living in a partnership with no other persons are the largest group (18%), followed by parents in a couple household with two children (16%) and those with one child (15%). The proportion of people in larger families (three or more children) is 6%. After the age of 50, there is a slight shift towards more complex households. Of those aged 18-59, just over a quarter (27%) live in complex households (fourth main type). Almost two thirds (64%) of those under 30 can be classified as living in this type of household. Of these, the vast majority (76%) say they live with at least one parent and frequently with other relatives (often siblings). They are therefore likely to be adults who still live in their parents' household.

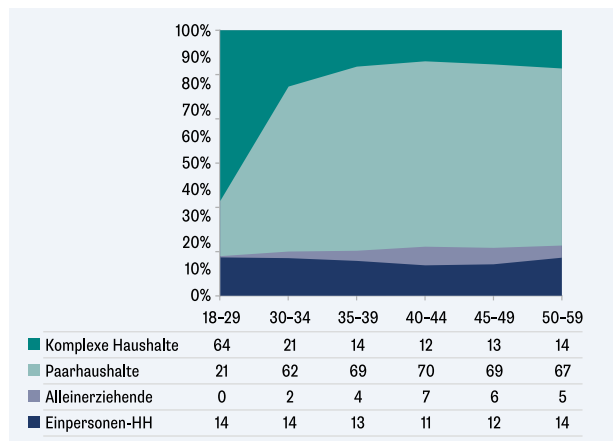


Figure 19.1: Persons in household types by age groups (%)

A quarter of the people live in complex household arrangements

A more detailed analysis of the composition of members living in complex households (Fig. 19.2) shows that multi-generational households are strongly represented. People living in extended family households (e.g. family nucleus with other persons or several family nuclei) are the next smaller group. The share of persons living with distant relatives and / or non-relatives is marginal. It should be noted that people who describe themselves as “gender diverse” only live in certain subsets of complex households.

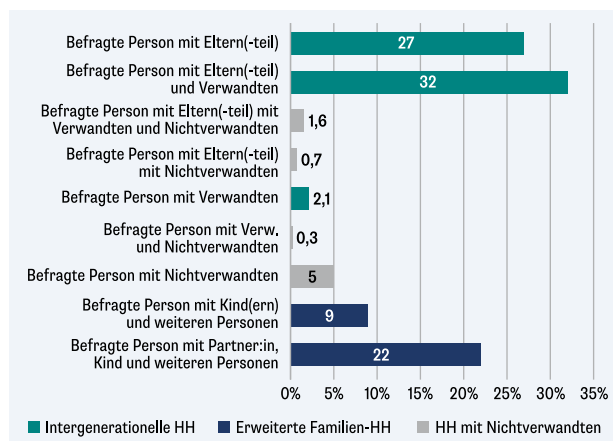


Figure 19.2: Persons in complex households (HH: households)

20 Aspects of intergenerational relations

BEAT FUX

The GGP focuses on the exchange relationships in the intergenerational network. The affective dimension is studied based on respondents' satisfaction with their relationship with both parents. The emphasis is on associational aspects (i.e. media contacts and face-to-face meetings with parents) and functional interactions (i.e. care services and financial transfers).

Quality of intergenerational relations

The quality of the relationship with both father and mother (ten-point scale) is consistently good. Across all respondents, the relationship with the mother (mean: 8.3) is rated slightly better than that with the father (7.7). The differences by gender and by age are relatively small. However, if the parents are divorced, there is a significant drop in satisfaction, especially with the relationship with the father (mean scores between 5.4 and 6.2 over the age course), while satisfaction with the relationship with the mother is less affected.

Frequency of contact and support services

Around a third meet their mother and 30.5% meet their father every day or several times a week (Figure 20.1). Two out of three report at least weekly media contact

with their mother. The figure for the father is 44.6%, only sporadic contact with both parents are rare. The frequency of contacts and meetings is significantly higher for female respondents, and the interactions with the mother are more intensive than those with the father (Figure 20.1). Over the age course, the number of contacts and face-to-face meetings decreases by a few percentage points during periods of high family stress.

Few respondents received care services. Where they did, almost 75% of care was provided by mothers (including stepmothers and mothers-in-law), fathers or their own partners. Around two thirds of care was provided to own children, mother or father. Transfers of services between non-relatives were marginal.

The situation is similar when it comes to financial support. Three quarters of all transfers were made by mothers or fathers, followed by grandparents. Around a third of respondents who provided financial support did so for their children, followed by their father, mother and partner. Other people (12%) also benefitted from financial support (e.g. friends, colleagues, etc.) (Fig. 20.2).

Overall, the affective, associative and functional aspects of intergenerational solidarity show an unbroken strong family orientation.

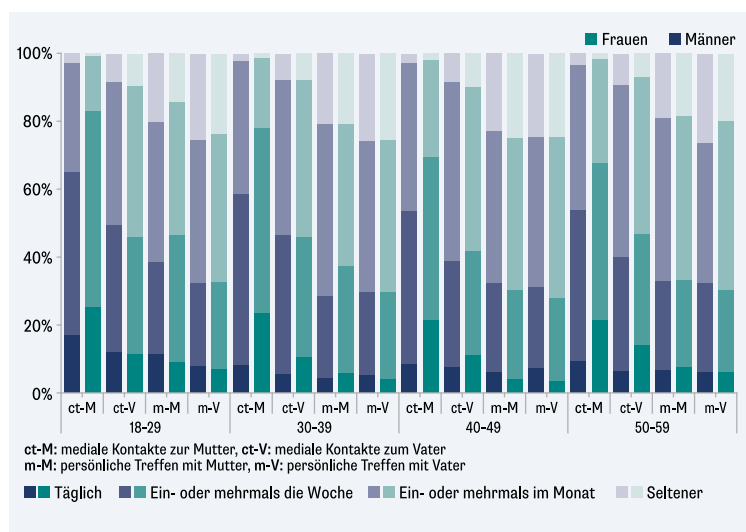


Figure 20.1: Contacts and face-to-face meetings with father and mother by age group (%)

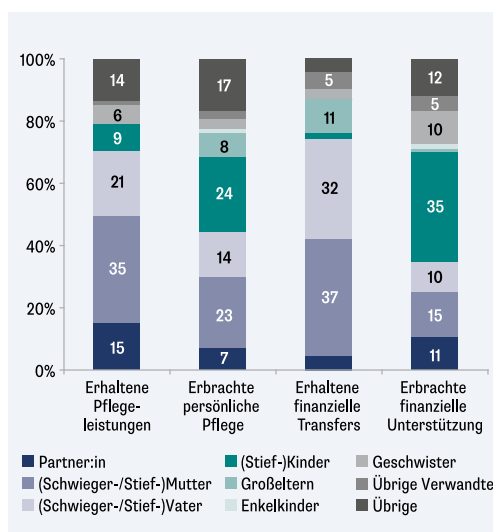


Figure 20.2: Care services and financial transfers received and provided (%)



Fertility Intentions

21 Are children important for a fulfilled life?

EVA-MARIA SCHMIDT • NORBERT NEUWIRTH

Social life is shaped by values. The indicator questions on the need of a man or a woman to have children for a fulfilled life capture the prevalence of these values. Since the GGP.at wave 2008 / 09, this prevalence seems to have decreased significantly, while the gender-specific differences still exist: agreement with the statement that “a man has to have children in order to be fulfilled” in life fell from 28% to 20% among male respondents and from 18% to 10% among female respondents. For the same statement on the woman, the decline in agreement is even more

pronounced, although the difference between males and females is only marginal: while the share of men agreeing fell from 28% to 13%, the share of women agreeing fell from 23% to 12%. Values that associate a woman’s fulfilled life with motherhood have thus become significantly less important, regardless of the respondents’ sex.

Views of today’s parents

On average, parents rather agree with both statements. This is even more evident when comparing age cohorts (Fig. 21.1): with increasing age, the agreement among childless respondents increases slightly and gender-specific differences in attitudes decrease. This could indicate a growing reflection on one’s own life situation. However, when asked about the importance of children for a man, men with children consistently show the highest and increasing rates of agreement, while women with children are less likely to agree, in the middle age group even least likely with both statements. Parents aged 50-59 – often after an intensive family phase – show the highest average levels of agreement.

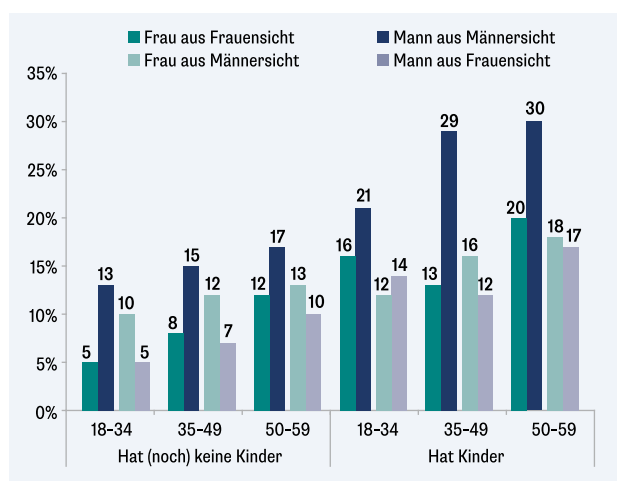


Figure 21.1: “A woman / man has to have children in order to be fulfilled”, by age groups (%)

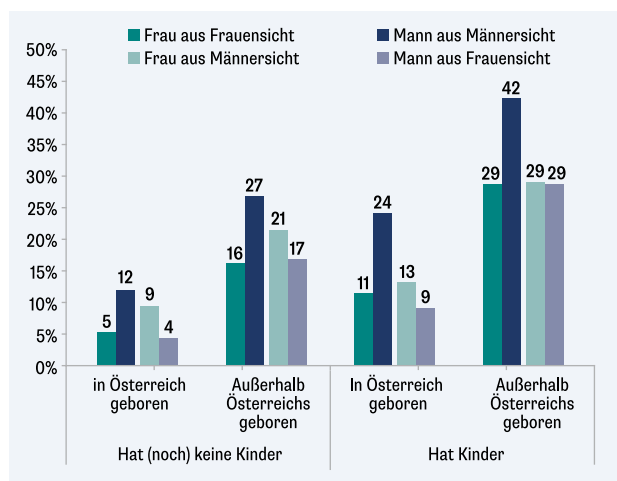


Figure 21.2: “A woman / man has to have children in order to be fulfilled”; by place of birth (%)

Does the country of birth matter?

Despite their heterogeneous composition, overall, respondents born abroad have more than twice as high percentages of agreement as respondents born in Austria (Fig. 21.2). Regardless of the country of birth, however, the male perspective also stands out in the group of people with children: fathers agree significantly more often with the statement that children are important for a man’s fulfilled life than with the same statement for a woman’s fulfilled life.

22 Women's fertility intentions and number of children by formal education

GEORG WERNHART

One of the core tasks of the GGP is to collect data on women's fertility intentions and the likelihood of realising them. This article presents the core variables broken down by formal education. The analysis focuses on the Austrian female population aged 18-59. The results for men tend to be similar but not identical.

Female academics have fewer children but higher fertility intentions

Figure 22.1 shows how many children women already have and how many (more) they want to have, by three levels of education. First of all, it is striking that fertility declines as formal education increases. While around 70% of women with compulsory education in the age groups surveyed already have at least one child, this share is only around 55% among women with tertiary education. The difference is mainly due to the lack of transition to the second and especially to the third child, while the share of women with one child is fairly constant at around 20% across all levels of education.

At the same time, the breakdown by educational level shows that women with formal higher education want to have significantly more (additional) children. About 50% of currently childless academics want to have children – preferably two. In addition, 30% of academics who presently have one child want to have

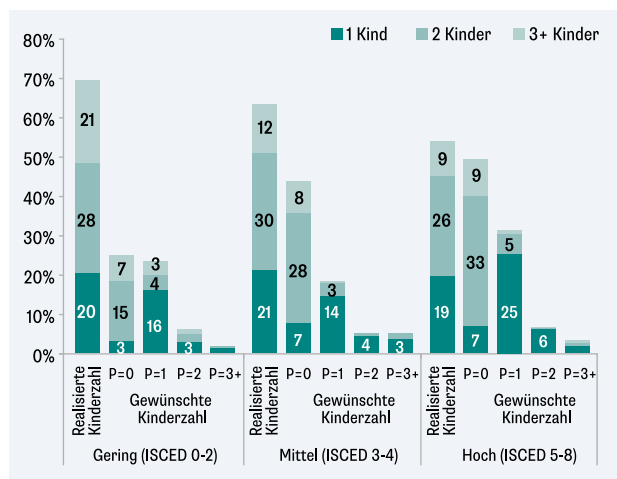


Figure 22.1: Realised and intended number of children, women (%)

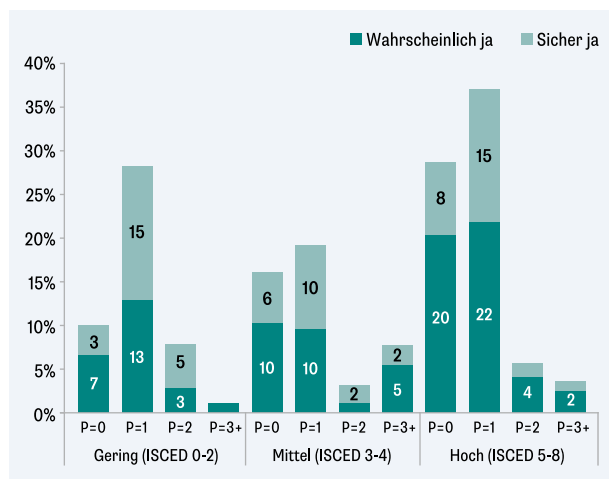


Figure 22.2: Perceived likelihood to have a (further) child, women (%)

more children in the future. By contrast, women with compulsory education seem to have already realised most of their fertility plans. Thus, in the medium term, women with a higher level of formal education could catch up in terms of the number of children they have. But how likely are they to fulfil their wish to have (more) children?

As Figure 22.2 shows, the chances of achieving this goal are good. Of the currently childless female academics, 28% say they will probably or definitely have a child in the next three years. This figure rises to 37% among those who currently have one child, while the likelihood of having a third child is rather low (5%).

The second wave of the GGP survey in three years' time will show whether the academics have actually realised their project or whether the decision to postpone childbearing has once again become a decision to abandon it.

23 One, two or three? On the ideal number of children

BERNHARD RIEDERER

The two-child ideal continues to dominate in Austria. Childbearing plans and personal ideals often coincide with the societal ideal number of children. However, there are also interesting differences.

Childbearing plans, personal and societal ideal

The GGP asks respondents not only about the number of children they would like to have, but also, for those aged 18-49, about the number of children they consider ideal for themselves and for society. While childbearing plans are strongly influenced by the current situation (existing children, age, etc.), personal ideals refer to more abstract wishes, and societal ideals to normative aspects. Nevertheless, they often coincide: childbearing plans and personal ideals are identical for 61%, personal and societal ideal are the same for 58%, and fertility intentions do not differ from the societal ideal for 43%.

Two is by far the most desired and/or ideal number of children (Fig. 23.1, left). It is primarily seen as the societal ideal (59%). There is a clear divergence between childbearing plans and ideals, especially when the number of children is less than two. While 24% want no or one child, only 13% consider fewer than two children ideal for themselves and only 6% consider such a small number the societal ideal.

Ideals by family type, age and education

Childbearing plans and the ideal number of children depend strongly on the number of children already born. For example, among people with two biological children, 78% want exactly two children, 69% think having two children is ideal for themselves and 65% think having two children is ideal for society. Therefore, the childbearing plans and ideals of persons who do not live with children are particularly interesting (Fig. 23.1, right). Overall, people who live alone are more uncertain about their childbearing plans (37% cannot or will not give a figure) and more likely not to want children (27%). The proportion of people who consider childlessness to be ideal for themselves is significantly lower (9%). The results are similar for those who live alone but have a partner and for

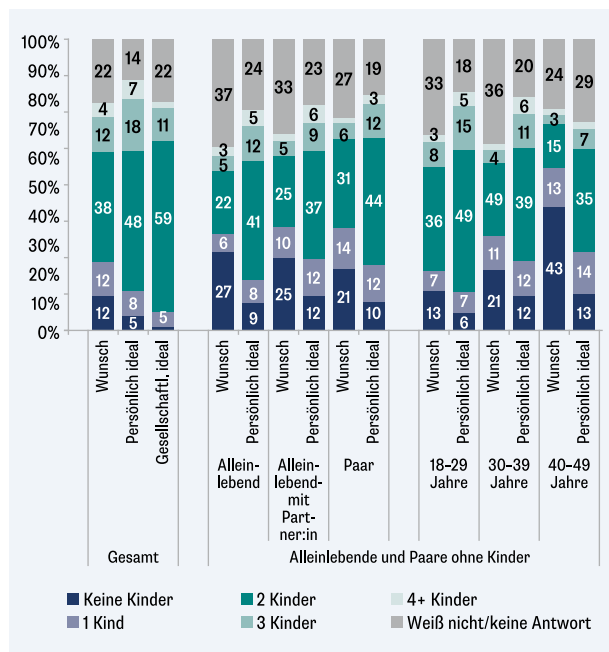


Figure 23.1: Childbearing plans, personal ideal and societal ideal number of children (%)

couples without children. In all three groups, however, the age of the respondents plays a key role: only 13% of those aged 18-29, but 43% of those aged 40-49 explicitly do not want to have children, while only 6% and 13%, respectively, state that childlessness (or being childfree) is their personal ideal.

A general analysis by age groups shows that younger people (18-29) are more likely to be uncertain about their childbearing plans (27%) and more likely to cite two children as the societal ideal (66%). When analysed by education, the results show that people with less education are the least likely to want two children (26%) and more likely to consider a larger number of children as personally ideal (20% three children and 9% four or more children). There are hardly any differences when differentiating by gender. However, men are slightly more often unable or unwilling to give a figure when it comes to childbearing plans or their personal ideal.

24 Two-child ideal and migration background

ISABELLA BUBER-ENNSER • BERNHARD RIEDERER

Currently, two out of ten people living in Austria were born in another country. This article examines whether immigrants have different ideal numbers of children than people born in Austria. The two questions “What do you think is the ideal number of children for a family in Austria?” and “For you personally: What would be the ideal number of children you would like to have or would have liked to have had?”, capture both societal and personal ideals. Germany as well as Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH), currently the first and second countries of origin of immigrants, are presented separately; the remaining countries of origin are grouped into “other European countries” and “other third countries”.

The two-child family is the societal ideal regardless of country of origin

Across all groups of origin, the ideal family size in Austria is most often considered to be two children. For a relatively large number of people from Bosnia and Herzegovina as well as other third countries, the societal ideal is more than two children (a quarter and almost a third, respectively) (Fig. 24.1). They also rarely consider fewer than two children to be ideal, which is more common among women and men from Austria and Germany, as well as from other European countries.

Three or more children more often the personal ideal for people from Bosnia and Herzegovina as well as other third countries

When asked about their personal ideal number of children, the differences by country of birth are even more striking: respondents from Bosnia and Herzegovina and especially immigrants from other third countries are more likely to say that having more than two children is their ideal (36% and 39%, respectively) (Fig. 24.2). For people born in Austria, larger families are less often the personal ideal (around 20%). The group with less than two children as their personal ideal is similarly large among Austrians, people from Germany and other European countries (around 14%), but only about half as large among people

from Bosnia and Herzegovina or other third countries. Across all groups of origin, having fewer than two children is more often seen as a personal ideal than as a societal ideal.

The ideal number of children is usually higher than the family size actually achieved. Personal circumstances related to partnership or work as well as financial or health issues are often at the root of these discrepancies, which shrink only partially when additional planned children are added to the current number of children. However, the differences between the groups of origin are similar to those for societal and personal ideals.

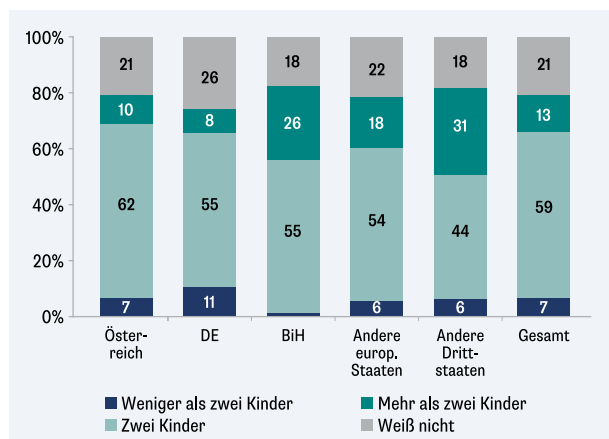


Figure 24.1: Ideal number of children for a family in Austria (%)

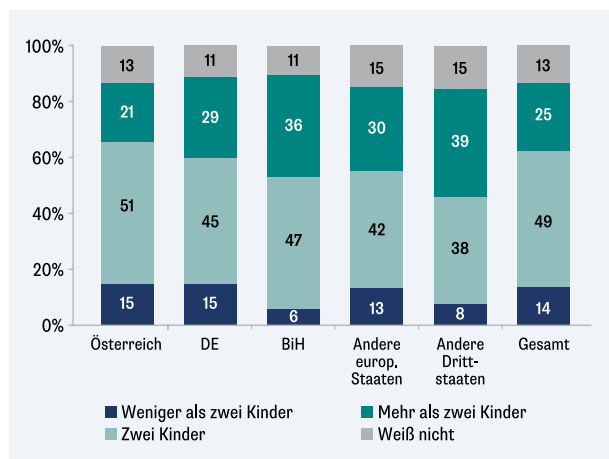


Figure 24.2: Personal ideal number of children (%)

25 Religion and number of children

GWEN GÖTLT • CAROLINE BERGHAMMER

The number of Catholics in Austria is steadily and rapidly decreasing. Data from Statistics Austria show that between 2001 (census) and 2021 (microcensus) the proportion of Catholics fell from 74% to 55%, while the proportion of people with no religious affiliation rose to 22% over the same period. Catholics are still by far the largest religious group, although most Catholics do not actively practise their religion.

Religious beliefs can influence family concepts. The differences in ideal, desired and actual numbers of children between the unaffiliated and Catholics (both groups together make up 84% of the total sample) are shown below. As not all Catholics feel equally

attached to their religion, a distinction is also made according to whether they attend religious services at least monthly or less frequently.

Ideal number of children highest among practising Catholics

The average number of children considered ideal for a family in Austria differs between Catholics and non-affiliated people, but also within Catholics depending on whether they practise their religion. Catholics who frequently attend religious services state on average 2.4 children as ideal, while less active Catholics and the unaffiliated state on average 2.0 children (Fig. 25.1).

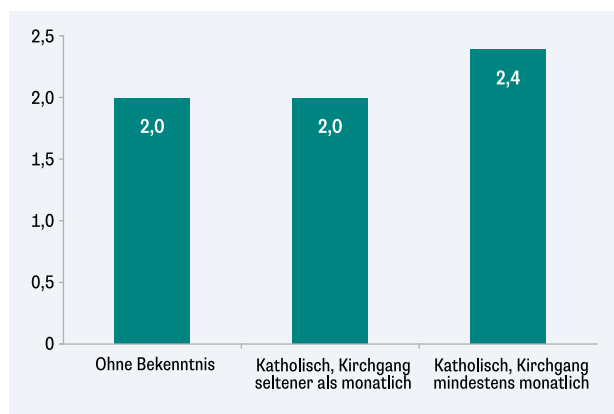


Figure 25.1: Average ideal number of children for a family in Austria by religious affiliation and religious service attendance

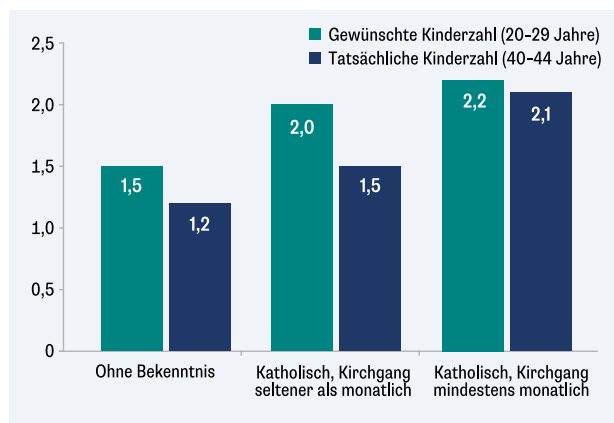


Figure 25.2: Average desired number and actual number of children by religious affiliation and religious service attendance

Desired and actual number of children highest among practising Catholics

We also looked at the desired number of children for people aged 20-29 and the actual number of children for people aged 40-44. On average, young people with no affiliation would like to have 1.5 children and practising Catholics 2.2 children (Fig. 25.2). At 2.0 children, Catholics who do not attend religious services regularly are in between. The differences in the actual number of children are similarly large. The unaffiliated have an average of 1.2 children and practising Catholics 2.1, which is almost one child more.

To sum up, the current survey confirms that religion can influence both how people think about family and their family behaviour.

26 Uncertainties in fertility intentions

ISABELLA BUBER-ENNSER

Many people cannot answer the question of whether they want to have a child or another child within the next three years with a clear “yes” or “no”.

In the age group 18-49, around four in ten opt for “probably no”, “I am unsure” or “probably yes”. Half of them certainly do not plan to start or expand a family in the near future, while a mere 6% certainly want to have a child within the next three years. Uncertainties are more frequently reported by men than by women (Fig. 26.1) and to a similar extent across age groups. In young adulthood (under 25) and in the so-called later reproductive years (40+), the answer is often “certainly no” – starting a family is planned for a later date or family planning has already been completed.

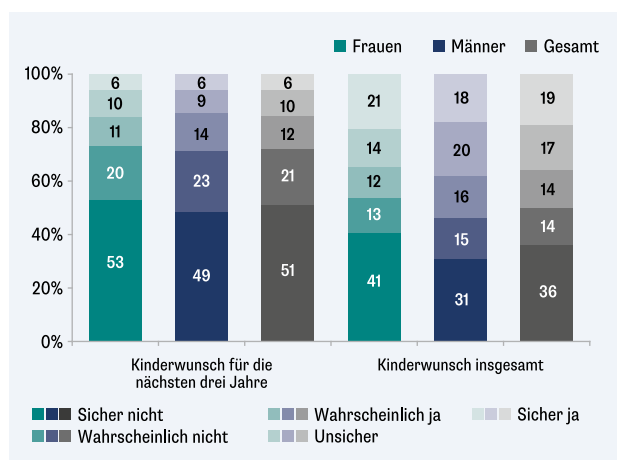


Figure 26.1: Childbearing uncertainties 2022 / 23 (%)

Roughly one in two undecided about future childbearing plans

Many people are also unable or unwilling to answer the question whether they would like to have (more) children in the future (i.e. not in the next three years, but in a longer time horizon) with a clear “certainly yes” or “certainly no” (Fig. 26.1). While about a third do not want to have (further) children in the future, two out of ten intend to have (further) children. However, almost one half are less sure: 14% say “probably no”, 17% “probably yes” and another 14% are unsure about their future childbearing plans.

Previous (international) studies have shown that family plans change over the life course as a result of moving in with or separating from a partner, work-related circumstances or starting or completing education. The age of the youngest child also matters when it comes to planning another sibling.

Dynamics of fertility intentions, especially among the childless

A comparison of the GGP-surveys done in 2008/09 and 2012/13 shows the dynamic of family plans for the near future (Fig. 26.2). Within these four years, quite a few respondents switched from “certainly no” to “probably no”, from “probably no” to “certainly no” or from “probably no” to “probably yes”. More significant changes, such as from “certainly yes” to “certainly no” were rare, and fertility intentions were mostly implemented when the respondents had “certainly” wanted a child in the near future. Further analyses show that especially the fertility intentions of childless people are very dynamic, whereas parents with two or more children change their plans less frequently and tend to stick to “certainly no”.

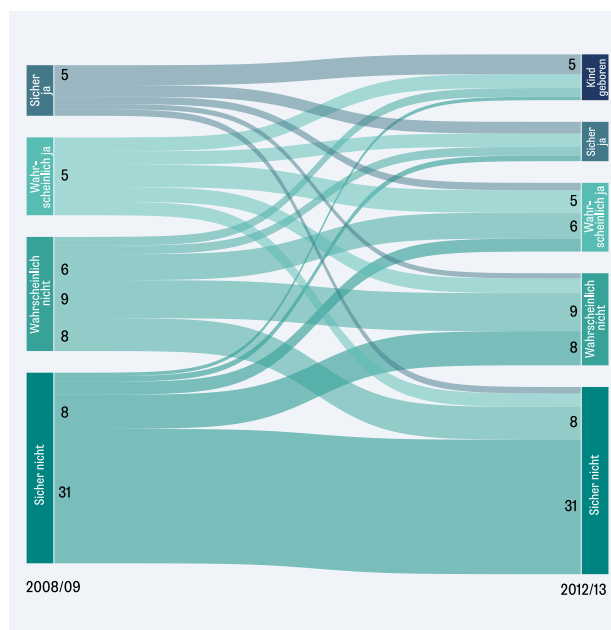


Figure 26.2: Dynamics in short-term childbearing intentions between 2008 / 09 and 2012 / 13 (%)

27 Childlessness: voluntary or involuntary?

TOMÁŠ SOBOTKA • KRYŠTOF ZEMAN

Relatively high rates of lifetime childlessness in Austria, reaching close to 20% among women born in the 1970s (see chapter 3), are explained by a mixture of planned, “situational” and unintended childlessness. Childlessness intentions often evolve over the life course, reflecting changes in individual preferences, but also in employment, partnership and health status. For many women and men in their late reproductive and post-reproductive ages, childlessness can therefore be seen as “situational” – the result of changing life circumstances, often in combination with postponing childbearing decisions until later ages and not having a “suitable” partner.

Age and gender differences: childlessness intentions and uncertainty more frequent among men

How do intentions to remain childless differ by sex and age? The GGP 2022/23 provides a detailed insight into the intentions of respondents aged 20-44 to remain childless (Fig. 27.1). For women, there is a strong correlation between age and childlessness preferences: the share of respondents who say they definitely do not intend to have a child increases after the age of 35, reaching 8% in the 35-39 age group and 12% in the 40-44 age group. At this age, many women have experienced infertility or have come to terms with their childlessness. In contrast, the share of respondents who are unsure about their preferences is highest below the age of 30.

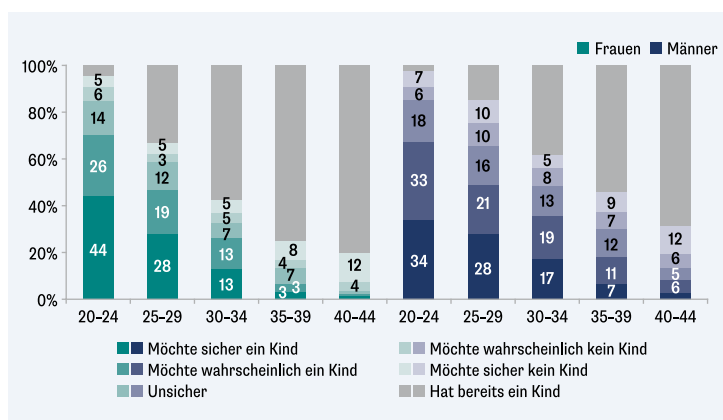


Figure 27.1: Lifetime intentions to remain childless by sex and age, GGP 2022/23 (%)

Among men, intentions to remain childless change less clearly with age, but, overall, more men than women plan to remain childless. This is particularly true for men in their late twenties: one in five men aged 25-29 plans to remain (definitely or probably) childless compared with only 8% among women in the same age group. For both men and women, the share of respondents who definitely intend to have a child is surprisingly low in young adulthood, with many respondents keeping their options open.

Intention to remain childless has increased over the last decade

Has the intention to remain childless become more pronounced over time? International discussions about changing values and lifestyles among young adults, as well as new concerns about the “climate emergency”, suggest that an increasing share of young adults are planning to remain childfree. Based on data from three GGP surveys, Figure 27.2 shows the share of young women and men aged 20-29, who do not intend to have a child. There is indeed a noticeable jump in the proportion of respondents who do not intend to have a child between the last two datasets, i.e. the GGP surveys 2012/13 and 2022/23. It is more pronounced among men, for whom the proportion of those who (definitely or probably) do not intend to have a child has doubled from 8% to 16%.

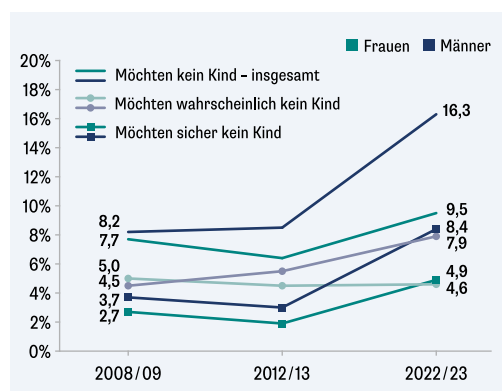


Figure 27.2: Intended lifetime childlessness by sex, among all respondents aged 20-29, GGP 2008/09, 2012/13 and 2022/23 (%)

28 Only children and childbearing intentions

CHRISTINE GESERICK

Nine per cent of those aged 18 to 59 grew up as an only child, i.e. they say they never had a brother or sister. Could this socialisation experience be affecting their own family formation, both in terms of wanting to have children and actually having them?

Only-child status “inherited”

In fact, the only-child status is to some degree “inherited”. Among 45-59 year olds – i.e. those who are unlikely to still have children – only children more often have exactly one child (27%) than those with siblings (20%) (Fig. 28.1). They are also more likely to remain childless and less likely to start a family

with two or more children. In short, they have fewer children. But is this what they wanted?

The much stronger wish to have just one child is striking: adults with no siblings are almost three times as likely as others to state “one child” as their ideal number of children (23% vs. 8%). They are also more likely to want to remain childless, although the difference is minimal. Conversely, the two-child ideal also dominates among only children, although it is precisely in this group that this wish often remains unfulfilled: 55% of only children would like to have two children, but just 31% have exactly two children at the end of their fertile period. The figures for children with siblings are 56% (wish) and 38% (reality).

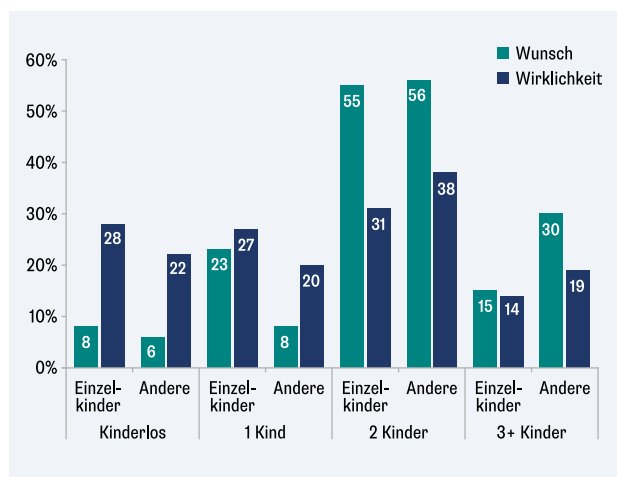


Figure 28.1: Ideal and actual number of children (%)

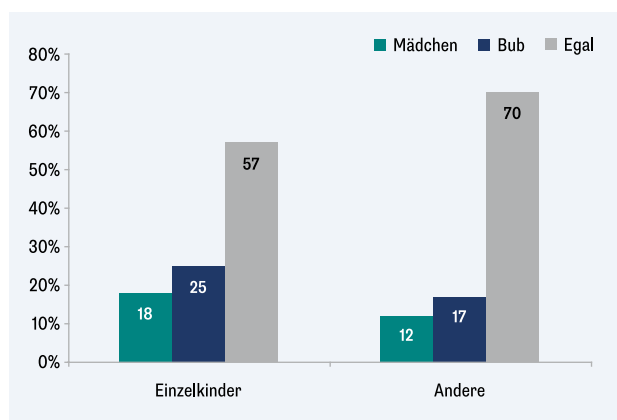


Figure 28.2: Gender preference for the first / next child (18-49 year olds, %)

Clearer gender preference for the first-born child

It is also typical for only children that they are more likely than those with siblings to want their (prospective) first child to be of a certain sex (Fig. 28.2). The focus was on the group of (still) childless 18-49 year olds. While 57% of only children said the baby’s sex “does not matter”, this open attitude was more widespread among those with siblings (70%). This means that only children more often have a gender preference, which slightly leans towards male (25% for boys vs. 18% for girls). However, the basic preference for male offspring equally applies to those with siblings but is less pronounced among them: if they have a preference, they are also more likely to want a boy (17%) than a girl (12%).

29 (Un)planned parenthood

BERNHARD RIEDERER

Most pregnancies are wanted. However, some children are born later than planned.

Planned and unplanned pregnancies

In the GGP, (expectant) parents were asked whether their current or last pregnancy was planned or unplanned. In total, 79% of the respondents said it was planned. A further 8% had taken things as they came. Only 13% said their pregnancy was unplanned. Of the pregnancies that were either planned or taken as they came, 73% occurred at what the respondents considered the “right” time, 16% later and 11% earlier than intended.

In the following, only planned pregnancies are differentiated according to their timing. Overall, the majority of pregnancies are planned and occur at the intended time (59%). Planned pregnancies that occurred later than intended are the second most common type (14%).

Age at birth, parity and economic status

The classification of a pregnancy as planned or unplanned varies according to the amount of time that has elapsed since the pregnancy: the proportions

of planned and unplanned pregnancies are significantly higher in retrospect than for current pregnancies, where expectant parents are more likely to say they just took it as it came (Fig. 29.1).

There are also differences according to the parents’ age at the time of pregnancy or birth. The proportion of unplanned pregnancies is higher for both younger parents (18-24) and older parents (45+) (37% and 22%, respectively). The proportion of planned pregnancies at the intended time is highest in the 25-29 and 30-34 age groups (64-65%), and the proportion of planned pregnancies that occurred later than intended is highest in the age groups 35-39 (18%) and 40-44 (22%).

An analysis by the number of previously born children shows that the proportion of planned pregnancies at the intended time is highest among second births (69%). Planned pregnancies occurring later than intended are most common among first births (20%). Unplanned pregnancies are most common among parents of three or more children (28%). The proportion of births where parents take things as they come is also highest in this group (15%).

Last but not least, the parents’ financial status also plays an important role. Unplanned pregnancies are more common among parents with a lower household income, while planned pregnancies are more common among parents who own their home. An analysis by parents’ level of education reveals differences by gender: in contrast to men, it is mainly women with less education who report unplanned pregnancies (27%) or pregnancies that occurred earlier than planned (14%). Planned pregnancies that occurred later than intended are more common among highly educated women (19%).

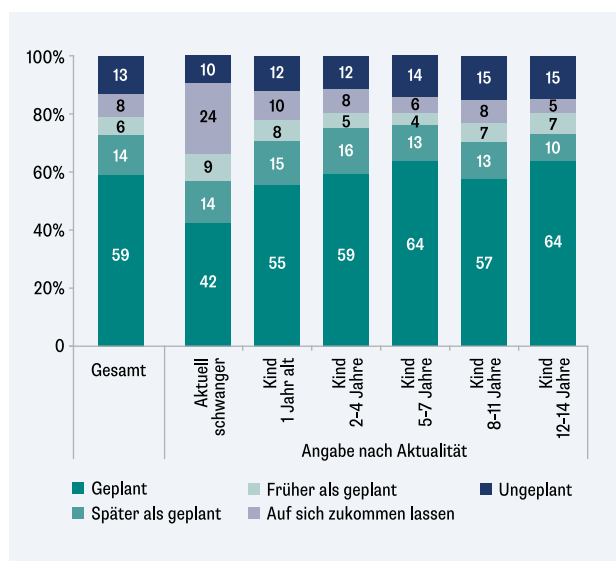


Figure 29.1: Classification of pregnancies by time elapsed since the pregnancy (%)

30 Fertility intentions by age: childless vs. parents

SHALINI SINGH • EVA BEAUJOUAN

Fertility intentions have long been considered a reliable indicator of actual childbearing behaviour. However, men and women face unique biological and social constraints that contribute to uncertainty about their intentions to have children at different ages and may also affect the timing of their intentions. Previous studies have shown that men and women often change their fertility intentions throughout the course of their lives, and especially after becoming parents. This prompts the question to what extent childless people and parents differ in their fertility intentions by age and sex.

Parents have shorter time horizons for childbearing than childless people

While both childless individuals and parents, regardless of their sex, show a similar trajectory of combined positive intentions (in the near future and later in life) across age groups – starting higher in younger years (around 72% for childless and around 42% for parents) and declining in advanced reproductive ages (to less than 10%) – parents rarely express long-term fertility intentions. This difference suggests that once people have become parents, they tend to prioritise having their next child shortly afterwards, while childless people have a remote idea of when they will become parents. It is now unusual to have a child at a younger age, so few childless people aged 18-24 intend to have

a child in the near future (less than 10%). Young parents also tend to be more uncertain about whether they will have another child, probably because of unstable work and relationship circumstances. The prevalence of uncertainty about childbearing intentions, especially among the childless, supports previous research suggesting that ambiguity is a rational response.

Greater uncertainty among childless people approaching 40

The overall decline in positive intentions and the increase in negative intentions with age reflect two aspects. Firstly, many people who wanted children had them earlier in life, so fewer people want children at older ages. Secondly, as people reach older reproductive ages, they become more aware of the potential impact of age on fertility, leading to a revision of their positive intentions to have children. Notably, a significant share of both men and women express uncertainty about their fertility intentions around the age of 35-39, just before the commonly perceived cut-off age for childbearing at 40. This reinforces the influence of the biological clock on fertility plans, particularly for childless women. In addition, women show higher positive intentions than men at younger ages, but the proportions decrease with age, indicating that men are aware of their relatively longer reproductive lifespan. Moreover, men tend to be slightly more uncertain across most age groups, regardless of parental status or childlessness, possibly due to less social pressure to conform to childbearing norms than women.

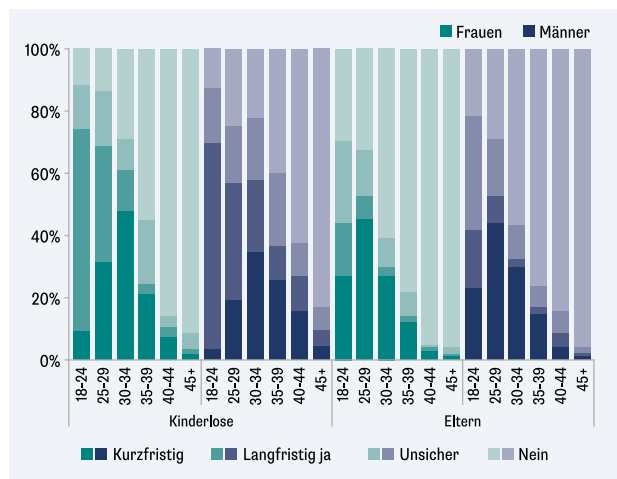


Figure 30.1: Fertility intentions (%)

31 Experiencing infertility

ESTER LAZZARI • EVA BEAUJOUAN

The prevalence of infertility rises with age. In high-income countries, the trend towards delayed family formation has led to an increase in the number of people who are unable to fulfil their desire to have children for biological reasons. In the GGP, respondents were asked whether they had ever experienced difficulties in conceiving. The analysis of the survey data shows how being affected by infertility varies by age and by the number of children a respondent has given birth to (i. e. parity).

Likelihood of ever experiencing infertility changes with age

In 2022, 11% of men and 15% of women report having experienced infertility at some point in their lives (Fig. 31.1). The likelihood of being challenged by infertility gradually increases with age, peaking at 40-44 years of age. The proportion of men who report infertility experiences ranges from 4% in the 25-29 age group to 20% in the 40-44 age group, and the proportion for women ranges from 2% in the 20-24 age group to 23%

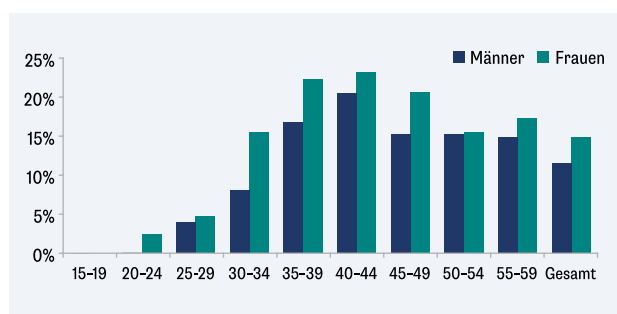


Figure 31.1: Share of respondents aged 15-59 who have ever experienced infertility, by age and sex (%)

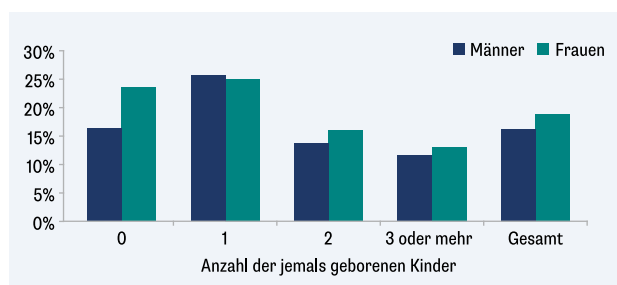


Figure 31.2: Share of respondents aged 40-59 who have ever experienced infertility, by parity and sex (%)

in the 40-44 age group. At ages 45-49, the share of those surveyed who report infertility experiences falls to 15% for men and to 20% for women, and further to 17% for women, at ages 55-59.

Experiencing infertility is closely related to the age at which people want to have children. On the one hand, the older generations may have had children at a younger age and were therefore less likely to be affected by infertility problems. On the other hand, younger generations tend to delay parenthood, which increases the risk of unsuccessful attempts to conceive.

People with less than two children are most likely to have experienced infertility

How many men and women past their reproductive years have experienced infertility? Does this vary by the number of children ever born? To answer this question, the analysis shown in Figure 31.2 was restricted to respondents who were aged 40-59 at the time of the interview.

By the end of their reproductive lives, 16% of men and 19% of women have experienced infertility. For both men and women, the likelihood of having been challenged by infertility is highest among those who are childless (16% and 24%, respectively) and those who have only one child (26% and 25%, respectively). Respondents with larger families are least likely to have experienced infertility.

These results suggest that a considerable proportion of childless respondents are involuntarily childless due to difficulties in conceiving, and that people who have experienced infertility in their lives are less likely to achieve their desired family size.

32 Assisted reproduction: prevalence among men and women

ESTER LAZZARI • MARIE-CAROLINE COMPANS

In recent years, advances in medically assisted reproductive technologies have revolutionised the treatment of infertility. In Austria and other European countries, the proportion of births achieved by these treatments has steadily increased. We examine differences in the likelihood of ever having used any assisted reproduction method to conceive by age and completed family size. These methods cover a wide range of options, including hormonal medication, in vitro fertilisation or micro-fertilisation, surgery, artificial insemination and any other medical treatments used to achieve pregnancy.

Variations in the likelihood of ever having used infertility treatment by age

As shown in Figure 32.1, 6% of men and 8% of women of reproductive age (15-49) used infertility treatment in 2022. The likelihood of ever having used infertility treatment increases gradually with age, peaking at 35-39 years. This can be explained by the fact that difficulties in achieving pregnancy increase with age. Among respondents aged 40 and over, the prevalence of medically assisted reproduction seems to stabilise for women and to decrease slightly for men.

It is important to note that the question in the survey has a substantial number of non-responses (i.e. many respondents, especially men, either state they do not remember whether they have used treatments or refuse to answer the question). This may be due to the sensitive nature of the question.

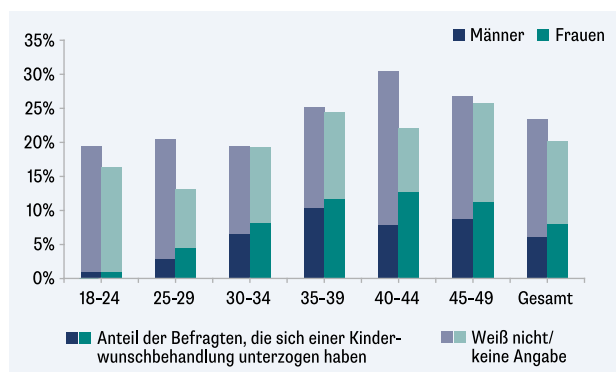


Figure 32.1: Share of respondents aged 15-49 who have ever used infertility treatment, by age and sex (%)

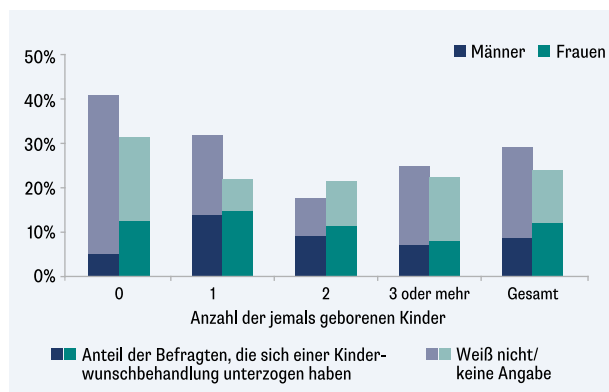


Figure 32.2: Share of respondents aged 40-59 who have ever used infertility treatment, by parity and sex (%)

Assisted reproduction, especially to conceive a first child

Among individuals who have undergone medically assisted reproduction and reached the end of their reproductive life, 5% of men and 13% of women did not transition to parenthood and ended up childless, presumably involuntarily. Moreover, while most respondents aged 40-59 had two children, most people who had ever used infertility treatments ultimately had only one child (Fig. 32.2). This suggests that infertility treatments are mainly used by those trying to conceive their first child, rather than to increase the size of their family.

33 Childbearing intentions and number of children: 2009 and 2023 – a comparison

CLAUDIA HERBST • NORBERT NEUWIRTH

The composition of the Austrian population in terms of age groups and number of children is changing all the time and has a decisive influence on the future development of society. Therefore, intertemporal comparisons of the number of children people actually have and intend to have are of high socio-political relevance.

Short-term intentions to have a (further) child have weakened

Let us start with a direct comparison of short-term fertility intentions. In 2023, noticeably fewer people plan to have a (further) child within the next three years than in 2009. This not only reflects the long-term shift in first births; declines are also observed in higher age groups. The general decline in short-term childbearing intentions may have been exacerbated by the current crises (Fig. 33.1).

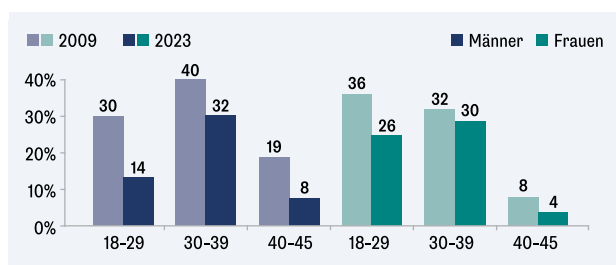


Figure 33.1: People who “definitely” and “probably” want to have a child within the next three years, 2009 and 2023, by age (%)

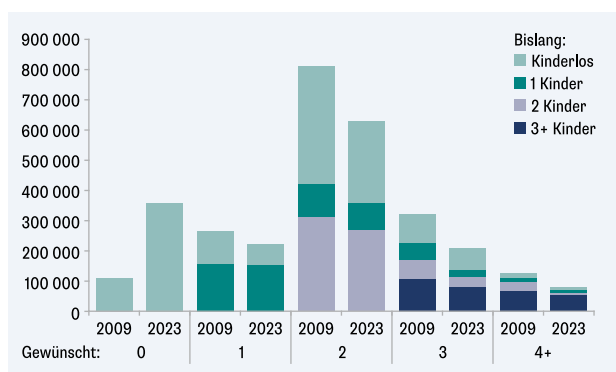


Figure 33.2: Women’s fertility intentions and previous number of children, 2009 and 2023, projected to the number of women aged 18-45

This observation already gives us a good idea of current trends. In order to gain a more detailed insight, the projected values of the realised and desired number of children of people in the fertile age cohorts are compared intertemporally. The analysis is limited to women’s number of children and fertility intentions. In 2009, the 18-45 age group comprised 1.63 million women, and has decreased by about 8% to just over 1.50 million in 2023. This is the main reason for the expected decline in birth rates in the coming years. In addition, the intention to have further children has weakened significantly in this shrunken age group.

Significant decline in total number of children born and desired

The number of women who do not want to have children has more than tripled. The number of women who already have one child and do not want to have any more children has remained almost the same (around 155,000), while the number of still childless women who want to have exactly one child has fallen from just over 100,000 to just over 70,000. The total number of those who already have two children and want to keep it that way has also fallen from 313,000 to 270,000, i.e. a drop of 14%. This means that the aggregate number of children in this group has fallen by much more than the fall in the total number of potential mothers would suggest. However, the decline (-28%) in the number of women who do not yet have a child or who have only one child but ultimately want two children is even more marked. There has also been a significant overall fall (-35%) in the number of women reporting a higher number of children, or at least higher childbearing intentions (Fig. 33.2).

In summary, it should be noted that the overall fertility intention has decreased from a replacement level of 2.1 children per woman (2009) to 1.68 (2023). Whereas women aged 18-45 had 1.67 million biological children and wanted about the same number of further children in 2009, women in these age groups now have a total of 1.3 million children (-22%) and want a total of 1.1 million further children (-33%).



Families as High Performers

34 Paid work in a couple context

NORBERT NEUWIRTH • LORENZ WURM

The number of hours a person living in a cohabiting partnership spends in paid work often depends on the extent to which the partner works and whether there are care responsibilities. The discussion about how paid work is shared within a couple or household is currently omnipresent. The GGP examines the situation for the year 2023.

Largest share of part-time work among couples with pre-school children

In 84% of all partnerships with a child under the age of three, at least one parent works part-time (Fig. 34.1). As the age of the youngest child increases, this proportion decreases and finally stabilises at 42%, around the same level as for couples with no children (40%). In about one in ten childless couples neither partner works, most often because both are young and still in education. Among parents, this proportion is lower, ranging from 4% to a maximum of 7%.

Women mostly work part-time

As expected, the birth of a child affects the extent to which women work. Two thirds of women with a child under three are on maternity protection, parental leave or not in paid work (Fig. 34.2). They then return to work, mostly on a part-time basis. Among parents with children aged three to under six, half of the

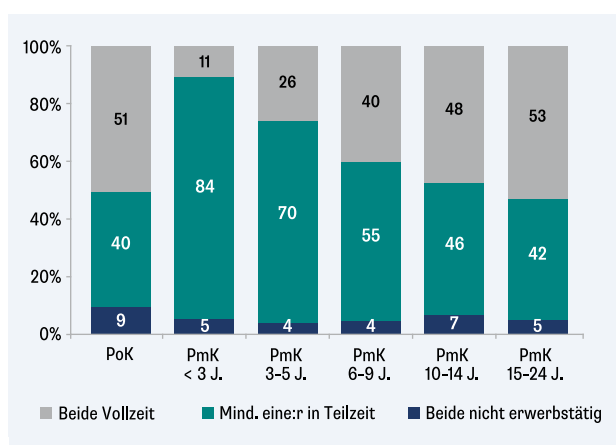


Figure 34.1: Level of paid work done by persons in partnerships without children (P w/o ch) and with children (P w ch), by age of the youngest child (%)

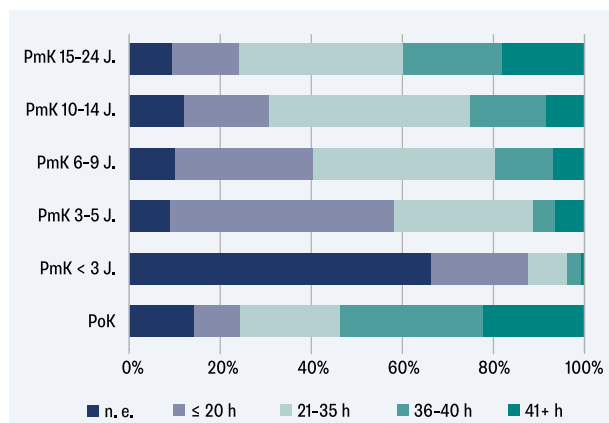


Figure 34.2: Level of paid work done by woman when man is in paid work (partnerships without children (P w/o ch) and with children (P w ch), don't work = either not in paid work or on parental leave, %)

mothers work 20 hours or less. The older the children, the more hours mothers work, but still mainly part-time. When their children are aged between six and nine, 30% of female parents work 20 hours or less and 40% work between 21 and 35 hours a week. Among couples with children aged 10 to under 15, around a quarter of women work full-time, and among couples with children aged 15 to under 25, almost 40% do so.

Fathers almost exclusively work full-time

After the birth of a child, fathers rarely reduce their working hours or switch to part-time work. The opposite is much more likely: men accumulate more overtime during this phase of their life. Full-time work is the norm for fathers, with at least four out of five working 36 hours or more per week at all family stages.

In summary, it can be said that even in 2023, equal working hours within couples are still the exception rather than the rule. After the birth of a child, it is still usually the woman who first takes parental leave and then works part-time for a long time.

35 Employment status of working-age couples

BRIAN BUH

The employment constellation of couples changes as they age. This includes finishing education, entering the labour market, becoming parents, and bringing up children. Dissecting the population of working-age different-sex couples by their age and by the age of the youngest child, the Austrian GGP-II illustrates how couples' employment constellation evolves over the life course.

Transition from education to careers and parenthood

Before having children, it is common for young couples aged 18-34 to be in education or military / civic service (42%, Fig. 35.1). However, only 6% of couples with at least one partner aged over 35 have one or both of them studying. Among parents, the proportion of couples with one partner being in education is negligible. These findings reflect an often-observed pattern of transition to adulthood in Austria. Most individuals finish education and enter the labour force before parenthood. The Austrian GGP-II shows that this standard trajectory is still present in 2023. Interestingly, unemployment is most common among older childless couples (10%), with more male or dual unemployment than among couples with children. This may reflect the importance of male labour force participation as a precursor to parenthood.

Women are tasked with leaving the labour force to raise children

With the exception of households with infants / toddlers (youngest child aged 0-3), dual-earner households constitute the majority of working-age couples' employment constellations in Austria. When couples have children, women, not men, take parental leave. In Austria, parental leave lasts until the child's second birthday, but parents are entitled to childcare allowance until the child is at most three years old. (There are several schemes, which differ in terms of the duration and the amount of the payments. In the longest variant, parents receive childcare allowance for up to three years, if the mother and father share the allowance.) In households with children aged 0-3, 48% of women are on parental leave while the men continue to work (Fig. 35.1). We do not report men on parental leave as the total count is so low it does not register in our figure (seven men report being on parental leave, compared to 339 women). Austrian labour law guarantees that people on parental leave can return to their previous job at the end of the leave. In the Austrian GGP-II, 90% of respondents currently on parental leave intend to do so. This is reflected in the strong return to two-earner households in which the youngest child is between four and five years old. However, not all women re-enter the work force. In this age category, 7% of women are homemakers. This proportion remains constant as long as the youngest child is under 12 but declines to 4% in households with the youngest child aged 12 and older. If a woman is a homemaker highly depends on the total number of children in the household.

Same-sex couples are not included. However, their employment situation is similar to that of different-sex couples.

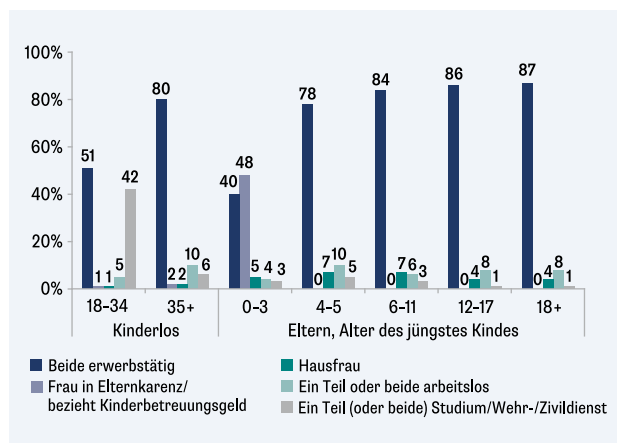


Figure 35.1: Employment constellations of coresidential different-sex couples of working age, by age of the youngest child in the household (%)

36 The work-life balancing act

LORENZ WURM • NORBERT NEUWIRTH

A good work-life balance is often associated with high life satisfaction. But how well do people actually manage the balancing act between work and family? The GGP asked about the impact of work-related stress on family and household, as well as how family life affects work.

Three quarters say work affects family life

When asked if they had ever come home from work too tired to do the chores that needed to be done, 25% of respondents said “never”. This means that a quarter of all Austrians have a very good work-life balance.

However, not everyone can manage this balancing act (Fig. 36.1). For example, 15% of respondents say that several times a week their workload is so heavy that either the household or other family responsibilities suffer. This is more common among women than among men (17% vs. 13%).

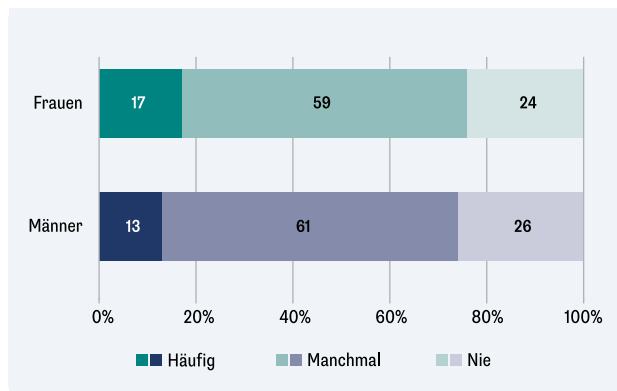


Figure 36.1: Work-life balance: impact of work on household and family by sex (%)

Taking into account the current living arrangement, both single parents and singles seem to find it more difficult to achieve this balance than people in couple relationships. Couples with children seem to be the most successful in separating work and private life: only 13% of them state that they often feel stressed by their paid work (Fig. 36.2). This may be mainly due to the more unequal division of labour within the family, with the amount of paid work being largely opposite in couples with children.

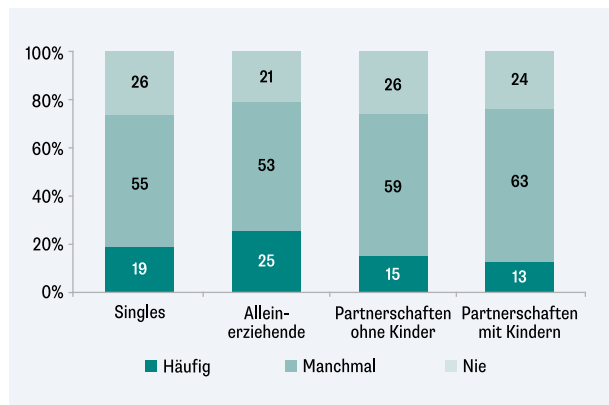


Figure 36.2: Work-life balance: impact of work on family by current living arrangement (%)

Hardly anybody says family life affects work

Significantly fewer respondents say that their family responsibilities make it difficult for them to function well at work. Almost two thirds say they have never experienced this and only 3% say it happens “several times a week”, indicating frequent difficulties.

However, families with children under the age of three are particularly affected: 61% of respondents, men and women alike, feel that family matters occasionally affect their performance at work. This type of stress decreases significantly as children get older.

Balance generally refers to a state of equilibrium or stability. Finding this point in the relationship between work demands and private life is not an easy task. The impact of work on other areas of life seems to be more pronounced than *vice versa*, with the interrelationships depending very much on the particular phase of life.

37 Working during off-peak hours and at weekends

LORENZ WURM • NORBERT NEUWIRTH

In addition to the “normal” eight-hour working day, there are some alternatives such as flexible working hours (43% have no fixed starting time), working from home (33% at least one day a week) or mobile working. In the GGP, Austrians were asked about their exact working hours, including working at off-peak times and weekends, and about their job satisfaction.

Working during off-peak hours

About a third of respondents had worked during off-peak hours (i. e. between 8 p.m. and 5 a.m.) at least one day a week during the four weeks prior to the survey. Men (38%) work significantly more often in the evening or at night than women (24%). When broken down by family type, the proportion of people working at off-peak times is, as expected, highest among singles and lowest among single parents (Fig. 37.1). In 30% of cases, the off-peak work could be done from home.

Working on weekends

Hence, people are more likely to work on weekends than at off-peak times. When asked whether they had worked on Saturdays or Sundays in the last four weeks, 31% of respondents said they had done so twice or more, and 14% said they had done so less than twice. Again broken down by family type, almost one in two single parents (48%) does weekend work at least once a month. The share for those in a couple with

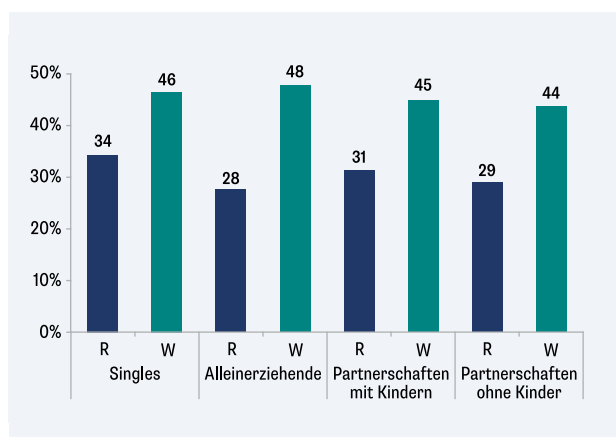


Figure 37.1: Work during off-peak hours (O) and weekends (W) by family type (%)

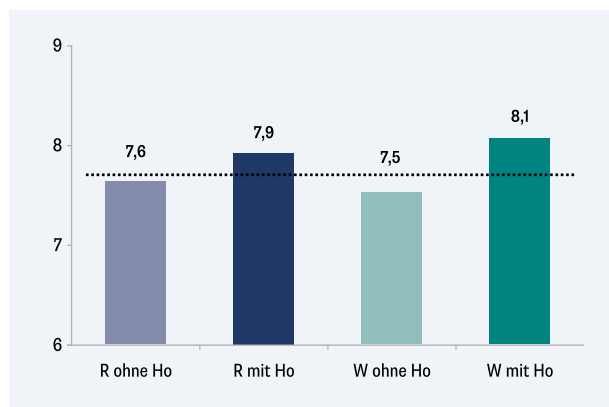


Figure 37.2: Job satisfaction with and without the option of working from home (WFH), off-peak hours (O), weekends (W)

children is 44%. Working from home on weekends is less common. Only 24% of single parents were able to do their work from home on weekends.

Job satisfaction

On a scale of 0 to 10, the average job satisfaction score is 7.7. People who work at off-peak times or at weekends report significantly lower levels of satisfaction (Fig. 37.2). However, when working from home is an option, satisfaction scores are above average.

Working at off-peak times and at weekends is thus no longer restricted to the gastronomy and tourism industries but is now widespread in other sectors as well. While single parents tend to shift their activities to the weekend if necessary and avoid working at off-peak times, couple parents can also work at off-peak times as long as the partner provides childcare. However, the key to reconciling work and family life is the recent spread of working from home arrangements.

38 Working from home and stress levels

SONJA DÖRFLER-BOLT • LORENZ WURM

The measures taken to combat the Covid-19 pandemic have accelerated digitalisation in many areas of life and have also changed the way we work. Working from home (WFH) has expanded significantly and continues to be used by many workers. Currently, 31% of respondents without children in the household work remotely at least occasionally; of these, 23% do so at least two days a week. Parents with children of pre-school age work from home much more frequently (42%), 32% of them at least two days a week.

WFH reduces stress for mothers and increases stress for fathers

Can WFH be a good way to reduce work-related stress? Among other things, the GGP collected data on perceived stress at work (no stress, some stress, a lot of stress). Overall, work stress levels are high (41%). A differentiation by sex and the use of WFH provides a more nuanced picture: when the number of days per week worked remotely is included in the analysis, it becomes clear that WFH can definitely have a stress-reducing effect on mothers of pre-school children (Fig. 38.1), while fathers who work from home tend to have higher stress levels than those who don't. This finding suggests that mothers successfully use WFH to better reconcile paid and unpaid work. Fathers who work remotely may be more involved in unpaid work, which increases the potential for stress (Fig. 38.1).

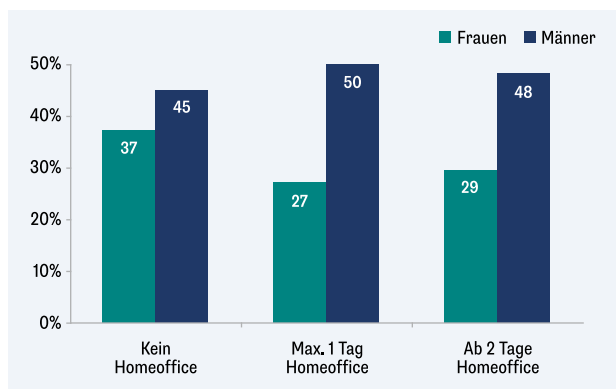


Figure 38.1: Proportion of people with high perceived work stress by sex and WFH level, people with children up to six years in the household (%)

Occasional WFH associated with high stress for childless people

Women without children in the household are more likely than mothers to report high levels of work stress (45% vs. 32%). The differences between childless men and fathers are slightly smaller. Stress levels are highest for childless men and women who occasionally work from home and lowest for childless women who do not work remotely. This suggests that WFH is essentially a stress-reducing reconciliation tool for women. However, this does not apply to childless women. For childless men, the lowest levels of stress go hand in hand with the highest levels of WFH. For them, WFH seems to relax the work situation. However, it should be borne in mind that not all work-related activities can be carried out from home, but rather those that require a higher level of education (Fig. 38.2).

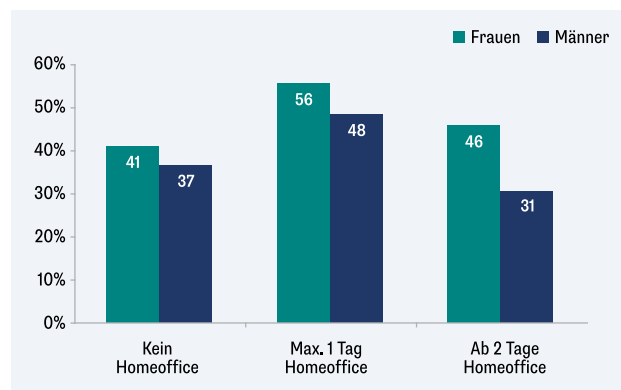


Figure 38.2: Proportion of people with high perceived work stress by sex and WFH level, people without children in the household (%)

39 Who decides on the amount of paid work?

ANDREAS BAIERL

In a couple, who decides how the time spent in paid work is divided between the partners? In the context of this question, we analysed who in the partnership decides on their own and their partner's level of paid work.

Women are more likely to decide for themselves

Figure 39.1 shows a comparison of the statements made by women and men in opposite-sex partnerships. Women most frequently say that they always decide themselves how much paid work they do (50% vs. 38% of men). The highest level of education attained does not affect this difference.

Men think that their partners are less likely to always decide for themselves than vice versa (34% vs. 41%). Detailed analyses show that women and men make similar statements about themselves and about their partners.

About a quarter of the respondents decide together on the amount of paid work they do, and very few say that their partner or other people decide how much paid work they do.

Couples with and without children

People who live with their own children under the age of 15 are less likely than those without children to say that they themselves always decide how much time they spend in paid work (36% vs. 50%). Forty-three per

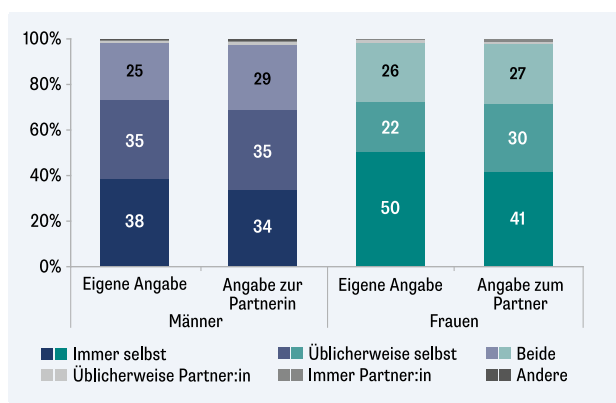


Figure 39.1: Who determines the time you spend in paid work? (%)

cent of women and 32% of men with children always decide on the extent of their paid work themselves, as compared with 41% of men and 57% of women in couples without children under 15. The differences are also very similar for families with younger children.

There is a considerable dynamic with regard to age (Fig. 39.2). At all ages, women without children most frequently state that they always decide by themselves to which extent they engage in paid work. This share reaches a minimum of just under 50% at age 40, while it is over 60% for younger and older women.

Young men and women with children comparatively rarely (just over 30%) decide by themselves how much time they devote to paid work. For women, this share rises steadily and reaches 50% by age 50, while for men it only starts to rise from the age of 50 and reaches the level of women with children at the end of their 50s. Up to their mid-40s, men without children are more likely than men with children to decide on the amount of their paid work, while the trend is identical thereafter.

All analyses show that the image of women or mothers making their decision to engage in paid work dependent on their partner is not confirmed by the data collected. The results point in the opposite direction: more often than men, women with and without children decide for themselves how much paid work they do.

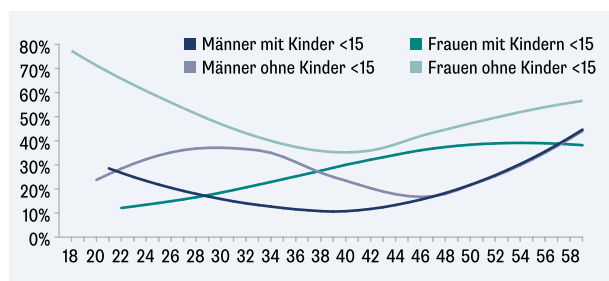


Figure 39.2: Percentage of people who always decide the amount of time they spend in paid work by themselves by age, sex and having children under 15 (%)

40 How many hours a week should fathers and mothers work?

NORBERT NEUWIRTH • EVA-MARIA SCHMIDT

The way in which parents divide up paid work between themselves is becoming less and less subject to rigid labour law frameworks. Part-time work and/or working from home are becoming increasingly common. However, when and how much parents work after the birth of a child depends not only on whether the child attends an educational institution such as a nursery or an all-day school and/or can be looked after by other family members, but also on the respective social norms.

For mothers, the rule is: if you work at all, work half as much

In order to capture the normative idea regarding the ideal amount of paid work, GGP respondents were asked to indicate how many hours per week a father and a mother of a two-year-old child should ideally work. For fathers, they reported an average of 35 hours per week and stated that mothers should ideally either refrain from gainful work or do a small part-time job during this family phase. A differentiation by age, sex and family phase shows only minor differences. Only respondents under 40 years of age who do not (yet) have children indicate higher ideal working hours for mothers and lower ideal working hours for fathers. In general, fathers are advised to

work more than twice as much as mothers (Fig. 40.1).

Only the young and (still) childless prefer a more egalitarian way of sharing

When the ideal amount of paid work for mothers and fathers is combined, we see that when a child is two years old, respondents under 40 who do not (yet) have children prefer both parents to work part-time (30%) and only 8% think that the mother should not work and the father should work full-time (Fig. 40.2). However, people with children are more than twice as likely (17-23%) to cite the latter combination, which is still typical of Austria, as the ideal, while this group is less likely (17-18%) to see part-time work for both parents as the ideal. This indicates a clear shift in preferences. There is an even clearer preference for traditional working patterns among people with older children and childless people over 40. However, the proportion of those preferring full-time work for fathers and part-time work to the level of at least 20 hours for mothers is similar across the different family phases. Equally few people think that it would be ideal for both parents to work full-time and that it would be ideal for both to work at most reduced part-time.

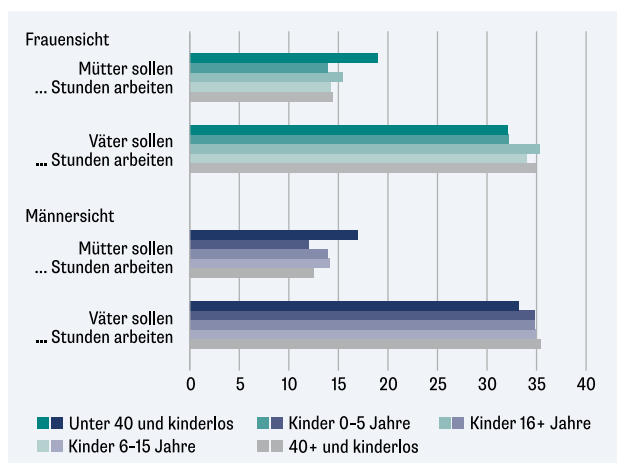


Figure 40.1: “How many hours a week should mothers / fathers of a two-year-old child work?”

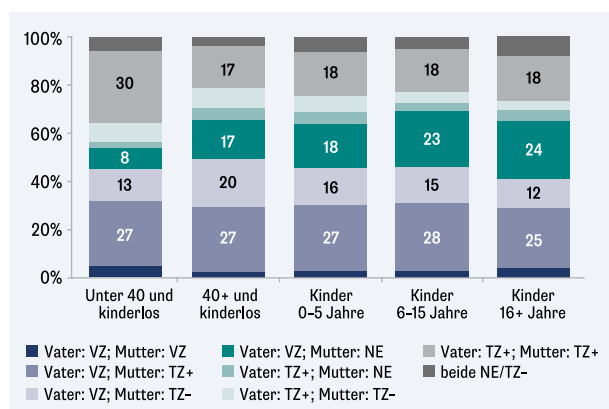


Figure 40.2: Ideal division of paid work when a child is two years old (NPW: no paid work, PT-: part-time less than 20 hours per week, PT+: part-time 20+ hours per week, FT: full-time 36+ hours per week, %)

41 Do children suffer if their mothers work?

EVA-MARIA SCHMIDT • NORBERT NEUWIRTH

In recent decades, the division of parental responsibilities has become increasingly egalitarian. This has been accompanied by an increase in the number of working mothers, mainly on a part-time basis. The indicator question “A pre-school child is likely to suffer if his / her mother works” aims to capture attitudes towards working mothers with pre-school children. Views on this issue are mixed and vary widely between men and women.

Most women disagree, men’s opinions are divided

There is a polarisation of attitudes towards working mothers, particularly among men: 40% agree with the statement, 40% disagree. Among women, almost 60% of women disagree, with almost 20% strongly disagreeing, while a total of 25% agree.

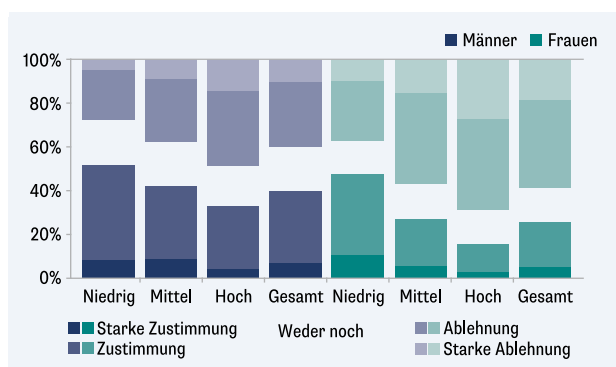


Figure 41.1: “A pre-school child is likely to suffer if his / her mother works”, by education of respondents (%)

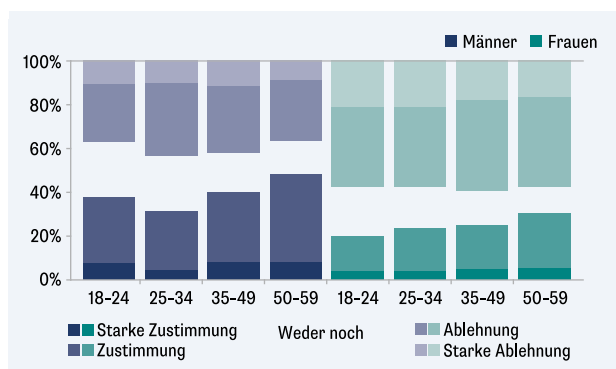


Figure 41.2: “A pre-school child is likely to suffer if his / her mother works”, by age of respondents (%)

Education makes the difference

In addition to the differences by sex, the data also show clear differences according to respondents’ level of education. Half of the less educated women and men agree with the statement, while most highly educated women (almost 70%) disagree. It is in this group, that the proportion of those who strongly disagree with the statement also peaks at almost 30%. This trend is similar but less pronounced among men (Fig. 41.1).

Higher agreement among older respondents, similar disagreement

When the results are broken down by those with and without children or by the age group of the children, agreement with the statement varies only slightly. There are also only minor differences according to the age of the respondents: across all the age groups surveyed, women disagree with the indicator question to a similar extent (57-59%), but with lower intensity in older age groups. Conversely, women’s agreement is more pronounced in older ages: while only 20% of women aged 18-24 think that a pre-school child is likely to suffer if the mother works, this share peaks at 30% among women in the age group 50-59.

Among men, this attitude is more prevalent and varies somewhat more with age. In the 18-24 age group, agreement and disagreement are almost equal at around 38%. In the next age group, men’s agreement is significantly lower but more pronounced again among respondents with higher age. The view that a child of pre-school age suffers if the mother works only prevails among men in the oldest age group (50-59) (Fig. 41.2).

42 Attitudes towards gender equality in education and (unpaid) work

INGRID SETZ

Although there has been considerable progress towards gender equality in the past, persistent inequalities continue to affect women’s economic situation. For example, women are less likely to work (full-time) and also contribute to a greater share of unpaid work in the household and in childcare. These inequalities raise questions about the extent to which traditional gender roles prevail in Austrian society. Using the data collected in the GGP survey, we can examine whether and how gender differences are experienced in key areas of life such as education and (unpaid) work.

Predominance of egalitarian attitudes but traditional (unpaid) work paradigms

Most respondents consider it equally important for both women and men to obtain a university degree, have a job and look after the home and children (Fig. 42.1). Support for gender equality is particularly strong in education, with 92% of respondents agreeing that a university degree is equally important for women and men. However, there is a greater shift towards traditional gender roles when it comes to paid and unpaid work. For example, one in eight respondents thinks that having a job is more important for men, and one in four says that looking after the home and children is more important for women. Overall, it is important to bear in mind that responses in surveys on attitudes and values may be subject to social desirability bias, i.e. that individuals are more likely to

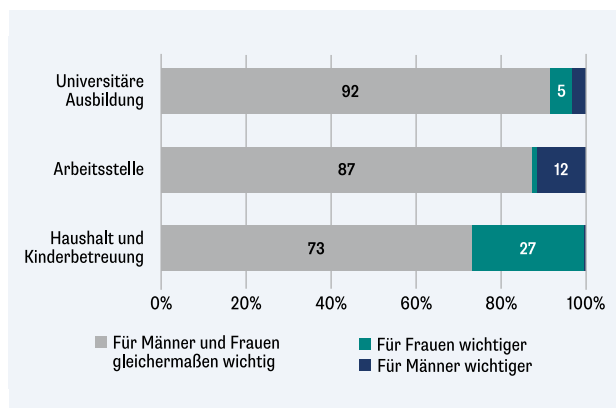


Figure 42.1: Gender role attitudes (%)

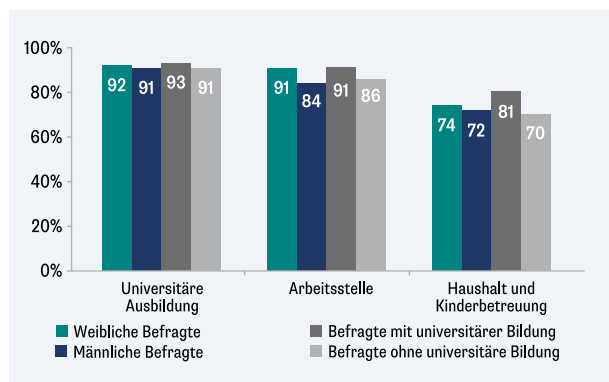


Figure 42.2: Percentage of respondents with egalitarian gender role attitudes (%)

give answers they believe will be viewed favourably by others (in this case, a tendency towards egalitarian attitudes). Therefore, the *actual* rejection of gender equality may be greater than what is reported.

Women and university graduates report more egalitarian attitudes

Egalitarian attitudes towards gender roles are not equally shared by all population groups. Women are more likely than men to agree with gender equality, and respondents with a university education are more likely to do so than those with less education (Fig. 42.2). While the differences between these population groups are small when it comes to the importance of tertiary education, they become more pronounced in relation to work. The largest difference is observed for unpaid work, where those with higher education are more likely to say that there are no gender differences (81% vs. 70% for those with lower education). A similar pattern emerges in relation to the importance of having a job. Yet, there are notable differences between female and male respondents. While 91% of women say that having a job is equally important for both sexes, only 84% of men share this view.

43 Division of household tasks

CHRISTINE GESERICK • GEORG WERNHART

How do heterosexual couples share domestic tasks? As in previous studies, the GGP data show that specialisation remains strongly linked to gender.

Routine tasks are the preserve of women

Women usually do most of the routine tasks. Three quarters of respondents say that in their partnership the woman “always” or “usually” does the laundry (Fig. 43.1). In 60% of couples, the woman also prepares the daily meals, while this is done exclusively by the man in only 7% of couples. In return, men more often take on traditionally male tasks such as “doing small repairs in and around the house” (75%) or “paying bills and keeping financial records” (34%). However, these tasks tend to be non-routine, resulting in the often observed additional daily workload for women.

Children reinforce specialisation

Children reinforce this gender-typical specialisation. In households with children, women are even more likely to be solely responsible for doing the laundry (78%) and men for minor repairs (77%). Conversely, couples who do not (yet) have children or couples whose children have left the parental home share household tasks more equally.

The more gender-typical division of tasks among couples with children may contribute to their somewhat

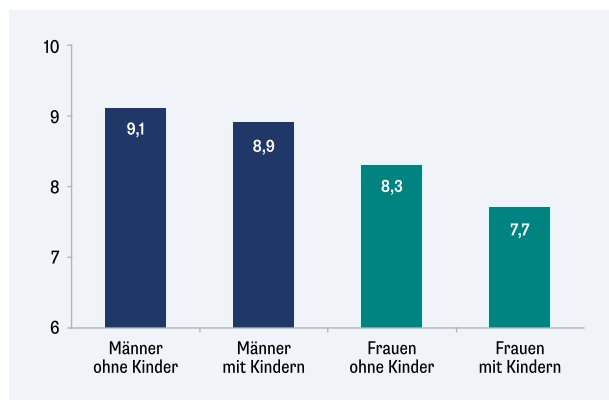


Figure 43.2: Average level of satisfaction with the division of household tasks (scale 0-10)

lower satisfaction with the way work is shared. This is true for both men and women, but more so for the latter (Fig. 43.2). On a satisfaction scale of 0 to 10 (10 = completely satisfied), men without children in the household are the most satisfied (average 9.1) and women with children the most dissatisfied (average 7.7). It should be noted, however, that overall satisfaction levels are quite high.

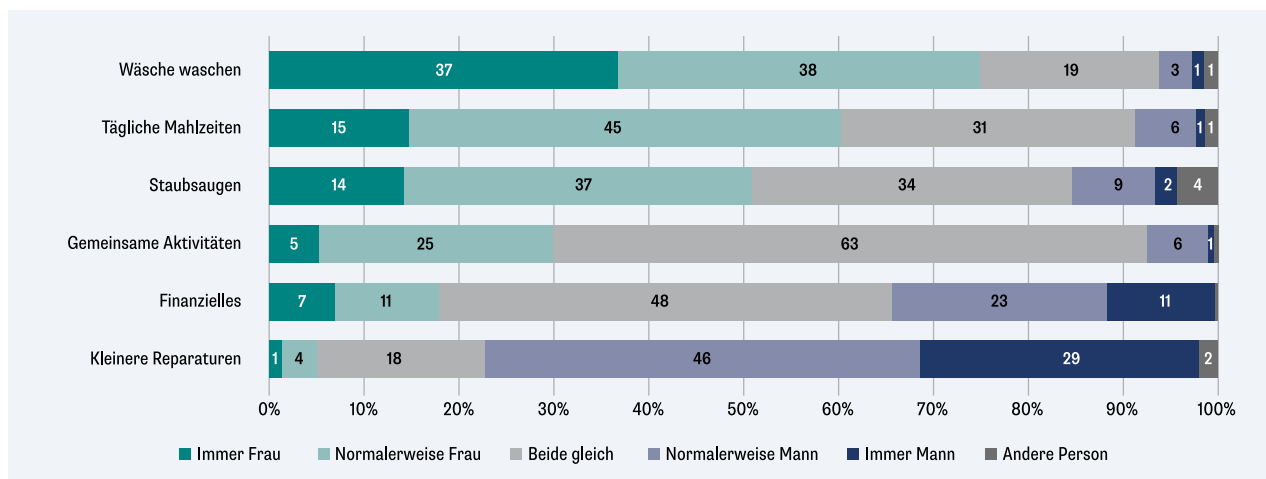


Figure 43.1: Practised division of household tasks (%)

44 Who is responsible for childcare tasks in couple households?

GEORG WERNHART

In addition to the tasks performed in all households, there are additional responsibilities in households with children. This is particularly the case for households with young children and schoolchildren and raises the question of who takes on these tasks in couple households. The following results refer to persons living in couple households with children under age 15.

Responsibility still mainly with mothers

In two thirds of couple households, mothers are always or usually responsible for dressing the children. A similar picture emerges when the child is ill, and helping with homework is also more often in the hands of mothers (56%). When it comes to putting the children to bed and playing with them, mothers' share is below 50% (at 33% and 30%, respectively). However, this does not mean that it is mainly fathers

who put the children to bed or play with them. Rather, responsibility for these tasks is seen to be shared equally by both parents (53% and 65%, respectively). For all childcare tasks, it is, however, still the exception that the responsibility always or usually rests with the father. This is most likely the case for helping with homework and putting the children to bed (6% and 5%, respectively).

Does this marked imbalance in responsibilities reflect the gender gap in work intensity that still exists in Austria? Many mothers with young children work part-time, while fathers almost exclusively work full-time.

The following analyses are limited to the division of tasks among couples with children under 15 where the woman works full-time (i.e. does more than 35 normal working hours per week). This means that both partners actually work full-time, as only very few fathers reduce their working hours to part-time. The result is sobering.

Full-time work does not change the distribution of responsibilities

Although the share of those who feel equally responsible increases by about three percentage points among couples where both partners work full-time, mothers shoulder the lion's share of responsibility. The percentage of couples in which the mother is mainly responsible for staying with an ill child is even higher than that in Figure 44.1. This shows that responsibilities are not allocated according to available time but determined by other reasons such as social factors.

Götl and Berghammer (see chapter 45) show that the marked imbalance in responsibilities also has an impact on the satisfaction with the division of tasks.

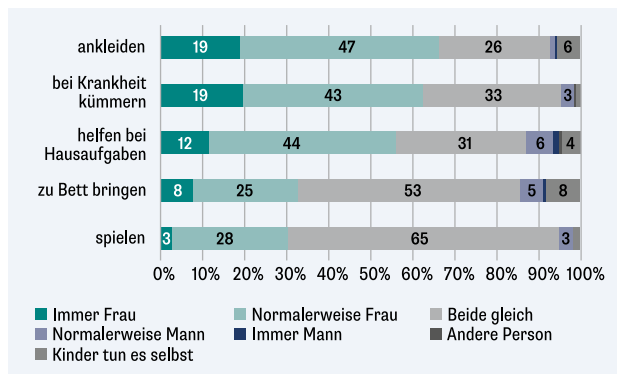


Figure 44.1: Distribution of childcare tasks in couple households (%)

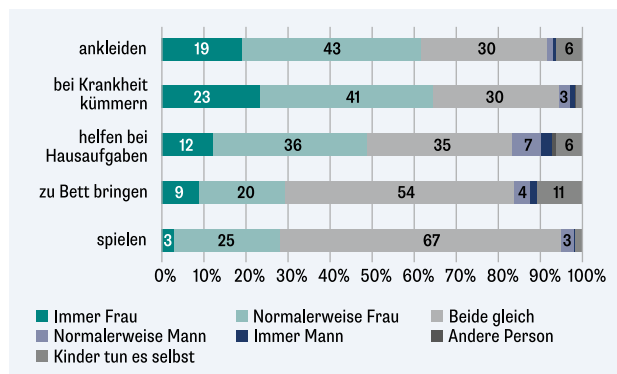


Figure 44.2: Distribution of childcare tasks in couple households where the woman works full-time (%)

45 Satisfaction with the division of housework and childcare

GWEN GÖTLT • CAROLINE BERGHAMMER

In many couples, women still do most of the housework and childcare (see chapters 43 und 44). How satisfied are men and women in heterosexual relationships with the way these tasks are shared between them and their partner?

The GGP 2022 / 23 collected data on who does household work (preparing meals, vacuum cleaning, laundry, small repairs) as well as childcare tasks (dressing, staying at home with ill children, playing; only for children over six: helping with homework, putting to bed). When interpreting the results, it is important to bear in mind that only a selection of tasks

were included (for example, not included: washing dishes, shopping or tidying up). The five response options ranged from “always man” to “always woman”. To simplify matters, we summarised the activities and distinguished between the following groups: “man does (slightly) more / both equally”, “woman does slightly more”, “woman does much more”, “woman does (almost) everything”. The satisfaction scale ranged from 0 (not at all satisfied) to 10 (completely satisfied).

Satisfaction with division of housework: differences between men and women

A balanced division of housework has different effects on the satisfaction of men and women. On average, men are less satisfied when they do the same amount or (slightly) more housework than women, while women are very satisfied with such an arrangement (Fig. 45.1). Women are notably less satisfied if they are responsible for much more or (almost) all the housework.

A more balanced distribution of childcare increases satisfaction

The results are different for childcare, where both men and women are on average most satisfied when childcare is shared equally (Fig. 45.2). This reflects the well-established research finding that, unlike housework, childcare is often experienced as enjoyable. Men, in particular, often feel that they do not spend enough time with their children and therefore find a balanced sharing satisfactory. As with housework, women are much less satisfied with sharing when they do (almost) all the childcare.

These results show that gender equality can lead to greater satisfaction in families. However, a more equal distribution of the less attractive tasks, such as housework, may result in men becoming dissatisfied.

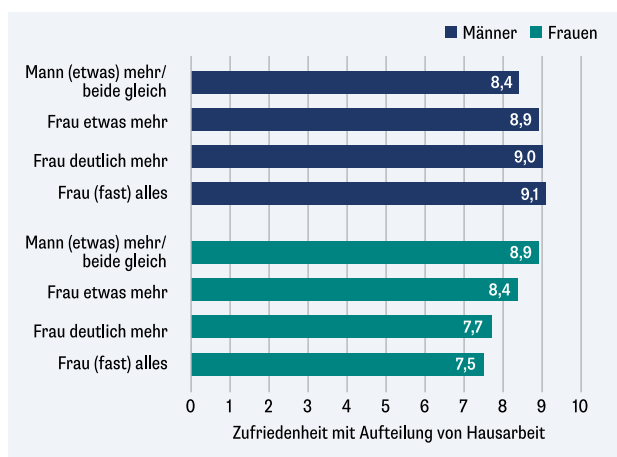


Figure 45.1: Average satisfaction with the division of housework by sex

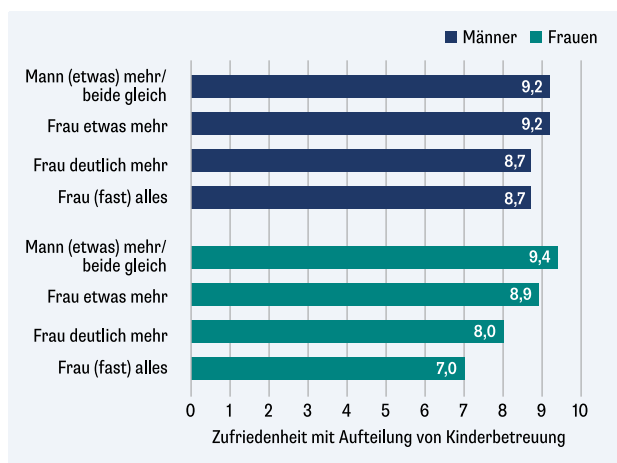


Figure 45.2: Average satisfaction with the division of childcare by sex (couples with children in the household)

46 Are women or men better at caring for small children?

INGRID SETZ

Women tend to do more unpaid work than men, such as caring for children. This often results in reduced participation of women in the labour market, leading to significant economic losses. What underlies this unequal division of labour? The decision about who takes care of young children might be based on role perceptions that reflect what is considered the appropriate, expected and preferred behaviour for each gender. In the GGP survey, respondents were asked to indicate whether they thought men or women were better able to take care of young children.

Majority believe men and women are equally capable, but men are more likely to hold traditional views on gender roles

The majority of respondents indicate that both women and men are equally capable of caring for children (Fig. 46.1). However, women are more convinced of equal abilities than men: while 64% of women have egalitarian role models, only 49% of men do. Traditional role models seem to be deeply rooted among men. For example, one in two men assumes that women are better at looking after children. This view is shared by both younger and older men, whereas among women there is a trend: the younger the more egalitarian, the older the more traditional. While 69% of women aged 20-29 think that men and women are equally capable

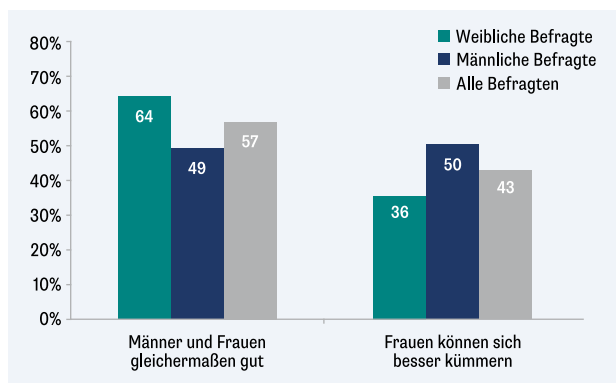


Figure 46.1: Gender role attitudes in childcare measured by the question “Who are better at caring for small children, men or women?” (%)

Note: Less than 1% of respondents say that men are better at childcare. They are not included in the figure.

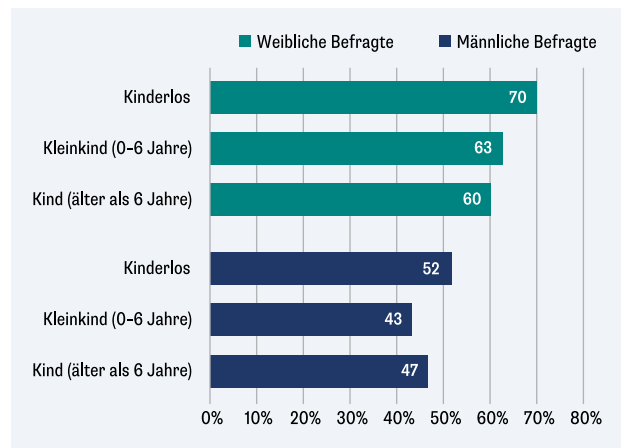


Figure 46.2: Percentage of respondents with egalitarian gender role attitudes towards childcare measured by the answer “men and women equally well” (%)

of providing childcare, only 60% of those aged 50-59 share this view.

Childless individuals more egalitarian than parents

Overall, childless respondents are more likely than parents to say that women and men are equally capable of looking after small children. Thus, 70% of women and 52% of men without children are convinced of equal abilities. Parents with child(ren) aged between zero and six, i.e. people who are directly affected by the division of childcare, are much less egalitarian in their attitudes. For both men and women in this group, the proportion of respondents in agreement with the equivalence of childcare falls by around eight percentage points. For parents whose child(ren) are older than six, the difference to childless (or childfree) respondents persists.

47 Organisation of childcare and the importance of informal support services

MARKUS KAINDL

Parents have several options for organising childcare. They can either take care of their children themselves or seek support from outside. In doing so, they can make use of informal offers (e.g. relatives) or formal services (e.g. childminders or kindergartens).

Little support for very young and slightly older children

Forty-one per cent of parents whose children are all under three years old always look after their children themselves, more than a third seek external support exclusively from relatives and acquaintances (Fig. 47.1), just under a quarter use formal services. If the youngest child is aged 10 to under 15 years, about two thirds confine themselves to parental childcare. Just as with children of primary school age, it must be taken into account here that these children are at school in the mornings (outside holiday periods) and no extra care is needed for this period. Formal care services are mainly used when all children are three to under six years of age. In this case, more than three quarters of parents rely on kindergartens or childminders.

For better differentiation, only families whose children are all in the same age group are considered here. Families with, for example, a 2-year-old and a 4-year-old child are not included in these evaluations.

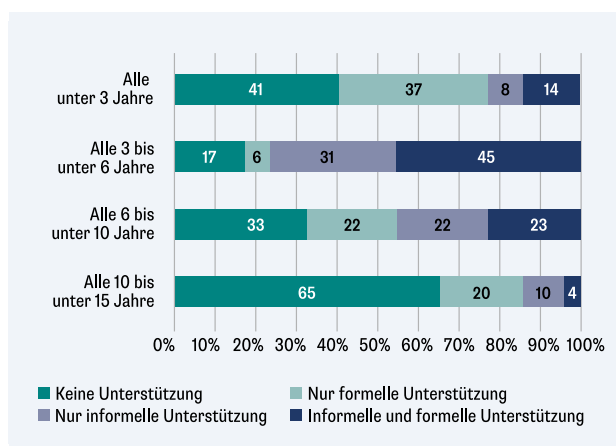


Figure 47.1: Childcare support by type (%)

Informal help is often sought at least once a week (Fig. 47.2). If their children are not yet of school age, almost a quarter of parents seek such help several times a week and a further 18% once a week.

Informal caregivers are mostly women

Among relatives, the children’s grandparents play a key role in providing support. If all the children are younger than three, around half of the parents get help from the grandparents; if the children are three to under six years old, the share is still 45%.

When it comes to grandparents’ assistance, gender effects are evident in two respects: on the one hand, maternal grandparents are more often called upon to provide care than paternal grandparents; on the other hand, grandmothers care for their grandchildren more often than grandfathers.

If the youngest child is not yet of school age, a third of the parents get support from the maternal grandmother, but only a quarter from the paternal grandmother. There are also comparable care ratios for grandfathers: 20% of maternal grandfathers, but only 15% of paternal grandfathers, are asked to look after children under the age of six.

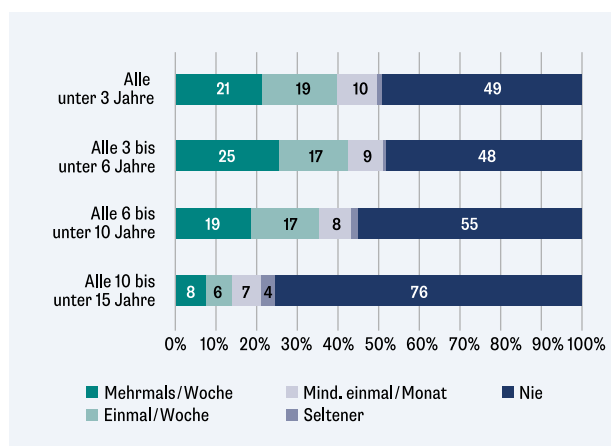


Figure 47.2: Frequency of using informal childcare support (%)

48 Division of unpaid work: a comparison over time

GWEN GÖTLT • CAROLINE BERGHAMMER

In heterosexual couples, unpaid domestic and childcare work is unevenly distributed: overall, women work significantly more than men in both areas (see chapters 43 und 44). The division of tasks is often based on traditional gender roles. For example, according to the GGP 2022 / 23, in 60-65% of couples, women usually or always prepare the meals or are responsible for dressing the children. In about 75% of couples, men usually or always do small repairs.

But how has the distribution changed between the first (2008 / 09) and the current GGP (2022 / 23) wave? We look at household activities (preparing meals, vacuum cleaning, small repairs) as well as childcare activities (dressing, staying at home with ill children, playing; only for children over six: helping with homework, putting to bed). The five response options ranged from “always woman” to “always man”. To simplify matters, we summarised the activities in each area and distinguished between the following groups: “woman does (almost) everything”, “woman does more”, “both equally”, “man does more”.

Changes towards a more egalitarian distribution over the last 15 years

A comparison between 2008 / 09 and 2022 / 23 shows clear shifts in the distribution of household tasks (Fig. 48.1): the share of couples in which the “woman does (almost) everything” or “more” has fallen from 50% to 40%, while the proportion of couples in which both do the same amount of work or in which the man does more has increased. When interpreting the results, however, it must be borne in mind that only three household activities could be included, one of which (repairs) is mainly done by men.

Childcare activities were clearly more unequally distributed than household activities at both points in time, but the distribution has also become more balanced (Fig. 48.2). During the last 15 years, there has been a shift in childcare from being (almost) exclusively done by women (falling from 51% to 44%) towards a more equal distribution, although even in 2022 / 23 “both equally” remains a very small group at 14%.

Thus, the decades-long trend towards a more equal division of unpaid work has been making its way in the most recent period. Traditional gender roles are still prevalent in Austria, especially in comparison with the European pioneers of gender equality. However, we can expect to see slow but steady progress towards sharing unpaid work more equally in the future.

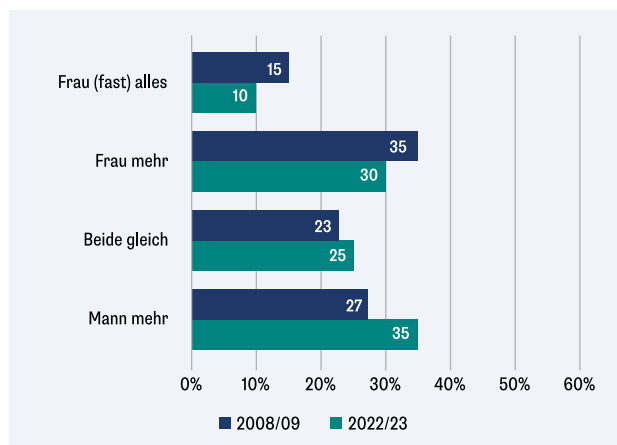


Figure 48.1: Changes in the division of household activities over time

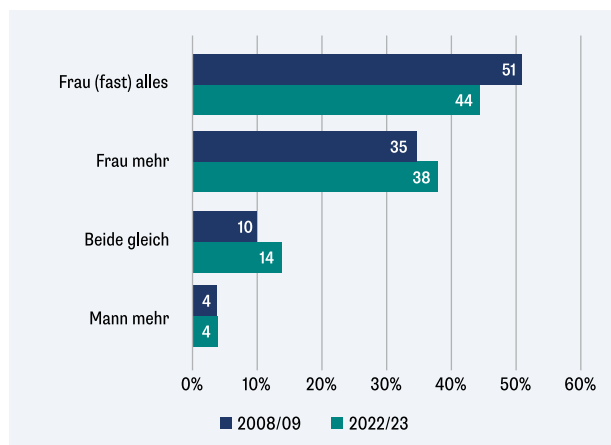


Figure 48.2: Changes in the division of childcare over time (couples with children in the household)



Economic Situation and Wellbeing

49 The financial situation of families

BERNHARD RIEDERER

The income and financial situation of households varies considerably depending on the type of family. Single parents in particular are among the disadvantaged groups in many respects. This is also the case for at least a part of households with many children.

Differences according to household and / or family type

The analysis of the income situation by family type (Tab. 49.1) clearly shows that the annual net earnings of couples with and without children are quite comparable. However, the share of persons with annual net earnings of less than € 20,000 is slightly higher among couples with three or more children (16%) and highest among single parents (44%), who are also relatively likely to receive minimum income support / social assistance (5%) and unemployment benefits (7%).

In Austria, owning residential property tends to indicate that a person has significant assets. Compared to other types of households with children (62-71%), the share of homeowners among single parents is low (33%), but quite remarkable compared to adults living alone (15-25%). The proportion of people owning property worth € 250,000 and above is significant for

both couples with children and older couples without children (43-71% and 30-50%, respectively).

Polarisation within the group of large families

Comparing households with children, it is noticeable that low annual net earnings are more common in the small group of households with four or more children (21% below € 20,000). Almost 9% of households with many children receive minimum income support / social assistance, whereas only 12% of households with one to three children do. Apart from this, however, the share of households with higher annual net earnings (€ 80,000 and above) (32%) and the share of homeowners (54%) cannot be considered low among households with four or more children, suggesting some polarisation within the group of large families.

Differences according to the age of the youngest child tend to be small. However, it is worth noting that the share of homeowners rises progressively with the age of the youngest child: from 53% for families with children under three to 63-65% for families with older children (11+). This may partly reflect both the process of starting a family and the accumulation of wealth with age.

Family types	Household income				Assets			
	Annual net earnings		Minimum income support / social assistance	Un-employment benefit	Income from interest and capital gains	Residential property	Real estate assets	
	Less than € 20,000	€ 80,000 and above					€ 100,000 and above	€ 250,000 and above
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	
Couples with 1 child	10	17	1	5	6	62	52-71	43-59
Couples with 2 children	11	20	< 1	4	6	71	57-79	51-71
Couples with 3+ children	16	16	3	4	6	66	48-69	43-62
Single parents	44	3	5	7	8	33	28-40	21-30
Couples under age 40 without children	10	11	1	7	7	24	28-37	22-30
Couples age 40+ without children	9	17	1	5	6	56	41-68	30-50
People under age 40 living alone	33	4	4	7	5	15	14-22	9-14
People age 40+ living alone	36	1	4	7	2	25	16-27	10-17
Living alone with partner	29	4	2	6	7	27	21-31	16-23
Joint household with parents	14	25	4	9	13	44	27-42	21-33
Other multi-person households	35	9	2	8	13	22	17-24	11-17

Table 49.1: Financial situation by household and / or family type (%)

50 Intra-family transfers – about receiving and giving

GEORG WERNHART

Data collection is often restricted to people living in the same household. However, individual family members spend long periods of their lives outside this household. These may be siblings living in another region or children who have grown up and moved away, not to mention aunts and uncles or in-laws.

The Gender and Generation Programme (GGP) broadens the focus to include all family members, regardless of where they live. Respondents could report monetary transfers received from and given to up to 18 different relatives.

Just under 34% of respondents aged 18-60 have at least once received a contribution of € 5,000 or more. In most cases (80%), they got this contribution from one person, in just under 20% of the cases from two different people. If we look at the smaller (more regular) gifts, the picture is a little more nuanced. In the last 12 months, 21% of the respondents received, and 23% gave € 250 or more. Of these, around two-thirds transacted with one person, around 20% with two and around 7% with three people.

From parents to children

Between which family members are transfers most frequent? Figure 50.1 shows this for smaller transfers made in the last 12 months. Around 80% of respondents who had received a gift had received it from their own parents or parents-in-law, and 52% had received it exclusively from them, followed by their grandparents (18%), their own partner (6%) and their siblings (3%). Only about 9% of respondents had not received a transfer from these family members, but from other relatives or acquaintances.

Money was mainly given to respondents' own children or children-in-law (48%), in 32% of all cases even exclusively, followed by their parents' generation (25%), their own partner (12%) and their siblings (9%). Only around 15% of respondents made payments to people other than those mentioned. To sum up: transfer payments are strongly focused on the (nuclear) family.

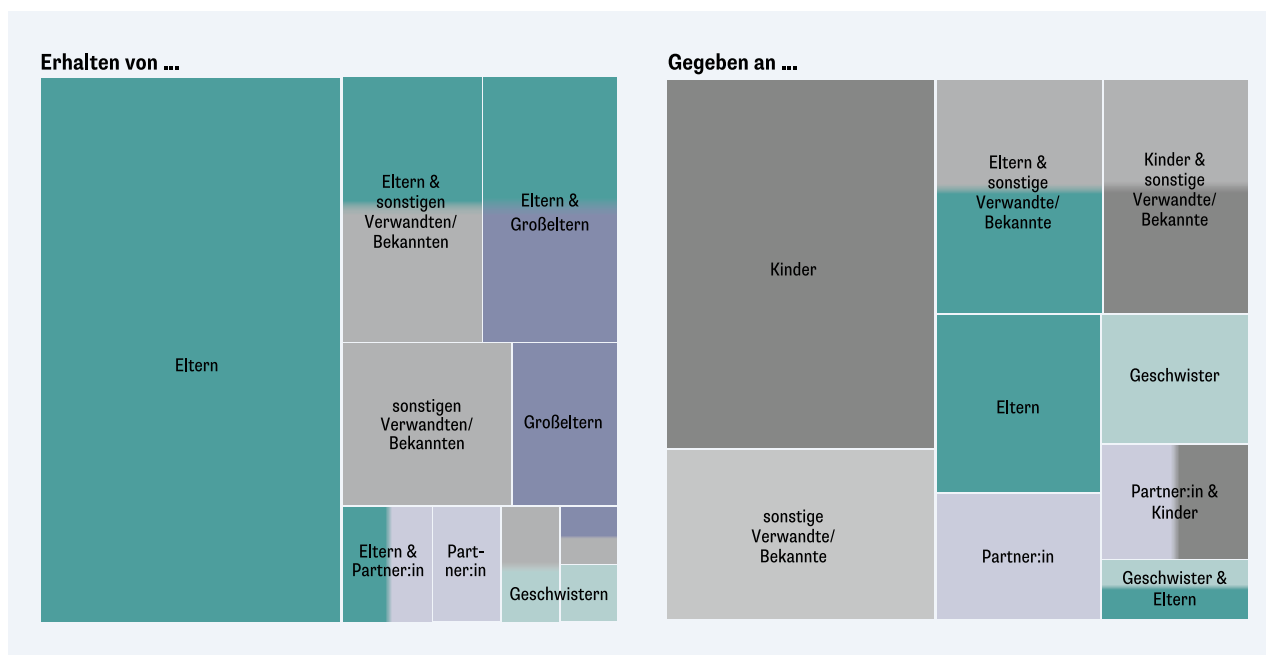


Figure 50.1: Groups of people involved in transfers

51 Housing status and financial situation

SONJA DÖRFLER-BOLT • NORBERT NEUWIRTH

A person's housing status indicates whether they own, rent or live in a rent-free accommodation without ownership. Housing status and financial situation are linked at various levels. On the one hand, the housing status is the basis for the creation of residential property, on the other hand, it has an impact on current expenditure.

Overall, exactly half of the respondents (50%) own their home, 40% rent and the rest live in other forms of accommodation. Ownership rises progressively with age, reaching 68% among the oldest (aged 55-60).

Home ownership is strongly correlated with asset transfers

Sufficient financial resources through income, gifts or inheritance are prerequisites for home ownership. Figure 51.1 analyses the aspects of gifts and inheritances in the form of money, property or goods in relation to the housing situation.

There are big differences. The share of those who have received gifts or inheritances of more than € 5,000 in the past is more than twice as high among homeowners than among renters. Almost half of the owners (47%), but only 21% of the renters, have ever received financial support of this size.

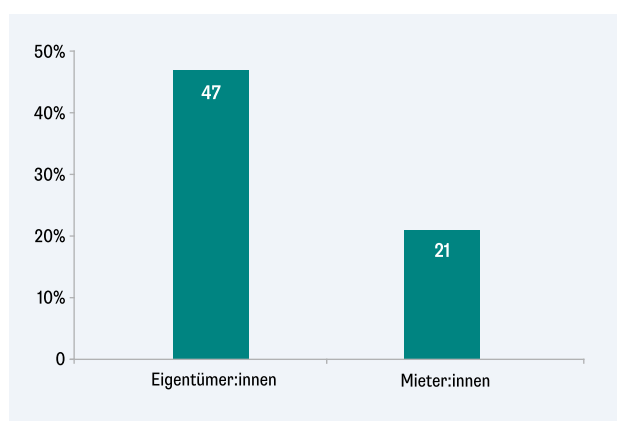


Figure 51.1: Received gift or inheritance worth more than € 5,000, by type of housing status (%)

Tenants get along with their income noticeably worse

The respective housing situation can also have an impact on the current financial situation. Figure 51.2 shows how homeowners and renters manage with their monthly household income. Basically, both groups most often state that they can manage relatively well (renters: 28%, owners: 32%). More than a quarter (27%) of renters have (great) difficulties in making ends meet, which is significantly more than owners (10%). Conversely, homeowners manage well or very well more often (44%) than those who rent (28%).

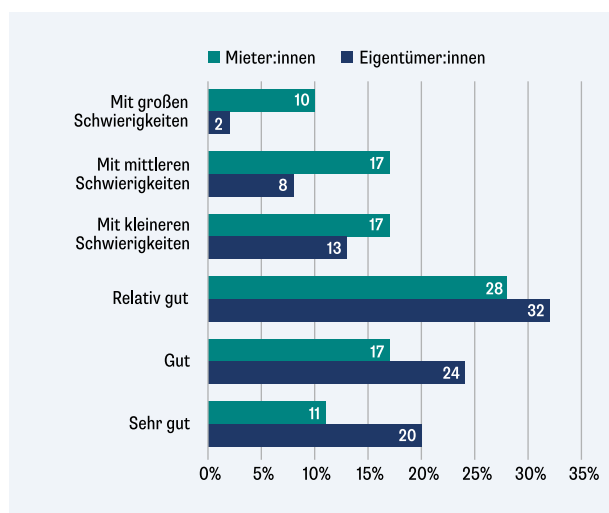


Figure 51.2: Can make ends meet, by type of housing status (%)

Overall, the data show that home ownership is much more likely to be linked with gifts or inheritances than rented accommodation. Moreover, renters find it significantly more difficult to meet their current financial commitments than homeowners, which is probably due to the monthly burden of rent.

52 Intentions to move and emigrate

RICHARD GISSER

More than a quarter of respondents answered the question “Do you intend to move *within Austria* in the next three years?” with “definitely yes”, “probably yes” or “unsure”. This means that almost three quarters have no intention to move in the near future.

Men tend to move slightly more often than women (28% vs. 25%), which is broadly in line with internal migration statistics. The latter also applies to age differences: the intention to move within the next three years is highest among young adults (18-29 years old: 52%) and decreases with increasing age to 10% in the sixth decade of life.

High intentions to move among young adults, childless people and those frustrated with their housing situation

The number of children plays an important role. People without caring responsibilities are the most mobile group. Currently, childless people have the highest intentions to move (40%); they are twice as high as those of parents with one child and more than three times as high as those of parents with two or three children (Fig. 52.1). Interestingly, the intentions to move rise again among parents with four children, suggesting that the space requirements of existing children are generally an important criterion.

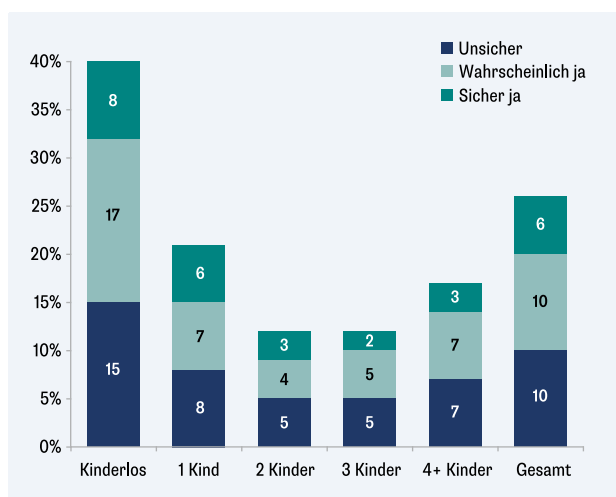


Figure 52.1: Intention to move by number of children (%)

There is a clear correlation between satisfaction with the current accommodation (measured on a scale of 0-10) and intentions to move. At 52%, these intentions are three times as high at low satisfaction (0-5) than at maximum satisfaction. The legal status also influences intentions to move, especially tenancy (41%) vs. ownership (12%).

When asked “Do you intend to move to *another country* within the next three years?” one in ten responded “definitely yes”, “probably yes” or “unsure”. Nine out of ten therefore have no intention of emigrating in the near future.

The answer “unsure” has a relatively higher weight for the intention to emigrate than for the intention to relocate. However, even here men (11%) are more likely than women (9%), and young adults (22%) are much more likely than those aged 50-59 (4%) to consider emigration.

Younger, more highly educated, and foreign-born most likely to want to emigrate

There are also large differences according to the number of children: among those without children, 18% intend to move abroad in the next three years, but only 7% (1 child) or 3% (2+ children) of parents with children. Compared with internal migration, the presence of children seems to be a greater obstacle to emigration.

At 9%, the intention to emigrate among those born in Austria is only about half as high as among immigrants (and this is likely to be a return migration).

As might be expected, the percentages for intentions to emigrate by educational level vary in a similar way to those by country of birth: higher educated people think about moving abroad in the next three years about twice as often as people with a medium or low education.

53 A sense of social inclusion

LORENZ WURM • NORBERT NEUWIRTH

Social inclusion is achieved when a person is accepted by society as an individual and has the opportunity to participate fully in society. If this is not the case, we speak of social exclusion, which describes the process of social marginalisation. Social inclusion can be measured by means of standardised questions which are also part of the GGP.

Most respondents feel well embedded in their social environment

To determine whether respondents felt excluded, they were asked to indicate to what extent statements (“I experience a general sense of emptiness. I often feel rejected.”) concerning perceived social inclusion had recently applied to them. Most Austrians do not feel socially excluded (76% and 82%, respectively, answered “no”), but 7% felt a general sense of emptiness at the time of the survey and 5% explicitly felt socially excluded (Fig. 53.1). This is similar for both men and women.

Previous studies show a correlation between perceived social inclusion and aspects such as age, education, number of children and working for pay.

General sense of emptiness more common among young adults

Young adults often experience a general sense of emptiness: 12% of 18-29 year olds said they had recently experienced such a feeling, compared with only 3% of 50-59 year olds. Feelings of emptiness seem to decrease with age. Having children and a higher income also have a positive influence on feelings of emptiness.

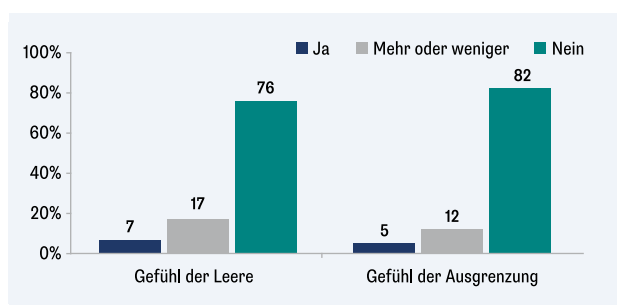


Figure 53.1: Findings on perceived exclusion (%)

Feeling excluded is linked to level of education and paid work

Men with a low level of education are most likely to feel socially excluded. Some 12% of male respondents with compulsory education often feel excluded, compared to 7% of women. Another important factor is paid work, which is associated with lower levels of perceived social exclusion. For men, the proportion halves from 10% for those who are not in paid work to 5% for those who are.

Partner is number one confidant

From time to time, everyone needs a shoulder to cry on, someone to talk to about personal matters. In Austria, the most important confidant is the partner, followed by friends, acquaintances or colleagues, and then the mother (Fig. 53.2). Very few respondents (1%) say that they have no one to talk to about personal matters.

It can be assumed that the Covid-19 pandemic has also left its mark, particularly in terms of perceived social inclusion. However, this could not be analysed explicitly due to a lack of comparative data.

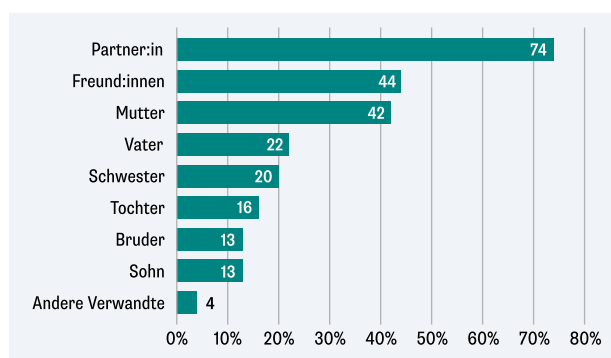


Figure 53.2: Persons with whom important personal matters are discussed (%)

54 Health snapshot and some challenges

PAOLA DI GIULIO

The majority of the Austrian population enjoys good health. Of all respondents aged 18-59, 35% of men and 40% of women say they are in exceptionally good health, i.e. they have no limitations or chronic illnesses and subjectively feel in good or very good shape. On the other hand, a modest 11% of men and 12% of women in the same age range say they are currently suffering from some kind of limitation or chronic illness and describe their health as at best fair or even poor.

Who reports poor health?

As expected, health status worsens with age: around 8% of 18-29 year olds report poor health. This share rises slightly to 9% and 10% for individuals aged 30-49, and to 15% and 18% for those aged 50-59, respectively

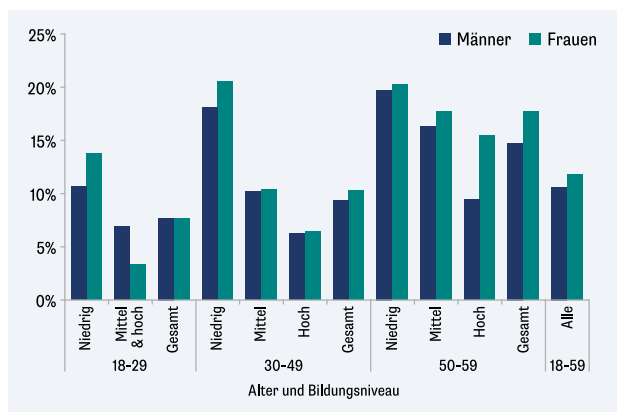


Figure 54.1: Percentage of respondents in poor health, by age, sex and level of education (%)

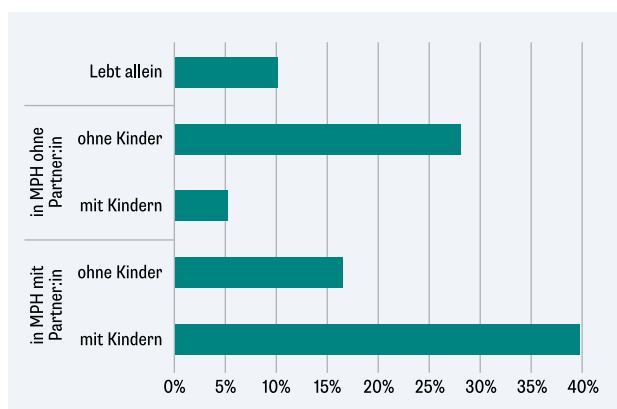


Figure 54.2: Distribution of respondents' families with a strongly limited family member by family type (%)

for men and women. There are expected regularities within the three age groups (Fig. 54.1), as women mostly report worse health than men. Respondents with low levels of education consistently report worse health than those with medium and especially high levels of education. Moreover, the largest gender differences are in the oldest age groups. The impact of education on health disparities is most evident among individuals aged 30-49, where those with a lower level of education experience a similar perception of poor health as the oldest age group.

Family health and coping with health problems

How many families have to deal with serious health problems affecting one or more family members? In our survey, 11% of respondents have a household member with a serious health condition. In just over half of the cases, this is a woman (53%), in about 10% of the cases it is a child younger than 18, while about 18% have a cohabiting family member older than 60 with severe health limitations. Although more than one family member may have severe health limitations, in the vast majority of families there is only one person with a disability, and in almost half of the cases this is the respondent themselves.

Figure 54.2 shows the rough distribution of family members with a disability across the different family types. More than half of all people with a health impairment live in couple households, two thirds of them with children and possibly with other family members. About 28% - usually adults living with their parents or other household members who can care for them - live in families without a partner or children. The 10% who live alone without any permanent support undoubtedly present the greatest challenge.

55 Children and life satisfaction

SABINE BUCHEBNER-FERSTL • ANDREAS BAIERL

Life satisfaction is a person’s subjective assessment of their overall quality of life. In the GGP, life satisfaction is measured on a scale of 0 to 10, where zero means “extremely dissatisfied” and ten means “extremely satisfied”.

On average, men and women rate their satisfaction similarly at 7.7 and 7.9, respectively. High levels of life satisfaction (scores of 8 or higher) are reported by 65% of men and 67% of women.

Older people and people with children are more satisfied

Satisfaction rises steadily with age for both sexes: among people under 30 years of age, 61% of women and 54% of men report a high level of satisfaction with their lives; for both men and women aged 31-50, the proportion rises to around two thirds, peaking at around 73% for those aged over 50.

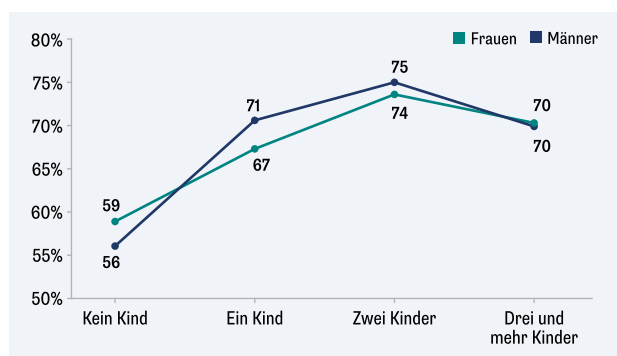


Figure 55.1: Percentage of people with high life satisfaction (>7) by number of children and sex (%)

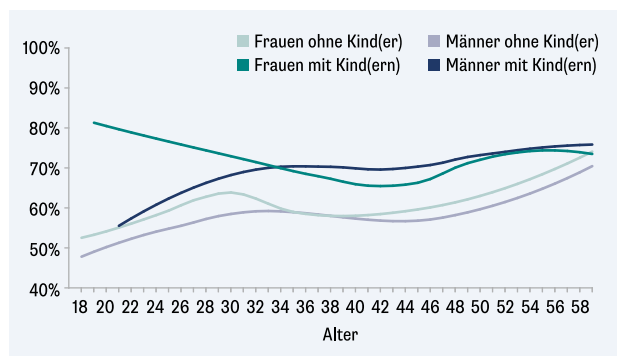


Figure 55.2: Percentage of people with high life satisfaction (>7) by age and sex (%)

Moreover, people with children – whether biological, adopted or stepchildren – are more satisfied. Among those without children, only 56% of men and 59% of women are satisfied. Among men with one child, satisfaction rises to 71%, among men with two children to 75%, and among women to 67% and 74%, respectively. Among those with three or more children, the level of satisfaction drops again slightly to around 70% (Fig. 55.1).

Satisfaction scores of parents and childless people converge with age

Looking at the age effect separately for men and women with and without children (Fig. 55.2), we see that in all age groups and for both sexes, those without children are less satisfied than those of the same age with children.

While the satisfaction of childless men and fathers increases significantly in two phases of life (up to the early 30s and from the mid-40s, respectively) and their scores become increasingly similar, presumably converging after the age of 60, the differences in women’s satisfaction are much more marked at the beginning but tend to converge more quickly.

Young women with children are the most satisfied. Their satisfaction falls below that of men with children until their mid-40s, when it starts to rise again. Satisfaction rises among childless women up to the age of 30, then falls slightly and rises again from the age of 40. By their late 50s, the shares of childless women and men and women with children satisfied with their lives are very similar.

The GGP questionnaire also asks about agreement with the statements “A woman/man needs children in order to be fulfilled” (see chapter 21). However, the almost obvious assumption that childless people who agree with this statement for their own sex would have lower life satisfaction scores than childless people who disagree could not be confirmed.

56 Psychological wellbeing: risk of depression

BERNHARD RIEDERER

Being embedded in a family network is considered an essential factor in a person's psychological wellbeing. To assess psychological wellbeing, the GGP asked about the frequency of five symptoms of depression during the week prior to the survey: feeling blue, feeling depressed, feeling life is a failure, feeling fearful, feeling sad. The indicator is based on the proportion of questions answered with "often" or "most or all of the time". In total, about 84% of respondents chose none of these options (low risk), another 6% chose them in no more than 20% of their answers, 4% in no more than 40% of their answers, 3% in more than 40% and no more than 75% of their answers, and 3% even more often (high risk). An increased risk of depression is assumed if more than 40% of the questions were answered with "often" or "most or all of the time".

Risk of depression by family type

People living alone, adults in multi-person households without children and single parents are more likely to be at increased risk (Fig. 56.1). The risk of depression is particularly low among couples with children and couples aged 45 and over without children. On the one hand, being socially embedded and having a partner and children who give meaning to life may reduce the risk of

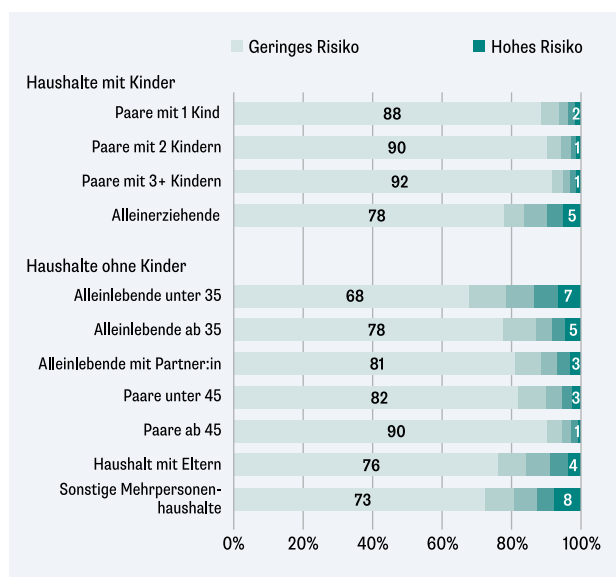


Figure 56.1: Risk of depression by household / family type (%)

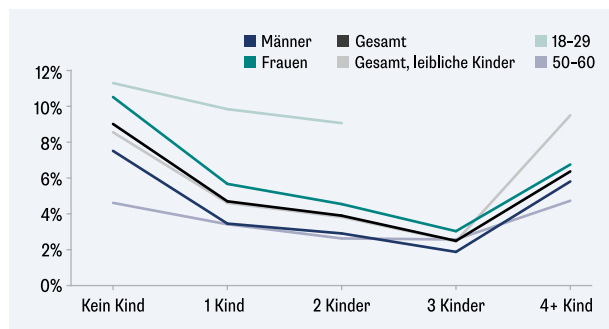


Figure 56.2: Proportion of people at increased risk of depression by number of children (%)

depression, on the other hand, an increased risk may reduce the likelihood of having a partner and children.

Parenthood and risk of depression

A higher risk of depression is found among those who became parents before the age of 25 (83% low risk, 4% high risk) and those who became pregnant unplanned (78% and 5%, respectively) or earlier than desired (80% and 2%, respectively). When analysed by the number of children, a U-shaped relationship emerges (Fig. 56.2): both childless people and parents with four or more children are more likely to have an increased risk of depression, probably because burden and sacrifice increase with the number of children. When the number of children, including stepchildren and adopted children, is taken into account, those with four or more children still have a lower proportion of people at increased risk of depression than those with no children. However, this is not the case when looking at the number of biological children. Here, the risk of depression increases significantly for those with four or more children.

Finally, there are also differences by gender: childless women have a significantly higher proportion of people at increased risk of depression than childless men. The higher the number of children, the more the curves for women and men converge. Despite the differences in the risk of depression according to age, the U-shaped relationship is also evident in all age groups (younger people rarely have more than two children).

57 Life course stress: manifestations in diverse domains

LUKAS GUTMORGETH • EVA BEAUJOUAN

Stress has become a widespread phenomenon in a pandemic society characterised by constant availability and pressure to perform. Stress influences health, wellbeing, pregnancy outcomes such as birth weight, and other life experiences. Depending on their age and the area of life, people are exposed to different types of pressures and strains and may experience various levels of stress, which we explore here.

People report high levels of stress in general and at work

Figure 57.1 shows the proportion of people reporting no stress, some stress and high stress in the last three months in seven life domains and in general. More than 40% of respondents reported no stress in most life

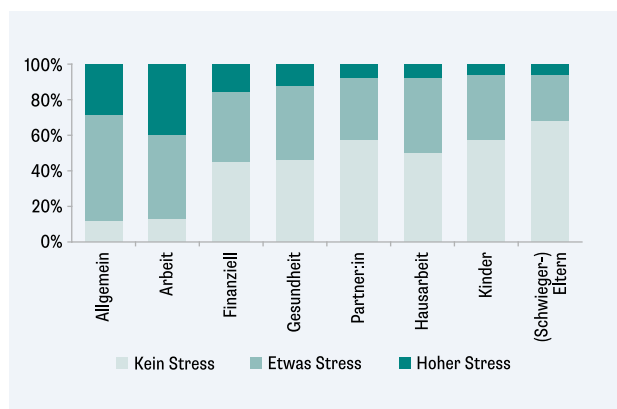


Figure 57.1: Self-reported stress in different areas of life (%)

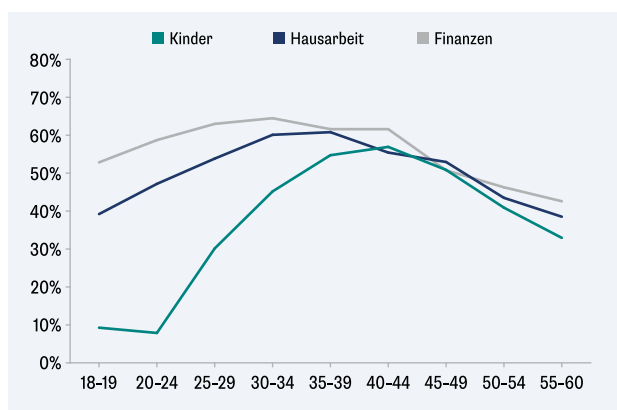


Figure 57.2: Proportion of people reporting some or high stress by age group (%)

domains. However, the proportion reporting elevated levels of stress at work (40%) is strikingly high; just over a tenth report no stress at all. There is also a high level of general stress (29%), which is an individual assessment of the overall stress experienced in the last three months. This may be due to stress at work or the cumulative effect of stress from different areas of life. Finally, there are gender differences (not shown here), with women reporting stress more frequently than men in all areas except work.

Financial, household and child-related stress is particularly prevalent in the “rush hour of life”

Looking at stress between the ages of 18 and 60, stress in general and at work is relatively constant (not shown here), while it fluctuates with age in other domains. Figure 57.2 shows the proportion of people by age group who report either some or high stress in three different areas of life. In young adulthood, people experience lower stress related to housework and the relationship with their children.

The intensity of stress rises sharply in young adulthood. In the age groups over 25 and under 50, more than 50% report having at least some stress from housework. In addition, stress with children increases sharply from the age of 25 onwards, and 57% of all people aged 40-44 report at least some stress. Financial stress is already relatively high in young adulthood and only starts to decline from the age group 40-44 onwards. This may be explained by better financial conditions at this stage of life, but it may also reflect a generational difference. In all three life domains shown in Figure 57.2, there is a significant increase in stress levels after the mid-20s, often referred to as the “rush hour of life”, which only begin to decrease from the age of 45 onwards.

58 Health-related stress, family and caring responsibilities

CHRISTOPHER ETTER • CLAUDIA HERBST • BEAT FUX

Caring for a relative often increases stress for family members. This article examines the health-related stress levels of people who have family members with health problems.

Health-impaired family members mean more stress for relatives

The data show that the health-related stress level of respondents who have family members with ill health is consistently higher (Fig. 58.1). The highest stress is reported by people whose partner has a health condition. Half of them report low and almost a fifth report high health-related stress. Of those who have at least one child with a health impairment in their household, almost half report low stress and one in seven reports high stress. If there are other household members with health problems, the reported stress levels are similar, although high stress is slightly less common.

Social support contributes to reducing perceived stress, but the burden on women remains heavier

Social networks can reduce the burden, especially if help is offered. Actual support provided by the social environment was therefore also recorded (Fig. 58.2).

As expected, people with caring responsibilities generally feel more stressed. However, stress levels

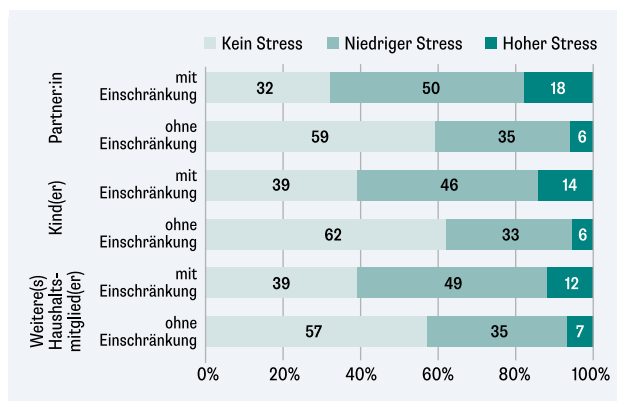


Figure 58.1: Perceived health-related stress by degree of health limitation of family members (%)

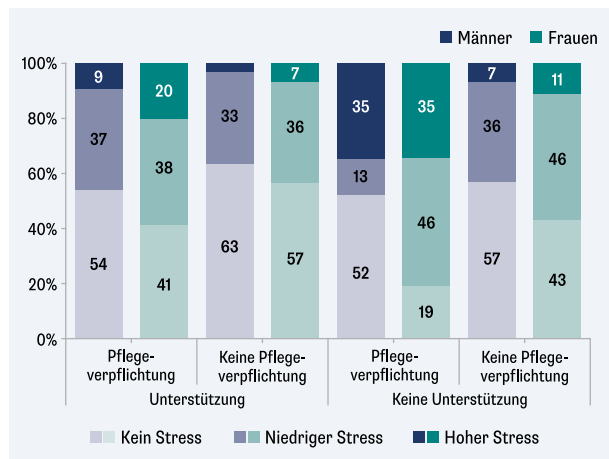


Figure 58.2: Perceived health-related stress by caring duties, sex and level of social support (%)

decrease as social support increases. Respondents who think they cannot rely on their network feel more stressed. More than a third of men and women with caring responsibilities in this situation state that they feel highly stressed; in addition, almost every second woman reports facing low stress, while among men about half state that they do not feel stressed despite having caring responsibilities. Among those who feel supported, one in ten men and one in five women with caring responsibilities report high stress. This difference suggests that, despite perceived social support, women's care burden is less alleviated, while men seem to benefit more and have lower stress levels.

Overall, caring responsibilities increase the burden on carers, especially when their partners are in poor health. The support provided by social networks eases the burden, particularly for men, while the burden remains higher for women.

59 The prevalence of health-related stress in social groups

CHRISTOPHER ETTER • BEAT FUX

Stress is a crucial factor in wellbeing. Moreover, different population groups differ in their exposure to stress. To be able to analyse stress levels, the current wave of the Austrian GGP includes questions on various sources of stress (see chapter 57). The focus of this article is on stress caused by respondents' own or a family member's health situation.

Increased health-related stress among women and people over 50

The results show that more than half of those surveyed experience moderate or high stress related to their own or their relatives' health (Fig. 59.1). Women are more affected than men, especially when it comes to high stress levels. While almost half of men state that they do not experience any health-related stress, this is only the case for 43% of women. In the first three age groupings, a uniform perception of stress can be observed, which increases for people aged 50-59.

Highest stress levels among the unemployed, pensioners and those unable to work

While differences between educational groups are negligible, the gradient is stronger when comparing respondents according to their work status (Fig. 59.2). We found that unemployed and retired people report higher levels of stress. In the case of the unemployed, this may be due to a lack of resources or chronic health problems, while pensioners are more likely to be faced

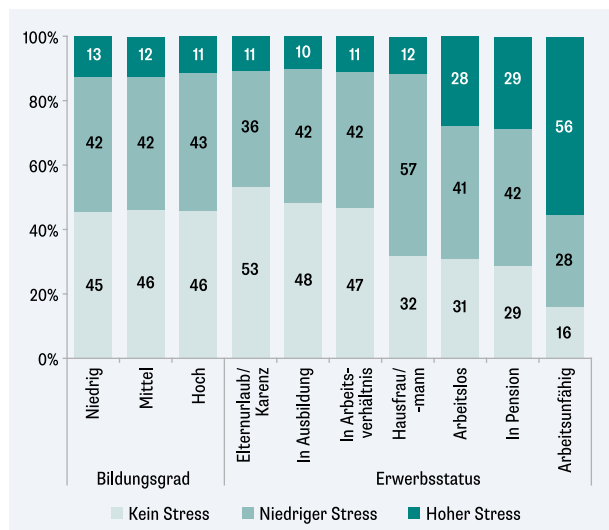


Figure 59.2: Health-related stress perception by education and work status (%)

with a deterioration in their own health and that of their partner. Homemakers also report higher levels of moderate health-related stress. This may be explained by the fact that they focus more on care work. Obviously, the highest stress levels are found among people who are unable to work because of health problems, while people in education and active work, as well as those on parental leave have the lowest stress levels.

To summarise, it can be said that health-related stress varies across social groups, with the disadvantaged and vulnerable being particularly susceptible.

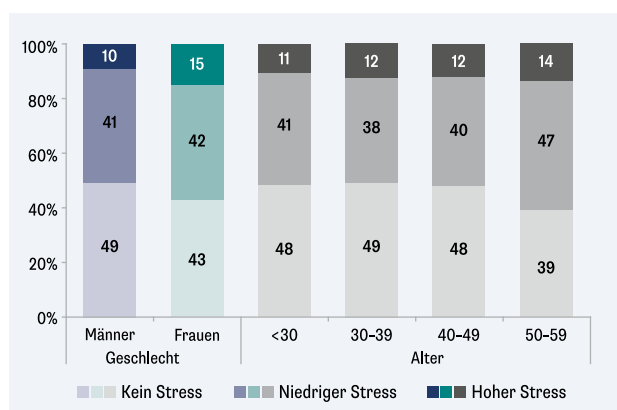


Figure 59.1: Health-related stress perception by sex and age (%)

60 Happiness and social networks by country of birth

SONJA DÖRFLER-BOLT • LORENZ WURM

Wellbeing can be measured by several factors. In this article we analyse how people born in different countries rate their happiness (measured on a 10-point scale) and subjectively assess their social networks.

Bosnians are happiest

Looking at the perceived happiness of the Austrian population by country of birth, there are clear differences, although a high level of happiness (scores of 6 or more) prevails in all groups. People from Bosnia and Herzegovina rate themselves as by far the happiest. Fifty per cent say they are very happy (score 9-10) and a further 44% say they are happy (score 6-8). In comparison, only 39% of those born in Austria feel very happy, closely followed by those born in Germany (38%). Among those born in other European countries, 36% feel very happy. People from other third countries fare much worse: only 32% of them say they are very happy (Fig. 60.1). People who were not born in Austria often have a personal history of flight and / or expulsion and have had to leave behind their social networks in their country of origin, which might have a negative impact on their happiness.

People born in Austria are best integrated into social networks

The GGP collects subjective assessments of people's own social networks, including agreement with the statements "There are many people I can trust completely" and "I miss having people around". An analysis of these assessments by country of birth also reveals clear differences. As expected, people born in Austria are most likely to have a good social network: they are least likely to miss having people around (8%) and most likely to have a good social support network (59%). People born in Germany come second in both cases, followed by people from Bosnia and Herzegovina and people from other European countries. People from other third countries come last again, with only 37% saying they can trust many people, and they are most likely to say they miss having people around (21%).

For people born in a third country, low levels of happiness correlate with comparatively weak social

networks. People born in Bosnia and Herzegovina have the highest levels of happiness, although they rate their social networks as mediocre. Obviously, other factors not examined here play an important role in the perception of happiness.

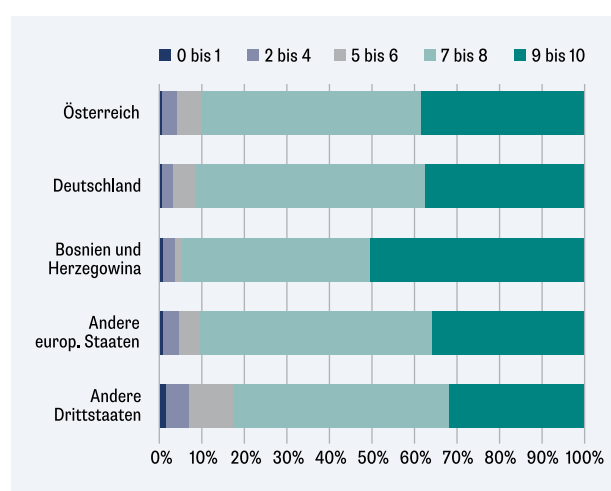


Figure 60.1: "How happy are you?" on a scale from 0 to 10 by country of birth (%)

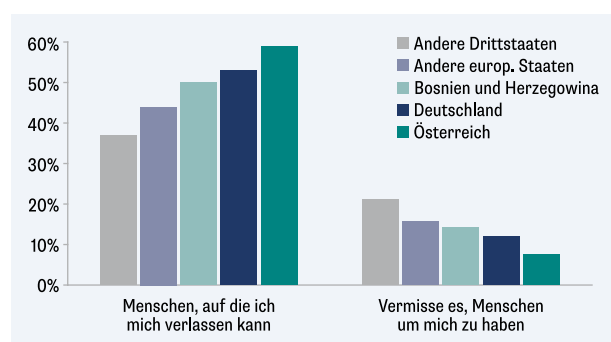


Figure 60.2: Subjective assessment of own social network by country of birth (respondents answering "yes", %)

61 Do children reduce adults' online time?

NORBERT NEUWIRTH • EVA-MARIA SCHMIDT

Nowadays, using electronic media usually means being online. The average number of hours per day that respondents say they spend online for private and professional purposes shows gender differences across all age groups and a progressive decrease with increasing age (Fig. 61.1). In the childless group, men use online media on average 0.3 hours longer than women. In the group of parents, men are online on average 0.5 hours longer each day. Overall, children have a pronounced dampening effect on the amount of time respondents spend on the internet. This is especially true for the mothers among the respondents.

Time spent online decreases with increasing age

Among the childless, online time halves across age groups and declines more linearly than among parents. The small group of fathers aged under 25 still show similarly high levels as childless men. From the mid-20s onwards, however, the diminishing influence of children is clearly visible and statistically more robust. Mothers are much less likely to be online than both childless women and fathers of the same age.

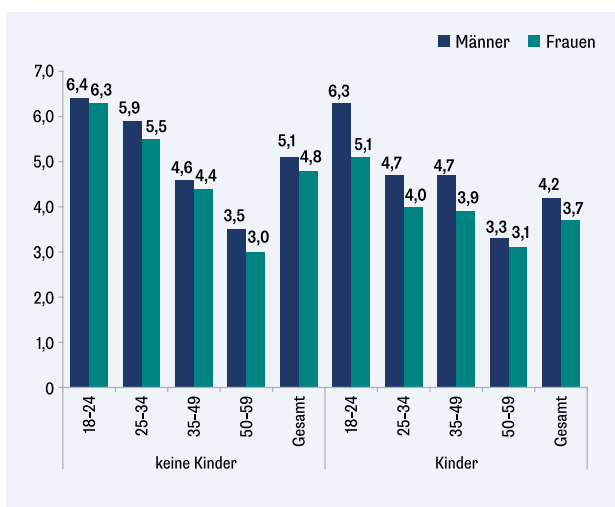


Figure 61.1: Online times of adults by age group and parenthood

Differences by education

There are further differences according to parenthood and highest educational attainment (Fig. 61.2). Overall, the extent of internet use increases with education, although among respondents with children, even highly educated women do not, on average, reach the online time of childless men. Online behaviour is most likely to be similar for highly educated women and men without children. The opposite is true for those with children: men and women with low or medium education and children show only small gender differences in their online behaviour. The hours parents spend on the internet also vary less among the individual education groups than among childless people, i.e. their online behaviour is more homogeneous.

The clear positive correlation between online time and education is also due to the fact that private and work-related times spent on the internet were surveyed together. With the proliferation of working from home arrangements and the increased availability and accessibility of staff through the use of electronic media, this distinction has become increasingly blurred, whereas the dampening effect of the presence of children is clearly evident in all age and education groups.

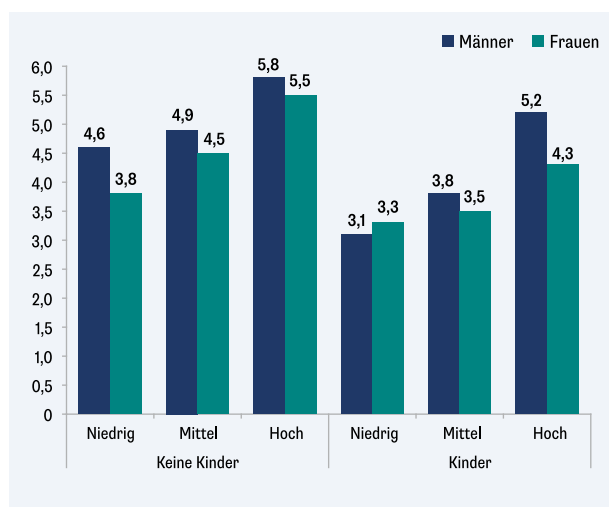


Figure 61.2: Online times of adults by education and parenthood



Crises and Impacts

62 Effects of multiple crises

SONJA DÖRFLER-BOLT • NORBERT NEUWIRTH • GEORG WERNHART

In recent years, the populations of many countries around the world have faced several major crises. The Covid-19 pandemic, the war in Ukraine and the resulting inflation have also affected many people in Austria.

Uniform indicators on a scale of 0 to 10 are an effective way of capturing the level of stress caused by these crises. The results show that the Austrian population feels most affected by the inflation wave during the period covered by the survey. However, Austrians are also well aware of the consequences of the Covid-19 pandemic and the war in Ukraine.

Due to the gender pay gap and because many of them are responsible for the daily shopping, women tend to feel price rises more. The differences according to educational level are even more pronounced (Fig. 62.1).

Women also feel somewhat more affected by the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic and the war in Ukraine. The differences by educational level are similar. On the face of it, this is astonishing, given that the Covid-19 pandemic and the war in Ukraine have hit everyone in Austria in the same way. However, the differences can partly be explained by the respondents' work history over the past 12 months.

The GGP also collected data on the impact of the current crises on respondents' working life over the past year. Respondents were asked not only whether

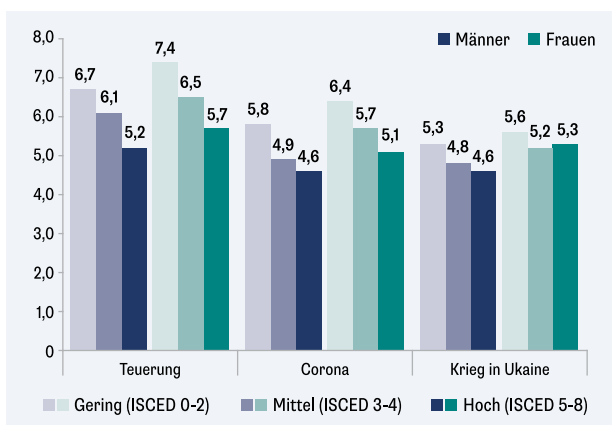


Figure 62.1: Average stress caused by various crises, by sex and educational attainment

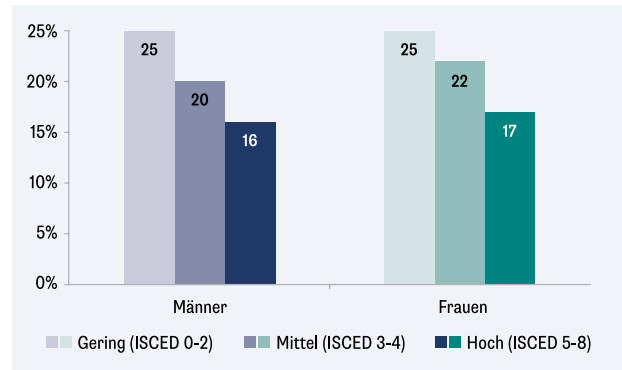


Figure 62.2: Negative impacts of the crises on paid work, by sex and educational attainment (%)

they were now working from home more often, but also about negative effects. If we look at the potential work-related consequences such as job loss, short-time working, the need to take on additional paid work, and increased workload, we see that the lower the level of educational attainment, the greater the likelihood of experiencing these consequences. A quarter of both men and women with compulsory education report negative effects on their paid work. There are only slight differences between men and women with medium and high levels of education, with women being slightly more affected than men.

The higher the level of education of people in paid work, the more likely it is that working from home will increase as a result of the crises. The extent to which this can be seen as a positive or negative effect depends on the individual circumstances.

Overall, the negative impacts of the current crises are more pronounced among women and especially among those with lower levels of education.

63 How do families cope with inflation?

NORBERT NEUWIRTH

With the outbreak of the war in Ukraine, energy prices rose sharply. Higher energy costs were followed by sustained waves of inflation in retail goods. In the housing sector indexed rents and operating costs increased several times over the year, and finally prices for services also rose. Wage increases from autumn 2022 onwards, which often only partially offset inflation, pushed prices up further. The bottom line is that families must cope with these rising prices.

Different family types perceive inflation differently

Different types of families appear to be affected quite differently by rising prices for everyday goods and services. Divided by their role in their family, single parents in particular (86%) feel strongly hit by inflation. Although the level of perception is lowest among young people living at home with their parents, a large proportion of them (73%) feels strongly affected. This may be related to the fact that these households with older main breadwinners not only have higher household incomes and savings, but also a higher rate of home ownership. Evidently parents are more aware of the recent price rises than those without children (Fig. 63.1).

Cutting down on and postponing major purchases

Households, or rather the people living in them, deal with the waves of inflation in different ways. Hence, almost half of all major purchases planned for the longer term, such as buying a car, making major alterations to their home or buying expensive consumer electronics, are foregone, postponed or replaced by a cheaper alternative. Nevertheless, 45% of these major purchases were made as planned and some (8%) were even brought forward. This may well be related to expected supply bottlenecks due to the crisis.

When it comes to major purchases by family type, the picture is similar to that for perceived inflation on everyday items. Again, single parents are the most likely to feel affected. Twenty-eight per cent have

foregone their long-term planned purchases and a further 29% have postponed them. Only 23% of single parents were able to make the most important, long-term, major purchase as planned, while more than twice as many people living in a partnership or still at home with their parents were able to do so (Fig. 63.2).

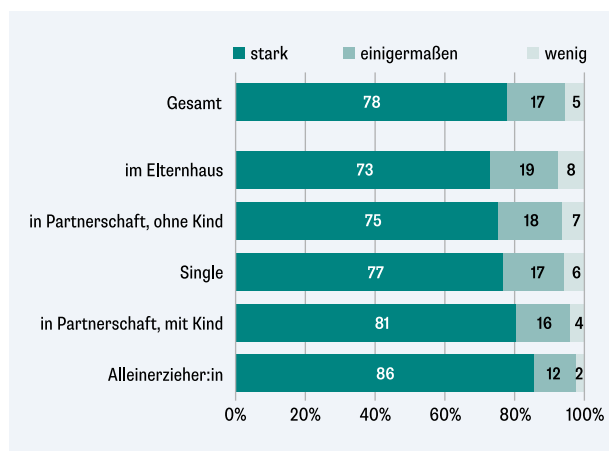


Figure 63.1: Perceived level of inflation for everyday goods, by family type (%)

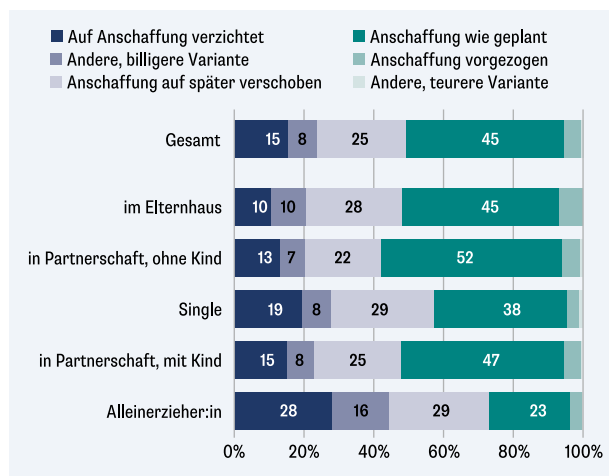


Figure 63.2: How families manage planned major purchases (%)

64 The impact of crises: what do families expect?

NORBERT NEUWIRTH

How do the multiple crises of recent years, i.e. the Covid-19 pandemic with all its developments and related measures, the war in Ukraine and its at least indirect inflationary pressures and real income losses, affect expectations for the near future? Do the expectations of parents differ from those of childless people? The special module of the Austrian GGP specifically asked about expected future developments.

Expected developments over the next three years: parents less optimistic

The first general question is whether parents are more optimistic than other people about the expected development of their household's disposable income. This is clearly not the case: while parents show a fairly symmetrical distribution of income expectations, childless people seem to be more optimistic (Fig. 64.1).

A clearer picture emerges when respondents are asked specifically about the areas in which they expect things to get worse or better. While the proportion of those with pessimistic expectations is about the same for those with and without children, the proportion of those expecting an improvement in the next three years is twice as high for those without children: 24% of the childless expect their chances of getting further education ("educational opportunities") to improve in the near future, compared with 12% of parents; expectations about career opportunities differ by 31%

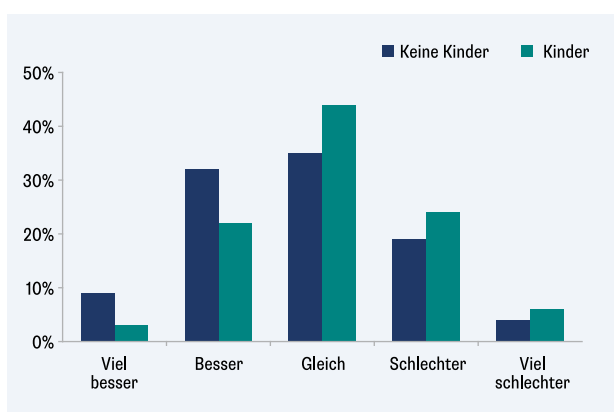


Figure 64.1: Expected development of household income over the next three years (%)

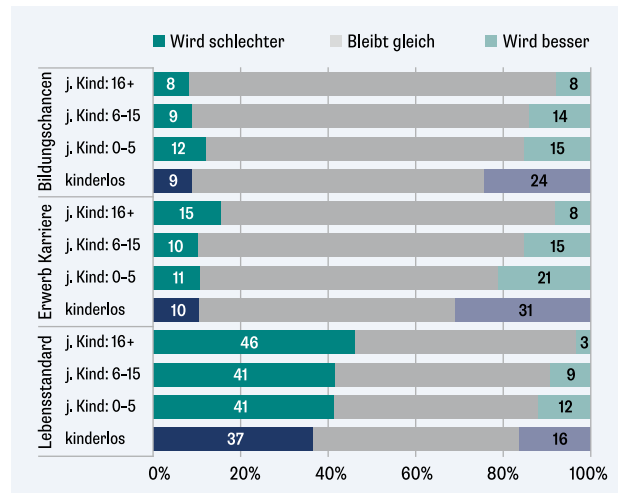


Figure 64.2: Expected changes due to crises (%)

to 14%. Among childless respondents, 16% also expect their own standard of living to improve, compared with 8% of parents. However, there is also a clear excess of negative expectations among parents. Here, parents' less optimistic expectations about their own career and income development are likely to be compounded by expectations of not only inflationary but also age-related increases in expenditure on children.

When the group of parents is further broken down by family phase, that is, by the age group of the youngest child, it becomes clear that career prospects and expectations regarding the development of living standards in particular decrease with the family phase. Parents of older children (16+) are mostly of an advanced age and have already completed most of their educational and professional careers, but are confronted with significantly higher costs, especially in this family phase. A deterioration in their career, feared by 15% of parents of older children, has an even more negative impact on their expected standard of living (Fig. 64.2).

65 Making ends meet

NORBERT NEUWIRTH

The income and financial situation of families in Austria varies widely. Some people earn well but have high expenses, others earn less but often have lower monthly expenses because of assets such as a paid-off home. Empirical surveys on income therefore often complement questions on income components by asking how respondents get by on their income. This anchor question was also included in the GGP.

It should be noted that although there are considerable differences in gross incomes in Austria, the disposable incomes are much more similar due to the progressive nature of taxes and transfer payments. The question of how people make do with their disposable income therefore leads to the expectation that only a small proportion of the population can cover their daily expenses with difficulty or not at all. However, in these times of crisis, a total of 17% of respondents say they find it difficult or impossible to make ends meet, while 37% say they manage so well with their income that they usually have money left over.

The situation for parents improves as they get older

Analysing the respective shares by number of own children and age cohorts of respondents, we find that the situation of childless people hardly changes with age. The share of those who find it difficult to make ends meet is around the Austrian average, while the share of those who are significantly better off is just above it. The situation is quite different for people with

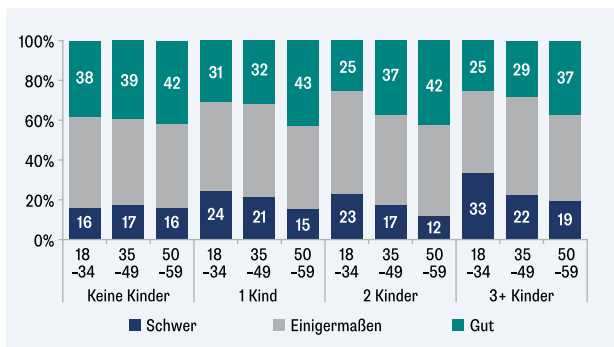


Figure 65.1: Making ends meet by number of children and age groups (%)

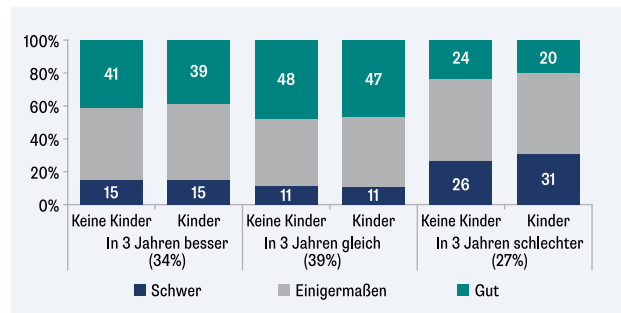


Figure 65.2: Making ends meet now and income expectations for the next three years (%)

children of their own: the share of those who find it difficult to get by on their income is significantly higher among younger people but decreases with increasing age. This trend almost repeats itself in reverse when looking at the proportion of parents who manage to get by easily: young age cohorts are still well below the Austrian average of 37%, but with increasing age this proportion rises to above the average (Fig. 65.1).

Current situation leads to pessimistic outlook

Although the data show that at least the situation of parents tends to improve with age, and despite the simple assumption that people who are struggling now are unlikely to be worse off in the future, we find that pessimistic expectations are more likely to be held by those who are already having a hard time getting by: the quarter of respondents who report a negative outlook for the future includes a significantly higher proportion of people who are currently struggling to make ends meet (Fig. 65.2).

66 Is the change in fertility intentions due to the global crises?

ISABELLA BUBER-ENNSER • CLAUDIA HERBST

The intention to have (another) child changes over the life course. In addition to factors known from previous research (partnership, career, etc.), global crises such as the Covid-19 pandemic, the recent inflation and the current war in Ukraine can influence whether, when and how many children are planned in the short or longer term.

Global crises influence fertility intentions of one in three people

Almost a third of the respondents have either changed their fertility intentions as a result of the crises mentioned above (11%) or are “unsure” (19%). Women report this more often than men. The current crises also have a strong impact on the fertility intentions of people under 30. In addition, people with low and medium levels of education are more likely to have second thoughts about having children than those who are more highly educated, while four out of ten have not changed their family plans (Fig. 66.1).

A differentiation according to the number of children shows that especially parents with two or more children have changed their family plans because of the global crises (18% compared to 12% among parents with one child and 10% among childless). In addition, childless people were often unsure how the crises would affect their family planning. When asked to what extent their fertility plans had changed, the majority

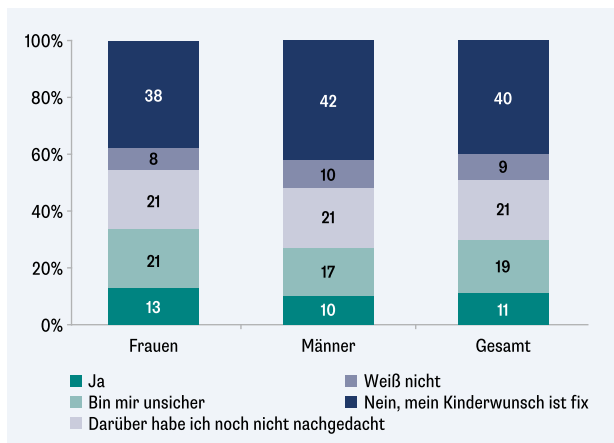


Figure 66.1: Change in fertility intentions due to global crises (Covid-19 pandemic, inflation and war in Ukraine, %)

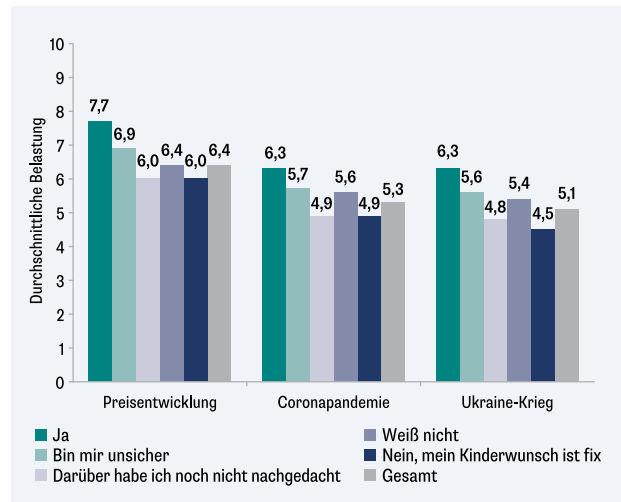


Figure 66.2: Stress due to global crises and changes in fertility intentions

said they wanted fewer or no additional children. Only 5% said they now wanted more children than before the crises.

Clear link between changes in family plans and perceived stress due to global crises

People who changed their fertility intentions feel more burdened by inflation, the Covid-19 pandemic and the war in Ukraine than respondents who were unsure about changing their family plans, respondents whose fertility intentions had remained the same or respondents who had not yet thought about changing their family plans because of these crises (Fig. 66.2). With an average score of 7.7 - measured on a scale of 0 (no stress) to 10 (high stress) - in particular the burden of inflation is not only strikingly high but is probably also the main cause of changes in fertility intentions.

Overall, the perception of crises can lead to changes or uncertainty in the intention to have (additional) children, especially in favour of having fewer children. In particular people who feel stressed by the current global crises reconsider their future life plans and decisions such as family plans.



Addendum

List of sources

All numbers are unweighted, calculations are based on weighted values.

- 1 **The International Generations and Gender Programme**
- 2 **GGP.at – the Generations and Gender Programme in Austria**
Fig. 2.1: Total population in Austrian and age group covered in GGP-II, n=8,247.
- 3 **Cohort fertility and parity distribution**
Figs. 3.1 and 3.2: Zeman, K., T. Sobotka, R. Gisser, and M. Winkler-Dworak. 2023. Birth Barometer: Monitoring Fertility in Austria. Vienna Institute of Demography. Available at: <https://www.birthbarometer.at> (updated by the authors).
- 4 **Where do couples meet?**
Fig. 4.1: n=6,254 men and women with at least one coresidential relationship.
Fig. 4.2: Men and women in a coresidential relationship (n=5,696 heterosexual couples and n=107 same-sex couples).
- 5 **Couples in Austria: Birds of a feather flock together**
Fig. 5.1: n=3,735 (educational level); n=1,905 (occupational group).
Fig. 5.2: n=5,428 (educational level of female partner); n=5,414 (educational level of male partner).
- 6 **Partnership status and marriage plans**
Fig. 6.1: n=8,247; smoothed proportions per individual year.
Fig. 6.2: n=2,357; smoothed proportions per individual year.
- 7 **Living Apart Together – couple relationships across household boundaries**
Fig. 7.1: n=6,040 of which 899 LAT and 5,141 cohabiting.
Fig. 7.2: n=791.
- 8 **Same-sex couples**
Fig. 8.1: n=6,102 (of which 66 male+male and 47 female+female), 95% confidence intervals.
Fig. 8.2: n=4,872 (of which 42 male+male and 30 female+female).
- 9 **Partnership satisfaction and conflicts**
Fig. 9.1: n=4,602.
Fig. 9.2: n=5,039 (household chores); n=5,025 (financial issues); n=4,728 (on having children); n=4,688 (child raising issues).
- 10 **The beginning of the end? Couples thinking about breaking up**
Fig. 10.1: n=5,577.
Fig. 10.2a: n=4,306 cohabiting with partner.
Fig. 10.2b: n=5,677.
- 11 **Partnerships and migration background**
Fig. 11.1: n=6,098 persons with a partner (GGP-II); n=3,892 persons with a partner (2008 / 09).
Fig. 11.2: 6,080 persons with a partner.
- 12 **Partnership trajectories**
Fig. 12.1: n=7,945.
Fig. 12.2: n=5,215.
- 13 **Education and women's age first birth**
Fig. 13.1: n=1,391.
- 14 **Biological children, stepchildren, adopted and foster children**
Figs. 14.1 and 14.2: n=8,247 (2022 / 23); n=4,902 (2008 / 09).
- 15 **Who do minors live with?**
Fig. 15.1: n=4,296 persons with at least one biological child under the age of 18.
Fig. 15.2: n=808 persons with at least one minor from a previous partnership.
- 16 **Father-child relationship after parental separation**
Fig. 16.1: n=257 dyads in 185 fathers.
Fig. 16.2: n=242 dyads in 174 fathers.
- 17 **Upward intergenerational mobility in education in Austria**
Fig. 17.1: n=5,184 persons aged 30-59. The educational level of the parent generation refers to the highest known educational level of both parents.
Fig. 17.2: n=5,184 persons aged 30-59 (3,090 women, 2,087 men, 7 gender-diverse). The educational level of the parent generation refers to the highest known educational level of both parents.
- 18 **Young adults living with their parents**
Fig. 18.1: n=2,005 persons aged 25-34, 179 of whom live in the same household with at least one parent (basement dwellers) and 1,826 who live without parents.
Fig. 18.2: n=179 persons aged 25-34, who live in the same household with at least one parent (basement dwellers).
- 19 **Families and household types**
Fig. 19.1: n=7,484.
Fig. 19.2: n=2,070.
- 20 **Aspects of intergenerational relations**
Fig. 20.1: n=6,116.
Fig. 20.2: Between 28 and 646 persons.
- 21 **Are children important for a fulfilled life?**
Fig. 21.1: n=8,223.
Fig. 21.2: n=8,174.
- 22 **Women's fertility intentions and number of children by formal education**
Fig. 22.1: n=4,868.
Fig. 22.2: n=3,389.
- 23 **One, two or three? On the ideal number of children**
Fig. 23.1: n=5,866 (childbearing plans); n=6,020 (ideal number of children) persons aged 18-49.
- 24 **Two-child ideal and migration background**
Figs. 24.1 and 24.2: n=5,840 persons aged 18-49.
- 25 **Religion and number of children**
Fig. 25.1: n=3,398.
Fig. 25.2: n=850 (desired); n=625 (actual). Desired number of children for persons aged 20-29, actual number of children for persons aged 40-44.
- 26 **Uncertainties in fertility intentions**
Fig. 26.1: n=5,690 persons aged 18-49, not expecting a child at the time of the interview.
Fig. 26.2: n=3,030 persons participating in 2008 / 09 and 2012 / 13 in GGS-I, aged 18-45 years at the first interview.
- 27 **Childlessness: voluntary or involuntary?**
Fig. 27.1: n=2,797 women and 2,004 men.
Fig. 27.2: n=911 women and 643 men (2008 / 09); n=680 women and 515 men (2012 / 13); n=1,009 women and 738 men (2022 / 23).
- 28 **Only children and childbearing intentions**
Fig. 28.1: For the ideal number of children: n=6,141 (aged 18-49), including 577 only children. For the realized number of children: n=3,114 (aged 45-59), including 259 only children.
Fig. 28.2: n=6,141 (aged 18-49), including 577 only children.
- 29 **(Un)planned parenthood**
Fig. 29.1: n=2,032 (expectant) parents.
- 30 **Fertility intentions by age: childless vs. parents**
Fig. 30.1: n=6,018.
The authors received funding from the European Research Council (ERC) under the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme (BIC.LATE, grant Agreement No 101001410).

- 31 Experiencing infertility**
Fig. 31.1: n=7,408.
Fig. 31.2: n=3,621.
The authors received funding from the ERC under the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme (BIC.LATE, grant Agreement No 101001410).
- 32 Assisted reproduction: prevalence among men and women**
Fig. 32.1: n=6,085.
Fig. 32.2: n=1,920.
The authors received funding from the ERC under the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme (BIC.LATE, grant Agreement No 101001410).
- 33 Childbearing intentions and number of children: 2009 and 2023 – a comparison**
Fig. 33.1: n=4,392 (2009); n=4,284 (2023) persons aged 18-45.
Fig. 33.2: n=2,804 (2009); n=2,986 (2023) women aged 18-45.
- 34 Paid work in a couple context**
Fig. 34.1: n=4,295.
Fig. 34.2: n=2,149.
- 35 Employment status of working-age couples**
Fig. 35.1: n=4,932.
Childless, age 18-34: both partners are within this age range; Childless, age 35 and older: least one partner is 35 years or older.
- 36 The work-life balancing act**
Figs. 36.1 and 36.2: n=5,262.
- 37 Working during off-peak hours and at weekends**
Fig. 37.1: Off-peak hours: n=4,707; weekends: n=4,693.
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- 38 Working from home and stress levels**
Fig. 38.1: n=2,782.
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- 39 Who decides on the amount of paid work**
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- 40 How many hours a week should fathers and mothers work?**
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- 41 Do children suffer if their mothers work?**
Fig. 41.1: "A pre-school child is likely to suffer if his / her mother works", n=6,607.
Fig. 41.2: "A pre-school child is likely to suffer if his / her mother works", n=6,708.
- 42 Attitudes towards gender equality in education and (unpaid) work**
Fig. 42.1: n=6,950. Gender role attitudes measured by the questions: "For whom is a university education more important, men or women?", "For whom is having a job more important, men or women?" and "For whom is looking after the home and children more important, men or women?".
Fig. 42.2: n=6,812. Egalitarian gender role attitudes towards the importance of having a university education, having a job and caring for the home and children, measured by the response "both sexes equally".
- 43 Division of household tasks**
Fig. 43.1: n=4,800 persons in a cohabiting heterosexual partnership.
Fig. 43.2: n=4,725 persons in a cohabiting heterosexual partnership.
- 44 Who is responsible for childcare tasks in couple households?**
Fig. 44.1: n=1,869 persons with children under 15 in the household. Helping with homework and putting children to bed: n=1,139. Persons with children under 15 in the household and at least one older than 6.
Fig. 44.2: n=893 mothers working full-time in couple households with children under 15. Helping with homework and putting children to bed: n=486. Mothers working full-time in couple households with children under 15 and at least one older than 6.
- 45 Satisfaction with division of housework and childcare**
Fig. 45.1: n=4,687 persons in heterosexual partnership.
Fig. 45.2: n=1,815 persons in heterosexual partnership with children in the household.
- 46 Are women or men better at caring for small children?**
Figs. 46.1 and 46.2: n=7,190.
- 47 Organisation of childcare and the importance of informal support services**
Fig. 47.1: n=1,213.
Fig. 47.2: n=1,209.
- 48 Division of unpaid work: a comparison over time**
Fig. 48.1: n=3,064 (2008 / 09); n=4,812 (2022 / 23) heterosexual couples.
Fig. 48.2: n=1,890 (2008 / 09); n=1,795 (2022 / 23) heterosexual couples.
- 49 The financial situation of families**
Table 49.1: The number of cases varies depending on the indicator (annual net earnings: n=4,137; real estate assets: n=7,746; all other indicators: n=8,247).
In the case of real estate assets, the answers "not applicable", "I don't know" and "no answer" were initially considered to be less than € 100,000 and / or € 250,000. In the second calculation, only the "not applicable" category was considered to be less than € 100,000 and / or € 250,000, while the other two response categories were excluded from the analysis.
- 50 Intra-family transfers – about receiving and giving**
Fig. 50.1: n=1,629 persons who received € 250 or more in the last 12 months; n=1,665 persons who gave € 250 or more in the last 12 months.
- 51 Housing status and financial situation**
Figs. 51.1 and 51.2: n=7,026.
- 52 Intentions to move and emigrate**
Fig. 52.1: n=8,247.
- 53 A sense of social inclusion**
Fig. 53.1: n=7,094; n=7,179.
Fig. 53.2: n=7,363.
- 54 Health snapshot and some challenges**
Fig. 54.1: n=6,850. "Poor health" includes any limitation, chronic illness (cardiovascular, respiratory, metabolic, gastrointestinal, neurological, musculoskeletal, ocular, cancer and mental health diseases), and fair, poor or very poor self-rated health.
Fig. 54.2: n=601 Respondents with information on family composition and household members' health.
- 55 Children and life satisfaction**
Fig. 55.1 and 55.2: n=7,341.
- 56 Psychological wellbeing: risk of depression**
Fig. 56.1: n=7,405.
Fig. 56.2: n=7,405.
Most analyses refer to the total number of children, which includes adopted children and stepchildren in addition to biological children.
- 57 Life course stress: manifestations in diverse domains**
Figs. 57.1 and 57.2: Between n=4,966 and n=7,388. This research was funded by the Austrian Science Fund (FWF), grant number P31171-G29.
- 58 Health-related stress, family and caring responsibilities**
Fig. 58.1: n=2,526 (children); n=4,052 (partner); n=5,259 (other household members); in the case of children, only those persons whose children live in the respective household were taken into account.
Fig. 58.2: n=3,037 (support); n=509 (no support) persons without health limitations.
- 59 The prevalence of health-related stress in social groups**
Fig. 59.1: n=7,182 (sex); n=7,142 (age).
Fig. 59.2: n=7,071 (education level); n=6,975 (work status).
- 60 Happiness and social networks by country of birth**
Fig. 60.1: n=7,226.
Fig. 60.2a: n=7,184.
Fig. 60.2b: n=7,076.
- 61 Do children reduce adults' online time?**
Figs. 61.1 and 61.2: n=7,963.
- 62 Effects of multiple crisis**
Fig. 62.1: n=7,031.
Fig. 62.2: n=6,653.
- 63 How do families cope with inflation?**
Fig. 63.1: n=6,795.
Fig. 63.2: n=7,181.
- 64 The impact of crises: what do families expect?**
Fig. 64.1: n=6,386.
Fig. 64.2: n=5,976.
- 65 Making ends meet**
Fig. 65.1: n=7,198.
Fig. 65.2: n=6,197.
- 66 Is the change in fertility intentions due to the global crisis?**
Fig.s. 66.1 and 66.2: 3,122 persons aged 18-49.

List of authors

1. **Andreas Baierl** (OIF) is a statistician and conducts research on child care and the interface of work and family • andreas.baierl@oif.ac.at
2. **Eva Beaujouan** (DoD) conducts research on fertility and family, with a focus on the reproductive consequences of delayed parenthood • eva.beaujouan@univie.ac.at
3. **Caroline Berghammer** (IfS, VID) conducts research on families and (un)paid work, fertility and partnerships • caroline.berghammer@univie.ac.at
4. **Isabella Buber-Ennser** (VID) conducts research on fertility intentions and their realization as well as forced migration • isabella.buber-ennser@oeaw.ac.at
5. **Sabine Buchebner-Ferstl** (OIF) conducts research on childhood, parenting and parent education • sabine.buchebner-ferstl@oif.ac.at
6. **Brian Buh** (VID) conducts research on fertility's interaction with employment, housing, and residential mobility • brian.buh@oeaw.ac.at
7. **Marie-Caroline Compans** (DoD) conducts research on late fertility and assisted reproduction • marie-caroline.compans@univie.ac.at
8. **Paola Di Giulio** (VID) conducts research on longevity, health, and families • paola.digiulio@oeaw.ac.at
9. **Sonja Dörfler-Bolt** (OIF) conducts research on family policies, gender roles, divorce and family and migration • sonja.doerfler-bolt@oif.ac.at
10. **Christopher David Etter** (PLUS) conducts research on stress, mental health and social policy from a sociological perspective • christopher.etter@plus.ac.at
11. **Beat Fux** (PLUS) conducts research on family, demography and welfare policies as well as social structure in a European comparative perspective • beat.fux@plus.ac.at
12. **Christine Geserick** (OIF) conducts research on family relations, the social history of family, and care work • christine.geserick@oif.ac.at
13. **Richard Gisser** (VID) conducts research on demography of Austria • richard.gisser@oeaw.ac.at
14. **Gwen Göttl** (IfS) conducts research on unpaid work and well-being in families • gwen.goeltl@univie.ac.at
15. **Lukas Gutmorgeth** (DoD) conducts research on fertility delay • lukas.gutmorgeth@univie.ac.at
16. **Claudia Herbst** (PLUS) conducts research on changes in fertility intentions and family dynamics in times of societal crises • claudia.herbst1@stud.plus.ac.at
17. **Markus Kaindl** (OIF) conducts research on childcare, work-life balance, and intergenerational relations • markus.kaindl@oif.ac.at
18. **Ester Lazzari** (DoD) conducts research on late fertility and assisted reproduction • ester.lazzari@univie.ac.at
19. **Norbert Neuwirth** (OIF) has headed the GGP in Austria since 2007 and conducts research on family policy, fertility, living standards, and family development • norbert.neuwirth@oif.ac.at
20. **Bernhard Riederer** (VID) conducts research on fertility, family well-being and consequences of parenthood • bernhard.riederer@oeaw.ac.at
21. **Eva-Maria Schmidt** (OIF, IfS) conducts research on social norms and parenthood, work, and digital media from children's perspectives • eva-maria.schmidt@oif.ac.at
22. **Ingrid Setz** (VID) conducts research at the intersection of fertility, labour market, and economics • ingrid.setz@oeaw.ac.at
23. **Shalini Singh** (DoD) conducts research on fertility intentions, reproductive behaviour and late fertility • shalini.singh@univie.ac.at
24. **Tomáš Sobotka** (VID) studies low fertility and family change, childlessness and assisted reproduction as well as migration • tomas.sobotka@oeaw.ac.at
25. **Georg Wernhart** (OIF) conducts research on the economic situation of families and intergenerational transfers • georg.wernhart@oif.ac.at
26. **Lorenz Wurm** (OIF) conducts research on reconciliation of family and employment • lorenz.wurm@oif.ac.at
27. **Kryštof Zeman** (VID) conducts research on fertility in low-fertility countries with focus on data, measurement, and methodology • krystof.zeman@oeaw.ac.at

DoD	Department of Demography, University of Vienna https://demografie.univie.ac.at
IfS	Department of Sociology, University of Vienna https://www.so.z.univie.ac.at
ÖIF	Austrian Institute for Family Studies University of Vienna https://www.oif.ac.at
PLUS	Paris Lodron Universität Salzburg https://www.plus.ac.at
VID	Vienna Institute of Demography/ Austrian Academy of Sciences https://oeaw.ac.at/vid



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