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Economic Demography Research Unit

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Work-family balance and childbearing intentions in France, Germany and Russia

Ariane Pailhé

GGP

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Work and family: Important aspects for family choices

- 70ies & 80ies: women's labour force participation one of the main explanation for fertility level
- Reversal of the relationship between fertility and female employment since the mid 80ies (Ahn & Mira, 2002; Engelhardt et al., 2004)
- New way of thinking: policies that ease the incompatibility between work and family may affect fertility (Rindfuss & Brewster, 2003)
- *"Work-family balance is also important for longer trends in population... It is plausible that improvement in the work-family balance could help to increase both the current employment rates and fertility rates"* (OECD, 2001)
- Reconciliation between work and family one of the major topics on the European social agenda



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Theoretical considerations

- Main economic theory of fertility decision: new home economics (Becker, 1981; Cigno, 1991)
- Rational decision : Parents weigh the costs and benefits of having children
 - Direct monetary costs
 - Opportunity costs: foregone earnings due to reduced labour force participation (short and long term)
 - Real or perceived
- Family policies and work-life balance policies may reduce those costs:
 - To compensate families for the forgone earnings: allowances
 - To reduce interruptions and “structural incompatibility” between work and family (Liefbrower & Corijn, 1999):
Work-family balance policies



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Work-family balance

- 2 actors:
 - State
 - Employer (OECD, 2002-2005; EGGsIE, 2005; Den Dulk, 2001)
- Childcare service
 - Affordable
 - High quality to increase acceptability
 - Flexibility in opening hours
- Flexible working time arrangements (worker oriented)
 - Possibility of taking days off (including leaves)
 - Possibility of reducing working hours (including part-time work)
 - Variation of entrance/exit time
 - Accumulation of working time
 - Working at home, work sharing...



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Impact of economic uncertainty

- High youth unemployment, more insecure jobs, transition economies
- One of the main explanations for the postponement of family formation (Blossfeld et al., 2005)
- 2 opposite effects
 - Unemployment lowers the opportunity cost of children and increases fertility: center live on the private sphere and then invest in children (Friedman et al., 1994)
 - Lowers the opportunity cost of pursuing education => increases the cost of children (Kohler et al., 2002)



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Family friendly policies and fertility

(Gauthier, 2006)

- Childcare cost and availability
 - Mixed results: positive but no strong results or non significant
- Effect of leaves on fertility
 - Mixed results: small positive impact/no evidence of impact/tempo effect
- Part time
 - Mixed results
 - - Del Bocca et al., 2007; Budig, 2003
 - + Liefbrower & Corinje, 1996
- Flexible work hours
 - Positive effect in OECD countries (Castels, 2003)



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Economic uncertainty and fertility

- Effect of female unemployment/non employment: Mixed results
 - - France (Meron, Widmer, 2002), Flanders (Impens, 1989), Germany high educated (Kreyenfeld et al., 2002)
 - Ns USA (Rindfuss et al., 1991)
 - + Norway (Kravdal, 1994)
- Temporary jobs: negative effect (Ahn & Mira, 2001, De Wit e tal., 1998)



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-
- GGS data useful to test the effect of work family balance policies and job uncertainty
 - Wave 1: intentions of fertility
 - They could be used as an indicator or predictor of future fertility (Schoen et al. 1999)
 - 3 countries:
 - France: 2005
 - Germany: 2005
 - Russia: 2004



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Different institutional contexts (1/1)

	France	Germany	Russia
Total fertility rate	1.94	1.39	1.35
Mean age at first birth	27.7	28.2	24
GDP per capita	30,386	29,461	10,845
Unemployment rate (1996-2005)	9.8	11.1	7.8
Female participation rate (25-54) in 2003	79.3	77.8	74.6
			(16-54)
Gender related development index (rank)	7	22	58
Gender empowerment measure (rank)	18	28	71

- ⇒ Different demographic setting
- ⇒ Different labour market
- ⇒ Different orientation towards gender and family



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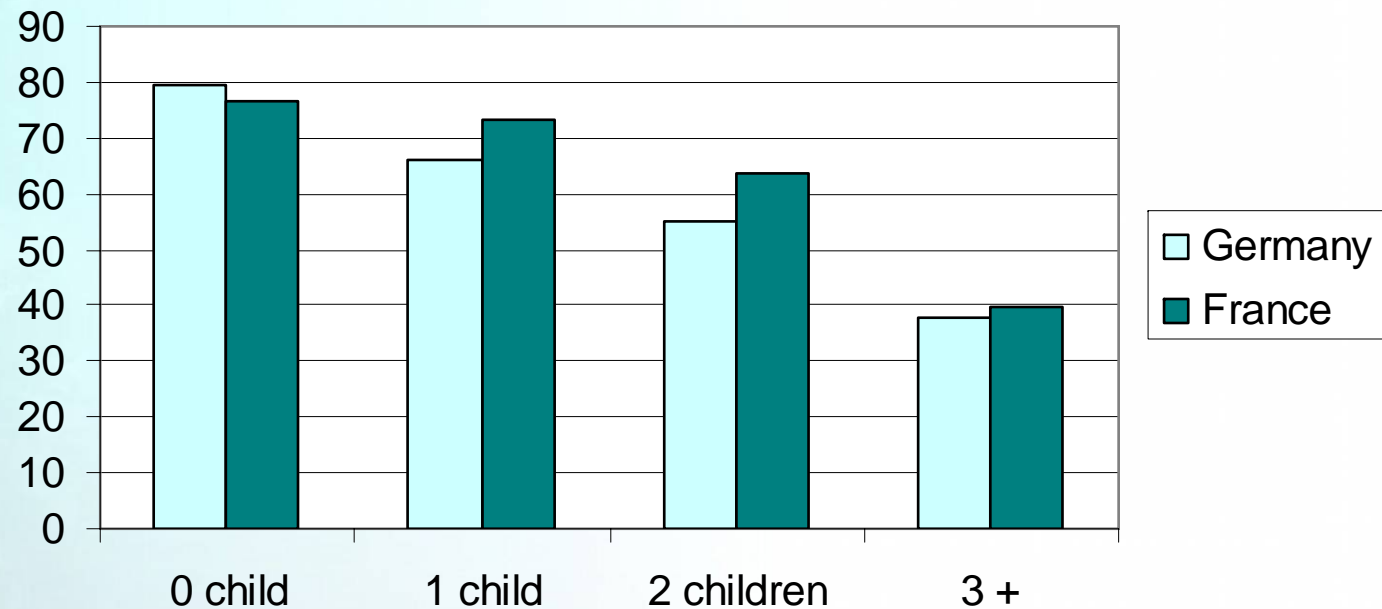


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Different institutional contexts (1/2)

Female participation rate by number of children



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Different family policies

- Russia : allowances do not compensate losses of incomes associated with childbearing; low paid parental leave, decrease of childcare availability
- Germany: family policy generous in allowances but weak in child care infrastructures; parental leave; part time daycare and school
- France: favorable context for the conciliation between work and family through a relatively comprehensive and continuous support: combination of subsidized private and public providers, parental leave, allowances



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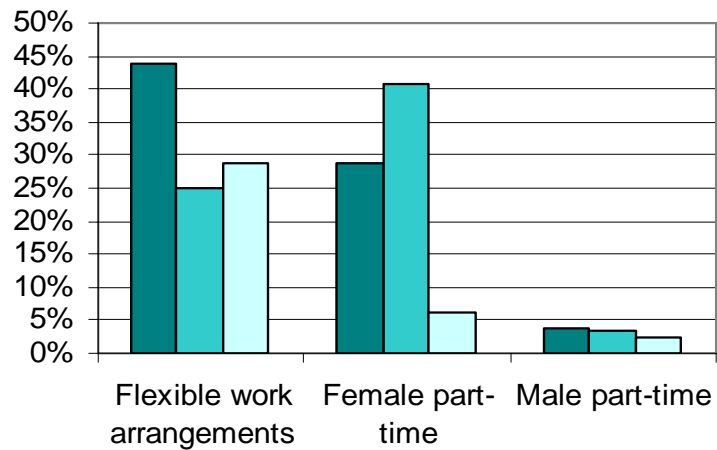
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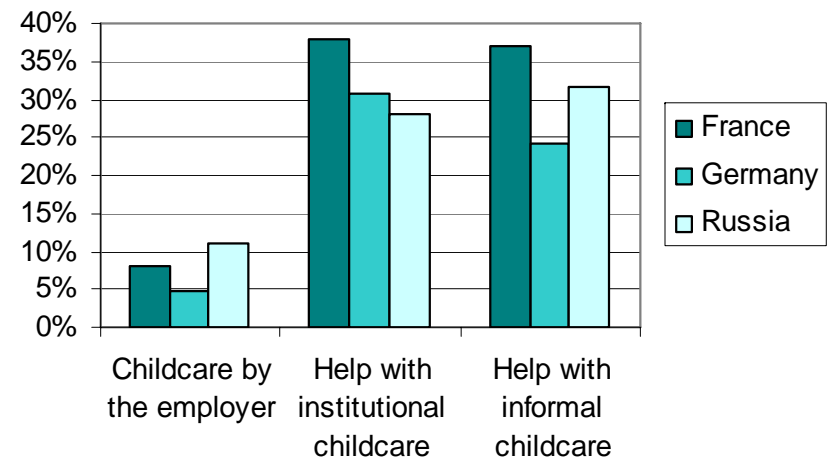
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Time arrangements



Childcare



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Sample: working people in couple, aged 18-45
Help: with at least one child <14

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Sample

- Men and women aged 18-45
- Having a partner (coresident or not)
- Physically possible to have children (R or P)

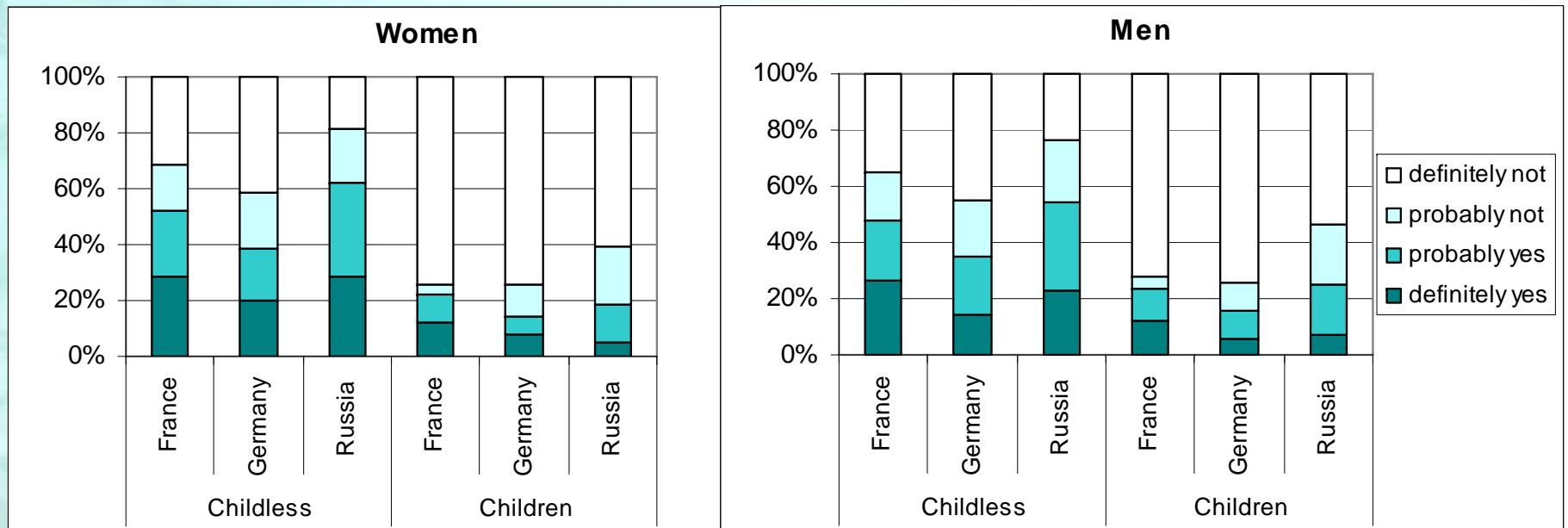
- Men and women are analysed separately
 - France: 1896 women, 1307 men
 - Germany: 1242 women, 845 men
 - Russia: 1904 women, 1415 men



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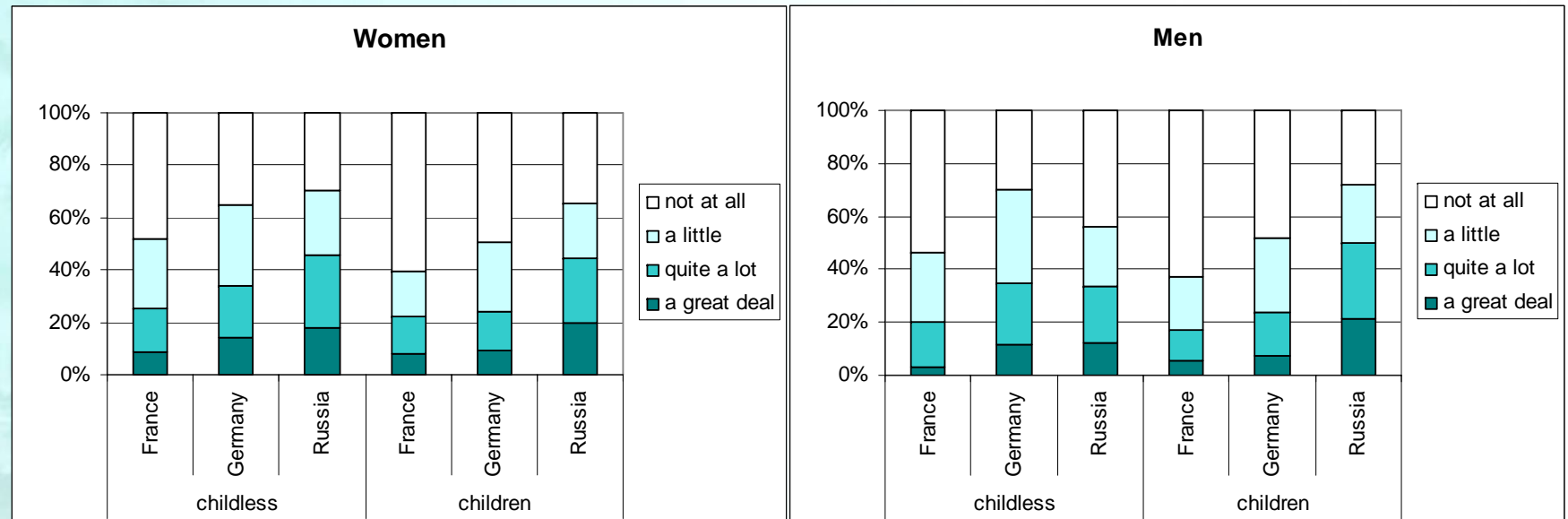
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Do you intend to have a/another child during the next 3 years?



- ⇒ Intentions high for childless women
- ⇒ Lower in Germany
- ⇒ First birth: higher in Russia, 2nd birth: France
- ⇒ Intentions quite similar for men and women

How much the fertility decision depends on availability of childcare



⇒ Availability of childcare important determinant of fertility intentions

⇒ More in Germany and Russia

⇒ A negative correlation between fertility intentions and concern about childcare



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Results: Work stability

- Entry in parenthood

	Women			Men		
	France	Germany	Russia	France	Germany	Russia
non permanent job	-	-	+	ns	ns	ns
permanent job	ref.	ref.	ref.	ref.	ref.	ref.
unemployed/OLF	(-)	ns	+	-	ns	-
student	-	(-)	ns	-	-	-
Non working partner	-	ns	-	-	ns	ns

- Another birth

	Women			Men		
	France	Germany	Russia	France	Germany	Russia
non permanent job	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	+
permanent job	ref.	ref.	ref.	ref.	ref.	ref.
unemployed	ns	ns	ns			
student/OLF	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns
Parental leave	-	ns	ns			
Non working partner	ns	ns	-	ns	ns	ns

Control var: age, age difference between partners, partnership status, education level, # children, age of the youngest child, satisfaction with dwelling, religiosity, # siblings



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Results: Family friendly policies

	Childless		With children	
	Women	Men	Women	Men
Flexible work schedule	(+)	ns	ns	ns
Part-time	-	-	ns	ns
Childcare by employer	+	+	ns	+
Institutional childcare			ns	ns
Informal childcare			-	ns

Germany: flexible work schedule + for childless women

Covariates: former ones + Public/private + Profession



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Conclusion

- Job insecurity
 - negative effect on intentions to entry in motherhood in France and Germany, positive in Russia
 - Negative effect for entry in fatherhood
 - No effect for additional kids
- Work life balance policies
 - Positive effect of provision of childcare by employer
 - Effect of flexible work schedules in Germany
 - Small effects may be due to the heterogeneity of measures



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Next steps of the research

- To examine behaviour: transition to the first and next children
 - Are fertility plans realised? Is there a gap between intentions and reality?
 - Do employment status and work family balance play a role on realisation of intentions?
- Next waves of GGS!!



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