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# Families in Austria 2009–2013

Descriptive findings on partnerships, fertility intentions,  
childbearing and childrearing

# Preface

Demographic changes have sometimes been compared to tectonic shifts: they tend to take place so slowly that they are hardly perceivable from one year to another and yet they transform the landscape so radically in the long run. The same is true for changing family structures and gender roles whose gradual modifications are closely tied in with demographic change. There is hardly anything that transforms our society as effectively as demographic change, but among policy makers and the general public this issue is still being much less debated than short-term economic decisions.

It is all the more important to measure and analyse this fundamental change, using the appropriate tools, in order to recognise developments in good time and to be able to react to them in a suitable manner. The international “Generations and Gender Survey (GGS)”, a statistical tool specifically designed for this purpose, empirically demonstrates these changes in international comparison. Its particular strength is its truly longitudinal character, as the same persons are being interviewed repeatedly every few years. This is the only way to obtain the necessary data for adequate analysis of changing attitudes and the actual realisation of previously announced behaviour.

This publication summarises first results based on the second wave of the Austrian GGS. It includes a selection of articles originally published in German, available at [www.ggp-austria.at](http://www.ggp-austria.at).

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## Editorial

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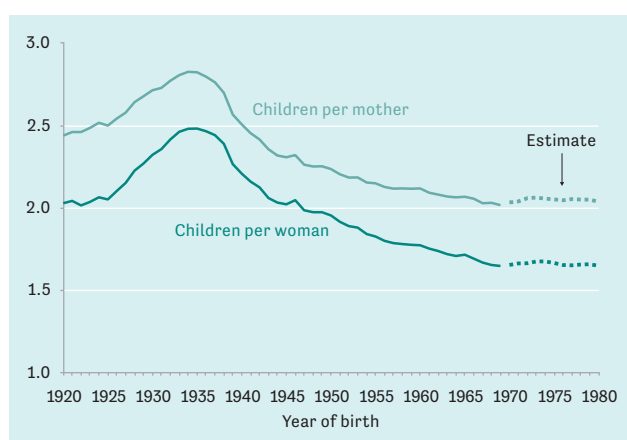
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# 1. Cohort fertility and parity distribution

KRYŠTOF ZEMAN AND TOMÁŠ SOBOTKA

Low fertility is not a new phenomenon in Austria. Already women born in the first decades of the 20th century had small families, with two children on average recorded among those born in 1920 (Fig. 1.1). Women born in the 1930s showed higher fertility rates as they formed families during the post-war baby boom era. Fertility peaked at

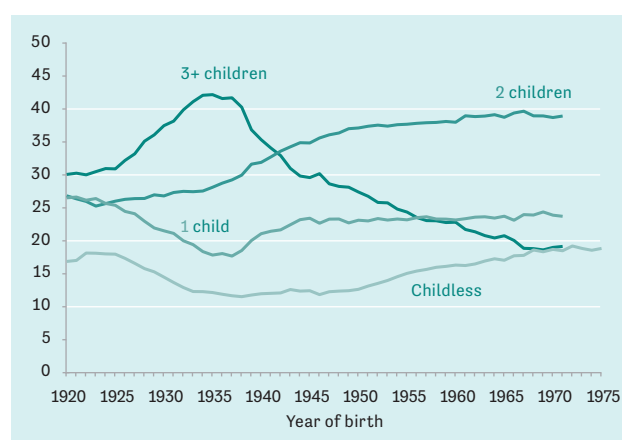
time. The rise of two-child families proceeded without interruption among the analysed cohorts (1920–80) and became dominant among women born since the mid-1940s. The baby boom was driven by a sharp increase in the share of families with three or more children, surpassing 40 per cent, and a corresponding fall in



**Figure 1.1: Mean number of children by women's year of birth, 1920–1980 (in %)**

almost 2.5 children per woman in the 1935 cohort. Each subsequent cohort showed a smaller family size, falling below two children among women born in 1947 and below 1.8 among women born in 1957. Women born in 1970 have 1.65 children on average and the same family size is projected for women born through the 1970s, while the number of children per mother (excluding childless women) is likely to stabilise just above 2.0.

A detailed look at the parity distribution of women in Fig. 1.2 shows the overall changes in cohort fertility over



**Figure 1.2: Women by year of birth and parity (number of children born alive), 1920–1975 (in %)**

the share of women without children and with one child only. Among women born in the late 1930s and after, larger families became ever less common. Correspondingly, the share with one child and the share childless increased closer to the earlier levels. Almost four out of ten women born in 1970 have two children, one-quarter have only one child, while fewer than one out of five have no child, or three or more children. This pattern is expected to remain stable for the women born in the 1970s and early 1980s.

## 2. Ideal family size: How far is it from the actual number of children?

MARIA RITA TESTA

How many children do men and women in Austria consider an ideal number? Do Austrians in fact have more or fewer children than their personal ideal number of children? The following question was asked in the 2009 and 2013 surveys: “For you personally, what would be the ideal number of children that you would like, or would have liked, to have?” This study only looks at the answers of those respondents who had taken part in both interviews.

### The personal ideal number of children is influenced by the two-child norm

Both in 2009 and 2013, more than half of the respondents consider two children as their ideal. For more than one in four, the ideal family has three or more children. Only few people, i.e. 3 and 10 per cent, respectively, see a childless family or the one-child family as their personal ideal. Among the cohorts born between 1965 and 1970, who had presumably completed their family size

### The ideal number of children is clearly higher than the number of children actually born

Although the ideal family size is currently determined by a distinct two-child norm, the number of people remaining childless is on the rise in Austria. The share of women with one child has stayed more or less unchanged, and fewer and fewer women are having a third child. The discrepancy between ideal and reality shows a number of clear age-specific differences (Fig. 2.2). The average ideal number of children remains constant in all age groups between 20 and 45 years and also for the same people over the four years between surveys; by contrast, the average number of children actually born increases – unsurprisingly – both across ages and for the same people with the passing of the four years. The gap between ideal and actual fertility, however, persists even in the last age group (40–44 or 44–48) where is currently at around 0.6 children (Fig. 2.2).

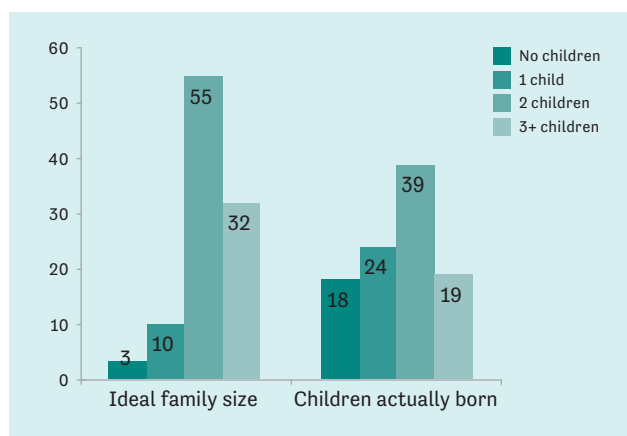


Figure 2.1: Ideal number of children and children actually born (in %)

at the time of the surveys, more than half considered a two-child family as ideal (55 per cent) but only one in three actually had a family with two children (39 per cent) (Fig. 2.1).

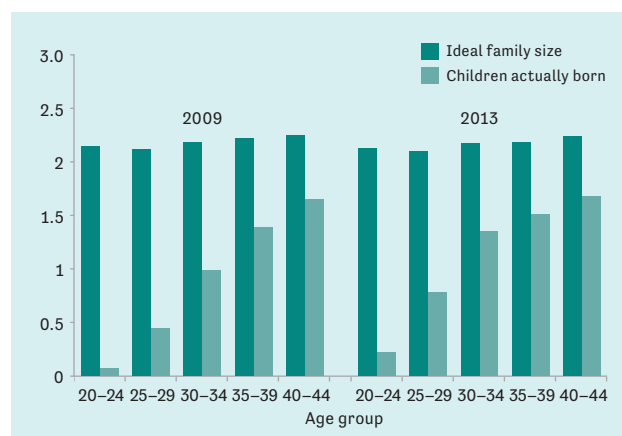


Figure 2.2: Mean ideal number of children and mean number of children actually born

### 3. What is the best age to have a child? – And when is it too late?

ISABELLA BUBER-ENNSER

What is the best age for a woman to have her first child? Two in ten do not want to commit themselves to naming a definite age or age range, saying that there is no ‘best age’ for a woman to become a mother. Women commit themselves less often than men, and more highly educated people do so more often than people with less education (compulsory schooling only: 19%; university graduates: 27%).

#### 27 is the best age for a woman to have her first child

In 2012, mothers in Austria had an average age of 28.7 years when their first baby was born (Statistics Austria). For the people interviewed, the best age to have one’s first child is 27 years, and thus below the current actual age at first birth in Austria. There was not much difference in this answer between men and women, nor between younger and older respondents. However, there are variations by education level: the higher the

#### After age 43, a woman is too old to become a mother even if she could

From what age is a woman too old to become a mother even if this were biologically possible? The average age of 43 given by respondents is independent of their gender and own age. Again, there are differences only with regard to education level: women with only compulsory schooling see the socially acceptable maternity limit to come sooner (at 42) than women with a university degree (at 44). In this issue as well, some respondents did not want to commit themselves, saying that a woman is never too old to become a mother. This opinion was voiced by nine per cent of respondents. The most frequent maximum maternity ages given were 40 years (36%), 45 years (26%) and 50 years (13%).

#### Women foresee difficulties getting pregnant sooner than men

The final question was after what age women might have considerable difficulties getting pregnant. The most frequently mentioned age limits were 35, 40 and 45 years, but also 30, 38 and 50 years were given more often than others (Fig. 3.1). Only very few respondents expect such difficulties before age 30, or later than age 50. However, there were sex-specific differences in the answers to this question: women foresee these difficulties to come up earlier than men (Fig. 3.1), expecting them on average at age 40, while men do so only at age 43.

Again there were education-specific differences, but they pointed in the ‘other direction’ than for the question about the best maternity age: women with higher education expected problems to set in slightly earlier. As for male respondents, those with compulsory schooling only estimated the limit age to be higher (age 44) than university graduates (age 42). Another group who would expect such problems only at a later age (45) was younger men.

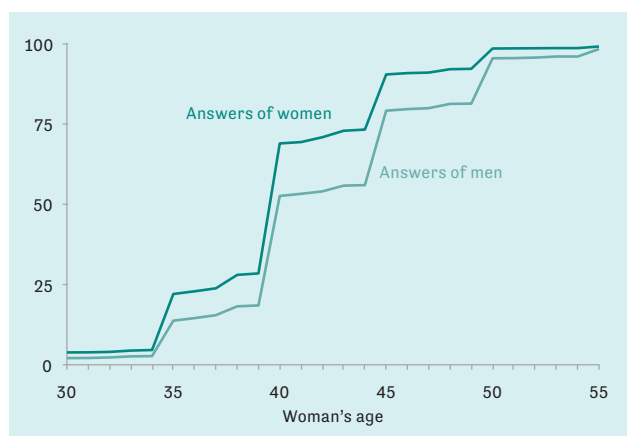


Figure 3.1: At what age do you think it gets difficult for women to become pregnant? (in %)

respondent’s education attainment, the higher the age given to be best for the birth of the first child. Men and women with compulsory schooling only (nine years) say on average that 25 years is the best age, while for university graduates the best time comes somewhat later, at age 28.

## 4. Young adults no longer fly the nest: who leaves, who stays?

CHRISTINE GESERICK AND NORBERT NEUWIRTH

In 2009, GGS participants were asked whether they still lived with their parents. Their answers showed that, in Austria, especially young men often live with at least one parent, i.e. as many as 39 per cent of all males aged 25 to 29 and 20 per cent of all males aged 30 to 34 (women: 21 per cent and 8 per cent, respectively). Especially when compared to western and northern Europe, Austria thus has a relatively high share of young adults who do not fly the nest.

However, the wish to leave the parental home was particularly pronounced among the 25 to 29-year olds. Asked whether they intended to start living separately from their parents within the next three years, one third of all males and as many as every other female replied: “definitely yes”. What happened to the plans these young adults voiced in 2009? Thanks to the repeat survey we can now compare intentions with hard facts.

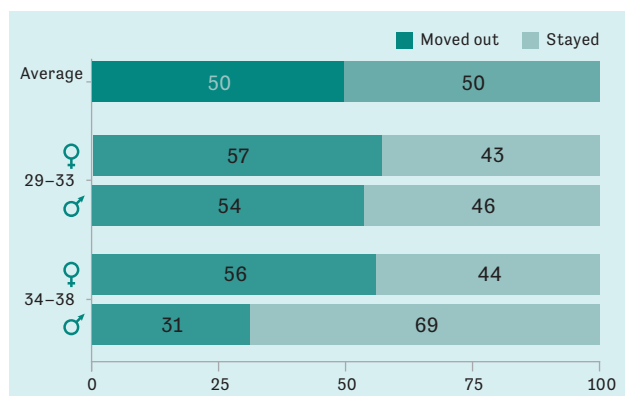


Figure 4.1: Respondents who moved out of their parents' home in the past four years (in %)

### Half of them stayed

Let us first take a look at the figures: How many of the young adults who lived with their parents at the time of the first survey still do so now? Of the 241,000 persons<sup>1</sup> aged 25 to 34 who lived in their parents' household in 2009, 121,000 had not left four years later. In other words, half of the meanwhile 29 to 38-year olds

moved out, the other half continues to live under their parents' roof (Fig. 4.1).

There is a marked difference in the behaviour of females and males, which, moreover, increases with age: In the group of those aged 34 to 38, less than one third (31%) of all men but more than half of all women (56%) who lived with their parents in 2009 have moved out.

### As they grow older, women implement their moving plans more consistently than men

It is also interesting to compare intentions with actual facts (Fig. 4.2): While women who had the firm intention to move out were more likely to actually do so if they belonged to the older age group (34 to 49), the trend was different among men: older males who lived with their parents implemented their firm intention to leave the parental home less often than their younger peers.

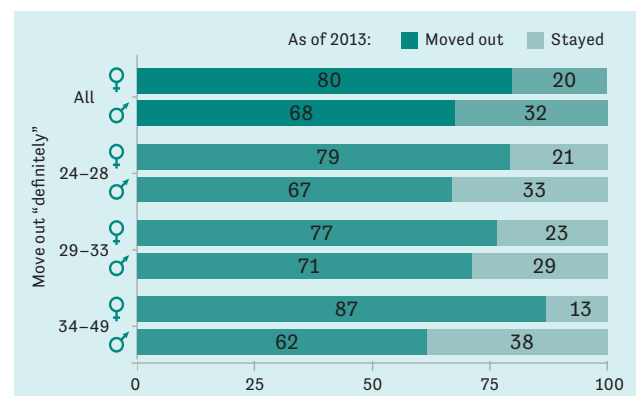


Figure 4.2: Implemented intention to move out within the next three years – four years later (in %)

Summing up, it holds true for all age groups that more men than women live with their parents. Males sharing the parental home plan to move out less frequently than females. Moreover, the men who do plan to leave carry out their intention far less often than their female peers, in particular from their mid-thirties onwards. In all age groups, only around two thirds of all men but as many as four fifth of all women implement their wish to move out.

<sup>1</sup> Extrapolated figure for Austria's population



## 5. Personality traits of children: What are the priorities?

ZUZANNA BRZOZOWSKA

From a list of eleven personality traits or qualities that children can develop, respondents had to choose three which were most important to them. One in five gave 'tolerance and respect for others' and 'sense of responsibility'. The third most frequent trait chosen was 'good manners' (one in six). Next in line are 'independence' and 'hard work' (one in twelve), 'determination and perseverance' and 'imagination' (one in twenty). The qualities 'thrift', 'obedience', 'religious faith' and 'unselfishness' were only rarely mentioned.

### Women place more value on tolerance and respect, men on industriousness

In general, male and female Austrians were in agreement on the preferred personality traits in children (Fig. 5.1). Women, however, valued tolerance and respect for others more than men (28% vs. 23%), and also imagination was slightly more important to them. On the other hand, one in ten male Austrians, but only one in seventeen females chose industriousness among the three most important qualities. There are only little differences by age in the list of preferred personality traits in children: younger respondents (18–29) considered a sense of responsibility slightly less important than older ones. In contrast, good manners are more appreciated among the younger generation.

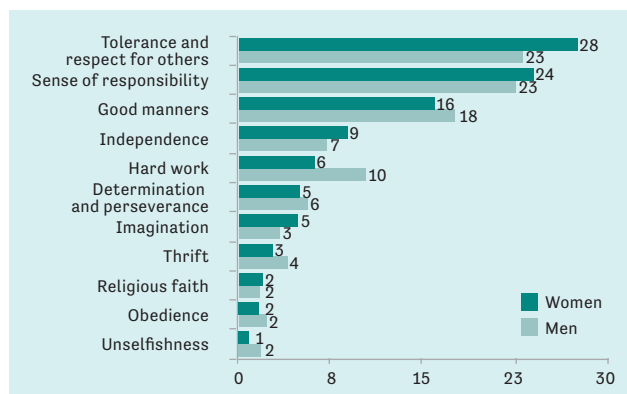


Figure 5.1: Assessment of the most important character traits that children can develop, by sex (in %)

### Tolerance, respect and independence become more important with increasing education level, good manners and industriousness are more valued by people with less education

If we consider the five most frequently mentioned qualities in children with regard to the respondents' education level, there were unmistakable differences (Fig. 5.2). The better the education, the more importance was placed on tolerance and respect for others (28% for people with only compulsory schooling vs. 35% for college or university graduates) and a sense of responsibility (almost one-quarter vs. one-third). The importance attributed to independence seems to be correlated to the education level as well, with 8–9 per cent for respondents with only compulsory/vocational schooling vs. 11–13 per cent for those with a college or university degree. Good manners and industriousness, on the other hand, were deemed more important with decreasing educational level. The gradient here is similar among women and men, with men without upper-secondary education considering industriousness a lot more important than all other respondents.

In summary it can be said that male and female Austrians largely agreed on the preferred personality traits of children. To most of them, tolerance and respect, a sense of responsibility and good manners were most important.



Figure 5.2: Assessment of the most important personality traits that children can develop, by education and sex (in %)



## 6. Partnership forms in Austria

MARIA WINKLER-DWORAK

Marriage is still the most common form of partnership in Austria. Among all persons interviewed, slightly over one-third are married while 20 per cent live in cohabitation with their partner and another 20 per cent are in a living-apart-together (LAT) arrangement. Approximately one-quarter of all respondents between 18 and 49 are currently without a partner. Almost half of all couples are thus living in a marriage, one in four live together unmarried and another one in four live in separate households.

### Trial period before marriage

However, almost 80 per cent of married couples report having lived together even before the wedding. After around three and a half years of living together, already one-half of the previously unmarried couples have got married. Thus, cohabitation is mainly a trial period before marriage.

However, the distribution does vary with the age of respondents. Fig. 6.1 shows that in the older age groups more than one-half of the persons interviewed are married, while cohabitation or LAT prevails among the under-30s. Whether the latter will go on to get married with increasing age to that same extent as the current older age groups or whether non-married living arrangements will establish themselves more and more as an alternative to marriage, remains to be seen.

### More than two-thirds of couples with children are married

The presence of children clearly promotes the increasing incidence of marriage. When there are children in a household, over two-thirds of respondents are married, another 21 per cent live in cohabitation. Approximately ten per cent are single parents.

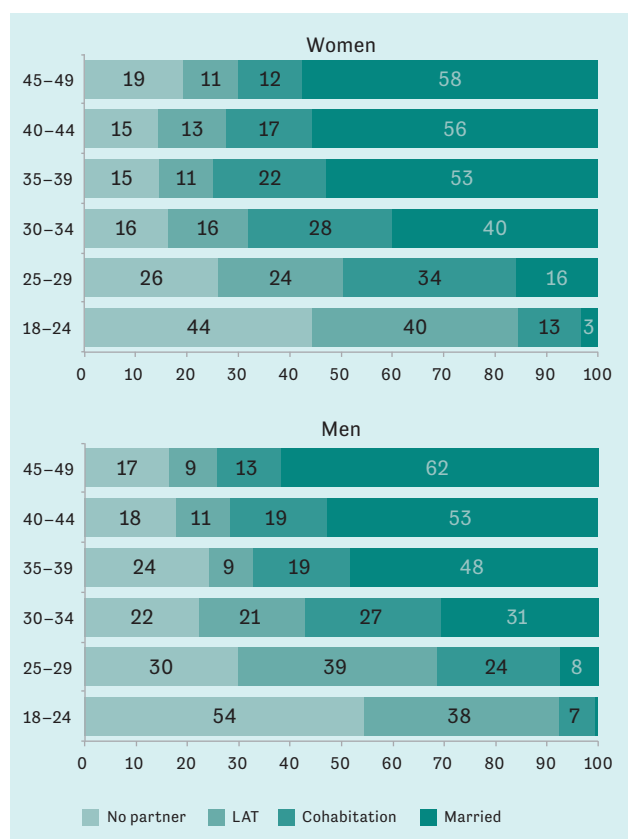


Figure 6.1: Distribution of partnership types (in %)

With regard to type of partnership, there are slight differences between men and women (Fig. 6.1): except for the age group 45-49, men were single more frequently than women at the time of the interview. Likewise, more men than women have never lived in a partnership at all (34 vs. 24 per cent). Asked about the number previous partnerships, about one-half said they were living together with a partner for the first time, while for approx. one in seven it was already the second time. Only some four per cent of respondents reported to have lived together with a partner three times or more often.

Since 1 January 2010, Austria offers the possibility of registering same-sex unions. Because of the recentness of this change in law it is no surprise that less than one per cent of respondents reported living in a registered same-sex partnership.

## 7. Living Apart Together: A new type of partnership?

ANDREAS BAIERL

Living Apart Together (LAT) is a term to describe couples who have an intimate relationship but live in separate households.

### LAT partnerships get more common

In total, the share of this type of partnership among the 18 to 45-year olds rose from 19 per cent to 21 per cent in the period 2009–2013. The rise was most marked in the group aged 25 to 34, while the shares remained unchanged in the younger and older age groups (Fig. 7.1). The reasons for living in a LAT partnership, i.e. whether people choose to live apart or are forced to do so by external constraints, hardly changed.

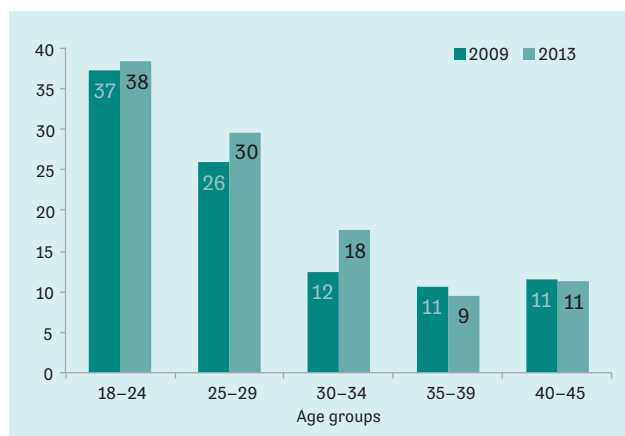


Figure 7.1: Share of persons in LAT partnerships (in %)

### LAT partnerships are very unstable

How have LAT partnerships developed since 2009? More than half (56%) of all LAT arrangements had dissolved by 2013. For purposes of comparison: 90 per cent of all persons who lived in the same household four years ago still live together now.

An analysis of the development of LAT partnerships by partners' age showed that the LATs of those who are meanwhile 25 to 34 years old are the most stable. In the

observation period, the 25 to 39-year olds moved in together most often (on average more than 30 per cent), while this holds true for only 8 per cent of the currently 45 to 49-year olds (Tab. 7.1).

Age (in 2013)	Different or no partner	Same partner, LAT	Same partner, joint household
20–24	64	12	24
25–29	47	14	39
30–34	53	19	29
35–39	58	8	34
40–44	57	23	21
45–49	67	25	8
Total	56	16	28

Table 7.1: Partnership status as of 2013 of persons in LAT partnerships in 2009 (in %)

How realistically did people living in a LAT partnership four years ago judge the likelihood that they would move in together? Three per cent of those who definitely did not want to move in together in the foreseeable future now live in a joint household; however, four fifth of these relationships meanwhile ended. Half of all those who thought they would definitely move in together now live in a joint household; four in ten separated. Only a minority still are what they were four years ago, namely two-home LAT partnerships.

# 8. Division of child care duties between partners

MARIA RITA TESTA

Do both partners take equal shares when child care tasks are concerned? In what way does the division of these duties between mother and father change after the birth of another child?

The survey question was whether a specific child care task was carried out “always or usually” by the respondent him/herself, “always or usually” by his/her partner or “about equally often by both partners”. The tasks inquired about were:

1. dressing the children or taking care that they are adequately dressed;
2. putting the children to bed or taking care that they go to bed;
3. staying at home with the children when they are ill;
4. playing with the children, spending leisure time with them;
5. helping the children with the school homework;
6. taking the children to the babysitter/day-care/school or leisure time activities and picking them up there.

Only those couples were considered who at the time of the first interview (2009) had been living with least one biological child under 14 in a shared household and had taken part in the second round (2013).

## Few couples divide child care duties in an egalitarian way

The result was that couples do not share the child care tasks equally (Fig. 8.1). For all of them, it is mostly the mothers who perform them (between 82 and 33 per cent of the cases). At least somewhat balanced is the division for the activities ‘playing with the children’ and ‘putting them to bed’: 65 and 50 per cent of the parents, respectively, shoulder these tasks equally often. In at least 16 per cent of the families the fathers also stay at home with their sick children. 25 per cent of fathers are helping with the homework or with getting dressed roughly as often as the mothers.

## Egalitarian division of child care duties between partners improves over time

Between 2009 and 2013, the division of these tasks between partners did become more egalitarian but this was not necessarily due to the birth of another child: in 2013, couples were sharing all child care duties more equally in general (Fig. 8.2). For couples who had another child between the two survey rounds, the increase in shared responsibility is greatest for the activities ‘dressing the children’ and ‘putting them to bed’ while for couples who did not have another child this increase is more in all other activities.

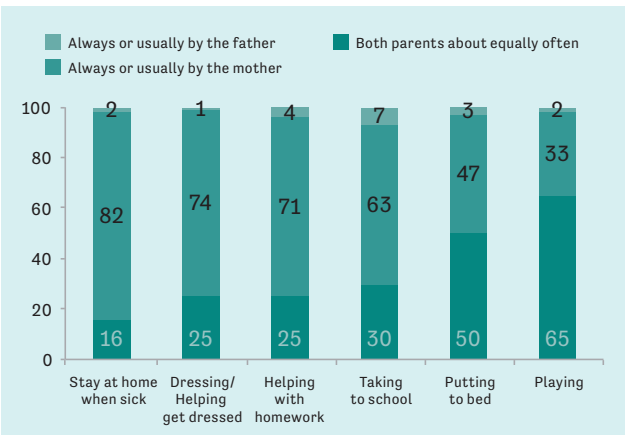


Figure 8.1: Division of child care duties in 2009 (in %)

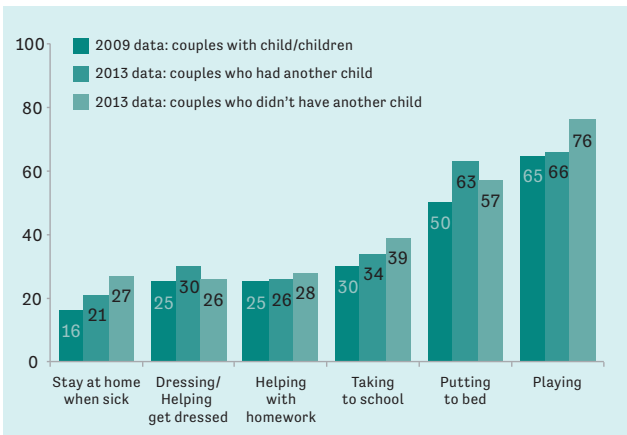


Figure 8.2: Couples in which both partners carried out various child care tasks “about equally often” in 2009 and 2013 (in %)

## 9. Changes in the division of household chores after the birth of the first child

CAROLINE BERGHAMMER AND NORBERT NEUWIRTH

With childless couples, usually both partners are in full-time employment and the distribution of household duties is comparatively equal. The birth of the couple's first child, however, changes the division of activities with respect to gainful employment and family/household duties more profoundly and sustainably than any other life event. Neither marriage nor the birth of further children results in similar retraditionalisation as the transition to parenthood: the (considerably increased) household chores predominantly end up with the mothers, apart from child care duties which are extremely time-consuming in the beginning, while fathers increasingly return to the traditional breadwinner role. Previous research showed, however, that most household duties are experienced as being less satisfactory than gainful employment or child care tasks.

organisation of social activities. As soon as the first child was born, there was an increase in the proportion of couples in which mainly the woman was responsible for household duties, while couples with an egalitarian distribution became rarer. This applies to all household activities. Additionally, the fathers then increasingly dealt with the family's finances (Fig 9.1)

### Increasing differences in perceptions between men and women after first birth

If one takes a look at the personal assessment, separately by gender, of how household tasks are distributed, it becomes clear that these views show increasing differences after the birth of the first child. While before that time, for instance, men and women were almost congruent in their assessment of the distribution of the household duty 'cooking', the same persons had clearly different views on this activity after they had their first child: the mothers now considered preparing meals to be mainly in their area of responsibility, young fathers saw this shift to a lesser extent. The increase in these gender-specific assessment differences can be found for all other household activities. Only the shift with regard to dealing with financial matters pointed – in the view of the women as well – in the young fathers' direction. These increased discrepancies in assessment are mainly related to the (increased) household chores taken over by the mothers, a majority of whom stays at home during the first months of their child. This is work performed mostly at times when the partner is not at home, therefore he registers it only to a limited extent. The division of household duties and the different ways of perception also fuel the potential for conflict between partners. Frequently these changes in the division of household duties are experienced as rather problematic: one in three respondents was less satisfied with the division of household chores, and only one in four was more satisfied.

### More egalitarian distribution before parenthood

Before the first child was born, couples had divided household chores much more equally among themselves, although women predominantly ended up with what are considered typically female activities (cooking meals, washing dishes, shopping and vacuuming) while men mainly took charge of repairs. The most equally divided tasks were dealing with financial matters and the

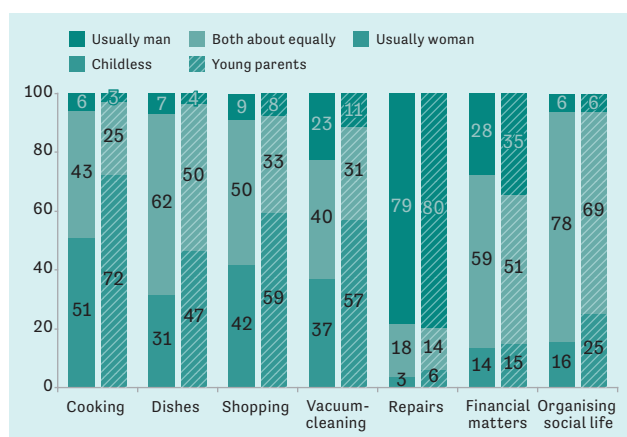


Figure 9.1: Performance of household duties before and after birth of first child (in %)

# 10. Marriage plans: aspirations and reality

ANDREAS BAIERL

All non-married persons interviewed in the GGS were asked if they planned to marry within the next three years. The second survey shows whether they realised their plans and permits us to analyse the discrepancy between aspirations and reality.

In 2009, 43 per cent of all unmarried respondents answered the question of whether they planned to marry within the next three years with “definitely not”, 32 per cent with “probably not”, 18 per cent with “probably yes” and 7 per cent with “definitely yes” (Fig. 10.1). The share of those who actually married or have remained unmarried clearly differs from the respective assessments in 2009. Even among the respondents who were sure to marry within the next three years only 39 per cent actually did (Tab. 10.1).

## Age is highly relevant for the wish to marry

While 11 per cent of all unmarried 30 to 34-year olds definitely planned to marry, the shares for the age groups 25–29 and 35–39 were 9 per cent and 8 per cent, re-

spectively. In the youngest and oldest age groups, only 5 per cent planned to marry within the next three years. The implementation is relatively independent of age (Tab. 10.1). The highest level of accomplishing probably or definitely planned marriages was found among the

25 to 29-year olds, while the gap between aspirations and reality was widest among the 40 to 45-year olds. The type of partnership is decisive for carrying out marriage plans: Only two in ten people living in a LAT partnership with firm intentions to marry (“definitely yes”) actually married. People who lived with their partner realised their marriage plans much more frequently. Six in ten cohabiting partnerships without children and four in ten such partnerships with children implemented their plan (Fig. 10.1).

## The birth of a child doubles the likelihood of realising marriage aspirations

Besides partnership status and marriage aspirations, the birth of a child plays an important role for entering into marriage. One third of all respondents who had a child after 2009 also married.

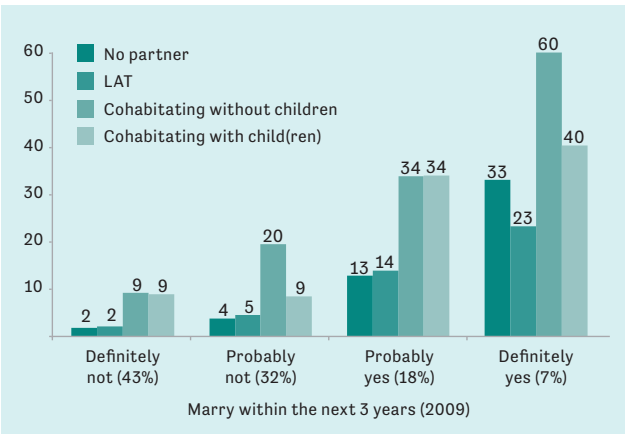


Figure 10.1: Share of persons who married in the period 2009–2013 by partnership status in 2009 (in %)

spectively. In the youngest and oldest age groups, only 5 per cent planned to marry within the next three years. The implementation is relatively independent of age (Tab. 10.1). The highest level of accomplishing probably or definitely planned marriages was found among the

Marry in 3 years	Age in the year 2009					Total
	18–24	25–29	30–34	35–39	40–45	
Definitely not	2	2	5	6	1	3
Probably not	5	7	12	7	7	7
Probably yes	26	25	28	25	8	24
Definitely yes	37	47	37	31	35	39
Total	7	13	16	13	5	10

Table 10.1: Share of persons who married in the period 2009–2013 (in %)

# 11. Satisfaction with current partnership, considering separation and separating

NORBERT NEUWIRTH

High separation and divorce rates strongly affect Austria's current demographic development. To analyse how separation risks differ by family form and gender perspective, we studied all respondents who either lived with the same partner in both waves or had separated between the two waves.

## Women are markedly less satisfied with their partners than men

The data clearly show that all respondents who lived with the same partner in 2009 and 2013 were less satisfied with their partnership than four years ago (Fig. 11.1). In this context, it is of secondary importance whether the couples were married or cohabiting. It is, however, striking that women, and above all those with children, were markedly less satisfied with their partnership than men. This finding was valid for all GGS countries in 2009. What is the impact of these apparent, gender-specific differences in actual separations? In general, a much larger share of women also reported to have thought

about separation during the past twelve months (Fig. 11.2). The difference is particularly large among parents: Across all partnerships, around five per cent of all fathers but more than twice as many mothers reported to have considered separation in 2009. Overall, these values remained almost constant until 2013.

## Compared to fathers, mothers also markedly more often consider separation

Meanwhile, a number of those who were couples in 2009 actually separated. As there were four years between the two waves, it does not come as a surprise that the share of those who actually separated is higher than that of those ready to separate within twelve months. Above all, this holds true for all those who still do not have children; separations of parents are less frequent. Among the hitherto stable partnerships, the shares of childless men and women considering separation converge, while mothers' inclination to separate has become three times higher than that of fathers.

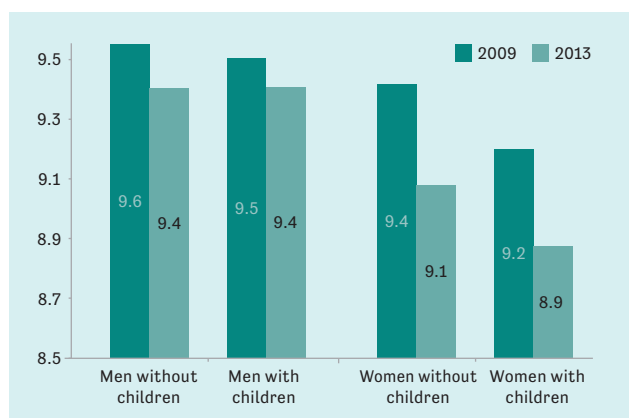


Figure 11.1: Satisfaction with the same partner

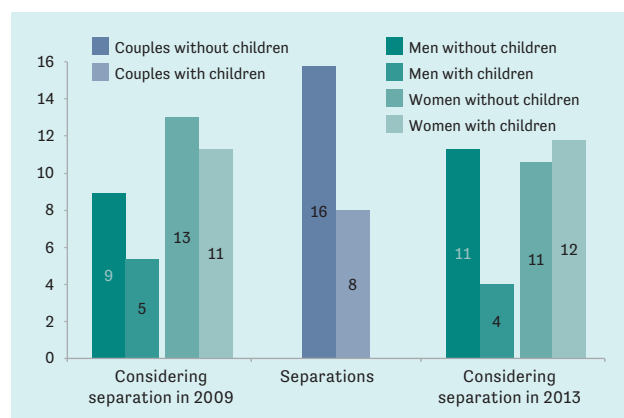


Figure 11.2: Respondents considering separation in 2009, respondents actually separated and respondents considering separation who still were in a partnership in 2013

## 12. Changing partnerships and changing childbearing intentions

ÉVA BEAUJOUAN

In the present era of profound changes in partnerships, unions can be formed and broken up quite quickly. To what extent do people move between partnerships in a short time period, e.g. four years? People who change their relationship status, whether or not they already have children, might reconsider their intention to have a(nother) child. For instance, being with a new partner might awaken the desire for a shared child with him/her. On the other hand, people remaining alone might revise their childbearing desires downwards.

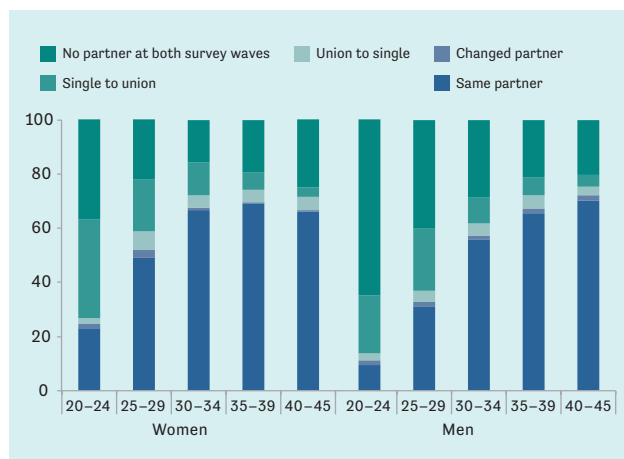


Figure 12.1: Partnership status in 2009 and 2013 (in %)

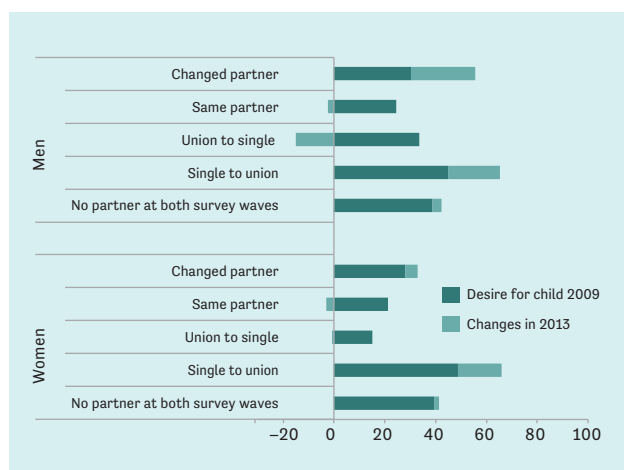


Figure 12.2: Desire to have a child in 2009 and 2013, respondents aged 20-45 (in %)

### A dynamic partnership process

In the four years between surveys, most existing unions remained intact; at younger ages, union formations were very frequent (Fig. 12.1). Slightly less than five percent of the respondents separated from their partner, some of those entered into a new union, with repartnering being a rare phenomenon for women aged 35+. At age 35-45, one in five men lived without a partner at both survey waves, the lowest proportion at all ages. The situation for women was different: while less than one in five aged 30-34 lived alone at both time points, older women were more likely to live without a partner. The difference between men and women is due both to later partnership formation among men and to the low frequency of repartnering for separated women at higher ages.

### Childbearing intentions change with family situation

Respondents aged 20-45 who remained with the same partner, or without a partner, showed little change in their childbearing intentions (Fig. 12.2). In those who formed a new partnership between surveys, however, the desire for a child was clearly more pronounced at the second interview. On the other hand, while women who had separated and remained alone showed persistently low childbearing intentions, men in the same situation had originally higher intentions but gave them up to a substantial extent (light green area left of zero line means decrease). We could also observe that men who had separated and repartnered developed a much greater desire to have children than women in the same circumstances. From these two facts it would appear that a man's childbearing desire is much more dependent of his (new) partner than for women.



# 13. Intended family size 2009 and 2013

ISABELLA BUBER-ENNSER

How many children do Austrian men and women want to have? To what extent did their childbearing intentions change over the four years? Apart from the current number of children, the 2009 and 2013 surveys also asked how many more children respondents wanted to have. Together, the result is the (total) intended number of children.

## Mean intended number of children decreased

When comparing the mean intended number of children in 2009 and 2013, the figure decreased by 0.2. In 2009, women and men aged 18–45 wanted to have an average of 2.1 children, by 2013 this number had dropped to 1.9 children (Fig. 13.1 and 13.2). The group of very young respondents revised their childbearing intentions only to a small extent, and in 2013 actually gave a higher number than in 2009. In particular young men around age 20 wanted fewer children in 2009 than four years later. An assumption is that until 2009 many of them had not really considered a life with children and therefore gave a lower figure for intended family size in the first survey.

## Two in three wanted the same number, one in four wanted fewer, one in nine more children

A comparison of the figures given in 2009 and 2013 shows that two-thirds of respondents stated the same intended family size in both survey waves. One-quarter wanted less children in 2013 than in 2009, and one-ninth wanted more in the second wave. Women kept to the same number of children more often than men (69% vs. 61%). Men tended to revise the number more frequently upwards, and women downwards. If somebody wanted more children in 2013, it was usually one more than in 2009. Respondents who wanted less in 2013 quite frequently went down by two children (Fig. 13.3).

## One-third of parents with one child reduced their intended family size – while a new partnership often coincides with an increase in the intended family size

Changes in the intended number of children vary by the number children a couple already has: one-third of parents with just one child reduced their intended family size,

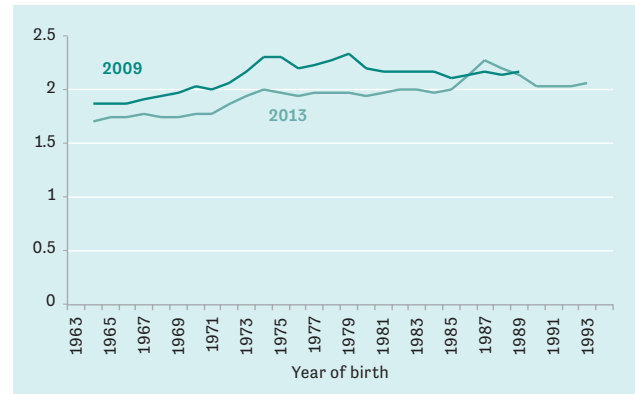


Figure 13.1: Intended number of children, women, 2009 and 2013 (mean)

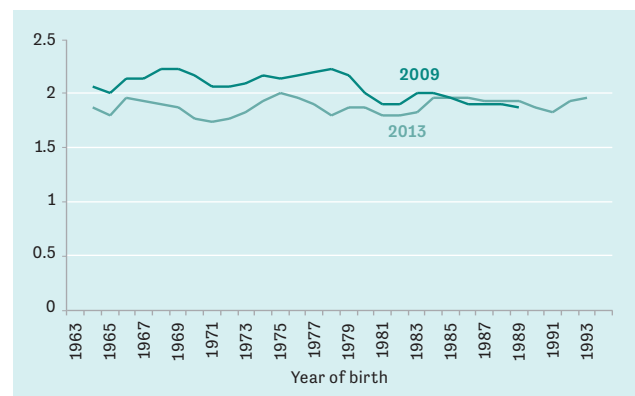


Figure 13.2: Intended number of children, men, 2009 and 2013 (mean)

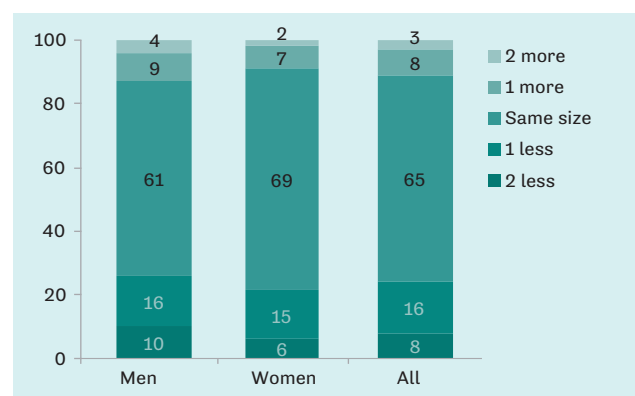


Figure 13.3: Changes in the intended family size from 2009 to 2013 (in %)

just like many childless people (slightly over one-quarter). Newly formed partnerships are also relevant.

# 14. Intended and ideal family size

MARIA RITA TESTA

How many children do Austrian men and women want to have? Is there a difference between the intended family size and the one considered as ideal? How do ideals and intentions change over time, or after the birth of a child? In 2009 and 2013, respondents were asked to give their ideal number of children as well as the number of children they intend to have. The ideal family size may serve as a general guideline for people's personal decision but does not necessarily coincide with the number of children they actually want to have.

## Ideal family size is usually larger than intended family size

For two-thirds of the respondents, ideal and intended family sizes are in fact the same. However, for those who give different figures, the ideal number of children is higher than the one intended in most cases (23%). Only seven per cent of respondents give a higher number for the intended than for the ideal family size. The mean ideal family size remains constant at slightly over two children in all age groups and both survey rounds (2.2 children). The mean intended family size, on the other hand, is approximately two children at young reproductive ages and seems to decrease both in the population, starting with the 35–39 age group, and also individually within the four years between interviews (Fig. 14.1, see also Article 13). The difference between the mean ideal and intended family sizes varies from 0.1 to 0.5 children, depending on the age group (Fig. 14.1).

## The intended family size is revised more often than the ideal one after the birth of a child

The difference between the two variables becomes clear when looking at the changes from 2009 to 2013 for those who have not yet completed their family size and distinguishing two groups: those who had a(nother) child in this period and those who had not (Fig. 14.2). Among respondents who did have a(nother) child between 2009 and 2013, as many as 64 per cent kept to their original

ideal family size while only one-half of them (54%) gave the same intended family size in 2013 as in 2009. The other half had adjusted their intention upwards (18%) or downwards (28%) after a birth. In addition, the intended family size is more often revised downwards than the ideal one; also, revisions are made more frequently in late than in early reproductive age (30+ vs. 20–29).

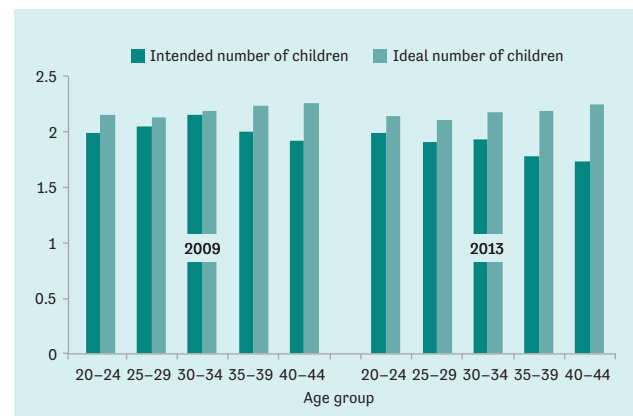


Figure 14.1: Mean intended and ideal family size

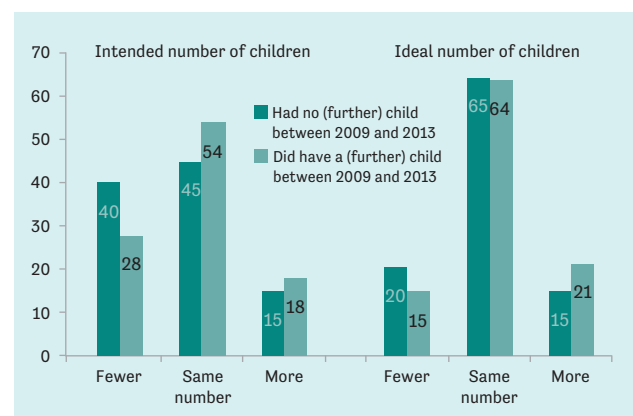


Figure 14.2: Changes of intended and ideal family sizes between 2009 and 2013 (in %)

This evidence supports the definition of intended family size as a moving target that is continuously revised over the individual's life course. The ideals, by contrast, remain constant over time because they are more closely related to norms.

# 15. Intended and unintended childlessness

ÉVA BEAUJOUAN AND TOMÁŠ SOBOTKA

Permanent childlessness is becoming increasingly common in most European countries. The reasons for remaining childless vary and include voluntary aspects as well as unintended childlessness because of adverse life circumstances such as ill health, infertility or the lack of a suitable partner. These reasons may change over time as individual plans adjust and some people get used to living a life without children. How many people intend to be childless at different ages and how certain are they about their intention? Are childlessness intentions stable?

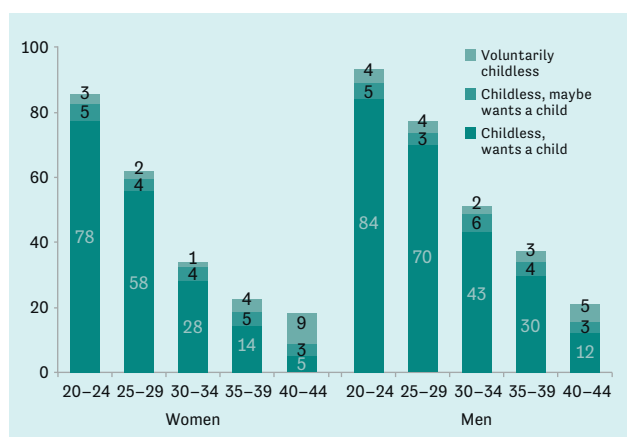


Figure 15.1: Persons childless and their intention in 2009 to have a child (in %)

## Intended childlessness still relatively infrequent

Childlessness is relatively high in Austria, with two out of ten women born in the 1970s projected to remain childless (see Article 1). However, the explicit wish to remain childless is considerably less common. In 2009, fewer than one in ten men and women below age 40 wished to remain childless, and the share of those who were certain about it was again much lower (Fig. 15.1). By far the large majority of childless women and men plan to have a child later in life.

## Instability in the intention to remain childless

A follow-up of childlessness intentions four years later revealed that many childless respondents had reconsidered their initial wish to stay childless (Fig. 15.2). However, there was also the opposite revision: many of the childless who had wanted a child in the first wave of the survey no longer did so in 2013. In addition, a few of the respondents who had wanted to remain childless got pregnant or gave birth to a child within the next four years. Youngest respondents (aged 20–24 at Wave 1) most frequently revised their intention to stay childless. Among the respondents aged 25–29, the size of the two opposite shifts (switching from intended childlessness to in-



Figure 15.2: People childless in 2009: change in intentions, by age and sex (in %)

tended parenthood and the other way round) was roughly equal. Above age 30, the shift from intending to have children to wanting no child was more common (Fig. 15.2).

## 16. Done after one child? Childbearing intentions and their realisation in one-child families

NORBERT NEUWIRTH

Increasing childlessness, the decreasing number of women with three and more children along with the persistently high share of women who have one child (24%) throughout the past 25 years are decisive factors for Austria's low fertility rate (see Article 1). Why does practically one in every four women ultimately have one child, if a mere ten per cent of all 20 to 29-year olds state in the interviews that they want to have exactly one child? How and when do people downsize their childbearing intentions, when do parents decide not to have more than the one child they already have?

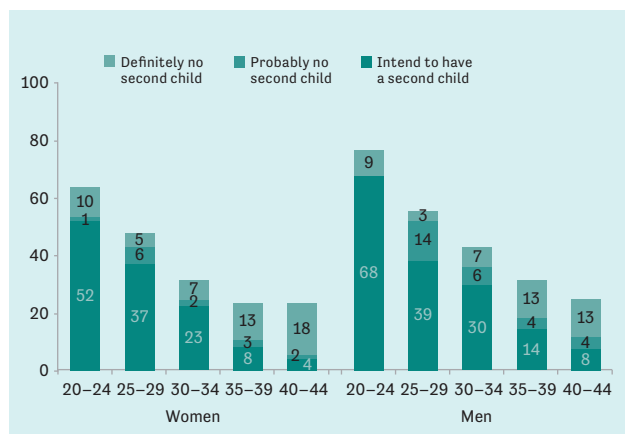


Figure 16.1: Childbearing intentions of parents with one child (share of all parents) in 2009

### From around age 35 onwards, parents tend to stop at one child

This adjustment process is documented by the childbearing intentions reported by parents of one child in 2009 (Fig. 16.1): As was to be expected, the share of parents with exactly one child decreased with the age of the interviewed parent, because many had a second child. From age 35 onwards, distinctly fewer mothers with one child intended to have a second child. This also held true for fathers, though with a certain lag of time.

### Men only realise later in life that they probably won't have more than one child

In 2013, we can analyse in more detail how parents who had exactly one child in 2009 changed their childbearing intentions. Differently to the childless respondents (see Article 15), the share of mothers who were younger than 35 in 2009 and do not intend to have another child now is markedly higher than 50 per cent (Fig. 16.2). This shows that most of them already revised their previously stated childbearing intentions in this phase of their life course. Fathers seem to be much slower in this respect. In the age group below 30, roughly the same number of



Figure 16.2: People with exactly one child in 2009: change in intentions, by age and sex (in %)

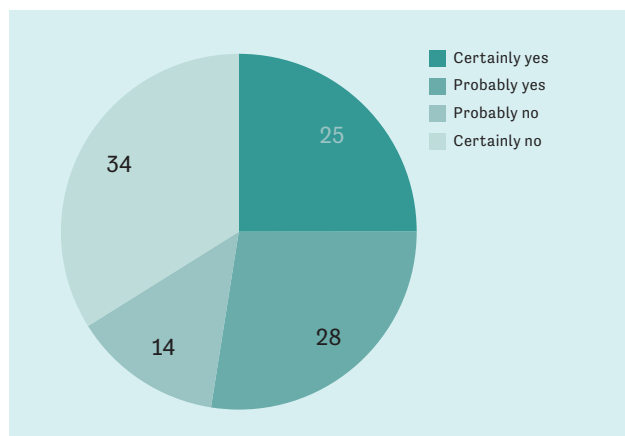
parents with one child revise their childbearing intentions in both directions. It is only after age 30 that they more adamantly oppose the idea of having more children, but the rejection is never as pronounced as it is among mothers in the corresponding age groups.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The fathers of exactly one child aged 20-24 in 2009 were underrepresented in the second wave of the survey.

# 17. Uncertainties in childbearing intentions

ISABELLA BUBER-ENNSER

Whether you intend to have a(nother) child depends on a number of factors: one's partner, the job, friends, one's financial situation, living arrangements, personal plans and the experience one has with the children already born are only a few of them. When asked whether one wants to have a(nother) child or children, it is usually those aspects which are reflected. The answer is often neither a clear "yes" nor a clear "no". To capture these uncertainties in people's childbearing intentions, the answering options "certainly yes", "probably yes", "probably no" and "certainly no" were suggested.



**Figure 17.1: Intention in 2009 to have a child sooner or later (in %)**

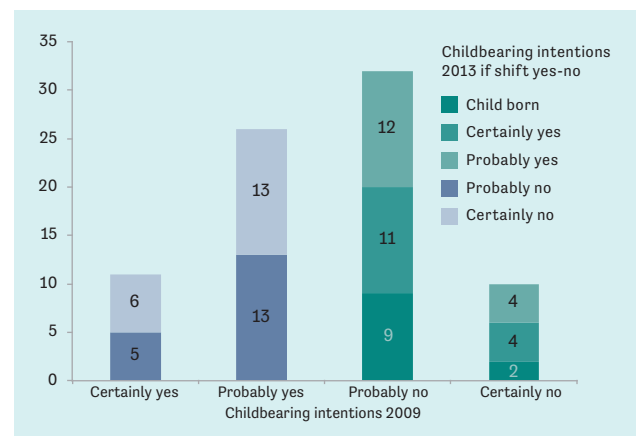
The time frame is important as well: does someone want a child at the moment? Does one plan a child within the next few years, or should a child or children come only later in life? A combination of these time frames showed that more than one in two respondents in 2009 said they wanted to have a(nother) child sooner or later.

## Childbearing plans were often uncertain

Three in ten respondents in 2009 said they probably wanted a child, 14 per cent said probably not. One-quarter were for "certainly yes", and one-third for "certainly no" (Fig. 17.1).

## People with uncertain childbearing intentions changed their mind more often

In the 2013 wave, childbearing intentions were collected in the same way. A comparison of the intentions in 2009 and 2013 shows the expected discrepancies: An important indicator for them are uncertainties in 2009. Let us look at the change from "yes" to "no" and vice versa (Fig. 17.2). On the one hand, eleven per cent of people who had been "certain" now no longer wanted a child. On the other, ten per cent of those who before had said "certainly no" meanwhile wanted a child, or already had one. But if the answer in 2009 had been tainted by an



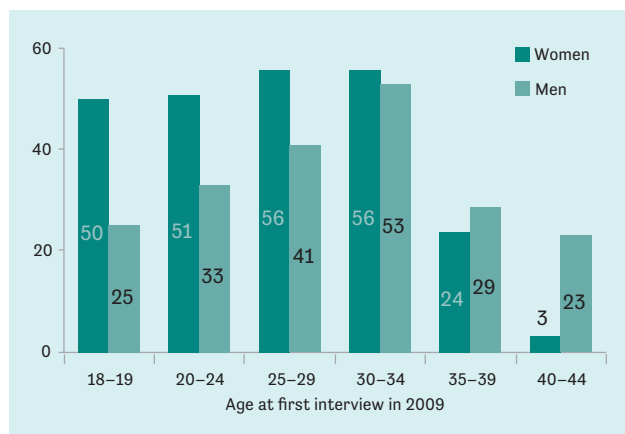
**Fig. 17.2: Uncertainty in childbearing intentions and shifts between „yes“ and „no“ (in %)**

element of doubt, i.e. if a "probably" option had been chosen, changes were much more frequent: one in four of the "probably yes" group and one-third of the "probably no" group changed their childbearing intentions. Further analysis showed that parents often revised their "probably yes" (43%) and childless persons their "probably no" (52%).

## 18. A child within the next three years? Realisation of childbearing intentions

ISABELLA BUBER-ENNSER, NORBERT NEUWIRTH AND MARIA RITA TESTA

Childbearing intentions of women and men and the actual number of their children are important in family research. In 2009, one-quarter of respondents wanted to have a child within the next three years, and the same share planned a child for a later point in time. One-half of the men and women interviewed (between 18 and 45) said they did not want to have a child – because they had already reached their intended family size or wanted to remain childless.



**Figure 18.1: Realisation of childbearing intentions within the next three years (in %)**

### Four in ten realised their childbearing plans

43 per cent of the women and men who in 2009 planned a child within the next three years actually became parents. Eight per cent of those who had wanted a child at a later point in time realised this intention earlier than initially stated, and three per cent of those who had not wanted any (more) children in fact had one nonetheless. It is only natural to focus on those who intended a child within the next three years in the first interview.

### Up to their mid-thirties, many women realise their plans; later this is much rarer

There are clear differences by age and sex: up to their mid-thirties, one in two women realised their childbearing intentions. After that age, realisation became increasingly rare, from one-quarter in the 35–39 age group to only three per cent among those aged 40–44. By contrast, among men the degree of realisation rose from one in four to one in two until their mid-thirties. Although after that age, realisation of childbearing intentions decreased for men as well, it remained at a considerably higher rate compared to women, in particular after age 40. While among women aged 40–44 at the time of the first survey wave, only very few of those planning a child actually had one, the quota for same-age men was at almost one-quarter (23%) (Fig. 18.1).

### Partnership is key

As would be expected, realisation was highest in couples who were together in both waves. Of those, one-half realised their childbearing intentions. LAT unions and separations with or without repartnering were indicators for less frequent realisation of childbearing plans. Most important was, apart from satisfaction with the partnership, also the partner's own childbearing intention: if both wanted a child, this intention was more often realised than when only the respondent had concrete childbearing intentions (57% vs. 43%) (see also Article 21).

# 19. Division of child care tasks and realisation of childbearing intentions

ISABELLA BUBER-ENNSER, NORBERT NEUWIRTH AND MARIA RITA TESTA

## Parents of one or two children realised their intentions more often than both childless respondents and parents of three and more children

The intention to have a child and its realisation depends essentially on the number of children one already has. One-half of all parents with one or two children realised their intention to have an additional child. Among childless respondents, four in ten did so; among parents with three or more children, it was one-third (Fig. 19.1). The birth of the first child is usually a much more deci-

a scale of ten, with 0 for “not satisfied at all” and 10 for “most satisfied”.

## The intention to have a further child depends on the mother’s satisfaction with the division of child care tasks

Mothers who were satisfied with the division in 2009 intended to have another child more often than less satisfied mothers. While among the (most) satisfied mothers

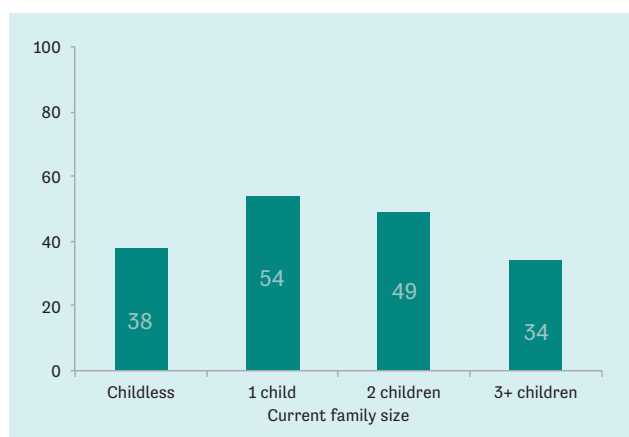


Figure 19.1: Realisation of childbearing intentions (in %)

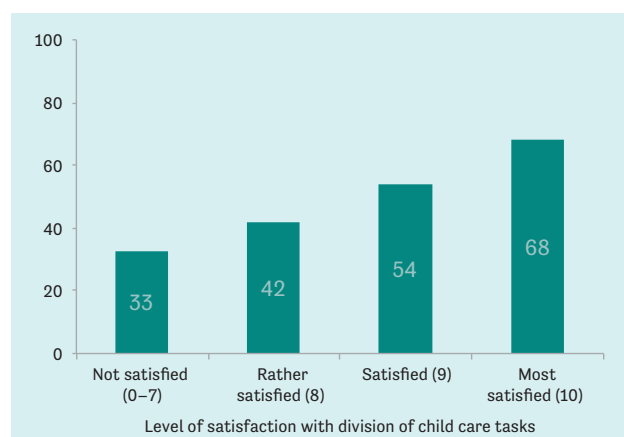


Figure 19.2: Realisation of intention to have a second child (in %)

sive event than the second or third one. While for childless people it is a question of experiencing parenthood for the first time, parents have of course already had that experience. The differences in realisation might indicate that statements about childbearing intentions can be considered more realistic when made by parents of one or two children than when they come from childless persons.

Another question dealt with the mother’s level of satisfaction with the division of child care tasks between herself and her partner, which was related to childbearing intentions and their realisation. We focused on women with one child under 14. Satisfaction was measured on

almost six in ten wanted a second child, only one-third of those less satisfied planned one. The realisation of childbearing intentions showed a similar correlation as well: mothers who were not satisfied with the arrangement realised their intention less often than satisfied mothers. While among those less satisfied, one-third actually realised their previously stated intention to have a second child, it was two-thirds of the mothers who said they were most satisfied (Fig. 19.2). This highlights the importance of women’s satisfaction with the division of child care duties for any plans to have further children as well as for the realisation of such plans.



# 20. Women and men in later reproductive ages: fertility intentions and childbearing

ÉVA BEAUJOUAN AND TOMÁŠ SOBOTKA

As they age, couples often face increasing difficulties in achieving pregnancy and carrying pregnancy to term without complications. How many women and men in higher reproductive ages still intend to have children? And do they actually realise their intentions?

## Wanting a child as soon as possible?

In 2009, the intention to have a child at age 35+ was most frequent among childless persons (Fig. 20.1), many

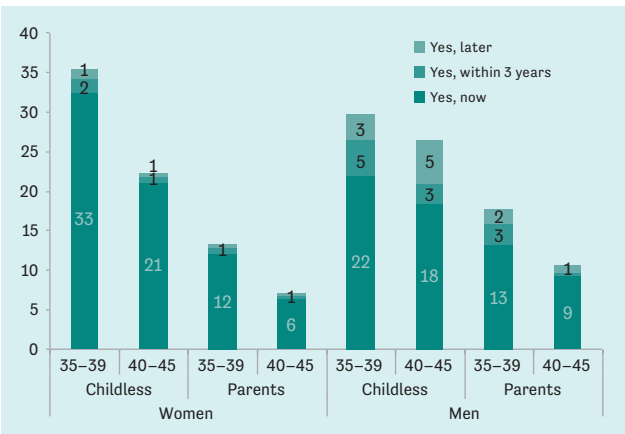


Figure 20.1: Childbearing intentions in 2009, of those aged 35–45 at the time (in %)

of whom had postponed parenthood earlier in life. Men were generally more likely than women to intend to have a(nother) child, in part because men tend to have children somewhat later. However, it was in particular childless women aged 35–39 who wanted a child: more than one-third still planned to have one. In the light of rapidly increasing infertility with age this figure is surprisingly high.

A large majority of respondents aged 35+ with childbearing intentions said they wanted the child “now” rather than in a more distant future. This short-term nature of fertility plans was especially common for women and indicates that many of them were aware of their shrink-

ing window of opportunity for childbearing and felt in a hurry to achieve pregnancy.

## Most intentions not realised four years later

Among the people with an intention to have a child quickly, less than one-quarter actually had one between survey rounds (Fig. 20.2). Men, “younger” respondents aged 35–39 and parents were more successful in realising their childbearing intention. The finding about parents

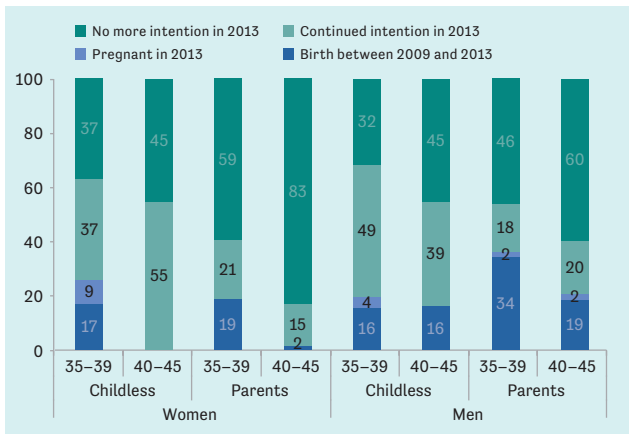


Figure 20.2: Births and childbearing intentions among women and men who intended to have a child in 2009 (in %)

might be surprising, as childless people arguably have a stronger motivation to have at least one child. At the same time, a majority of parents (except for men aged 35–39) revised their intention and no longer wanted a child four years later. Among childless persons, many did not realise their plans, but still wanted a child after four years. Especially for those aged 40–45 in 2009 and in their mid to late forties at the second interview, infertility and sterility made these intentions increasingly unrealistic.

## 21. Realising childbearing intentions: how crucial is agreement between partners?

MARIA RITA TESTA

How many couples agreed on their childbearing intentions in 2009? Did couples with a shared intention actually have a baby within the next four years? And in case of conflicting intentions, which partner more frequently prevailed: the one who wanted a baby or the one who did not?

ment about wanting a child: in this group, 54 per cent of childless couples and 56 per cent of parents actually had a(nother) baby. In case of disagreement, the share of successful couples was only between 24 and 33 per cent for childless couples and between 17 and 21 per cent for parents (Fig. 21.1)

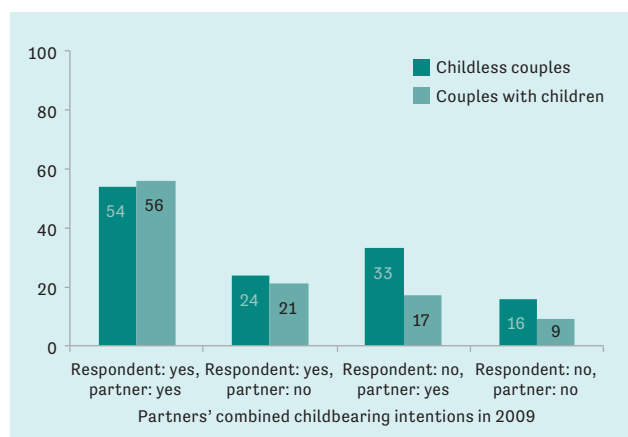


Figure 21.1: Couples who had a baby between interviews (in %)

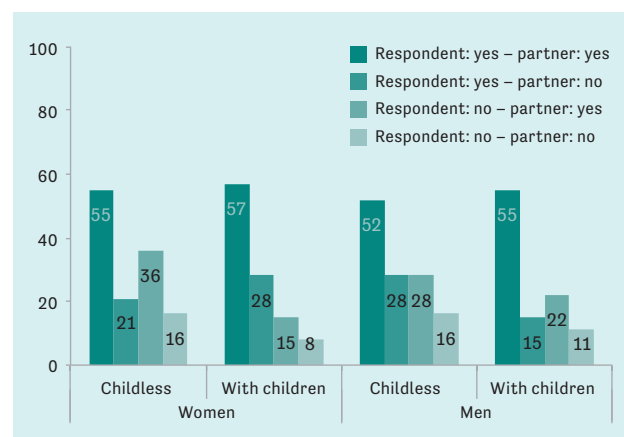


Figure 21.2: Couples who had a baby between interviews, by sex and number of children together (in %)

The selected sample includes heterosexual couples: 60 per cent had children together and 40 per cent did not. As many as 87 per cent of the couples agreed about their intentions: 76 per cent wanted a(nother) child, for the other 11 per cent the family was complete. In 13 per cent of the responding couples, however, the partners were in disagreement. Six per cent of respondents said that unlike their partner they wanted a(nother) child, the remaining seven per cent did not want one, but the partner did.

### More than half of the couples realised their childbearing intentions if partners agreed on having a(nother) child

The results of the second wave in 2013 showed that the proportion of couples who had had a baby within those four years was only high for those who had been in agree-

### Men tend to prevail in the decision for the first child – women tend to decide on further children

The woman's opinion carries more weight in the question of whether to have further children. The decision for the first one, however, is more often influenced by the man (Fig. 21.2)

### Disagreeing couples frequently turn into couples without childbearing intentions

A noteworthy fact is that two-thirds of those couples who in 2009 had been in disagreement about their family planning and had not had a baby in the meantime, in 2013 declared unanimously not to want any (more) children. Only eight per cent of these couples changed their mind to agreeing on saying "yes" to having a child.

## 22. Predictiveness of childbearing intentions

MARIA RITA TESTA

Are childbearing intentions predictive of subsequent reproductive behaviour? What are the differences between people who could realise their childbearing intentions and those who could not?

In 2009, the first survey wave asked whether respondents intended to have a child within the next three years. In the second wave in 2013, the same persons were asked if they actually had had a(nother) child in the meantime. The comparison of the intentions in 2009 and the actual childbearing behaviour afterwards yields four different options: “intention yes – plan fulfilled”, “intention yes – plan not fulfilled”, “intention no – plan not fulfilled” and “intention no – plan fulfilled” (Tab. 22.1).

### Four in five persons predicted their future reproductive behaviour correctly; most people did not want a child and did not have one

In the “plan fulfilled” group, the large majority are persons who did not intend to have a child (70% vs. 11%). The “plan not fulfilled” group consists mostly of respondents who did not have a child in spite of intentions to the contrary (16% vs. 3%) (Table 22.1).

Looking at the socio-economic characteristics of respondents in 2009, the most frequent attendant circumstances of postponing or revising intended births can be identified (Tab. 22.2). Respondents who had a child as intended are younger than those whose childbearing intentions were not fulfilled. They are also more frequently female and married or cohabiting than those who did not have a child contrary to their intentions. As additional characteristics, they are already parents, mostly well educated, not employed (mostly housewives or on maternity leave), and they are less often still studying or in training than those who could not realise their family-planning intentions. Changes in partnership are also a key factor: respondents who had another partner in 2013 than in 2009 showed more often unrealised childbearing intentions than those who were still in the same relationship.

### The less certain the intentions, the less probable their realisation

The majority of respondents with unrealised childbearing intentions had already been uncertain of their intentions at the time of first interview: 66 per cent of those who had “planned yes – plan not fulfilled” and 69 per cent of those who had “planned no – plan not fulfilled” had declared uncertainty as to their intentions.

Intention to have a child within the next three years in 2009	Had a child between 2009 and 2013	
	YES	NO
YES	Intention yes – plan fulfilled: 11	Intention yes – plan not fulfilled: 16
NO	Intention no – plan not fulfilled: 3	Intention no – plan fulfilled: 70

Table 22.1: Respondents by combination of childbearing intentions and subsequent reproductive behaviour (in %)

	Intention yes		Intention no	
	fulfilled	not fulfilled	not fulfilled	fulfilled
Age (mean)	30	32	30	34
Male	39	50	50	39
Married	42	29	44	50
Cohabiting	51	48	33	27
Single	7	23	23	23
With new partner in 2013	7	13	14	9
Childless	53	67	43	38
One child	33	21	19	14
Two children	11	8	29	32
Three or more	3	4	9	16
Low education	44	45	49	49
Medium education	34	38	34	38
High education	21	17	17	13
Employed	75	82	75	72
Unemployed	4	2	4	5
Student or in training	3	6	5	10
Housewife, maternity leave, not active	18	9	16	13
Uncertain intentions	47	66	69	28

Table 22.2: Respondents by socio-economic characteristics and combination of childbearing intentions and subsequent reproductive behaviour (in %)

## 23. Childbearing intentions – postponed or abandoned?

ISABELLA BUBER-ENNSER

### Plans to have a child, once expressed, are usually postponed rather than abandoned

Four in ten men and women fulfilled their child-within-three-years intention. What happened to the others who in their own words had planned to have a child within the next three years but did not have one? Another four in ten maintained their childbearing intentions but postponed them, and less than two in ten did not want children any more (Fig. 23.1).

Respondents with childbearing intentions for the future continued to harbour them. Seven in ten who in

2009 had generally wanted children, though not within the next three years but later, still wanted a child in a more distant future. Eight per cent in fact had had a child – sooner than planned in 2009. Two in ten gave up their childbearing intentions and did not want any (more) children in 2013. Even when one does not want any more children at a certain point in time, this attitude can vary over time: one in seven changed their mind in this way: they had not wanted any (more) children in 2009 but in 2013 they did, or had already had one in the meantime.

### Childless people postpone their intentions more often, parents of two often give them up

Respondents childless in 2009 tended to postpone their childbearing intentions by another three years, while parents who already had two or more children more often abandoned them.

### Uncertainties in childbearing intentions are reflected in their realisation

Finally, any uncertainties in the intentions had a considerable influence on their realisation: those who had “most certainly” wanted a child within the next three years, fulfilled this concrete plan much more often (54%) than those who answered the child-within-three-years question by “probably yes” (35%).

### On the international scale, Austrians rarely realise their intention to have a child within three years

While in Austria 43 per cent of people fulfilled their original intention to have a child by actually having one, this figure was at 55 per cent in Switzerland and even 75 per cent in the Netherlands (Fig. 23.2). The intentions were mostly postponed, not completely abandoned. This is true for Austria, Switzerland, Hungary and Bulgaria. In the Netherlands, however, only few people postponed their childbearing intentions.

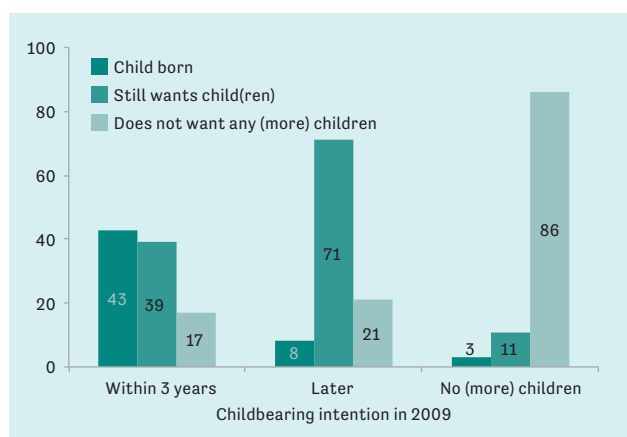


Figure 23.1: Childbearing intentions in 2009 and 2013 (in %)

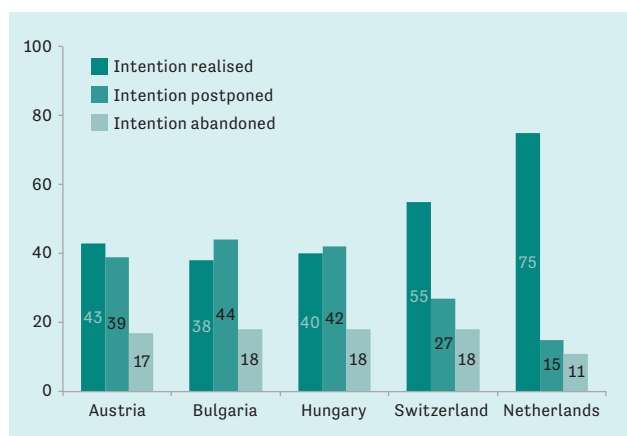


Figure 23.2: Realisation of intention to have a child within three years (in %)

## 24. Comparison with the first Austrian longitudinal study in the 1980s

ISABELLA BUBER-ENNSER AND RICHARD GISSER

Surveys on family and children are taken more or less regularly in Austria. What is special in this study is that the same persons were interviewed twice, in 2009 and 2013. Such a ‘longitudinal or panel study’ with mostly socio-demographic contents had been carried out before in Austria, about three decades ago, and also in two waves: 1978 and 1982. At the time, young married women were interviewed who in 1978 had not been married for more than five years and had been under 30 at the time of wedding. Since meanwhile cohabiting couples have become more common, this group was taken into account for our comparison as well. The current comparison group for our purposes is thus made up of women who in 2009 had been living with their partner for less than five years and had been under 30 at the time of getting married or moving together.

### In 2009, less women wanted to have a child, but more of them fulfilled this intention

How many respondents in 1978 wanted to have a child within the next few years, how many did so in 2009? How many of these fulfilled their intention? In 1978, more women wanted a child than in 2009 (69% vs. 61%), but on the other hand, the women interviewed in 2009 for the first time were more likely to actually realise their

intention (65% vs. 55%). These two opposing components, taken as a whole, surprisingly result in two almost equal groups of ‘child intended and child born’: both back in 1978 and now in 2009, four in ten women intended to have a child and actually had one. However, there is a difference in the numbers of those who did not want a child and did not have one either. This group is larger in the more recent study than in the one from the 1980s (36% vs. 25%) (Fig. 24.1).

In these two groups of married (or in 2009, including cohabiting) young women the total number of intended children was the same at the first interview: 2.2 children. However, while in the 1980s, the second interview yielded a slightly larger intended family size than the first one, in our recent survey the number of intended children decreased to 2.0 children between 2009 and 2013. Moreover, young women in 2009 had comparatively fewer children than in 1978/82 (Fig. 24.2). The figures in this article refer to the particular group of young women living in a union (see above), and their intended family size is larger than for the total of women interviewed.

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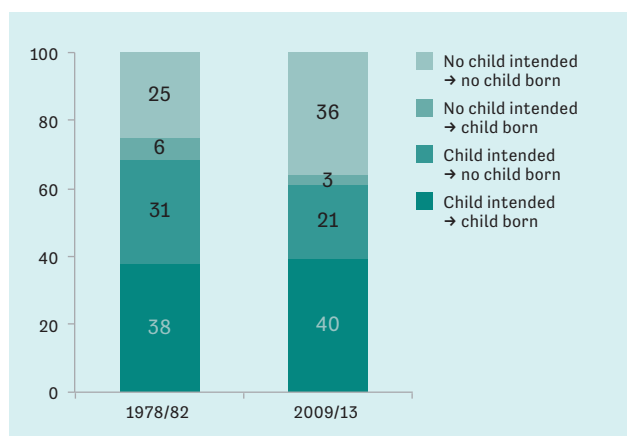


Figure 24.1: Childbearing intentions within the next 3–4 years and their realisation (in %)

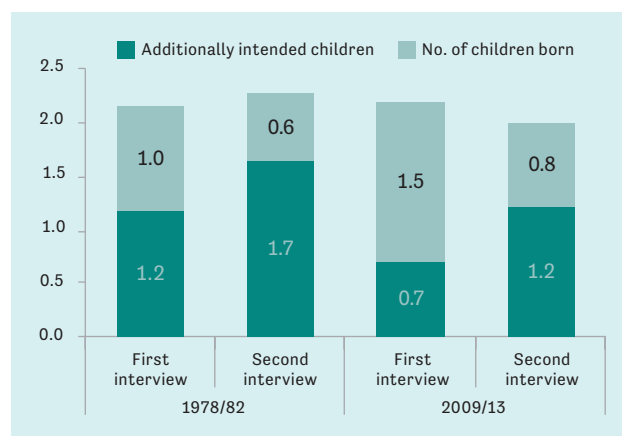


Figure 24.2: Total number of intended children (mean)

## 25. Number of children and realisation of childbearing intentions by education

ISABELLA BUBER-ENNSER

Education is crucial in many areas of our lives. Higher education entails higher participation rates in the labour force, higher life expectancy and fewer impairments in old age. The chances to find a partner, marry or divorce are frequently linked with education. Attitudes and values may vary with the level of education. Moreover, the number of children people want and have also depends on their education.

### Lower educated women tend to have more children than highly educated women

Longer education and postponed family formation are the main reasons for the fact that the higher the education of women aged 18 to 45, the lower the number of children they have had so far. In addition, women's overall childbearing intentions vary with their level of education: In 2009, females who only completed compulsory schooling wanted on average 2.5 children, women with middle education intended to have around 2.1 children, while those with higher education wanted fewer children (1.9).

### Overall fertility intentions declined in particular among young university graduates and many childbearing intentions have remained on their wish list

A differentiation by age and education showed that the childbearing intentions of young university graduates were definitely high (2.3 children) in 2009. Although many of them were mothers by 2013 (the average number of children rose from 0.7 to 1.2), the number of children they had intended to have was drastically undercut. On the one hand, they had considerably lowered their childbearing intentions (from 2.3 to 1.9); on the other hand, the realisation of many of these intentions was still pending (Fig. 25.1). It remains to be seen how many of the on average 0.7 additional children will actually be born. A look at the age group 35–39 shows that only few women became mothers in all education groups. What were women's childbearing intentions for the next three years in 2009 and to which extent were they implemented? Women who had only completed compulsory

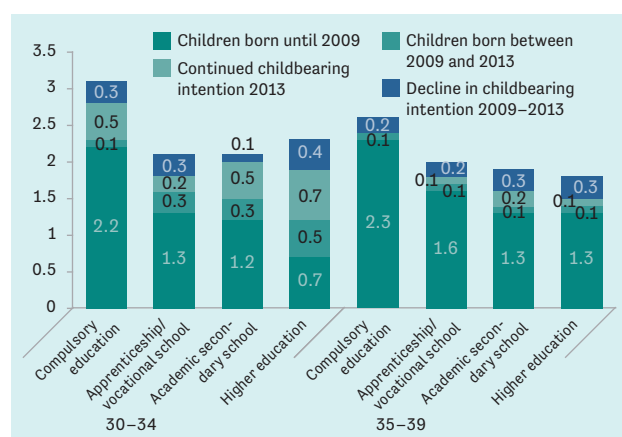


Figure 25.1: Number of children born, overall number of intended children in 2013 and decline since 2009

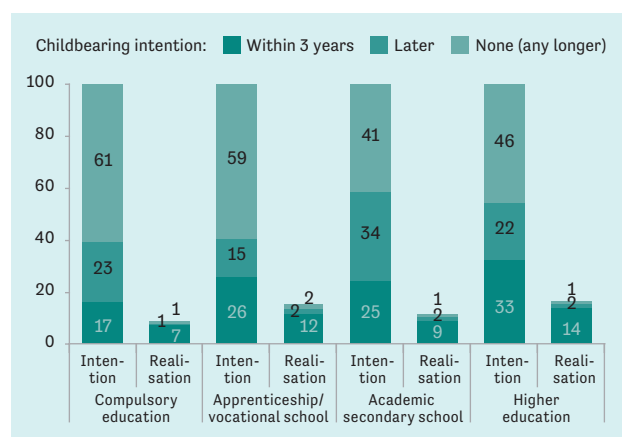


Figure 25.2: Women's intention to have a(n additional) child in 2009 and its realisation, women aged 18–45

schooling less often planned to have a child, many of them already had the number of children they wanted to have. The share of those who intended to have a child within the next three years rose with the level of education (Fig. 25.2): one in four women among those with middle education, and one in three women among those with higher education. Nine to 17 per cent of these women actually had a child by 2013. Women with a vocational education realised their childbearing intentions more often than women who had only completed compulsory education or graduated from academic secondary school.

## 26. Intergenerational financial transfers

VALERIA BORDONE

Within the more general exchange of support between family members, financial transfers (i.e. money, property or other goods) are a crucial component of intergenerational solidarity. The 2013 survey shows that in Austria almost one in ten of all 22 to 49-year olds reported having (themselves or their partner) received financial aid during the past twelve months from someone outside their household. About two in three of them received such transfers from parents and/or parents-in-law.

### Half of all financial transfers from parents(-in-law) to adult children were one-time transfers

One in four transfers was a regular financial aid over the year. The amount transferred was higher when the frequency was lower: One-time transfers were higher than occasional transfers. The fact that more women than men were recipients of financial transfers from parents points to gender differences.

Financial transfers from parents to children may not be long-lasting: four in five recipients of parental financial aid in 2008 were no longer recipients in 2012. Support from parents decreases with age, one-time financial transfers occur most often, probably as inheritance. The average amounts transferred are lowest among the below 30-year olds.

Females, the youngest, students and those having fewer siblings received financial transfers from parents(-in-law) most frequently (Fig. 26.1). Moreover, parents(-in-law) more often supported offspring who were single, did not live with them and did not live with child(ren).

### The likelihood to receive financial support from parents rose with the level of education

Subjects with equal or higher education than their parents were also more likely to receive financial transfers. Moreover, on average, the transferred amount was high-

er for recipients who had achieved intergenerational upward mobility, suggesting that parents mostly rewarded their successful children.

Parents tended to financially support their children especially when they were students, but also in the transition to working life, when they left the parental home and when they started to co-reside with their partner. Parents of children below age three were more likely to receive financial transfers than their peers with older children or with children who did not live in the same household.

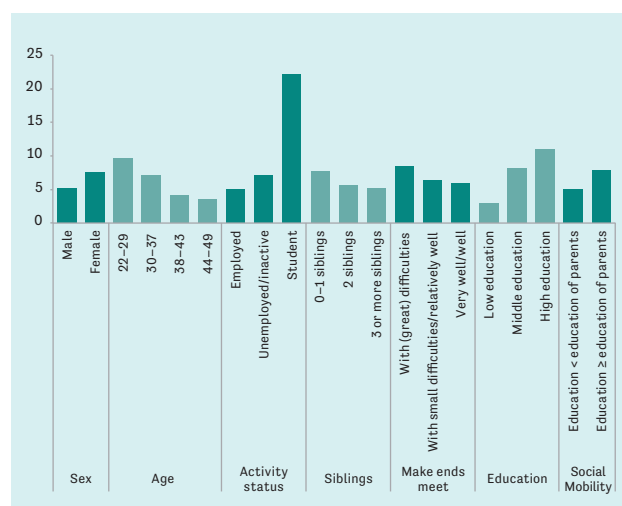


Figure 26.1: Recipients (%) of financial transfers from parents or parents-in-law

About seven per cent of all Austrians aged 22-49 also gave money, properties or other valuable goods to someone outside the household during the past twelve months. However, only one in five of the givers financially assisted a parent or an in-law; while the recipients were the children in one fourth of all cases. Interestingly, almost one in every two adults giving financial aid supported non-close relatives, friends or organisations.



## 27. Public and family responsibilities for child care

MARKUS KAINDL

Toddlers and pupils can be looked after both within the family and in public child-care facilities such as kindergartens or all-day schools. Who is mainly deemed responsible for child care depends on the age of the child.

### Especially after-school care is viewed as a public responsibility

Three in four respondents think that it is predominantly the family's task to look after infants and toddlers under age three, only around four per cent view this as a primarily public responsibility and one in five see it as a duty to be evenly shared by the state and families (Fig. 27.1). For children between age three and school entry (i.e. the typical kindergarten-age range) respondents clearly more often assign the key responsibility for child care to the state. More than half of all respondents

### Respondents who want to have many children give higher responsibility to families

The number of children respondents want to have is a key indicator for the degree to which they consider child care their job. Overall, it is a fact that the likelihood of respondents to primarily see families as the principal authority in charge of child care grows with the number of children they ultimately intend to have.

Even though most respondents think that it is mainly the task of families to look after toddlers under age three, the view of those who eventually want to have several children is more focused on the family: Hardly any of these respondents think that the main responsibility for toddlers' child care rests with the state. Respondents' childbearing intentions are, however, of minor importance when it comes to children in the age bracket three to six. Among the respondents who want to have only one child, equal shares think that the main responsibility for after-school care rests with the state or the family, respectively. However, among the respondents who want to have at least three children, 39 per cent are convinced that families are mainly responsible for after-school care and only 22 per cent assign this responsibility primarily to the state.

### Child care is the joint task of families and the state

Respondents often do not see child care as a one-sided obligation that either predominantly rests with the parents or with the state. For children above age three, more than 40 per cent view this responsibility as the joint task of the state and the family. This viewpoint underlines the supportive and supplementary character of public child-care offers for families in Austria.

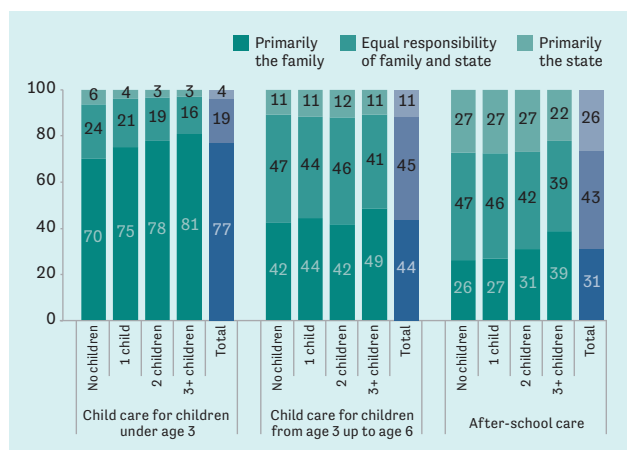


Figure 27.1: Responsibility for child care by ultimate number of intended children (in %)

think that it is at least as much the duty of the state as that of the family to look after children in this age group. This shift of attitudes persists when it comes to after-school care: More than one quarter of all respondents consider after-school care a key task of the state, while only one third think that this is mainly the family's responsibility.

## 28. An international comparison of attitudes towards working mothers

ISABELLA BUBER-ENNSER AND RALINA PANOVA

The attitudes towards working mothers differ greatly across Europe, in particular if the women who work for pay are mothers of small children. 15 European countries were ranked from 'more traditional' to 'less traditional' based on the degree to which respondents agreed with the statement: "A pre-school child is likely to suffer if his/her mother works".

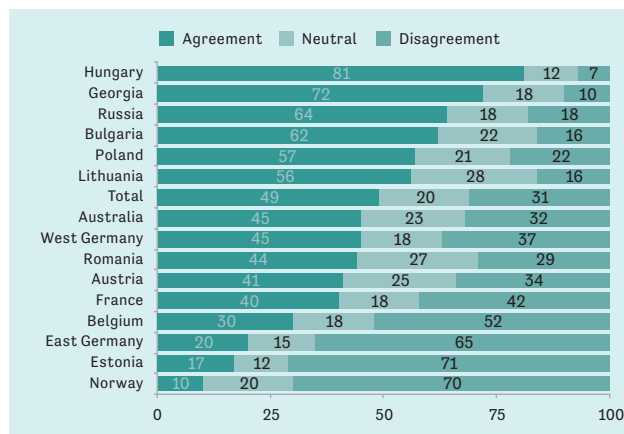


Figure 28.1: Agreement with the statement: "A pre-school child is likely to suffer if his/her mother works" (in %)

### Hungarians were the most traditional, Norwegians the least traditional

While eight in ten Hungarians agreed that a pre-school child was likely to suffer if his/her mother worked, only one in ten Norwegians agreed with this statement. Besides Hungarians, also Georgians, Russians and Bulgarians strongly objected to mothers doing paid work. In addition to Norway, Estonia and East Germany were among the least traditional countries (Fig. 28.1).

### In an international comparison, Austria ranked somewhere near the middle

Four in ten Austrians viewed the paid work of mothers sceptically, one third did not think it endangered children's wellbeing. One fourth neither agreed nor disagreed with the statement. In France, West Germany,

Romania and Australia attitudes were similar to those in Austria. Age, education, sex and the number of children markedly influenced the attitudes: the younger the respondents and the higher their level of education the lower their scepticism; the more children respondents had, the higher their scepticism. Men turned out to be more traditional than women.

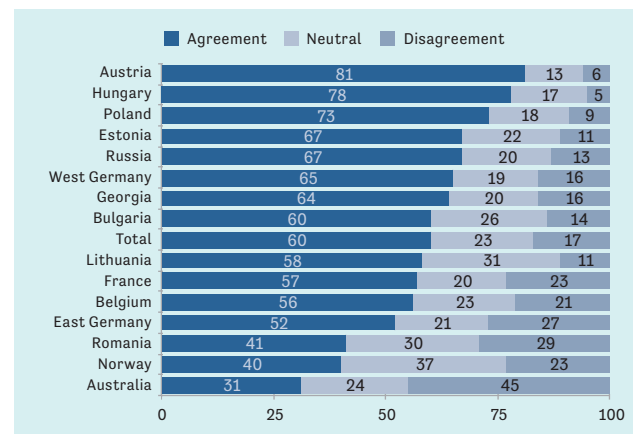
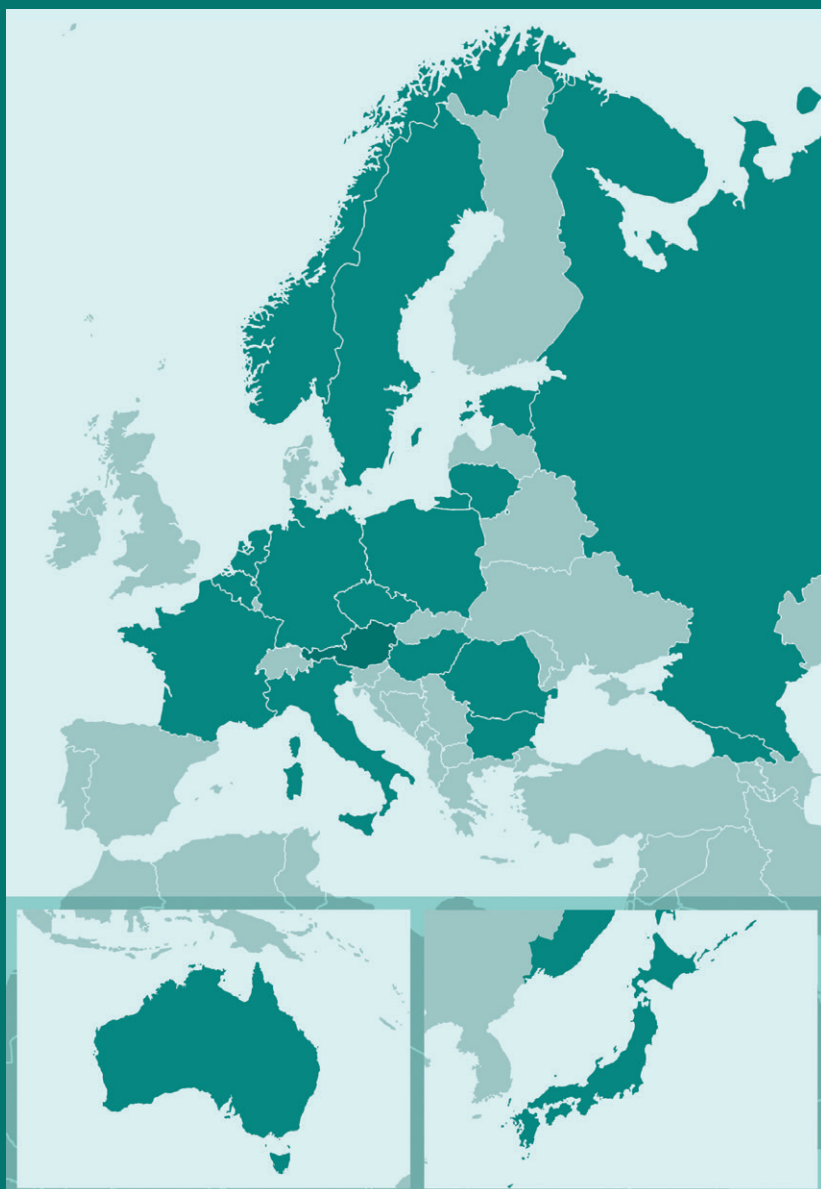


Figure 28.2: Agreement with the statement: "Children often suffer because their fathers concentrate too much on their work" (in %)

Austria took the lead with respect to working fathers and children's wellbeing: eight in ten Austrians thought that children often suffered because their fathers concentrated too much on their work. The country ranking for this statement is different and needs to be analysed in more detail (Fig. 28.2). However, this first result demonstrates that Austrians are highly aware of fathers' excessive focus on work. The results underline the importance of fathers' active participation in child care and education in Austria.



The Generations and Gender Programme (GGP) is a social science research infrastructure providing micro- and macro-level data that significantly improve the knowledge base for social science and policymaking in Europe and developed countries elsewhere.



The GGP is a longitudinal survey of 18–79 year olds in 19 countries that aims to improve our understanding of the various factors affecting the relationships between parents and children (generations) and between partners (gender). A broad array of topics – including fertility, partnership, the transition to adulthood, economic activity, care duties and attitudes – are covered by the survey. In total, 13 out of the 19 participating countries have carried out a second wave and thus allow longitudinal analyses.

In Austria, the first wave was carried out in 2008/9 and includes 5,000 persons (3,000 women and 2,000 men) aged 18–45 years. Therefore, Austria deviates from the international programme, as it focuses on the persons in the reproductive ages only. The second wave was carried out in 2012/13 where, besides the re-interviewed panel respondents, the next cohorts of young adults were taken into account as well.

The Austrian Institute for Family Studies at the University of Vienna and the Vienna Institute of Demography of the Austrian Academy of Sciences jointly

planned and prepared the Generations and Gender Survey (GGS). The Austrian GGS was conducted by Statistics Austria with the financial support of the Federal Ministry of Economy, Family and Youth, the Federal Ministry of Science and Research and the Federal Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Consumer Protection.