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DEMOGRAPHIC PATTERNS IN EUROPE

A REVIEW OF AUSTRIA, GERMANY, THE NETHERLANDS, ESTONIA, LATVIA, AND LITHUANIA

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Abstract

Since the Second World War demographic behaviour has changed dramatically in the industrialised world. Marriage and fertility rates have declined substantially and total fertility rates have reached unprecedented low levels. All European countries (except Iceland and Turkey) now have fertility levels well below the replacement level. Divorce rates, non-marital cohabitation and extramarital fertility, on the other hand, have increased significantly, as has the age at first marriage and first birth. However, when, and at which speed, these changes have occurred has varied greatly between different countries. The new pattern of development, generally referred to as the "second demographic transition", appeared in Northern and Western Europe in the mid 1960s and then spread to the Southern countries, and more recently to the Eastern parts of Europe. In this overview I discuss the demographic development in Germany, The Netherlands, Austria, Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania since the 1960s. The issues I focus on are: transition to adulthood (mainly the act of leaving parental home), partnership and fertility. I also present different explanations for the demographic changes. Some explanations deal with economic aspects such as the increased labour force participation and autonomy of women. Regarding the rapid demographic changes in the post-socialist states in Eastern Europe most explanations focus on the economic and social hardship following the collapse of the system. For Western Europe, cultural explanations such as values, secularisation and greater acceptance towards e.g. divorce and non-marital cohabitation, are used to a higher extent.

Sammanfattning

Under efterkrigstiden har familjemönstret genomgått stora förändringar i den industrialiserade världen. Äktenskapsfrekvensen och fruktsamheten har sjunkit avsevärt och i alla europeiska länder (Island och Turkiet undantaget) är födelsetalen i dag långt under reproduktionsnivån. Skilsmässofrekvensen, samboende och utomäktenskapliga födslar, å andra sidan, har ökat betydligt, liksom medelåldern vid första äktenskapet och födseln. När, och med vilken hastighet, dessa förändringar har inträffat varierar dock mellan de olika länderna. Det nya demografiska mönstret, ofta benämnt den "andra demografiska transitionen", uppkom i norra och västra Europa på 1960-talet och spred sig sedan till Syd- och Östeuropa. I denna översikt diskuterar jag den demografiska utvecklingen i Tyskland, Nederländerna, Österrike, Estland, Lettland och Litauen sedan 1960-talet. De frågor jag fokuserar på är: övergången till vuxenlivet (framförallt att flytta hemifrån), partnerskap och födelsetal. Jag presenterar även olika förklaringar till de demografiska förändringarna. En del förklaringar tar avstamp i ekonomiska teorier om kvinnors ökade arbetskraftsdeltagande och autonomi. I fråga om de dramatiska demografiska förändringarna i de post-socialistiska staterna i Östeuropa baseras de flesta förklaringarna på de ekonomiska och sociala svårigheter som följde systemets kollaps. När det gäller förändringarna i Västeuropa används kulturella förklaringar, såsom värderingar, sekularisering och ökad acceptans mot exempelvis skilsmässa och samboende utanför äktenskapet, i högre utsträckning.

ABBREVIATIONS

ECE – Economic Commission for Europe

CEE countries - Central and Eastern European countries (the former socialist states)

FFS - Family and Fertility Survey

FRG - Federal Republic of Germany (West Germany)

GDP - Gross Domestic Product

GDR - German Democratic Republic (East Germany)

IUD - Intra-uterine (contraceptive) device

TFR - Total Fertility Rate

1. INTRODUCTION

During the past decades, significant demographic changes have taken place in Europe, both in partnership and reproductive behaviour. These changes include a postponement and decrease in marriage and childbirth and an increase in divorce and cohabiting unions. Today, Europe's population as a whole has the lowest fertility of any major block of countries, on an average well below replacement level (Coleman 1996, Latten and de Graaf 1997).

When analysing demographic trends in western[1] societies the notion of "the second demographic transition" has almost become a paradigm. The second demographic transition began in Northern and Western Europe in the mid 1960s and then spread to the Southern countries, and more recently to the eastern parts of Europe. The Central and Eastern European (CEE) countries underwent enormous socio-economic changes after the fall of the Iron Curtain. After almost 50 years under Soviet rule Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia regained their independence in 1990-1991. In the Baltic States, as in many other CEE countries, the demographic development in the late 20th century has been rather turbulent. In the 1990s a new demographic pattern began to develop. Life-styles, values, priorities, economic activity and marital and fertility behaviour have undergone rapid change. The economies of the former socialist countries are still in the process of transition. In the early 1990s the economies hit the bottom. The recovery started in the mid-1990s and at the end of the decade the GDP per capita increased significantly in the Baltic countries (Katus et al. 2000, Philipov 2002, Stankuniene et al. 2000).

The demographic transition reflects and contributes to changes in societal beliefs and attitudes, economic development and scientific and medical knowledge. Since the 1960s abortion and divorce have been legalized in most European countries and legal systems have commonly reduced or eliminated the distinction between legitimate and illegitimate births. The traditional family characterised by strict gender specific role segregation has transformed into a relationship in which men and women maintain a high degree of autonomy in pursuing their own individual interests both outside and within unions. Young people today are less subject to family control

[1] "Western" in the broad Cold War sense.

and social norms and can freely decide whether and when to cohabit, marry, divorce or have children. Increasing individualisation entails growing diversity in life courses and longer periods of singlehood and unmarried cohabitation. The extent to which different populations have adopted these patterns has differed greatly, thus creating diversity in Europe's population in matters of sexual behaviour, living arrangements, and family forms (Billari et al. 2000, Coleman 1996).

This overview describes demographic patterns in Western, Central and Eastern Europe, namely: Germany, The Netherlands, Austria, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania.[2] The issues I will discuss are leaving parental home, partnership and fertility. The separation and reunification of Germany offer a unique opportunity for comparisons. For more than 40 years the two parts differed in ideology and family policy, at the same time as they, more than any other European countries, resembled each other culturally. In contemporary Europe many countries are so-called multi-ethnic societies, which naturally enhance the diversity regarding patterns of family formation. The Netherlands, Austria and Germany all have high rates of immigration and the population in the Baltic States has always included multiple nationalities and ethnic groups (Latten and de Graaf 1997, Prinz et al. 1998, Stankuniene et al. 2000). In the Fertility and Family Survey (FFS) of Estonia the writers distinguish between native and foreign-born Estonians. In this review I will primarily refer to the native Estonians.

2. THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES

Specific demographic, political, economic and cultural factors determine family and household size and composition, including substantial regional variations on aspects such as the socio-economic welfare of the family, the functioning of the household as a working unit, the role and status of women, marriage patterns and co-residence of kin (Billari et al. 2000). How these factors interact and which are the crucial ones vary with different theories.

[2] In this text I distinguish between East and West Germany even though they are united since more than 10 years. This is because a large amount of the data I discuss stem from the period before the fall of the Berlin Wall. Moreover, still today there are vast differences in demographic patterns between the former East and West Germany.

The economic theory of the family was developed by American economists in the late 1960s and throughout the 1970s and 1980s, a period in which women's increasing labour force participation and demands for gender equality began to transform the roles of women. According to neo-classical economic theory cohabitation, later marriage, increased divorce rates and delayed parenthood are primarily the outcome of a general reduction in gains of marriage for women and of a considerable increase in the opportunity costs of motherhood. The increased opportunity cost of motherhood is a result of higher education, greater earnings capacity, and consequently increased bargaining power and more financial independence for women. According to economists women in industrialised societies traditionally depend on men for economic provision; men rely on women to bear and rear children and to look after the home. Thus, the mutual dependence of men and women provides the major incentive for partners to marry and to stay together. This view assumes that also values are determined by socio-economic conditions and that there is no independent additional outcome originating from ideational factors (Blossfeld et al. 1995, Blossfeld and Müller 2002, Philipov 2002).

The economic theory has been criticised on several points. Oppenheimer argues that higher levels of schooling and concomitant enhanced economic autonomy for women have increased the standards for a "minimally acceptable match". Cohabitation and prolonged dating reflect a trial run and a more careful search for a partner. In this view the postponement of marriage and child-birth and higher divorce rates merely suggest higher standards and expectations in what partners can get out of marriage, not an economically induced "de-institutionalisation". The post-materialist theorists stress the importance of values, secularisation, the refusal of institutional morality, freedom of choice and the greater tolerance for the choices and lifestyles of others (Lesthaeghe and Moors 1996). The impact of changes in norms, values and attitudes on fertility behaviour has been extensively studied where western societies are considered. Secularisation, enhanced female autonomy, and increasing individualism are factors that are considered as contributing to a reduction in the pressure of traditional norms related to high fertility (Philipov 2002).

When it comes to demographic changes in Eastern and Central Europe after the fall of the socialist regime demographers explain these in diverse ways. The predominant explanations can roughly be divided into two groups. One relates to the direct social and economic hardship of the

transition, such as unemployment, impoverishment and the increase in the costs of children. The other emphasises ideational changes. Some claim that the drop in fertility is basically the outcome of long-lasting ideational changes that began to develop before the start of the transition. The discontinuity of the transition then created conditions for a sudden ideational change different from the long-term development. The ideational transformations that occurred during the transition period in the CEE countries differ from the longstanding ideational shift towards modern society observed in Western Europe where new patterns of behaviour spread gradually. Rapid changes in norms, values, preferences and behaviour cause disorientation and uncertainty. In situations like these people may decide to postpone or even reject crucial and irreversible life events, such as marriage or childbirth. Philipov (2002) attempts to connect the economic and the ideational perspectives and discusses the transition period as one of discontinuity and social crises, as old institutions are entirely reorganised or even demolished and new ones are being constructed. This state of de-institutionalisation and weakening normative regulations is what Durkheim described as *social anomie,* that is, normlessness. Given that the ideational change is triggered by the economic difficulties the ideational approach interacts with the economic explanation mentioned above.

Another social and economic aspect that is assumed to have substantial impact on fertility behaviour is *relative deprivation*. Relative deprivation means that people consider their income as low relative to others or to their personal expectations, and therefore view their economic situation as inappropriate for having a(nother) child. In the CEE countries most people did not experience a significant drop in their personal life but still assess themselves economically deprived relative to others (Philipov 2002).

There are not as many theories concerning leaving home as about fertility. The fact that leaving home often is closely related to union formation complicates the analysis of income and occupational effects (Aassave et al 2001). Huinink and Konietzka identify the act of leaving home as an individual decision process with potential incentives and disincentives of action. They structure the situational aspects in three dimensions of conditions of action that affect the subjective interpretation of the situation in which action takes place. These dimensions have effects on the relative relevance of incentives and disincentives of a certain action in a different way. First, there are the *objective conditions* of action, that is, the cultural, social, political,

economic and ecological circumstances which favour or disfavour a certain kind of action. These conditions exist at the macro-level of society, the meso-level of the social context, the family of origin and a potential partnership. Second, there are the *resources* the individual has access to: economic capital, human/cultural capital, psychic capital and biological/genetic capital. Third, there are the individual *psychosocial dispositions* a person holds: beliefs, convictions, values, expectations, orientations and emotions.

3. LEAVING PARENTAL HOME

Preface

The transition to adulthood is a multi-dimensional process including different but related "status passages" in the life course that affect social, cultural and economic dimensions of gaining independence from the parents (Huinink and Konietzka 2000). In the process of the transition to adulthood leaving the parental home is considered being a crucial event. It usually implies not only household independence but also greater social autonomy for young people (Billari et al. 2000). The process of leaving the parental home has changed in several aspects in terms of timing, reasons and reversibility. State subsidies, the housing market and the labour market are factors that favour or disfavour the home leaving process. It is important to distinguish between the diverse conditions of the adolescents when they have left home, as the amount and the structure of the material and social capital of the new places of residence might be quite different both within and between countries (Hullen 2000).

The age at leaving home varies greatly across Europe. However, leaving home is not a one-way street; it has rather become a fluid process that is often characterised by temporary returns to the parental home prior to permanent independent residence (Cherlin et al. 1997). The fact that many young people return to their parents' home implies a methodological dilemma. Do we count the *first time* one leaves home or the *last time* (until interview date)? And how do we relate to those who leave home to do military service or study for a long period of time? There are often inconsistencies in how to count; some researchers therefore distinguish between the first and the last time leaving parental home.

Two subgroups can be distinguished regarding the age at leaving home. The motive of higher education is the main reason for leaving home up to the age of 20. Thereafter, the primary reason for moving out is cohabitation or marriage. For those who move out when marrying or having a child, rising ages at leaving parental home over cohorts are visible. This goes along with the fact that the age at marriage and family formation increased in the younger cohorts. But for those who leave home in connection with other reasons, like attaining further education, no clear postponement has evolved (Huinink and Konietzka 2000, Hekken et al. 1997).

The timing of leaving the parental home

In the last 20 years, the period of youth has extended gradually since transition from one status group to another has shifted to a later stage in people's life. Studies focusing on trends in the twentieth century show a declining age of leaving the parental home from the 1920s until around 1970-80, when a reversal is noted in many western countries. A large-scale comparative study over Central and Eastern Europe is still lacking and, with the exception of Poland, comparative analyses have up to now not addressed these countries (Billari et al. 2000).

Interestingly, some CEE countries seem to follow the Southern European pattern with late and heterogeneous home leaving. In these countries some people never leave the parental home during their whole life. By contrast, almost all women have left home in Western and Northern Europe (including former East Germany) at age 35. Austria is the Western European country that has the highest percentage (12%) of men who stays at home until age 35 (Billari et al. 2000).

To estimate the variability of the distribution of ages at home-leaving one can measure the inter-quartile difference of the distribution, that is, the number of years, which pass from when 25% of the people have left home to when 75% have left home. Demographers sometimes use the terms standardised (homogenous) home leaving and individualised (heterogeneous) home leaving. The Nordic countries, together with France, Belgium, East and West Germany are considered homogenous while in Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Portugal and Italy the age at leaving home is more heterogeneous (Billari et al. 2000). Some researchers claim there is an increasing heterogeneity and life-course disorder due to de-standardization and de-coupling of the events in the transition to adulthood (Huinink and Konietzka 2000). Women are generally more homogenous than men in their behaviour. Young men tend to stay longer at the parental home

than women in all countries included in this overview. The age difference between men and women when leaving home is on average one to two years. This difference reflects the average age difference between men and women regarding age at first cohabitation or marriage, a difference that stays constant over cohorts (Hekken et al. 1997, Prinz et al. 1998).

Little is known about the timing and structure of leaving the parental home in the former **East Germany** and there are no studies on leaving the parental home that exclusively deal with the time period after the German unification. The FFS carried out in 1992, showed no remarkable difference in the timing of leaving home in the former East and West Germany.[3] Compared to West Germany, East Germany has in general less cohort-specific differences and more stability.[4] In **West Germany**, there is a long-term trend towards leaving home earlier.[5] It is uncertain in what direction the age at leaving home has moved in the recent years. Some research show that the cohorts born in the early 1960s left home *later* than previous cohorts (Huinink and Konietzka 2000).[6] Contrary to the common notion of increasing life-course disorder, there is no indication of de-standardised patterns of leaving parental home in Germany. The difference between the first and the last leave from the parental home did not increase up to the cohort born in 1960. If there is a growing disorder and reversibility of events in the transition to adulthood it is in the younger cohorts. However, some young people, in particular students, maintain both independent and parental residences at the same time, which confirms the theory of the home leaving as a fluid process (Cherlin et al. 1997).

In **Austria**, the age at leaving home declined in the 1970s and 1980s.[7] In the 1990s young people stayed increasingly longer in the parental home. Unlike many other European countries this is due to longer education and not a consequence of increasing unemployment and worsened living standards for adolescents (Prinz et al. 1998). In the **Netherlands** leaving parental home is often connected with the completion of formal education, entry into the labour market and/or family

[3] According to the 1992 FFS males aged 20-39 left home at age 22.9 in West Germany and 22.6 in East Germany. Women aged 20-39 left home at 21.4 in West Germany and 21.1 in East Germany.
[4] Between the cohorts of 1929-31 and 1959-1961 the median age for men barely changed. For women the median age fell from 23 to 21 during the same time period (Huinink and Konietzka 2000).
[5] The age at finally leaving home has declined from a median age of 27 to age 23 for men and from 26 to 20 years for women since the 1920s.
[6] According to the Family and Fertility Survey in Germany of 1992 the younger cohorts had left home at higher ages. For the 20 to 39 years old cohorts the median age of men had increased from 22.6 to 24 years and the median age of women from 20.9 to 21.6 years (Hullen 2000).
[7] Of the 1957-1961 cohorts as many as 82% of the women and 68% of the men had left home by age 23.

formation. However, increasingly young people who leave home do so to live alone. Women leave home somewhat earlier than men do. Most 20-24 year old men still live with their parents while among their female counterparts a majority has already left home (Latten and de Graaf 1997).

In **Estonia** a trend towards earlier departure from home prevailed among the older cohorts. But for the cohorts born during the 1950s the trend ceased and for the youngest cohorts a reverse trend towards later home leaving emerges.[8] Also in **Latvia** there has been a trend towards later home leaving for the younger cohorts.[9] In **Lithuania** the age at leaving parental home has increased with every cohort included in the FFS.[10] The delay in departure from home is most apparent for cohorts born in the 1970s. Although about 40% of the men and 50 % of the women have left home before the age of 20 as many as 21% of the women still live at home at the age of 35. This indicates a rather heterogeneous home-leaving (Stankuniene et al. 2000).

State support, education, labour market and housing

State support of young people's autonomy and welfare differs dramatically among European countries in terms of housing market policies, labour market policies, and direct transfers of taxation. In those countries where state support is weaker, family support is more important (Billari et al. 2000). In the **Netherlands** the income source for young people has shifted from parental support to state subsidies. This raises questions about the effect of economic support of the state, does it promote or stabilise the leaving home process one way or another? According to Hekken et al. (1997) financial measures by the state do promote an early departure from home. In the 1950s, however, when the age of leaving home began to decrease, there was no financial support in the Netherlands. In the 1960s and early 1970s financial state support made it possible for young people to leave home at a young age. In the early 1980s, when youth wages dropped dramatically and the unemployment among young people rose severely, the age at leaving home began to rise again.

[8] For the birth cohort of 1949 the median age at leaving home was approximately 20 years, for the 1969 cohort it had increased slightly to 20.6 (Katus et al. 2000).
[9] In the cohort of 1955-1960 the median age at leaving home was about 20.9 years for women and 23.8 for men, while in the cohort of 1965-1970 the median age had risen to 22.9 respectively 24.1 years (Zvidrins et al. 1998).
[10] The median age has increased from 18.5 for both women and men in the 1950-55 cohorts to 20.5 for women and 21.3 for men in the 1965-1970 cohorts.

A number of studies show that leaving the parental home is increasingly linked with transitions in the educational system and particularly the transition from the educational system to the labour market. The extended educational careers have led to a gradual postponement of the transition to the first job in the last decade. More and more people are attaining higher education in all six countries. Some studies find that higher education delays leaving home while others show that higher studies accelerates leaving home. On the one hand, student loans and grants and/or parental resources provide students with sufficient resources to leave home. On the other hand, a substantial share of those attaining higher education stay in the parental home for economic reasons or motives of more favourable living conditions in the parental home. Since students in general are economically dependent on some kind of cash transfer, many students return to the parental home after graduation. The leap into adulthood, associated with leaving the nest, might therefore not be as significant for university students as for those in employment (Huinink and Konietzka 2000).

In the **Netherlands** younger cohorts enter the labour market at a higher age than older cohorts. Evidently this has to do with the prolonged period of education (Latten and de Graaf 1997). Huinink and Konietzka (2000) argue that the earlier timing of leaving home in **East Germany** compared with **West Germany** is due to differences in opportunity structures, like the educational systems. For example, until recently, access to Abitur (graduation) was possible one year earlier in East Germany than in West Germany. Also, in the GDR the proportion in higher education was smaller than in the FRG. As a consequence of a less widespread university system in the GDR students were more likely to leave the parental home and move to another city. Another reason was the restricted living conditions in the parents' home. Since most students did not have access to a flat of their own they lived in student accommodations. In the **Baltic States** education has increased considerably after the transition. In Estonia and Latvia more and more people attain higher education while in Lithuania the number of university students was high already at the start of the transition. However, the enrolment ratio in the CEE countries is still lower than those observed in Western Europe (Philipov 2002).

The political and economical changes in the CEE countries during the 1990s gave rise to new phenomena such as inflation and unemployment, which, at least officially, did not exist before.

Another recent important feature is the rapid spread of impoverishment. Like unemployment poverty started from very low levels and rose to incredibly high levels in some countries.[11]

East and **West Germany** had similar institutional settings structuring the transition into the employment system. However, the economic aspects were less important in the transition to adulthood in East Germany compared with West Germany. While in West Germany labour market integration was more or less necessary to leave home, in East Germany this was not the case. The risks regarding the individual work career and economic support, which individuals typically encounter in a market economy, were not apparent. Still, in the West German (occupationally based) labour market even the first job tends to be a relatively stable job compared with the instable labour market young people in countries like the US, Britain, France and Italy, encounter (Huinink and Konietzka 2000).

The housing market is another issue that affects the leaving home process. A tightening housing market (allocation, quality and price) on the whole makes it more difficult and less appealing to leave the parental home. Therefore home leaving is postponed. If the housing market is tight the *benefits* of leaving the parental home ("pull factors") are greater, on the other hand the potential *costs* of staying in the parental household ("push factors") are higher as well (Huinink and Konietzka 2000). The transition from a socialist centralised planned economy to a market economy seriously affected the housing market in East Germany and the Baltic States as it has slowed down the housing construction and raised the apartment prices significantly.[12] Also in many larger cities in Western Europe, e.g. in the **Netherlands**, difficult housing situations worsen the possibilities for young people who are about to leave parental home (Cherlin et al. 1997, Zvidrins et al. 1998).

In the former **GDR** leaving the parental home was greatly influenced by specific "opportunity structures" and constraints on the societal level, among which the housing shortage most likely was of outstanding importance. A priority list stipulated what groups were favoured in the distribution process. In general, restrictions of that kind had a much greater effect on leaving home in East Germany than in West Germany. For men, military service was a common part of

[11] In Estonia e.g. the percentage of the population earning less than four US dollars per day rose from 1% in 1987-88 to 34% in 1993-95 (Philipov 2002).
[12] In Latvia e.g. the number of newly built housing decreased rapidly from 13,300 flats in 1990 to 1,800 in 1995 (Zvidrins et al. 1998).

the transition to adulthood. On the one hand this promoted an early leave, on the other hand it implied a widespread return to the parental home (Huinink and Konietzka 2000, Nave-Herz 1997). In the **Baltic countries** the prolonged residence at the parental home among the youngest cohorts is most likely related to the new situation on the housing market (Zvidrins et al. 1998, Stankuniene et al. 2000).

Leaving home, partnership and first birth

Residential autonomy and partnership behaviour have always been strongly connected; there are therefore considerable gains in studying them together (Billari et al. 2000). Traditionally, marriage was the decisive factor for leaving the parental home. Marriage itself did generally require economic independence (by the male partner) from the parents. Today, premarital residential independence has emerged as a new period in the life course, which provides an accepted alternative to family living. The events of leaving home and marriage have been separated in most European countries. Therefore cohabitation should be more relevant to the timing of home leaving in our time. Recent studies show that "living with a partner" was the strongest predictor of moving out for both men and women in **Germany**, while marriage did not notably predict moving out. Huinink and Konietzka (2000) argue that this is one incidence of a growing de-institutionalisation or de-standardisation of life course transitions.

One of the main differences between **East** and **West Germany** is the connection between leaving home and first birth. In the former GDR the median ages of leaving home, first marriage and family formation are very close to each other in all cohorts while in West Germany marriage and first birth have been separated from leaving the parental home in the younger cohorts. Thus, there is a pattern of relative change in West Germany and relative stability in East Germany (Huinink and Konietzka 2000)

In **Central** and **Eastern Europe** a very low percentage of the young adults leave home before unions, and it is much more common to start a union, even a marriage, while still in one's parents' dwelling (Katus et al. 2000). In **Lithuania** e.g. young couples rarely have a dwelling of their own (Stankuniene et al. 2000). In **Latvia** as many as 50% of the men and 40% of the women start cohabiting together in their parents' residence. Housing allocation practices may be an explanation. Before the fall of the Berlin Wall accessibility of housing and employment in the

socialist states indeed played an important role (Billari et al. 2000). According to Billari et al. (2000) this explanation does not apply to **East Germany** while Huinink and Konietzka (2000) maintain that many young East German couples lived some time in one of the parents' residence. Among the Western European countries **Austria** stands out with 20% of the young people starting cohabiting with their partner within the parental home (Billari et al. 2000).

Cultural and social factors

If the housing situation is of particular relevance in explaining the general behaviour in Eastern Europe, cultural factors seem to play a major role in Western Europe (Billari et al. 2000). Cherlin et al. (1997) conclude that "the creation of an independent family appears to be more of an individual and private choice, albeit one that is constrained by the economic environment". According to Huinink and Konietzka (2000), leaving the parental home, the prevalence as well as the timing, has become less a matter of *normative prescription* and more and more a matter of young adults' *decisions.* They admit that parents naturally still play an active role in the decision, by either encouraging or restraining their children from moving out. Katus et al. (2000) emphasize the influence of socialisation environment, such as social and cultural values, norms, traditions, on life course behaviour. Huinink and Konietzka (2000) point out that the strength of social control inside the parental household typically has decreased over time. Given this, the potential *costs* of staying in the parental household ("push factors") have lost relevance since life in the parental home has become normatively less restrictive. On the other hand, the *benefits* of leaving the parental home ("pull factors") have increased relevance as new forms of independent living have become available in young peoples life. Young people can establish their own household living alone or with a partner or a friend. In this view, the decision of leaving home may have become gradually more ambivalent.

There can be many reasons and different combinations of reasons that may lead to changing one's residence. Hekken et al. (1997) present a theory on how material resources within the family influence the timing of leaving home. The theory can be summarised with the following: The more transferable resources the parents have, the more likely it is that their offspring will leave the parental home early. Parental support is divided into two dimensions: (a) transferability of support, with the two values of transferable and non-transferable, and (b) material support and non-material support. Moreover, the non-transferable material resources can be divided into two

sub-groups. The first consists of the services that are given to the adolescents primarily, but not exclusively, by the mother. The second comprises free access to the infrastructure of the family, like the telephone, the car, the room etc. Non-material resources are relations and communication in the family along with values and norms of the family members.

Data from the **Netherlands** shows that young people who have good relations with their parents leave home later than those who do not, even though the effect of the parent-child relation on the leaving home process is quite limited. However, most adolescents who leave the parental home before the age of 18 belong to the minority who do not have good relations with their parents (Hekken et al. 1997). The family structure is another factor that matters in the process of leaving home. Data from the Netherlands and Germany show that the greater the number of siblings, the earlier young people tend to move out. Divorce in the parental home can also be a relevant factor; in the Netherlands female adolescents seem to be more affected by parental divorce than males. There are also regional differences within a country; the percentage of youths who live at home is higher in smaller towns than in big cities (Hekken et al. 1997). In rural areas of **West Germany** where conventional patterns of living are common, young adults stay longer at home than young people living in urban areas. Some people even wait until they marry (Nave-Herz 1997). In religious families as well, young people tend to leave home later than in non-religious families (Hekken et al. 1997).

Summary

In a number of European countries the age at leaving home has risen in the 1980s and 1990s. In Germany, however, recent data do not clearly point towards rising ages, which makes Germany an exception. In all countries women leave home earlier than men do. Some explain the postponement of leaving home by pro-longed education, which has had the effect that young people become financially independent at a later stage in their life. In addition, as a result of the high youth unemployment and unstable labour market for young people, the opportunities to achieve early economic independence have worsened in many European countries.

In all six countries there is a weaker link between leaving parental home and marriage and family formation and a closer link between leaving home and labour market entry. However, data suggests that labour market entry has not simply taken over the role marriage once played for

leaving home. Leaving the parental home has become more independent of other events and is not interlinked with other major biographical events in life. In the Baltic countries, however, independent living after leaving parental home and before forming one's own family has not developed into a separate phase of the individual life course. Many young people enter their first union while still living in the parental home. This is primarily due to the prevailing housing shortage.

While material conditions, such as housing, seem to be crucial in Eastern Europe, cultural explanations are almost exclusively used for Western Europe. Among other things, the significance of the family structure and the quality of the parent-child relation are mentioned. But even more important appears to be the growing social acceptance of new living arrangements, like cohabitation, single living and other alternative ways of living. To postpone marriage and family formation to live an independent social life has become quite common. Another trend is that the life courses have become more complex and more reversible. Young adults who have moved out return to the parental home, persons who have completed school and entered the labour force acquire additional education, married and cohabiting couples divorce or separate etc.

4. PARTNERSHIP

Partnership is often described as a union of two people who share the same household. The union consists of either a homosexual or a heterosexual couple, even though most demographic research deal with the latter. In all six countries except the Netherlands, legal marriage is exclusively between two persons of the opposite sex. Partnership can be divided into marital unions (marriage) and consensual unions (cohabitation). A remarkable new feature in family formation is the growing prevalence of consensual unions since the 1970s. There has been a sharp decline in marriage rates in most European countries in the last decades. The age at first marriage has increased, the divorce rates have risen dramatically and there has been an increase in out-of-wedlock births. In contrast to the relatively uniform fertility pattern in Europe, changes in marital behaviour have been more diverse. Cohabitation remains much less common in Eastern and Southern Europe than in Northern and Western Europe.

4.1. Cohabitation and marriage

Preface

The institution of marriage has changed in the process of the second demographic transition. Traditionally, non-marital cohabitation was not accepted. The post-World War II baby boom generation grew up in a period of industrialisation and optimism. It was this generation who became trendsetters and started to cohabit. The cohabiting trend started in the Nordic countries during the 1960s and early 1970s and then spread to Western Europe in the late 1970s and 1980s. Until very recently cohabitation was quite rare in Eastern Europe. The Baltic countries, despite being under Soviet rule, where the predominant marriage pattern remained rather conservative, show similar trends as the Scandinavian countries.

Nowadays, consensual unions have become widely accepted but are still often regarded as a prelude to marriage in many countries. The change in sexual norms and the increase in cohabitation have reduced the pressure on both women and men to marry early. The postponement of marriage does not entail its disappearance, but it does enhance the probability that a higher proportion of women and men will never marry as a consequence of the scarcity of suitable partners, which in turn is due to the exhaustion of the marriage pool (Huinink and Mayer 1995, Katus et al. 2000).

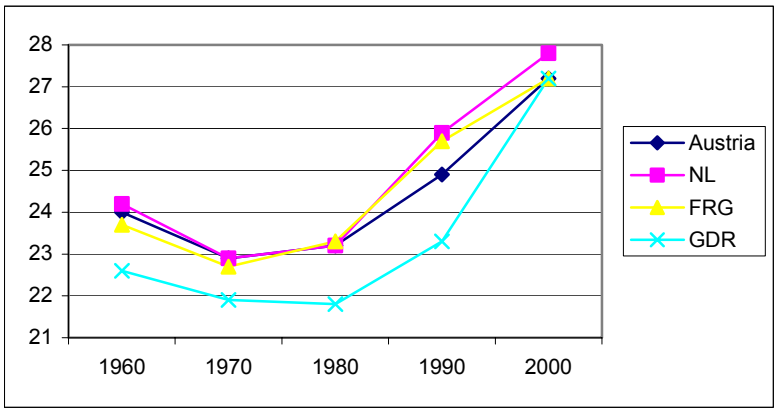
Cohabitation and marriage

In general, women enter first partnership at a younger age than men; this applies to all countries included in this study. However, while the age at first partnership has declined in some countries over cohorts, it has increased in others. In the **Netherlands** the age at first partnership has increased for both women and men.[13] This suggests that young people today postpone moving in with a partner and instead choose to live alone or stay at the parental home. In the Netherlands marriage rates fell sharply and age at first marriage increased in the 1970s and early 1980s. At the same time non-marital cohabitation increased. Nowadays, cohabitation as a living arrangement is well established among young people. Nevertheless, the decline in marriage is not fully compensated by increased cohabitation and for the most part cohabiting is considered a

[13] 83 % of the 40-42 year-olds had a partnership before age 25, while this is true for only 76 % of the 25-29 year-olds in 1993.

temporary arrangement as most consensual unions are eventually transformed into marriage (Latten and de Graaf 1997).

Mean age of women at first marriage



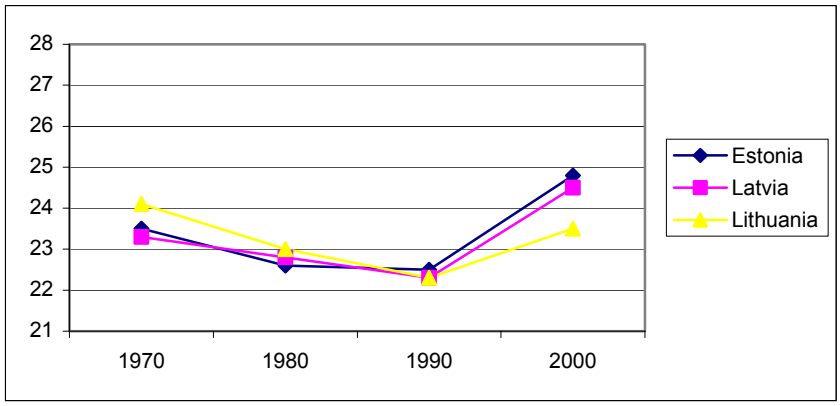
Source: Council of Europe

Austrian data indicate the same trend towards postponement of first partnership and decrease in marriage.[14] Most of the decline has been compensated by a rise in consensual unions, which has become the most common living arrangement among young people. According to FFS data more than 80% of the 1942-46 cohort married and started living together at the same time, while in the cohort of 1970-1972 the opposite prevailed, i.e. more than 80% cohabited before marriage. There are strong indications, however, that cohabitation is still largely viewed as a prelude, not an alternative, to marriage. A great majority of those who start a non-marital cohabitation later transform it into a marital one. Typically this takes place in connection with childbirth (Prinz et al. 1998).

In **Germany**, marriage has been postponed and cohabitation and single living have become more widespread over cohorts. In contrast to men, the more qualified women are, the more they will delay marriage and childbearing. Furthermore, men with a university degree and a full-time employment are more prone to marry than others. Women's educational attainment and employment seem to have insignificant or no effect on their marriage risk. The share of young people living in cohabitation has risen enormously since the early 1970s. However, in West Germany cohabitation often serves as a prelude to marriage (Blossfeld et al. 1995, Blossfeld and Jaenichen 2002, Huinink and Mayer 1995, Hank 2002, Adler 1997, Council of Europe 2001).

[14] Of the 1962-1966 cohorts 52% had entered a partnership before age 20. The corresponding share of the 1972-1976 cohorts was 37%. In 1970, 9 out of 10 women married at least once; in 1995 only 5 out of 10 did so.

Mean age of women at first marriage



Source: Council of Europe

Eastern Europe traditionally had, and still has, younger ages at marriage compared to Western Europe. In the Baltic region the marriage pattern has been a mixture of Eastern and Western European patterns. Cohabitation is rather common in Estonia but less frequent in Latvia and much less common in Lithuania. The propensity towards early marriage and a small proportion of singles, that has been typical of many Eastern European countries, did not emerge in the Baltic countries until their corporation into the Soviet Union in 1940 (Coleman 1996, Katus et al. 2000, Zvidrins et al. 1998).

In **Latvia** the marriage rate has decreased sharply since the 1960s. Given the current marriage rate half of the population will never marry. Even though the level of cohabitation has increased over cohorts it is slightly below the European average and does not correspond to the decline in marriage. The mean age at first marriage declined between 1975 and 1990 but began to rise again after the fall of the Iron Curtain. The median age at first partnership on the other hand, has declined somewhat over cohorts[15] (Council of Europe 2001, Zvidrins et al. 1998).

The same trend of declining ages at first partnership is evident in **Estonia**. The age at first marriage has decreased sharply throughout the 1940s-1970s before stabilising in the 1980s. During the 1960s-1980s the marriage rate remained high. In the 1990s the marriage rate decreased dramatically, in six years the marriage rate dropped to half. Today, the marriage rate in Estonia is among the lowest in Europe. This decline is to some extent a result of a postponement

[15] Between the cohort of 1945-1950 and the cohort of 1965-1970.

of marriage. Another trend is the constant increase in consensual unions.[16] Then again, most couples living in consensual unions will eventually marry. In Estonia this occurs relatively soon after moving in together. About half the couples marry within a year after they start cohabiting. Many couples wed when they expect a child or anticipates a pregnancy (Katus et al. 2000).

Before the transition in the 1990s family formation in **Lithuania** was predominantly traditional and coincided with marriage. In the last decade the patterns of family formation have changed dramatically. Consensual unions, which previously were relatively rare, have become widespread, especially among young people. In the past consensual unions were usually formed as a second partnership after the dissolution of a previous marriage or the death of a spouse. As a consequence of the growing acceptability of non-marital unions age at first partnership has decreased and marriage has been postponed.[17] The postponement is not yet universal and marital behaviour differs with social strata. However, consensual unions mostly serve as a prelude to marriage or a temporary arrangement (Stankuniene et al. 2000).

Explanations

According to the economic theory of the family women and men marry because the gender roles are intrinsically complementary. Some researchers argue the decline in marriage, in part, reflects the less favourable employment opportunities and the need for higher levels of schooling (Cherlin et al. 1997). Kiernan (1996) emphasise the effect of women's participation in the labour market on partnership behaviour. Blossfeld and Jaenichen (2002) also point out women's higher education and greater economic independence as factors contributing to the postponement in marriage. However, they also call attention to the fact that the marriage trend in **West Germany** does not correspond to the development in women's educational attainment. As mentioned above, the decrease in mean age at first marriage came to a halt in the early 1970s and then reversed while the increase in women's education has been continuous over the cohorts. According to Blossfeld and Müller (2002) the substantial delay in marriage among younger cohorts can be attributed to the extension of periods of educational enrolment, but for the cohorts of 1949-53 there must be other relevant factors that made the age at first marriage decrease. One possible explanation is the favourable economic circumstances for family formation in the late

[16] In the youngest cohort of the FFS, the cohort of 1969-1973, only 3% married directly without pre-marital cohabitation.
[17] The mean age at first marriage was in 1997 24.8 years for men and 22.8 years for women.

1960s and early 1970s. Hank (2002) investigates the "independence hypothesis" and finds a negative correlation between women's aggregate labour force participation and men's transition rates to marriage in Germany. Moreover, he finds that men's economic status influences their marital decisions. However, other studies show that the women's "independence hypothesis" is valid only for aggregate-level data, not for micro-level event history analysis.

The decline in marriage in the Baltic region in the 1990s is often explained by the uncertain and discontinuous situation. Zvidrins et al. (1998) e.g. explain the drop in marriage rate in **Latvia** by the growing economic uncertainty. The institution of marriage can also be affected by political factors. During the struggle for independence in **Lithuania** in the late 1980s and 1990s, when the Soviet army operated in the country, there was compulsory recruitment among young men. One of the legal ways to be exempted was getting married and/or having a child. Therefore many men got married in order to escape, or at least postpone, military service. During this period an increase in marriage and fertility was observed in Lithuania (Stankuniene et al. 2000). In **Austria** temporary increases in marriage due to family policy measures have been observed. In 1971, the fiscal policy regarding newly-weds was changed and a special allowance of 7,500 schillings was introduced for all single persons marrying after January 1972. This suggests that the preference for one sort of union over another does not have to be hard and fast. Which kind of union people choose may simply be a result of practical considerations.

There are also ideational and cultural explanations to the changing partnership patterns. Latten and de Graaf (1997) stress the effect of cultural systems of attitudes, values and knowledge on fertility and family behaviour. Hank (2002) also emphasizes the importance of the social context and argues that in **West Germany** the regional socio-cultural setting and normative expectations have a strong effect on a person's propensity to marry. The normative imperative to marry seems to have weakened a great deal in most European countries the last decades. In the **Netherlands** during the 1960s and 1970s it was almost a rite of passage for the "new left" to cohabit. It was a manifestation and a rejection of the conventional "bourgeois marriage" which was criticised for being hypocritical in the sense that its conformity was more significant than the quality of the relationship (Lesthaeghe and Moors 1996). Prinz et al. also (1998) emphasise the role of values and beliefs concerning marriage and family formation. In **Austria** younger cohorts are much more open with respect to non-marital cohabitation, homosexuality and single motherhood after

divorce. However, despite the decline in marriage rates the attitude towards marriage among young people is on the whole positive, especially among women (Zvidrins et al. 1998).

Analysing values and living arrangements in four Western countries, among them the **Netherlands** and **Germany**, Lesthaeghe and Moors (1996) find that the positive correlation between cohabitation and secularisation still holds. However, the relationship between values and living arrangements can be problematic, since it is difficult to tell whether people with particular values favour different living arrangements or if it is an affirmation process where people in different living arrangements acquire distinctive values (Coleman 1996). The postponement of marriage and increase in single person households in reproductive ages affects fertility only as far as marriage is seen as a precondition for childbirth. This link can also be reversed, given that people do not marry because they do not want to have children (Philipov 2002). According to Katus et al. (2000) there is a connection between the increase in the number of consensual unions and the decreasing age at first partnership. The lack of clear social and legal obligations in a consensual union promote an earlier beginning of partnership formation. Of the countries in this overview, this tendency is only visible in the Baltic States.

4.2. Separation and divorce

Preface

Along with the decline in marriages divorce rates have increased dramatically in all of Europe from the mid-1960s to the beginning of the 1980s. There is still considerable diversity in the levels of divorce rates in Europe. The highest rates are found in Northern and Eastern Europe. In some countries, like Austria and West Germany, the divorce rates stabilised during the 1980s.[18] The number of divorces no longer provides an adequate picture of the separation of couples since many non-married couples will break up as well. Besides, the split-up risk among cohabiting couples is significantly higher than among married couples. Unfortunately, comparable information on break-up of consensual unions is not available. The risk of divorce or separation diminishes with age, in other words, couples who start cohabiting or marry at a young age are

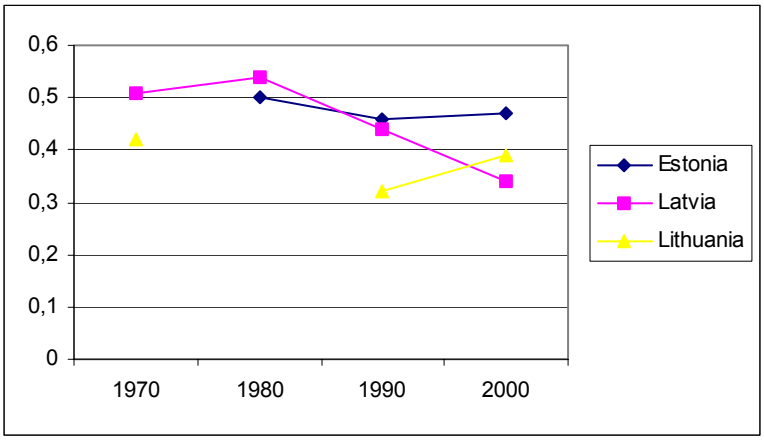
[18] According to Blossfeld and Müller (2002) however, the divorce rate continued to rise in West Germany during the 1980s and 1990s.

more likely to separate or divorce (Latten and de Graaf 1997, Blossfeld et al. 1995). The probability of divorce is also lower for married couples with children, in particular small children (Poortman and Kalmijn 2002). As a consequence of the increasing instability of modern-day unions, periods during which people will live alone are likely to become extended, at all ages. At the national level the increasing divorce rate have a substantial downward effect on the fertility rate (Coleman and Garssen 2002).

Divorce rates

The political and economic structural changes of the 1940s in the **Baltic States** seriously affected marital behaviour and the divorce rates rose rapidly. Some of the highest divorce rates in the world have been observed in several of the former socialist states in Central and Eastern Europe. Since the 1960s the **Baltic States** have had high divorce rates. Evidence indicates that the dissolution risk among cohabiting couples is even higher than among married couples. How the fall of the Iron Curtain has affected the divorce rates is not yet clear.

Total divorce rate

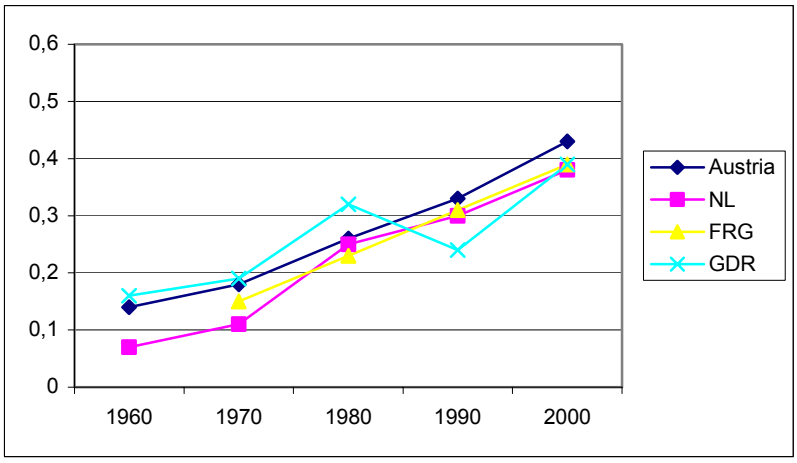


Source: Council of Europe

After 1989 the divorce rate has increased in **Lithuania** but has decreased in **Latvia** (Blossfeld and Müller 2002). However, in 1994-1995 the divorce rate in Latvia was as high as 72 per 100 marriages, one of the highest in the world (Zvidrins et al. 1998, Katus et al. 2000). For direct marriages without previous cohabitation the dissolution risk is smaller compared to marriages preceded by a consensual union (Stankuniene et al. 2000). Despite the increase in divorces and younger ages at first partnership in **Lithuania**, so-called serial partnerships are not very common

(Stankuniene et al. 2000). In **Austria** the total divorce rate has risen dramatically since the 1960s. In the cohort of 1941-1946 the few marriages, which had been preceded by cohabitation had a lower divorce risk than the ones who did not. Thus, the pre-marital cohabitation functioned as a selection phase. Today, the picture is somewhat different, direct marriages turn out to be significantly more stable than the ones preceded by non-marital cohabitation. Couples with a high commitment to the relationship and its lifetime character still tend to marry directly. Therefore their divorce rates are the lowest of all dissolution rates. Men experience considerably more dissolutions than women do and the difference between the sexes has become stronger in the younger cohorts (Prinz et al. 1998).

Total divorce rate



Source: Council of Europe

In the **Netherlands** the divorce rate practically exploded during the 1970s. Working women have a slightly higher risk (22%) of divorce than their non-working counterparts (Poortman and Kalmijn 2002). It is much more common than it used to be to form a new partnership after a separation or divorce, therefore the increased rate of partnership dissolution has resulted in an increased average number of partnerships (Latten and de Graaf 1997, Katus et al. 2000). Since the 1920s the divorce rate in the former **East Germany** has been higher than in **West Germany**. In the 1980s East Germany had the highest crude divorce rate in Europe. In 1990 only the United Kingdom had a higher number of divorces per 1,000 inhabitants (Blossfeld and Müller 2002, Kiernan 1996).

Explanations

How can one explain the long-term sharp increase in divorces that has taken place in nearly all of Europe in recent decades? Legislation concerning divorce naturally has an effect on the divorce rates. Short-term fluctuations of divorce rates are sometimes the result of changes in the legislation. In **Estonia** e.g. two major changes towards easier legal procedures have been made in the last decades and both times the divorce rate has increased markedly the following years (Katus et al. 2000). Adler (1997) attributes the higher divorce rate in the former **East Germany** relative to **West Germany** to the diverse legislation. In the GDR divorces were free and easy to obtain while in FRG divorce procedures are complex and very costly. Engelhardt et al. (2002) mention the younger marriage age in East Germany as a potential explanation for the higher divorce rate.

Using event history data from **West Germany**, Sweden and Italy Blossfeld et al. (1995) attempt to combine the ideational and the economic approach. They argue that the pattern of change in divorce risk since the 1960s is part of a major structural transformation of the family and household relationship in modern societies, which reflects the outcome of socio-economic processes of modernisation outside the family. One of these changes is the increase in female education. Accordingly, the divorce risk increases when a woman's educational attainment improves. At the outset, this change has a destabilising effect on traditional family relationships, which increases the risk of marital disruption. Also, well-educated women are less resistant to violate social norms by dissolving unhappy marriages and have a larger capability to cope with the consequences of disruption. As family structure changes and becomes less traditional, the correlation between divorce and education weakens. This explains why the increase in divorce rates levelled off in the eighties in countries that had reached high divorce rates. The diversity in the divorce rates in industrialised countries is explained by the influence of nation-specific cultural family traditions and social policies, which inevitably interacts with forces of modernisation.

Since the rise in divorce is paralleled by the increased female employment in western countries, theories on the division of labour and female independence has become a common theme in demographic and sociological research (Poortman and Kalmijn 2002). Prinz et al. (1998) point out increased economic independence among women as the major cause for the diminishing

lifelong partnerships in **Austria**. Ermisch (1996:147) uses an economic analysis of the family to explore the interaction between divorce and women's employment in several countries, among them **Germany** and the **Netherlands**. He describes the household "as a little factory, combining its members' time and purchases of goods and services from the market to produce 'domestic output'." Ermisch finds a positive correlation between women's participation in the labour market and divorce. He explains this by women's increased earning capacities (as a result of e.g. equal pay legislation or lower fertility), which reduces the benefits of a traditional household division of labour, which in turn decreases the gains from household co-operation, i.e. marriage. Therefore, as women's participation in paid employment increases, we should expect fewer marriages and more divorces. The association works both ways: women who contemplate divorce are more likely to participate in paid employment, and women who work are more likely to consider divorce.

Poortman and Kalmijn (2002) criticise the economic approach and advocate a sociological interpretation instead. Their findings indicate that there is no noteworthy effect of women's labour force participation on divorces among younger cohorts in the **Netherlands**. According to them the correlation between women's employment and divorces has weakened over time while the effect of men's contribution to the household work has become an increasingly important factor. This is because "a more equal division of housework may be perceived as more fair and therefore lead to greater marital satisfaction, which decreases the likelihood of divorce" (2002:180). In opposition to the economic theory, several sociological studies indicate that marital satisfaction increases when spouses play similar rather than complementary roles. From this perspective, women's labour force participation does not constitute a threat to marriage. On the contrary, marriage may be more satisfying when both husband and wife are gainfully employed and share the domestic responsibilities as well. Accordingly, this should imply a decline in divorce rates in modern society. However, the changes in gender roles have been rather asymmetric in that men's participation in housework and childcare has hardly increased and their greater share of the total housework is for the most part an artefact due to the reduction in time spent by women on household work. The "doing gender" approach attempts to explain this asymmetry by recognising normative expectations regarding gender providers and dependents. This theory suggests that "the more severely a man's identity is financially threatened - by his

wife's higher salary - the greater is the rate of union separation and the less he can afford to threaten it further by doing 'women's work' at home" (Blossfeld and Müller 2002:15).

Another explanation for the increase in divorces dealing with attitudes is that, as a result of secularisation, attitudes towards divorce have become more accepting over time. This is an important explanation that applies to all European countries. Engelhardt et al. (2002) explain the variation in divorce rates in the different parts of Germany by the different religious compositions of the **East** and **West German** population. West Germany has a higher proportion of Catholics and Protestants while East Germany has a higher proportion of non-religious inhabitants.

In the **Netherlands** and **Germany** (both the former East and West), persons who grew up in broken homes are more likely to break up an unsatisfactory relation than those who lived with both their parents for most of their childhood (Latten and de Graaf 1997, Engelhardt et al. 2002). Stankuniene et al. (2000) argue that one of the reasons for the increase in cohabitation is the growth of divorce in the 1960s and 1970s which gave the children growing up in broken homes a negative notion of marriage. According to the **Lithuanian** FFS, respondents whose parents got divorced before they were 15 start first partnership by a consensual union almost twice as often as respondents who were raised by both parents.

Summary

The age at first partnership has risen in Austria and the Netherlands during the 1980s and 1990s while it has decreased in Estonia, Lithuania and Latvia.[19] The decline in age at first partnership in the Baltic States is mainly a result of the growing social acceptance regarding non-marital relationship. The delayed partnership formation in Western Europe has been explained by the postponement of leaving parental home and increased single living.

In Austria, the Netherlands and West Germany cohabitation began to emerge in the 1970s mainly as a childless, transitional phase preceding marriage. In all Baltic States there has been an increase in consensual unions but the frequency of cohabitation still varies. Estonia has the highest number of non-marital unions while cohabitation is less widespread in Latvia and much less common in Lithuania. The rise in non-marital cohabitation has occurred at the expense of

[19] I have not found any data concerning age at first partnership in Germany.

marriages. Yet, most informal partnerships are still converted into marriage in all six countries, which indicates that cohabitation is more of a prelude to marriage than an alternative. Marriage as a beginning of a partnership with subsequent childbearing, which previously was mainstream behaviour has now become minority behaviour. Marrying when already expecting a child, however, is quite common in all six countries. In Austria, the Netherlands and Germany the age at first marriage has increased steadily since the 1970s. Not until the 1990s, after the regained independence, did the postponement of marriage appear in the Baltic countries. The fall of the Iron Curtain also affected marriage rates, which declined sharply in the Baltic States. In all six countries divorce rates have risen dramatically in recent decades.

Some researchers claim the increase in divorces and the decrease in marriages is a consequence of the enhanced opportunity cost of marriage for women, which in turn is a result of women's higher education, increased labour force participation and greater financial autonomy. Others emphasise the changes in values and norms due to secularisation and modernisation. Religion still seems to matter, given that divorces are less frequent in societies with a higher proportion of Catholics and Protestants, e.g. Lithuania and former West Germany, than in more secularised societies. The "doing gender" approach attributes the rise in divorces to disrupted normative gender expectations and the asymmetrical change in gender roles. The cultural explanations and explanations referring to increased female independence are mostly used for Western European countries. The changes in partnership behaviour in the post-socialist states are mainly explained by economical and political factors. Many researchers stress the importance of the discontinuity of the transition period and the economic and social crises following the fall of the regimes. Some authors make a connection between the rise in divorces and the increase in cohabitation and argue that persons who grow up with divorced parents are more likely to enter a non-marital union than those who did not.

5. FERTILITY

Since the Second World War, all Western European countries show similar fertility trends. A short post-war baby boom directly followed the reunification of families after military demobilisation. A period of lower fertility followed in the reconstruction years of the late 1940s and early 1950s, although the birth rate generally remained above replacement level except in

West Germany and Austria. An unexpected long-lasting period of high fertility characterised the late 1950s and 1960s when most Western European economies were growing rapidly. The baby boom peaked in the mid-1960s. After the boom of marriages and births in the first half of the sixties, most European countries experienced a sharp and constant decline in fertility to levels below the replacement level in the seventies. Towards the end of the seventies and throughout the eighties the fertility decline slowed down and, in some Northern European countries, even reversed. The Baltic States showed exceptionally low levels of fertility as early as before the Second World War. The Eastern European countries and the Soviet Union experienced no baby boom in the 1950s and 1960s. Instead these decades were a period of declining fertility. As a result of the decline in the number of births the last decades, the proportion of children in the population has also decreased. In many Eastern European countries, e.g. Latvia, the issue of generational replacement is one of the most urgent problems these countries encounter at present (Coleman and Garssen 2002).

5.1. Fertility and family size

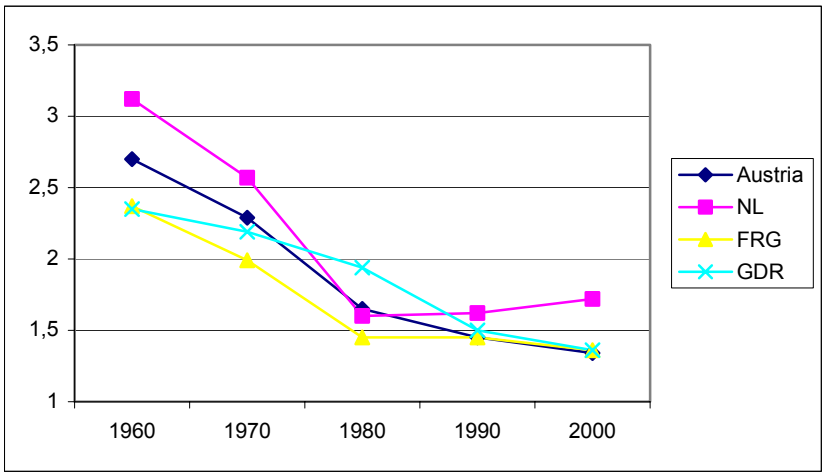
Fertility rates

The **Netherlands** has experienced a dramatic increase in the number of inhabitants since World War II. This is mainly the result of the baby boom in the mid-1940s. Subsequently, the birth rate has gone down, but in the 1960s a second peak occurred. Until the late 1960s the fertility rate in the Netherlands was higher than the European average. The two-child family has become increasingly popular and is today the most common. More and more women remain childless; among women born in the 1970s one in five will never have children, compared with one in ten of those born in 1945 (Coleman and Garssen 2002, Latten and de Graaf 1997).

In **Austria**, the total fertility rate has declined since the mid-1960s. In the early 1970s fertility fell below the replacement level and remained there ever since. In 1995 the TFR was among the lowest in Europe. In 1996 only Germany, Greece, Spain and Italy had a birth rate lower than Austria. Gender differences are rather significant. The fertility among men is more heterogeneous than among women. Thus, childlessness is much more frequent among men. Of the 1945 female

birth cohort 15% remained childless by age 40. Among the women born ten years later almost one in five did not have a child at that age (Coleman 1996, Prinz et al. 1998).

Total fertility rate



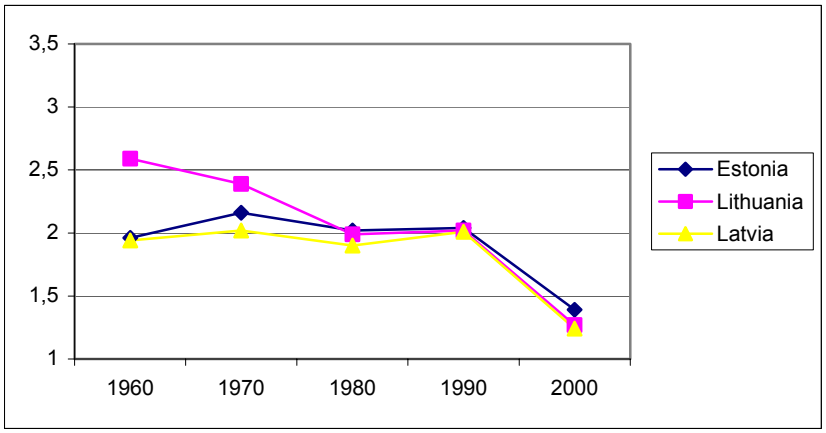
Source: Council of Europe

West Germany experienced a moderate post-war baby boom. Except for a peak in the mid-1960s the TFR has been below replacement level since the 1950s. The proportion of women remaining childless at age 40 has increased steadily over the cohorts: from approximately one in ten of the women born in the late 1930 and early 1940s to more than one in five among women born in the late 1950s (Coleman 1996). In **East Germany** the TFR fluctuated slightly above replacement level between 1950 and 1970. In the early 1970s the birth rate fell below replacement level and has since then continued to fall. In 1989 GDR had the lowest TFR among the CEE countries. Still, the fertility rate was slightly higher in the GDR than in the FRG, which had the lowest fertility among the CEE countries. After the reunification with West Germany the TFR in the East fell from already low levels to below 1.0, in 1993 the rate was as low as 0.78. This sharp drop in fertility is unprecedented in industrial countries during peacetime. Even though many CEE countries experienced severe fertility declines, none of them occurred as fast and no other country reached such low levels as East Germany did (Adler 1997, Coleman 1996, Lechner 2001).

In almost all **CEE** countries the drop in TFR was sharpest during the first years of transition. In the former Soviet States the decrease began before the collapse of the state, with the exception of **Lithuania** where it started with the achieved independence. In Lithuania the total fertility rate has

decreased slowly but surely between 1970 and 1990. During the 1990s the TFR decreased further and in 1999 it was down to 1.35. Still, the fertility is slightly higher in Lithuania than in the neighbouring Baltic countries. The most common family size up to now has been the two-child-family. Among the younger cohorts the cumulative percentage having a second child is declining. The childlessness among older cohorts is about 10% and it seems likely that the future childlessness will increase since as many as 10% of the men and women of the 1975-1977 cohorts indicated that they would prefer not having any children at all. Compared to older cohorts these indicators are noticeably higher (Philipov 2002, Stankuniene et al. 2000).

Total fertility rate



Source: Council of Europe

During World War II **Latvia** experienced a greater population loss than almost any other country. In addition, the post-war baby boom was rather moderate. Just as in Western Europe fertility began to decline drastically in the 1960s and for many years Latvia had one of the lowest fertility rates in the world. In the mid-1960s, when most of Europe experienced a period of high fertility, the total fertility rate was as low as 1.7. In the 1970s and 1980s the fertility rates increased. In the mid-1980s it exceeded 2.0 and reached a maximum of 2.15 in 1986-1988. In the 1990s the fertility rate declined once more to below 1.1 (1998), lower than at any other time in the history of the country and again among the lowest in the world. During this period the number of abortions exceeded the number of live births. Completed fertility shows much less variation than total fertility rate though. Despite the low fertility, only 5-8% of women remain childless at age 35, a proportion that is low in comparison to other European countries (Zvidrins et al. 1998).

The demographic development in **Estonia** resembles the Western European pattern rather than following an Eastern European model. Fertility began to decline early and below-replacement fertility was reached as early as in the 1920s. But unlike the general European trend Estonia experienced no baby boom during the post war decades. Estonia is one of the few European countries that still have not reached its pre-war population size. The Estonian total fertility rate has been remarkably stable. Between 1934 and 1989 the TFR fluctuated within a narrow interval of 1.8-2.2, except for a peak in 1988 when the TFR rose to somewhat above 2.2, the highest rate in 80 years. In the beginning of the 1990s, however, fertility declined to 1.2-1.3. Until now, the two-child family has been the most widespread. Despite low fertility, few women remain childless. The proportion of childless women has decreased from 25% for cohorts born at the end of the 19th century to 8-9%. In other words, the frequency of the extremes, childlessness and four children or more, has decreased (Katus et al. 2000).

Timing of births

Changes have also occurred in the timing of births. Most European countries have experienced a delay of first births in recent decades. The postponement of children affects fertility rates since, due to reduced fecundity, a growing number of women no longer are able to have as many children as they would like to have (Coleman and Garssen 2002).

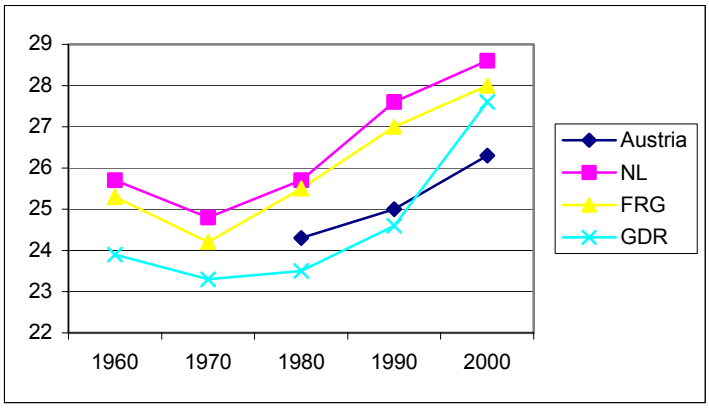
In the **Netherlands** there has been a rise in women's mean age at first birth since the 1970s. The teenage fertility rate is one of the lowest in the world and is considerably lower than the European average.[20] Increasingly few women have their first child before age 30. Today, Dutch women are among the oldest first-time mothers in the world with an average age at first birth over 28 years. Also the birth of subsequent children is delayed (Coleman and Garssen 2002, Latten and de Graaf 1997).

Austria has the lowest mean age at childbirth in the European Union. The median age at first birth for men is almost four years higher than for women. In comparison with e.g. the Netherlands the duration between first and second birth has remained practically constant. Likewise, the birth interval between the second and the third has hardly changed, but is on

[20] In recent years, however, there has been a minor upward trend in teenage fertility. This is mainly due to growing immigration. Teenagers of non-western origin make up one seventh of all teenagers but contribute to nearly half of all teenage births.

average larger than that between the first and the second. The proportion of women having a third child, however, has declined (Prinz et al. 1998).

Mean age of women at birth of first child



Source: Council of Europe

In **West Germany** age at first birth began to increase with the cohort of 1949-1953. The postponement of motherhood, however, is less pronounced than the delay in entry into first marriage (see 4.1.). Hence, there is an increasing gap between these major life events. Before the reunification, women in **East Germany** got married and had children at an earlier age than their Western counterparts (Blossfeld and Jaenichen 2002). Ten years after the reunification the mean age at first birth had increased in both parts of Germany and the age difference had nearly disappeared (Council of Europe 2001).

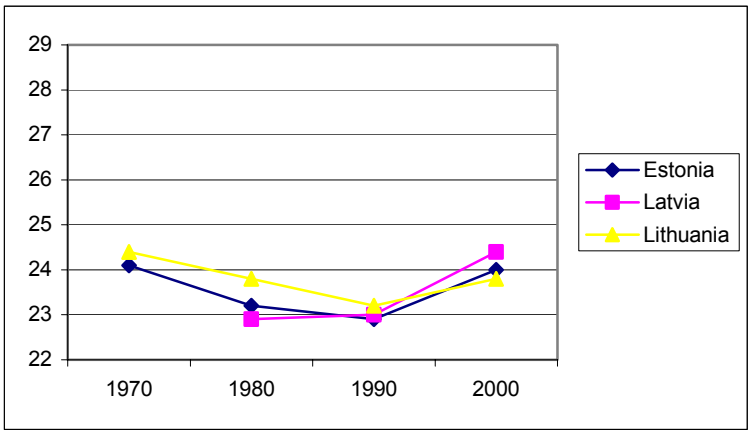
In the **Baltic countries** the mean age at first birth was very low before the transition and has only increased slightly during the 1990s. The fertility pattern in the Baltic is characterised by a narrow age interval. At age 30 around 90% of all births have already taken place (Philipov 2002).

Between 1980 and 1990 the mean age of mothers at first birth has remained almost constant in **Latvia**.[21] During the first half of the 1990s it declined somewhat and then increased in 1994. The fertility among teenagers has more than doubled between the cohort of 1945-1950 and the cohort of 1970-1975 (Philipov 2002, Zvidrins et al. 1998).[22] In **Estonia** the mean age of mothers at first birth has declined since the 1960s. Unlike many other European countries the mean age did not

[21] There are no data for the mean age of mothers at first birth for Latvia before 1980, Council of Europe (2001).
[22] From 106 per 1,000 women (15-19 years old) to 229.

increase during the 1980s and the early 1990s. Not until the late 1990s a minor postponement of childbearing occurred (Philipov 2002, Katus et al. 2000).

Mean age of women at birth of first child



Source: Council of Europe

Just as in Estonia and Latvia, the mean age of mothers at first birth declined in **Lithuania** during the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s and then increased in the 1990s. However, the increase began a few years earlier in Lithuania than in Estonia. The fertility rate for women under 20 has always been lower in Lithuania than in the other Baltic countries (Stankuniene et al. 2000).

Explanations

To find a coherent explanation for the variety of combinations of traditional and modern reproductive and family elements is very problematical. Some authors have therefore emphasised the need to recognise a diversity of explanations. Structural and ideational theories imply that there is a link between the value attributed to children and the frequency of traditional family forms, on the one hand, and the intensification of individualistic and post-material values, on the other. These theories also suggest that the new partnership patterns have a negative effect on fertility. Some claim that demographic trends are not the result of the sum of individuals' choices but rather a consequence of a collapse of a system, which has constrained the range of personal choices (Pinnelli 1995).

The fertility preferences have changed towards fewer children but not as much as actual fertility has declined. Most young adults want to have children but the difficulties in combining work and family, the unstable labour market and the tightening housing market prevent them. Surveys

show that the number of children respondents ultimately wanted to have exceeds the actual fertility rates in all six countries.[23] Recent longitudinal research carried out in Germany showed that most young people still consider having a family to be their primary goal in life (Rost 1999). Furthermore, in all countries persons who come from large families are more likely to have children of their own than people from small families (Latten and de Graaf 1997, Stankuniene et al. 2000).

The changes in family formation that have taken place all over Europe can also be explained by the re-evaluation of the role of women in society. Huinink and Mayer (1995) argue that, due to the more egalitarian mode of family formation where many women spend an extended period of their lives in education to prepare for a career, there are larger differences in status, behaviour and attitudes between women than existed traditionally. In this sense women would behave more like men of their own educational status and less like women with a different status. Coleman (1996) calls attention to the fact that the relationship between fertility and other aspects of social behaviour may themselves be changing. For example, married women who work have fewer children than those who do not work outside home. This correlation has long been recognized but recently an opposite trend is appearing in some countries.

The economic approach lays emphasis on the relationship between the improvement in women's education and the delay and decline in childbirth. According to the FFS of the **Netherlands** there is a clear correlation between timing of first birth and educational level. 92% of the women with lower education had their first child before age 40, compared with 62% of the women with a high level of education. The same holds for men, the higher the education; the older men are when they have their first child (Latten and de Graaf 1997). Prinz et al. (1998) also explain the delay in childbirth in **Austria** by the increasing level of education and labour force participation of young women.

Blossfeld and Jaenichen (1992) stress the importance of looking at the complex relationship between macro socio-economic trends and changes in the family system at the micro sociological level. They explain the postponement of motherhood in **West Germany** by women's increased

[23] In Latvia for example, the ideal family size according to respondents was 2.4 children while the total period fertility rate in 1995 was 1.25 (Zvidrins et al.1998). According to a survey carried out in 1989 in the twelve EC countries the average ideal number of children was 2.1. Germany showed the lowest ideal (1.97) and the Netherlands the highest (2.23) (Coleman 1996).

education and growing economic independence. The prolonged education is associated with a degree of economic dependence on parents and the completion of education is often seen as a prerequisite for acquiring adult status. Women enrolled in education might therefore not consider themselves mature enough for motherhood. Thus, the explanation of educational enrolment does not necessarily have to be a purely economic approach. It is worth noting that the *level* of education has no significant influence on the timing of first birth, it is rather attending the educational system that has a negative effect on the propensity to have a first child. At age 34, there is hardly any difference in the proportion of childless women left between women with different levels of education. Furthermore, Blossfeld and Jaenichen draw attention to the fact that there has been a continuing rise in the proportion of women with higher education across birth cohorts while during the same period both a rise and a fall in the age at first birth and marriage have occurred (see 4.1.).

In **Estonia**, the recent delay in childbirth applies to all main categories of educational attainment. Prolonged education therefore does not seem to explain the postponement. The differences in age at first birth between high and low educated women were larger in the older cohorts (Katus et al. 2000). In **Lithuania** women and men who obtain higher education generally postpone marriage and childbearing. This tendency is visible in all cohorts but the difference in the timing of first births among women of different educational levels has increased significantly. In the younger cohorts women with a university degree also more often remain childless. In recent years it has become increasingly difficult to find a job for low educated women. Therefore, becoming a housewife with early marriage and childbearing is quite popular among these women. The authors of the Lithuanian FFS argue that the recent drop in fertility is a matter of materialistic aspects. The statement "children are expensive, especially when they grow up" was the statement that most respondents considered as important on the subject of childbirth (Stankuniene et al. 2000).

Philipov (2002) argue that the low fertility in the **CEE** countries is, among other things, a result of the discontinuity of the transition period. He attributes this to the uncertainties in life such as insecurity of work, housing and income. As mentioned above, under the pressure of uncertainty people tend to postpone irreversible life events such as childbirth. The trend towards younger childbearing in the **Baltic region** and **Eastern Germany** during the totalitarian period is often

explained by the political circumstances. Among the 1960s and 1970s birth cohorts many men got married early and had children in order to escape military service in the Soviet army. A more long-term and widespread factor was the housing policy. In the Soviet Union the housing policy meant that one could not buy a flat or a house, the dwellings were instead given upon fulfilling a number of preconditions. Having a child increased the chances to qualify for a dwelling. The recent trend towards postponing first births supports this theory since the introduction of the housing market has eliminated this incentive for having children at an early age (Katus et al. 2000). In **Latvia** respondents in the FFS were asked to evaluate the role of 13 circumstances relevant to the fertility decline. The most common reply, given by 96.1% of the respondents, was the economic crises and unemployment. The second most frequent answer was the poor housing conditions and the third insufficient child care facilities and the financial burden of raising children.

Lechner (2001) distinguishes between two kinds of economic explanations, similar to those mentioned above, for the extreme drop in fertility in **East Germany** in the 1990s. The first one is the *convergence hypothesis.* According to this hypothesis the fertility drop is caused by rational individuals' adjustment of fertility behaviour to the new institutional framework. Eventually, the difference in fertility between East and West Germany will flatten out, as new generations, unaffected by the old GDR incentive system, grow up. The other explanation, the *postponement hypothesis,* refers to the decrease as a temporary reaction to the uncertainties of the reunification, which makes people postpone important decisions such as having a child. The fact that seven years after reunification, the fertility rate for women under age 27 was very similar for women on both sides of the wall while for older cohorts the differences remained significant, supports the convergence theory (Lechner 2001).

Adler (1997) criticises the view that the recent fertility drop in Eastern Europe is caused by a shift towards a Western culture of consumerism and hedonism. She attributes the fertility decline in East Germany to the changing social and economic conditions such as an insecure labour market, reduction in state support for families and childcare, and legal changes regarding taxes, abortion and divorce. Inevitably, this new reality has also created more complex future options for young adults, including a variety of choices not previously available such as travel, material acquisitions, and remaining single or childless longer. With worsened job opportunities and less

state support, the opportunity costs of having a child have increased since the reunification. "Young women, who previously expected to combine motherhood with lifelong employment within the security of a social safety net, are not eager to become dependent homemakers or mothers in the new society" Adler writes (1997:38). Zvidrins et al. (1998) describe the effects of the political and economical crises as "in a period of economic crises, values related to the subjective appreciation of life and most indicators of demographic development have been falling". Philipov (2002) argues that the relevance of the traditional explanation for low fertility in the CEE countries, i.e. lack of housing, has increased during the transition. Coleman (1996) also mentions the severe housing problems and the high levels of female labour force participation as factors that depress the birth rate in the Baltic States. Data implies that among the CEE countries economic aspects are more important in South Eastern Europe and countries that formerly belonged to the Soviet Union than in Central Europe. Though ideational change has taken place all over Eastern Europe it is most apparent in the Baltic States (Philipov 2002).

According to the ideational approach, modern values such as female autonomy (due to the significant increase in female labour force participation) and secularisation (some of the socialist regimes imposed restrictions on practicing religion) spread among the **CEE** countries during the totalitarian period. This implies that the ideational shift in the former socialist states did not appear overnight but began to develop before the transition (Philipov 2002). Stankuniene et al. (2000) point out the importance of history, religion and ethnic-cultural traditions concerning demographic behaviour. Some explain the relatively high post-war fertility in the **Netherlands** as "a symptom of the competition, demographic and otherwise, which then existed in the "pillarised" Dutch Society between the Catholic and various Protestant denominations" (Coleman and Garssen 2002:440). In **Lithuania** the development regarding fertility trends and rates is similar to the one in Poland. Both countries are characterised by strong Catholic traditions and patriarchal attitudes. The societal norms are reflected in gender roles and sexual and matrimonial behaviour, which have remained rather stable over several decades.

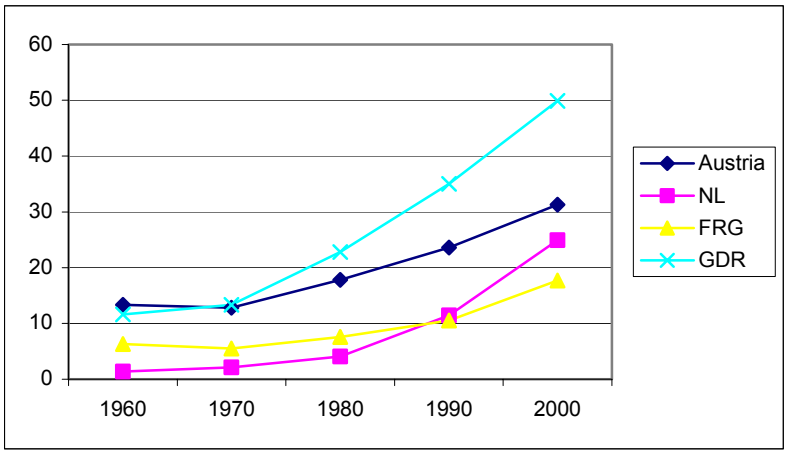
5.2. Births outside marriage

As a consequence of the rise in unmarried cohabitation and single motherhood, increasing numbers of children are born out of wedlock. This is particularly true for first-born children. However, the proportion of births outside marriage varies greatly between different European countries, from over 50% in Sweden and Iceland to 2% in Greece (Kiernan 1996, Coleman 1996).

In the **Netherlands**, the number of children born outside marriage has multiplied since the 1960s. Among firstborn children 17% were born outside marriage in 1990. One third of these children were later "legitimised" by marriage. The remainders are children of unmarried couples, lone parents or parents of the same sex. The small number of unmarried couples with children indicates that the norm that one should marry when planning or having a child still prevails (Latten and de Graaf 1997). Another reason for the relatively small proportion of out-of-wedlock births in the Netherlands is the late childbearing (Coleman and Garsson 2002).

In **Austria**, non-marital fertility has traditionally been relatively high compared with other countries in Europe. In many regions having children before marriage have not been unusual. The recent rise in non-marital fertility therefore appears less dramatic than in many other countries. Nevertheless, the proportion of children born outside marriage has doubled between 1960 and 2000. In addition, a high proportion of first children are born to parents not living in any partnership at all. This share is as high as 20-25 %, compared with other European countries were this proportion is only around 10%. Prinz et al. (1998) explain this phenomenon by a long tradition of non-marital births to single mothers still living in their parental home. Accordingly, the high proportion of children born to single mothers stems from a combination of traditional behaviour and contemporary societal trends. Another important factor are the benefits single mothers enjoy, e.g. longer period of parental leave, which may have the effect that some couples postpone the marriage until the child reaches the age of three.

Extra-marital births, per 100 births



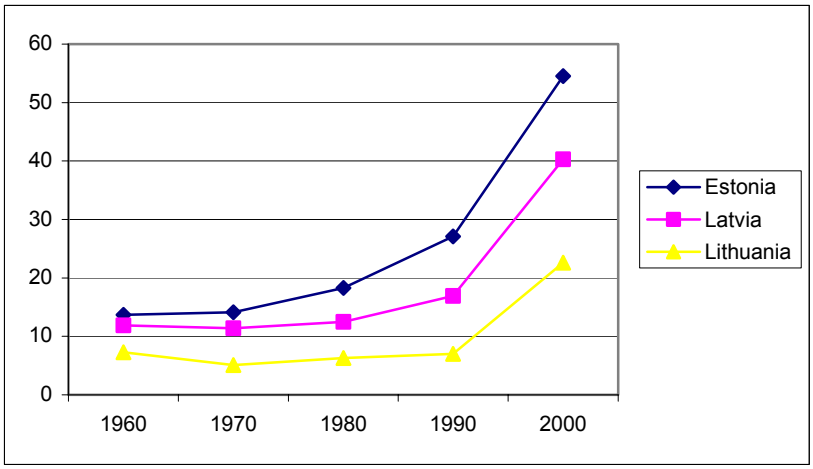
Source: Council of Europe

In the former **East Germany** the extent of extra-marital births was not as intimately related to cohabitation as in Northern and Western Europe but more to policies relating to housing allocation and child care which may have created an incentive for couples to marry after the birth of their first child (Kiernan 1996). While the old socialist regime supported motherhood independently of marital status the **FRG** favoured married mothers. In 1989 the proportion of non-marital births was three times higher in the GDR than in the FRG. According to Adler (1997) this difference reflects the relatively high independence of Eastern women from male partners. Interestingly, despite the new policies favouring the two-parent family the proportion of non-marital births has increased in the former East Germany since the reunification (see 5.3 and 5.4.). Adler's (1997:39) hypothesis is that "this trend reflects a reduction in postconception marriage rather than an increase in prenuptial conception or non-marital births, per se". During the same time the proportion of non-marital births hardly increased at all in Western Germany (Lechner 2001).

In terms of non-marital fertility, **Estonia** and **Latvia** are following the same patterns as the Scandinavian countries. During the transition period the non-marital fertility increased markedly. This was mainly a result of the increase in non-marital unions. Another reason for the rise is the earlier entry into sexual activity and the low usage of modern contraceptives. Teenage fertility has therefore increased a great deal among the CEE countries. Philipov (2002) argue that the rise in non-marital births is partly a result of changes in preferences and a break from traditional norms and behaviour. In the beginning of the transition period **Estonia** had the highest proportion of non-marital births among the CEE countries. Among the youngest cohort in Estonia, only half

of the children were born to married parents and as many as four out of five births were conceived out of wedlock. This implies that many couples marry when expecting a child. The life course events of childbearing and marriage have consequently switched places as mainstream behaviour (Philipov 2002, Katus et al. 2000). Also in **Latvia**, the proportion of children born out of wedlock has increased in recent decades. About half of those children born out of wedlock are born to parents living in a consensual union and the remaining to parents not living in any partnership at all. For the 1970-1975 years cohorts almost 10% of the women were not living in any partnership at first birth (Philipov 2002, Zvidrins et al. 1998).

Extra-marital births, per 100 births



Source: Council of Europe

The development in **Lithuania** diverge somewhat from the Baltoscandian pattern. The traditional marital and fertility behaviour complying with Catholic norms has been very strong in Lithuania. Non-marital fertility is therefore lower in Lithuania than in Latvia and Estonia. Due to, among other things, complications in registering a marriage, the proportion of non-marital births has increased. In 2000 they accounted for one fifth of all births. The proportion of first births in a consensual union is small, only in the youngest cohort has it exceeded 2%. More than 10% of all women born in 1945-1970 had their first child born outside any partnership at all (Philipov 2002, Stankuniene et al. 2000).

5.3. Work and fertility

In the last decades women's labour force participation has grown steadily. Rates of female activity are higher in countries that have created conditions that are more favourable towards maternity and make it possible to reconcile work and family life. Also attitudes concerning the roles of men and women have changed. A survey conducted in twelve EC countries in 1987 showed that the younger the men, the more educated the men, and the higher the family income, the more likely were men to favour their wives working (Kiernan 1996). Ermisch (1996) applies the same economic analysis when discussing fertility as in the case of divorces (see 3.2.). According to him men and women's wages have significant effect on fertility. Since most childrearing is done by the mother the opportunity cost of having children increases if women's income increases.

Time is one of the most important issues in the reconciliation of family and working life, especially if both parents are gainfully employed. Since most of the difficulties associated with bringing up children rest with the mother, many women find it difficult to combine reproductive and professional careers. In Austria, Germany and the Netherlands most women solve this problem by staying home for several years. To a significant, though unknown extent, this is not so much the result of an intentional decision process, but rather of existing family policy.

In all countries with centrally planned economies, female labour force participation was high. The policy of full employment was based on the participation of all people of working age, irrespective of gender and family roles. There were no flexible employment forms, like part-time work. Women, as a rule, worked full-time and part-time work was not considered a typically female matter. Consequently, officially women's problem of combining family responsibilities and employment was not an issue (Blossfeld and Müller 2002).

During the 1980s the labour force participation in **Latvia** was amongst the highest in the world, particularly among women. Since then the situation has changed, the unemployment rate has increased rapidly.[24] Nearly half of the women whose youngest child was younger than 3 years old

[24] From 2.3% in 1992 to 7.2 in 1996.

work outside the home, two thirds of them full time. Of women with a youngest child in kindergarten age 65% were employed (Zvidrins et al. 1998).

In **Estonia** female labour force participation increased during the Soviet rule. The major rise occurred in the 1950s and until recently women's employment rates were very high. At some point in the 1970s the net work-life expectancy of women at birth even exceeded that of men. In the 1980s labour force participation among women slightly declined due to extended maternity leave. Since 1989 women are eligible for a partially paid leave until the child's third birthday. Unlike men, a great majority of the Estonian women interrupt their professional career for longer or shorter periods to care for their children. Part-time work among mothers is relatively uncommon. For mothers with small children staying at home is the most likely option. The increase in activity rates in the 1950s did not cause any reduction in completed fertility. Evidence suggests a simultaneous decline in both fertility and labour force participation among the youngest female cohorts. This imply that the popular idea that increased engagement in gainful employment would cause fertility decline is not valid in Estonia (Katus et al. 2000).

Since the fall of the Iron Curtain the traditional division of work, with the man as breadwinner and the woman as housewife, has actively been propagated for in **Lithuania**. Although it has become increasingly common to be a housewife, a majority of women seek education and careers. The FFS shows that there is a clear correlation between women's economic activity and maternity and the number of children. Women who aim at a career outside home have children later in life than those who become housewives. Most mothers (68%) whose youngest child is of nursery age are not gainfully employed. Of mothers with children in kindergarten or primary school age the share is considerably smaller (Respectively 43% and 29%). Many of those employed work part-time (Stankuniene et al. 2000).

Former **East Germany**, obviously, has a very different post-war history compared with West Germany, particularly with respect to women's participation in the labour market and policies that supported that participation. Mothers in the GDR therefore had a strong orientation towards employment, and as a rule returned to work after 12 months of paid leave. Childcare services were provided by the workplace or the state. Not only were there high levels of employment among mothers, mothers also typically worked full time. In 1989 62.0% of married mothers and

89% of single mothers worked outside home in the GDR. The corresponding proportion in the FRG was 28% and 45%. By 1994 women's labour force participation had reduced considerably in the former East Germany (to 74%). In contrast, the unification does not seem to have affected the West German women's participation in the labour market. The normative expectation in the East was that all women, including mothers, should work outside home. This is in sharp contrast to the West where the belief that mothers should care for children in the home is widespread (Adler 1997).

The (West) **German** context makes it difficult to combine employment and children for women. Conservative welfare states like Germany typically provide low levels of childcare services. The increasing employment among mothers in Germany has not been matched by a growing number of childcare places. Places in nurseries and family day care are scarce, available for only 5-6 % of children under the age of three. The limited supply of childcare reduces the employment opportunities for mothers with young children. In addition school day ends at lunchtime, consequently only jobs with short working hours in the morning are practical for mothers. A relatively high proportion of employed married women therefore works part-time. Moreover, full-time working dual-earner couples are punished by the tax system, which gives incentives for non-work rather than part-time work, and part-time work rather full-time employment. A study by the Institute for Labour Market Research and Occupational Research 1997 showed that nearly half of the mothers have not returned to the labour market several years after the end of the parental leave. Highly qualified women return earlier to work after parental leave. Another study asked mothers about their plans to return to work. More than half of the mothers wanted to go back to paid employment. Thus, there is a discrepancy between what mothers want and what they actually do. There are several possible explanations for this, such as the lack of childcare facilities, discrimination in the labour market and/or difficulties in reconciling gainful employment and family responsibilities. Also, husbands have so far shown little inclination to contribute to an equal share of housework and childcare. Due to the difficulties in combining work and family young women are confronted with the choice of commitment to work or to the family. Either choice they make they will face disadvantages (Blossfeld and Müller 2002, Pettinger 1999, Huinink and Mayor 1995).

In the **Netherlands** the growing participation of women in higher education and gainful employment leads to problems in combining work and childcare. Many women try to solve this problem by working part-time. But part-time jobs are in short supply. It is predominantly women with higher education who postpone having children, even though the trend is visible for low-educated women as well. Generally, the lower the education, the lower the chance of being able to combine work and children. As in Germany the Dutch state supports wives and mothers who stays at home, hence, the family policy preserves the male breadwinner family model (Blossfeld and Müller 2002, Latten and de Graaf 1997).

In **Austria** attitudes towards the division of labour between the sexes has changed over the decades. While older generations favour mothers giving up their jobs to stay home with the child(ren), younger cohorts are more in favour of sharing household work and childcare, thus making it possible for women to work outside home. However, the trend towards sharing responsibilities is merely a change in attitudes, not in practice. There are few women with children in nursery school age (0-3 years) who are gainfully employed. One reason for this is the scarcity of childcare facilities; only 3% of Austrian children attend nursery school. Among mothers with children this age only one in five work outside home. Among mothers with a youngest child of kindergarten age (3-6 years) the proportion is noticeably higher (53%). The family policy in Austria clearly disadvantage employed women and the inflexible labour market offers limited possibilities to choose between part-time and full-time work. Most women in Austria solve the problem of combining motherhood and work by either interrupting the professional career for a longer period or giving it up completely since re-entering the labour market after, say, ten years is very difficult. If they do re-enter the labour market their career options are rather limited, women in general therefore experience lower salaries and pensions than men (Prinz et al. 1998).

5.4. Public policy and family formation

Along with processes such as secularisation, emancipation, individualisation and industrialisation, public policy may also play a role in demographic trends. Although few European countries have a population policy as such, there are other policies that may have an indirect effect on fertility, such as policies concerning equal opportunities for men and women, policies that help

parents combining family and work, social security, child allowances, availability of contraceptives, childcare facilities, and housing policies, to name a few. Many authors, among them Pinnelli (1995:84), have argued that "the factor that seems most important for levels of fertility is the extent to which institutional conditions make it possible for women to reconcile productive and reproductive roles".

State intervention in family life is a delicate issue. Particularly in European countries, such as Germany, Italy, Spain and the post-socialist states of Eastern Europe, with recent memories of authoritarian regimes. To a varying degree regimes in these countries have imposed a collectivisation of children and coercive, racial, social and demographic policies that restrained the free choice of individuals, in particular of women, in matters concerning family formation (Chesnais 1996). Pronatalist policies have traditionally been favoured by many authoritarian regimes. For the socialist governments pronatalist policies were a means to guarantee the future labour force and at the same time enable mothers to remain in the current one. Before the transition nearly all countries in Central and Eastern Europe had a comprehensive and relatively generous system of family benefits, including long periods of paid maternity and childcare leave. The pre-school institutions were another important part of the socialist family system, although they rarely met the family needs and many children groups, in particular in cities, were overcrowded. During the transition period parental leaves were retained although payments decreased due to inflation and pregnancy became an obstacle in the labour market. In addition the number of kindergartens declined, in part due to housing privatisation (Stankuniene 2001, Philipov 2002).

Fertility regulations

As a result of available modern contraceptives, patterns of family planning have changed. In countries where effective contraception is still inaccessible, abortion sometimes serves as a way of regulating fertility. In the **Baltic countries** modern contraception has become increasingly available, but at a relatively high price. Abortion rates have fallen during the 1990s but are still high in comparison with western societies (Philipov 2002).

In **Latvia** the access to contraceptives is poor and as a result the contraceptive prevalence rate is very low and abortions are quite frequent. The unavailability of contraception is to some extent a result of the pronatalist policy, based on the concern of the survival of the nation. During the

1990s the abortion rate declined considerably. Still, a woman can expect to go through, on average, two abortions during her lifetime. According to the FFS of 1998 less than half of the respondents with partners who were fecund, not pregnant and sexually active used birth control. For respondents above age 20 the IUD was the most used contraceptive method whereas the youngest cohort preferred the pill (Zvidrins et al. 1998). In **Estonia** the lack of knowledge and unavailability of modern contraception during the Soviet era resulted in a high prevalence of abortion as a birth control method. The abortion rate peaked in the 1949-53 births cohorts with a total abortion rate higher than 1.8. The recent availability of modern contraceptives has resulted in lower abortion rates (Katus et al. 2000). In **Lithuania** the usage of contraceptives has increased over cohorts. However, most people still rely on traditional methods or do not use any contraceptive at all. The most popular contraceptive is the IUD, the second most popular is the pill. Only 3% uses the pill. In the youngest cohort this proportion has increased to 6%. As many as 20% of the women and 25% of the men who were sexually active and living in a partnership, where the woman was not infecund or pregnant, do not use any contraception at all (Stankuniene et al. 2000).

In **East Germany** abortion was free of charge and legal until the first trimester. Since the 1993 **German** unified compromise legislation, abortion is now officially a criminal offence, but will not be prosecuted if it occurs after abortion counselling and before the 13th week of pregnancy. Furthermore, abortion is no longer covered by health insurance. As a consequence of these changes, the number of abortions decreased from 73,899 to 26,207 in the Eastern states between 1989 and 1994. The recent decrease in fertility therefore seems to be the result of improved access to reliable birth control rather than increased abortions (Adler 1997).

In the **Netherlands** policies on contraceptives are very liberal. The high level of efficient birth control has resulted in low levels of abortions, about half the European average; only Ireland and Belgium show lower rates (Coleman and Garssen 2002, Latten and de Graaf 1997). In **Austria** abortion was legalised more than 20 years ago. Of the respondents who were living with a partner and were not pregnant, 47% of all women and 42% of all men used some kind of contraceptive. This proportion seems rather low, but unlike the Latvian FFS the Austrian survey also included respondents who were not sexually active or infecund. The most frequent method was the pill (Prinz et al. 1998).

Childcare, maternal, paternal and parental leave

As mentioned above, **Latvia** had in the 1960s one of the lowest fertility rates in the world. The low fertility brought about a number of large demographic surveys. Demographers pointed out the urgent need for an active demographic policy but, for political reasons, it was not possible for the government to implement such a policy at that time. Not until the 1980s did the government endorse measures to promote fertility. In 1986 the government adopted "The Population of Latvia 1986-2000" program as a part of the contemporary plan for economic and social development. The following years fertility increased markedly to about replacement level. This experience makes Latvia an excellent example of a positive outcome resulting from research and successful pronatalist measures. However, due to the economic recession associated with the economic and political transition the fertility rate went down again in the early 1990s. The new governments aimed at raising fertility and undertaking the problems of family planning. Unfortunately, the scarcity of resources made it impossible to undertake these problems (Zvidrins et al. 1998).

In **Lithuania** the idea of a new family policy was intertwined with ideas of the nation's survival and a part of the national movement for independence. Other underlying causes for the new system of support for families were the economic, societal and demographic changes connected with the transition. The rising unemployment and declining fertility required political measures. Even though the purpose of the policy to some extent was demographic this goal was not expressed explicitly. Most benefits that were introduced in the early 1990s are not dependent on family income but granted to selected categories of the population considered to be socially disadvantaged. The rejection of the Soviet system made women's role in society a popular topic in the 1990s and nostalgia for the traditional patriarchal family spread. Many parents now refused to send their children to pre-school institutions. The new family policy provided, among other things, the opportunity of staying longer at home with the child and compensated families that did not place their children in pre-school institutions. However, the economic crises and deteriorating living standards compelled women to once again engage in gainful employment, which in turn increased the demand for childcare institutions. This resulted in a change in attitudes towards the pre-school system and the number of children attending these institutions began to grow again (Stankuniene et al. 2000, Stankuniene 2001).

West German mothers are granted 14 weeks of maternity leave, including 8 weeks after the birth of a child. The maternity leave is exclusively concerned with protecting the health of the mother. When this leave comes to an end there is an entitlement to parental leave until the child's third birthday. If another child is born during this period a new claim period starts. During the first two years, all families, with an aggregated annual income below 51,000 EURO (DEM 100,000), are entitled to a benefit irrespective of whether or not the parents were employed before the birth and whether they take parental leave. Parental leave was introduced in Germany in 1986 as part of the Parental Benefit Act and its purpose is care for the child. The percentage of parents taking parental leave is high. Both parents are entitled to parental leave but only a very small minority of the fathers claim parental leave.[25] It is up to the parents how to divide the leave between them. The stability of the traditional gender division of labour is based on the widespread belief that the mother is the best primary care taker for a child. Another reason for the low take up of fathers is the financial loss the family would encounter, given that men in general have a higher income. Since women take up almost all the parental leave a consequence of the introduction of the parental leave is that the gender roles have become even more traditional. The focus of the present political discourse has been the inclusion of fathers. Research shows that fathers who reject the possibility of taking parental leave and fathers who say they would take parental leave under different circumstances, have different characteristics. Fathers who would consider taking parental leave are less career-oriented and put less importance on material comfort and consumption. They are also more accepting towards a less traditional gendered division of work and they are less religiously oriented (Pettinger 1999, Rost 1999).

When Germany was reunited in 1990 the West German regulations concerning parental leave and benefit payments was introduced in the former **East Germany**. This entailed a major policy change in the East, given that the West German system is less generous than the East German one. The GDR system strongly encouraged marriage and childbearing through, among other things, interest-free loans to young couples (with debt reduction for each child), housing subsidies, extensive childcare, and generous parental leave and child allowances.[26] Childcare has in other words been relocated from the public to the private sphere. Some have interpreted the contemporary fertility drop as a form of protest due to anger over these reductions in state

[25] There are no official statistics on parental leave in Germany but the share of fathers taking up parental leave has been estimated to approximately 1.5 % (Pettinger 1999).
[26] Before the reunification, mothers in GDR were entitled to 26 weeks of maternity leave at full pay (Adler 1997).

support (Adler 1997, Pettinger 1999, Rost 1999). However, other industrial countries, e.g. the United States continue to have replacement level fertility in spite of a much less generous family policy than most European countries comprise.

In **Austria** employed mothers have a legal entitlement to 16 weeks of maternity leave, which must be divided into 8 weeks before and 8 weeks after the birth. During the maternity leave the mother receives a benefit paid at an earnings replacement of 100%, based on their average income for the three months before the leave. There is no legal entitlement to paternity leave, although collective agreements in general guarantee fathers 10 days off with full earnings replacement at the time of their child's birth. Parents who have been formally employed for at least 52 weeks during the past 24 months are entitled to up to two years of parental leave and a parental leave benefit. Almost all mothers interrupt their career in order to take up the two years of parental leave. Benefits for parents taking parental leave is paid at a flat rate of 407 EURO (5,600 ATS) a months. Single mothers and low-income couples are entitled to a supplementary benefit of 182 EURO (2,500 ATS). This benefit is, since 1996, treated as a loan. In the case of lone parents, repayment is sought from the other parent (usually the father). Concerning low-income couples, they are to make repayment once their income exceeds a certain limit. Except for some minor details, the parental leave is gender neutral, in the sense that the mother and the father can use it equally if they really want to. However, eligibility is not the same for men and women. Although six months of the parental leave is non-transferrable, parental leave is not an individual right or a family right, but fundamentally a right for mothers. It is mothers who have to prove eligibility for parental leave. If they are not eligible, there is no leave to be transferred to the father. Efforts to increase the take-up of parental leave by men have proved vastly inefficient. No more than 1% of all take-up is by men. Most parents reconcile work and family in a traditional gendered way. Austrian men who do take-up parental leave show similar characteristics as in Germany (Thenner 1999).

In the **Netherlands** parents receive child allowances irrespective of household income. The level depends on the number and ages of children. In 1990 the maternity leave was extended to sixteen weeks. Since 1991 parents may take unpaid parental leave for periods of up to six months before the child's fourth birthday. The last decade the Dutch childcare has developed significantly. This

has resulted in a tripling of the number of professional childcare places.[27] In the early 1990s one in four working mothers with children under the age of four use professional childcare. The majority, however, still turn to a relative or a private babysitter at home (Latten and de Graaf 1997).

Summary

Not only is fertility below replacement level in all six countries, it is also below the level desired at the individual level. Even though attitudes regarding the family have changed in the last decades, young people still consider the family and having children as important as older cohorts. In Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania the mean age of mothers at first birth did not increase in the 1970s and 1980s like it did in most of Western Europe, on the contrary, in Lithuania and Estonia the mean age of mothers at first birth even declined between 1960 and 1980. The mean age is therefore lower in the Baltic States than in Austria, the Netherlands and Germany. Only in the late 1990s a postponement of births emerged in the Baltic States.

Yet, the fertility rate is slightly lower in the Baltic States and the Eastern parts of Germany than in Austria, the Netherlands and Western Germany. The pronatalist population policies adopted in most socialist states kept the TFR close to the replacement level in the Baltic States. The sharp decline in the Baltic States and East Germany began in the early 1990s, with the fall of the Iron Curtain. In Austria, the Netherlands and West Germany fertility has declined gradually since the 1960s. Even though it is too early to state whether the decline in fertility in the youngest cohorts is mainly a postponement of childbirth or an actual decline, the decrease is on such a large scale that it will most likely have an effect on completed fertility. The proportion of women remaining childless has increased over cohorts in Austria, the Netherlands and West Germany. In the Baltic States childlessness is much less widespread, it is well below 10%.

There are two main explanations in the literature for the abrupt fall in fertility in the CEE countries in the 1990s. The first of these explanations focuses on the economic and social hardship after the collapse of the system, in other words, material issues. The second suggests that the fertility decline is a result of an ideational change. For Austria, the Netherlands and West Germany the most frequent explanations for the postponement of births and the decline in

[27] From 20,000 in 1988 to 60,000 in 1994.

fertility are women's higher education, increased labour force participation, the changing role of women in society, and the problem for women of reconciling work and family.

European values, attitudes and behaviour in relation to fertility show great variety and are far from harmonized and homogeneous. The differences are particularly large regarding births outside marriage. Non-marital fertility has increased in all six countries, for the most part due to the rise in non-marital unions. This is mainly explained by changes in attitudes and norms and the increased social acceptance towards non-marital unions and illegitimate births and the break from traditional norms and behaviour. This accounts for both Eastern and Western Europe. But there are also practical and economic reasons behind the increase, such as benefits given to single mothers and registration problems.

Attitudes clearly seem to play an important role when it comes to work and fertility. In East Germany and the Baltic States the policy during the socialist regime led to the normative expectation that everyone, regardless of sex, should participate in the work force. In Germany, Austria and the Netherlands the opposite belief, that mothers should stay home with the children, still prevails and is also supported by the state given that family policy clearly disadvantage employed women. While the trend in Western Europe unequivocally points towards higher female labour force participation for every cohort and a more positive attitude towards a more egalitarian division of labour among younger cohorts the development is more ambiguous in the post-socialist states. In Lithuania tendencies pointing towards a more traditional gender division of labour began to show in the 1990s. This shift may possibly be explained by the strong Catholic tradition, which experienced a revival after the regained independence.

Childcare supply and whether the tax-system benefits dual or single earner families are crucial factors for the labour force participation of women. Shortage in childcare facilities for small children makes it difficult for women to reconcile gainful employment and family responsibilities. Women's education also seems to matter, in that the higher the education the higher the chance of being able to reconcile gainful employment and family responsibilities. This aspect is mentioned for both Eastern and Western countries. When it comes to taking-up parental leave by men there seems to be a discrepancy between attitudes and actual behaviour. With the birth of the first child most couples turn to the traditional gendered family pattern. Traditions, values and

attitudes regarding who is the best caretaker for the child have an obvious effect on both family policies and how parents make use of the entitlements.

6. CONCLUSION

What is the future of the family in Europe? Is there any evidence of a demographic convergence or do different countries show different patterns of development? Common for nearly all countries in Europe are fertility rates below the replacement level, postponement of marriage and first births. However, diversity still remains regarding fertility rates, age at first birth, and the frequency of cohabitation, extra-marital births and divorces. In the post-socialist countries the speed of the changes during the transition is striking, the new demographic trends appeared and spread within a decade. In Western Europe the development has been more gradual but nevertheless rather dramatic in many countries.

One would expect that people today in Europe are rather free to choose the life course that they would like but a closer look at demographic data reveals that many young adults do not have the possibility to leave home as early as they would like to, that men and women do not have as many children as they would like to have, and that a lot of women find it difficult to combine gainful employment and family responsibilities and subsequently do not work as much as they would prefer, or the opposite; do not spend as much time with their children as they would like. In times of very low fertility and with the approaching shortage of labour, one hopes that these facts would force decision makers to take action. Another lesson learned from research is that political measures have a considerable influence on demographic behaviour. This becomes remarkably evident with the rapid demographic changes in the former socialist states in Europe during the transition period. However, more research on the effects of different kinds of policies on fertility and gender roles is needed. Despite growing interest in recent years for men it is striking how focused demographic research is on women, to get a more complete picture of recent demographic changes men need to be included as well.

APPENDIX: DATA SOURCES

Aasave Arnstein, Billari Francesco C., Mazzuco Stefano and Ongaro Fausta (2001) *Leaving Home ain't easy: A comparative longitudinal analysis of ECHP data*
Analyses the impact of employment, earnings, household income, and welfare on young adults' decision to leave parental home in ten European countries, among them Austria, West Germany and the Netherlands. Longitudinal data from three waves of the European Community Household Panel (ECHP).

Adler, Marina A. (1997) "Social Change and Declines in Marriage and Fertility in Eastern Germany"
This article is based on secondary sources and not on a particular survey.

Billari Francesco C., Philipov Dimiter, Baizán Pau (2001) *Leaving home in Europe: the experience of cohorts born around 1960,* MPIDR Working Paper WP 2001-014
Explores the leaving home patterns in Europe. A cross-country study of micro data of representative samples from 16 European countries with life-course perspective. Data from the series of Fertility and Family surveys (FFS) that was carried out mainly in the nineties.

Blossfeld, Hans-Peter and Müller, Rolf (2002) "Assortative Partner Choice, Couples' Division of Work and Union Disruption in Modern Societies"
This cross-national comparative research on union separation originates from the project *Household Dynamics and Social Inequality in Comparative Perspective* at Bremen University. The countries included in the study are: the United States, Canada, Great Britain, Sweden, Norway, the Netherlands, West Germany, Hungary, and Greece.

Blossfeld Hans-Peter, de Rose Alessandra, Hoem Jan M. and Rohwer Götz (1995) "Education, Modernization, and the Risk of Marriage Disruption in Sweden, West Germany and Italy"
The West German data come from the German socio-economic panel, a nationally representative longitudinal data base for West Germany. The first data collection was carried out in 1984, and there has been a further panel wave in every subsequent year.

Blossfeld Hans-Peter and Jaenichen Ursula (1992) "Educational Expansion and Changes in Women's Entry into Marriage and Motherhood in the Federal Republic of Germany"
The paper builds on previous analyses of the determinants of the timing of entry into marriage and motherhood. The process of family formation is studied on the basis of a continuous succession of birth cohorts born between 1919 and 1968. The data comes from the German Socio-economic Panel.

Cherlin Andrew J., Scabini Eugenia, Rossi Giovanna (1997) "Still in the Nest. Delayed Home Leaving in Europe and the United States."
This article is based on other articles previously published in *Journal of Family Issues.*

Chesnais, Jean Claude (1996) "Fertility, Family, and Social Policy in Contemporary Europe"
The article is based on secondary sources and data from Eurostat 1995 and Council of Europe 1996

Coleman, David and Garssen, Joop (2002) "The Netherlands: paradigm or exception in Western Europe's demography?"

Coleman David (ed.) (1996) *Europe's Population in the 1990s.*
This book describes and analyses key aspects of Europe's population. It includes nine papers written by internationally known authors.

Council of Europe Publishing (2001) *Recent demographic developments in Europe*
This annual report presents the latest available information on population development in 46 countries.

Engelhardt, Henriette, Trappe, Heike and Dronkers, Jaap (2002) "Differences in Family Policy and the Intergenerational Transmission of Divorce: A Comparison between the former East and West Germany"
The authors use data from the German Life History Study, which was carried out in both East and West Germany, using multivariate event-history methods.

Ermisch John (1996) "Economic Environment for Family Formation"
This chapter is based on secondary sources and not on a particular survey.

Hank, Karsten (2002) "The Geographic Contex of Male Nuptiality in Western Germany During the 1980s and 1990s"
This paper investigates the relationship between characteristics of men's place of residence and the probability of entering marriage in Western Germany during the 1980s and 1990s. It links micro-information from the German Socio-Economic Panel Study (GSOEP) with district data to estimate discrete-time multilevel logit models.

Huinink Johannes, Konietzka Dirk (2000) *Leaving Parental home in the Federal Republic of Germany and the GDR. The changing interrelations of leaving home and other transition events to adulthood*. Paper presented on the Workshop on "Leaving Home - A European Focus" 6-8 September 2000. Max Planck Institute for Demographic Research Rostock.
The authors analyse the process of leaving home in East and West Germany before the German Unification in 1990. They use cohort data from the German Life History Project on leaving home in East and West Germany that cover a historical time period of more than 40 years.

Huinink Johannes, Mayer Karl Ulrich (1995) "Gender, Social Inequality, and Family Formation in West Germany".
The data used comes from the German Life History Study of the Max Planck Institute of Education and Human Development conducted by Karl Ulrich Mayer. Data for the cohorts born 1929-1931, 1939-1941, and 1949-1951 were collected in 1981-1982. The sample size is 2,171 cases. The 1,040 men and women of the 1954-56 and 1959-1961 cohorts were interviewed in 1989.

Hullen Gert (2000) "Measures of leaving the parental home", Workshop *Leaving home – a European focus,* Max Planck Institute for Demographic Research.

This presentation is part of the BiB project "The decline of nuptiality – a new gain of privacy or a loss of private and family investments?" which has been announced to the "Fertility and Family Survey" research programme of the UN/ECE.

Katus Kalev, Puur Allan and Luule Sakkeus (2000) *Fertility and Family Surveys in Countries of the ECE Region Estonia.* United Nations Economic Commission for Europe, United Nations Population Fond
The Estonian FFS survey material is based on a nationally representative sample, it includes interviews with 5,021 women and 2,511 men.

Kiernan Kathleen E. (1996) "Partnership Behaviour in Europe: Recent Trends and Issues"
This chapter is derived from the author's previous papers: Kiernan 1992a and Kiernan 1993. It is also based on data collected for the countries that are members of the council of Europe and the EC such as Eurostat 1993 and Council of Europe 1992.

Lesthaeghe Ron and Moors Guy (1996) "Living Arrangements, Socio-Economic Position, and Values Among Young Adults: A Pattern Description for France, West Germany, Belgium, and the Netherlands,1990"
The data stems from the European Value Surveys held in 1990 in a number of Western countries. In total, the data pertain to 1,386 persons aged between 20 and 29.

Latten Jan and Arie de Graaf (1997) *Fertility and Family Surveys in Countries of the ECE Region. Standard Country Report: The Netherlands.* United Nations Economic Commission for Europe, United Nations Population Fond.
The Dutch FFS of 1993 was based on a representative sample of men and women living in the Netherlands, born in the period 1950-1974. Approximately 3,700 men and 4,500 women were interviewed. The survey was carried out in co-operation with Statistics Netherlands.

Lechner, Michael (2001) "The Empirical Analysis of East German Fertility after Unification: An update"
The article is mainly based on individual data from the German Socio-economic Panel (GSOEP)

Lesthaeghe Ron and Moors Guy (1996) "Living Arrangements, Socio-Economic Position, and Values Among Young Adults: A Pattern Description for France, West Germany, Belgium, and the Netherlands, 1990"
The data used stem from the European Value Surveys held in 1990 in a number of Western countries. In total, the data pertain to 1,386 respondents between 20 and 29 years.

Moss Peter and Fred Deven (eds.) (1999) *Parental Leave: Progress or Pitfall? Research and Policy issues in Europe,* NIDI/CBGS Publications.
This book contains analyses of past, present and future demographic trends as well as their determinants and consequences.

Nave-Herz Rosemarie (1997) "Still in the Nest. The Family and Young Adults in Germany". This article presents the demographic development during the past 45 years. The data analysed in the article were collected in various distinctly different empirical surveys on the subject.

Oppenheim Mason Karen and Jensen An-Magritt (eds) (1995), *Gender and Family Change in Industrialized Countries*, Clarendon Press, Oxford
This volume developed out of a seminar organized by the committee on Gender and Population of the International Union for Scientific Study of Population.

Pettinger Rudolf (1999) "Parental Leave in Germany", in Moss Peter and Fred Deven (eds) *Parental Leave: Progress or Pitfall? Research and Policy issues in Europe,* NIDI/CBGS Publications.
Based on Statistisches Bundesamt, the Federal Organisation of German Employers' Federation, Bundesministerium für Familie, Senioren, Frauen und Jugend (1998), Institut für Arbeitsmarkt- und Berufsforschung der Bundesanstalt für Arbeit (1997)

Philipov Dimiter (2002) *Fertility in times of discontinuous societal change: the case of Central and Eastern Europe*
This working paper is based on various data sources such as Recent Demographic Development in Europe (2001), Council of Europe (2001), the Bulgarian Fertility Survey, and the Russian Longitudinal Monitoring Survey.

Pinnelli Antonella (1995) "Women's Condition, Low Fertility, and Emerging Union Patterns in Europe"
The data used are obtained from Council of Europe (1989), Eurostat (1987), ILO (1988), Monnier (1990), United Nations (1989, 1991), UNESCO (1989) and the World Bank (1989)

Poortman, Anne-Rigt and Kalmijn, Matthijs (2002) "Women's Labour Market Position and Divorce in the Netherlands: Evaluating Economic Interpretations of the Work Effect"

Prinz Christopher, Lutz Wolfgang, Nowak Vera and Pfeiffer Christiane (1998) *Fertility and Family Surveys in Countries of the ECE Region. Standard Country Report: The Netherlands.* United Nations Economic Commission for Europe, United Nations Population Fond
For the Austrian FFS 1996, 6120 respondents between age 20 and 54 were interviewed (4581 women and 1539 men).

Rost Harald (1999) "Fathers and Parental Leave in Germany"
This book contains analyses of past, present and future demographic trends as well as their determinants and consequences.

Stankuniene Vlada (2001) *Family Policy of Lithuania: A Changing Strategy*

Stankuniene Vlada, Baublyte Mare, Kanopiene Vida and Mikulioniene Sarmite (2000) *Fertility and Family Surveys in Countries of the ECE Region. Standard Country Report: Lithuania* United Nations Economic Commission for Europe, United Nations Population Fond
The FFS of Lithuania was the first comprehensive survey on fertility and family in Lithuania. It was carried out in four stages from October 1994 until December 1995. Samples of 3,000 women and 2,000 men aged 18-49 were surveyed. The survey covers the cohorts born 1944-77.

Thenner Monika (1999) "Parental leave in Austria"
This book contains analyses of past, present and future demographic trends as well as their determinants and consequences.

van Heeken Suus M. J., de Mey Langha and Schulze (1997) ”Youth Inside or Outside the Parental home. The case of the Netherlands”.
This article presents some trends in the leaving home process of young adults between 1950 and 1990 and the trend shift that took place in the 1970s.

Zvidrins Peteris, Ezera Ligita and Greitans Aigars (1998) *Fertility and Family Surveys in Countries of the ECE Region Latvia.* United Nations Economic Commission for Europe, United Nations Population Fond
The survey sample consisted of 4,200 persons (1,501 men and 2,699 women aged 18-49. The Latvian FFS is the first survey to provide data on fertility and family behaviour that are comparable to those existing in other countries.

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