(Not So) Precarious Baby Plans? Examining the Impact of Economic Circumstances on Childbearing Intentions of German Men and Women

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Abstract

Examining predictors of fertility intentions is a crucial part of understanding the demographic future of low fertility countries, especially as they deal with global and regional economic crises. Using data from two waves of the German PAIRFAM panel data for young adults, we examine how demographic and economic context affect fertility intentions in German men and women. We focus especially on the way in which education, labor market status and income shape the ideal and realistically expected number of children in gendered ways. We also examine what predicts whether young adults compromise their fertility plans and expect realistically to have fewer children than they consider ideal

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Introduction

Examining the sensitivity of fertility intentions to demographic and economic circumstances in advanced post industrial countries is crucial to understanding both current fertility patterns and how global and regional economic crises may affect already low fertility levels. Demographic theories and empirical research link fertility intentions to behavior (Barber 2001; Bongaarts 2001, 2002; Hayford 2009; Liefbroer 2009; Speder and Kapitang 2009) and low fertility levels have been of wide social concern.

While research on the determinants of intentions has lagged behind that of the determinants of behavior, theory and empirical research give us reason to believe that economic circumstances will be particularly influential. Intentions are often solidifying during the years when young adults are making the complicated transition from school to work (Rindfuss and Brauner-Otto 2008). Recent research has shown that, at the macro level, higher levels of female labor force participation are associated with higher levels of fertility (Brewster and Rindfuss 2000; Del Boca 2002; Rindfuss et al. 2003). At the individual level, women who experience employment instability may shy away from motherhood based on a lack of resources, or they may postpone or abandon parenthood to attach themselves more firmly to an increasingly unstable job market.

Germany is an important case to study for several reasons. First, it has extremely low fertility (total fertility rate <1.3 [PRB 2010]) and there is growing economic uncertainty among younger adults making this relationship particularly salient. Furthermore, there are strong notions

about traditional gender roles, which adds an additional layer of complexity to this social issue. It is therefore important to examine how childbearing plans are affected by shocks to the men's breadwinner status, and how economic instability in women shapes childbearing intentions.

In this paper, we answer two separate research questions: First, we ask how sensitive men's and women's fertility plans are to their demographic and economic context, using two waves of German data on young adults. Second, we want to understand how demographic and economic context shape men's and women's compromises regarding plans for children: what determines whether a young adult realizes that he or she will be unlikely to have his or her ideal number of children? In the following sections we will discuss the existing literature on the link between fertility and labor force participation, the role of financial strain in shaping family plans, and we will discuss the specific context of Germany, a very low fertility country. We then turn to a discussion of our data and methods, followed by results and conclusions.

Theoretical Background

Understanding the predictors of fertility intentions is important in part because they are a crucial component of ultimate fertility behavior (Bongaarts 2001, 2002). They are certainly not the only thing influencing completed family size, but a wide range of theoretical and empirical research has demonstrated that they are central to the process (see for example Quesnel-Vallee & Morgan 2003, Schoen et al. 1999, Westoff 1990).

A significant body of research has examined the link between fertility expectations and fertility behavior. While not perfect, fertility intentions have significant predictive power, even among teen women (Barber 2001). Especially in lower fertility contexts, Hayford (2009) argues that the number of children people have "is largely a product of how many children they want" (p. 765). A growing body of literature investigates what factors influence how well fertility

intentions predict behavior and how stable those intentions are over the life course. In general, studies reveal that intentions do change over the life course, and become stronger predictors of behavior at the same time (Liefbroer 2009; Speder and Kapitang 2009). Basic demographics such as age, marital status and gender, along with religion, employment status, and life satisfaction all influence their stability and connection to behavior.

Despite this acknowledgement, research on the predictors or correlates of intentions has been lacking. In this paper we attempt to fill this gap in the literature by explicitly exploring how demographic and economic characteristics are related to young people's fertility intentions.

Setting terms.

Before describing our theoretical framework for understanding predictors of fertility intentions we define some of the terms we use. We use the phrase fertility intentions in the broadest sense to describe professed statements regarding future family size. This includes ideal family size, childbearing desires, actual childbearing expectations, and childbearing plans. Ideal family size or childbearing desires can be thought of as more hypothetical situations and are highly influenced by social norms. On the other hand, expectations or plans are more realistic and more commonly viewed as a proximate determinant of fertility behavior (Bongaarts 2001, 2002). Expectations are also more likely influenced by one's own experiences and one's partner and his/her experiences (see Hagewen and Morgan 2005 for an excellent discussion of the differences between ideal desires and realistic plans).

It is true that there are subtle differences between these dimensions of fertility intentions; however, we expect the theoretical mechanisms and processes to have the same general effect (i.e. the same direction). When theory predicts a different effect or a different magnitude of the

effect we will discuss this. For example, partner preferences, and therefore their characteristics, likely have a larger influence on actual expectations than on ideal family size.

Determinants of Fertility Intentions

There are several theoretical approaches one can take for framing a study of the predictors of fertility intentions. Childbearing intentions are neither a purely rational endeavor nor completely driven by ideology (Mason 1997). Social-psychological theories tend to focus on how motivations and attitudes influence intentions (Miller et al. 2004, 2010). Economic models of fertility behavior tend to fold intentions into the framework as part of the benefits of childbearing. In this paper, we test economic theories and the role of demographic characteristics directly. Our research also speaks also to societal pressures facing men and women in the specific German context, as we expand research on fertility intention by examining fertility ideals, realistic expectations, and the disparity between the two. We focus our analyses on young people and do so for two main reasons. First, early life intentions are important indicators of later life intentions and behaviors. Recent research has found that women fall into general intention trajectory groups—groups which are largely defined by their intentions early in life (Hayford 2009; Miller et al 2010; Hagewen and Morgan 2005; Schoen et al 1999). Less is known about men's trajectories. A further advantage of examining the fertility intentions of young adults is that they are much less likely to be faced with biological limitations to fertility when they indicate both their ideal and realistically expected number of children. Knowing what predicts initial intentions can tell us something about later life intentions and behaviors. Young people with very low or high intentions early in adulthood are unlikely to have dramatic changes in intentions putting them at the other extreme by the end of their childbearing period. Second, young adulthood is a particularly salient time period regarding fertility intentions and economic

circumstances, as they transition to lead independent lives. Similarly, exploring determinants of fertility intentions, particularly realistic intended childbearing, among young adults is important because that is the period when their fertility intentions are most likely to be changing or changeable.

Demographic determinants of fertility intentions

There is solid evidence that family background and current family circumstances have an impact on fertility intentions. Childbearing is a couple level activity in most cases. Certainly the degree of partner involvement can vary tremendously, but for the vast majority both the individual and the partner have some influence on childbearing (Thomson et al. 1990). Being married is associated with higher fertility intentions for a variety of reason. Married individuals are usually more financially stable, and they experience more social support (both for their relationship and their childbearing plans) than other types of families (Rindfuss and Parnell 1989, Schoen et al 1997). Those in stable relationships also may not worry as much about access to and custody of potential children than those who may plan on having children with more casual partners.

Studies on fertility routinely include the number of siblings as a predictor, arguing that children of larger families are more likely to be sexually active due to lack of parental control (Trent and Crowder 1997). But sibship size is also important since family preferences are formed in late adulthood and retained in later life (Westoff and Potvin 1967), and lack of exposure to large families is associated with a preference for smaller families (Lutz, Skirbekk and Testa 2006). This argument is not without challenge (see Easterlin's 1980 work on the link between cohort size and fertility).

There is little research that examines the changes of men's family plans over the life course.

H1: Married men and women report higher fertility intentions than those with other marital or partner statuses.

H2: The number of siblings is positively associated with fertility intentions.

H3: Among young adults, we do not expect an effect of age on fertility intentions.

Economic context of fertility intentions

There are two broad theoretical arguments linking women's economic situation to their fertility intentions. On the one hand, when women are unemployed or otherwise experiencing economic uncertainty their realistic expectations may be closer to their ideal plans because of lower opportunity costs. Women have less to lose by exiting the labor market to give birth and maybe to care for the child. One study looking at fertility intentions as an outcome did investigate the role of economic circumstances. They found that for women, having a job meant they were less likely to increase their expectations over time and having higher earnings meant they were more likely to decrease their expectations (Iocovou and Tavares 2011). The key theoretical foundation of the opportunity cost approach, the new home economics ideal (brought forward by Becker 1981) suggests that for women children mean decreased earnings opportunities. As a result, lower earnings potential and economic instability, for example in the form of unemployment, are seen as leading to declining opportunity costs of children, which results in a negative association between economic potential and fertility.

Education is also associated with lower completed fertility. Education can be associated with postponement of motherhood due to the duration or the association with opportunity cost.

Education is seen as a reasonable predictor of labor market participation patterns, and future earnings. Delayed motherhood, may result in fewer children, especially if the delay is substantial.

The combination of education and employment is also thought to give women an alternative source of satisfaction apart from parenthood: more highly educated mothers may find their careers as sources of identity, rather than relying on children for fulfillment (Friedman et al 1994). This would suggest that for women with lower levels of education children can be the main source of happiness and fulfillment (Edin and Kefalas 2005).

On the other hand, contrary to the expectations brought forth in the previous section, economic strain can be associated with reduced fertility expectations. Children can be perceived as too expensive, and intentions are shifted downward. Bulgarian and Hungarian women in less stable forms of employment had lower odds of childbearing in the subsequent 2 years (Philipov et al. 2006), and higher levels of female unemployment are associated with downward trends in fertility (Ahs and Mira 20002). Kohler and Kohler (2002) find that economic uncertainty in Russia has been associated with fertility decline, and at the macro level, higher levels of female labor force participation are associated with *higher* levels of fertility (Brewster and Rindfuss 2000; Del Boca 2002; Rindfuss et al. 2003).

Most research on fertility intentions and economic context focuses on women's economic strain vs. opportunity costs. For men, research suggests that financial strain may postpone fatherhood: for men, declining earnings means declining household income, and lower levels of resources are seen as reducing the likelihood of becoming a father (Kreyenfeld 2004).

In addition to the actual financial strain that affects the availability of resources to raise children, there is also evidence that for both men and women economic circumstances can affect

fertility through expectations regarding parenting costs. The actual and the perceived costs of raising children are "upwardly mobile" along with the financial circumstances of the would-be parent(s). Middle class parenting may be "more demanding" in that they are following ideologies of high intensity parenting, have expectations about college costs and lessons during childhood, possibly even private schooling which means that middle class children are perceived and actually are "more costly" (see Pearson 2002, Warner 2005, Weiner 2005 for more detail).

To the extent that opportunity cost is a key factor underlying fertility intentions, we expect that:

H4a: Employment and income are negatively associated with fertility intentions, especially for women.

To the extent that economic strain is a key factor underlying fertility intentions, we expect that:

H4b: Employment and income are positively associated with fertility intentions for both men and women

To the extent that social class shapes the perceived cost of children, we expect that

H5: Education is negatively associated with fertility intentions for both men and women.

German context

Germany is a very low fertility county with low levels of unplanned births. It also features interesting family policies that make examining childbearing intentions particularly interesting. First, in Germany a traditional division of paid labor among married couples, coexists with a growing prevalence of dual career couples even in the German context, and relatively high age at first birth and relatively low marriage rates and late marriage.

In high(er) fertility countries such as the United States, lower socioeconomic status has been found to be associated with higher levels of fertility (Edin and Kefalas 2005), whereas those with more economic resources have fewer children (see above). Recent demographic work in low fertility countries has started to examine the role of policy context in shaping levels of fertility, and a link between policies that improve the affordability of having children and younger ages at first birth has been established (Rindfuss et al 2007). Based on these studies we hypothesize that in a low fertility context like Germany a lack of economic resources further decreases plans to enter parenthood. Because of the high value placed on the male breadwinner, men's financial strain may be particularly linked to lower fertility intentions.

On the surface, Germany's generous paid leave polices might seem like the perfect answer to issues women's labor force participation and fertility. However in the German context long parental leaves are found to destabilize careers (Aysenbrey et al 2009). This implies that the issue of opportunity costs is still applicable.

Another interesting feature of Germany is that demographic and economic patterns continue to differ in East and West Germany. Using the example of East Germany, Adler (1997) illustrated that both economic and social uncertainty can have a profound negative effect on fertility.

Examining the role of household and individual level economic circumstances on fertility intention using the case of Germany may yield a fairly conservative estimate of the actual role of economic context since the German welfare state is fairly generous and economic setbacks, such as unemployment and loss of earnings do not pose the same existential threat that they do in less generous welfare states like the United States. Germany is also a country with lower levels of unplanned pregnancies, so fertility intentions may be closer to actual fertility outcomes than in

other contexts. Understanding how men's and women's economic circumstances affects fertility plans in the German context can give us important insights into how economic crises shape future fertility in a lower fertility context.

Data

To examine these issues we use the 2008-2009 and 2009-2010 waves of the Panel Analysis of Intimate Relationships and Family Dynamics (PAIRFAM). Data are nationally representative of Germans age 25-27 at time of first interview[1]. The initial PAIRFAM sample included data from 4010 primary respondents in this age group, 2621 of the respondents also participated in wave 2. Our main analysis sample, after exclusion of all observation with missing data yields a sample of 2049, with is 1110 women and 939 men who participated in both waves.

Dependent Variables

To investigate the determinants of fertility intentions we use measures of both ideal family size and realistic childbearing expectations or plans. Looking at these two different components of fertility intentions can help us understand this complex construct better. Our measure of ideal family size is based on the question: Assuming ideal circumstances: How many children would you like to have altogether? Realistic expectations were obtained by asking respondents the following question: When you think realistically about having [additional] children, how many [more] children do you think you will have?" To construct the realistic number of children for those who already have children, we added the number of current children. Both of these variables are interval measures ranging from 0 to 18 (for ideal number of children) and 8 (for realistically expected number of children). Overall we found that ideal family size is greater than realistically expected family size: 2.25 and 1.99 respectively. Both

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[1] we do not use the cohort of 35-37 year olds. 24 respondents (0.92% of the sample) also indicate that they are 24 at the time of the first interview, rather than 25.

ideal and realistic family size were over 2 for women, but the mean ideal family size was over a quarter more than the mean realistic number. These differences are what we would expect based on theoretical arguments and empirical research on the relationship between fertility intentions and behavior and on how contextual factors inhibit individuals from achieving their fertility goals. To further explore the differences between ideal and realistic family sizes we construct a measure of fertility compromises—whether the respondent's realistic childbearing expectations are lower than their ideal family size. We code a respondent as compromising if his or her realistically expected number of children is smaller than their ideal number of children.[2] We find that almost 30 percent of men and women are already compromising their fertility goals. Since these respondents are still quite young we can only expect to find further compromising as they age. We will discuss gender differences in fertility expectation in more detail below.

[Table 1 about here]

Key Independent Variables

We examine three dimensions of economic context: education, labor force status, and income. Education is measured in years and we include formal schooling, formal vocational training, as well as training at all forms of institutions of higher learning (universities, technical universities, teacher colleges, etc.). The mean number of years of education for the entire sample was 12.73. Women had slightly more education (12.95 years) than men (12.51) on average (see Table 3 for details)

The second measure of economic context we include is labor force status. We distinguish between respondents who work for pay (includes all types of work), those who are currently

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[2] 31 respondents already have more children than they think is the ideal. We code them as a zero for the compromise variable; another 158 respondents report a greater realistically expected number of children that they consider ideal. They are also assigned a value of zero on the compromise variable.

enrolled in schooling, and those who are currently unemployed. We also have an "other"

category that captures everyone else—those who are not working, but who are not counted as

unemployed (this includes those who are on parental leave, in the military, homemakers). This is

a complex category that is highly gendered; the vast majority of respondents in this category are

women who are either homemakers or on parental leave. We chose to include these respondents

in the "catch-all" category to allow for models that include the same covariates for men and

women.[3] We see that among the young sample of this study, about 71% of men and 59% of

women are currently working for pay. Women are much more likely to be out of the labor force

(i.e. not working, but not being unemployed), with about 20 % in that group.

> [Table 2 about here]
> [Table 3 about here]

We explore two measures of income—one for the household and one for the respondent's

own income. Our measure of household income is logged and adjusts for household size to

measure overall financial well-being. Respondents' income is also logged[4]. The descriptive

statistics (Table 3) show the unlogged values for ease of understanding. The average personal

income is almost 300 Euros higher for men and for women. The adjusted household income is

about 120 Euros higher for men.

Demographic Characteristics:

The key demographic characteristics we include are, partner and marital status, age,

number of siblings, and region of residence. Partner and marital status distinguishes between

single respondents who do not have a romantic partner (about 27% of the sample), those who do

have a romantic partner but do not live with him or her (~20%) , those who live with a romantic

partner, but are not married (29%), and those who are married (24%). There are stark gender

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[3]If we wanted to separate out the homemaker or on parental leave group from the other respondents the variable
would be almost completely co-linear with gender meaning we could not estimate separate models for men and
women with identical independent variables (only 9 men report being on parental leave or being a homemaker).
[4] Respondents who are not working for pay were not asked the question about personal income (which only
applies to labor earnings) and assigned a value of 0. We added 1 to allow the log operation for these cases.

differences in partner status: women are much more likely to be married compared to men, and in turn, men are overrepresented among singles in this age group.

[Table 4 about here]

Respondents are on average 26 year old, and on average. Due to the differences in the economic context and child care infrastructure we take into account whether or not a respondent lives in East Germany, were 22 % of our respondents live.

[Table 5 about here]

Finally, we include a measure of the number of siblings each respondent has had. Empirical research has consistently found that the respondent's family of origin has a strong, positive relationship to the stability of his/her fertility intentions. The average number of siblings in our sample is 1.48.

Methods and Analytic strategy

Our analyses proceed in three steps. First, we examine the role of demographic characteristics and economic circumstances in shaping the ideal number of children for men and women. Second, we examine the role of demographic characteristics and economic circumstances in shaping the realistic number of children. Third, we examine the effect of demographic and economic context characteristics on the likelihood of compromising in family planning, having a smaller expected number of children than is considered ideal by the respondent. Unless specifically noted otherwise, we examine men and women in separate models since the mechanisms of fertility intentions are thought to operate distinctly. To test whether effects differ by gender we also estimate pooled, fully interactive models (not shown).

We utilize the longitudinal data to optimize the temporal and causal ordering. Our OLS models with robust standard errors utilize independent variables measured at time 1, and use fertility intentions at time 2 as dependent variables. We also considered fixed effects models to isolate the impact of changes in individual characteristics on fertility intentions, but chose not to present these findings. There is relatively little change in either fertility intention between the

two waves (which are only one year apart) or the explanatory factors, making fixed effects models not very useful. Moreover, we are also interested in the role of time invariant factors, such as gender and number of siblings, which is not an option in fixed effects models.

Results

Table 1 illustrated that that fertility intentions are gendered. In the following analyses, we set out to examine what drives the fertility intentions, and how these mechanisms differ for men and women. In a first set of analyses, we examine how demographic and economic context shape men's and women's reports of *ideal* number of children. We present these results in Table 6. Models 1 and 2 are the base models that include demographic characteristics. Overall, once we include individual characteristics, the gender differences in the ideal number of children outlined in Table 1 disappear.[5] We see that singles and cohabiting individuals report ideal numbers of children that are .20 and 1.4 below the number of ideal children of married individuals. We also find a preference for larger families among those who have more siblings: each additional sibling increases the ideal number of children by about 0.09 for men and about 0.15 for women. We do not find significant age differences in our relatively narrow age range, and we are unable to identify regional differences between East and West German respondents. Overall, the analyses of ideal family size support hypotheses 1, 2, and 3.

[Table 6 about here]

In Models 2-5 we introduce the three dimensions of economic context: education, labor force status, and two different types income. We do not find a link between years of education and the number ideal children for men or women, and we find only very limited evidence for a gendered way in which labor force status shapes fertility intentions: women who are out of the labor force report higher ideal numbers of children than women who work for pay. For men, we do not find significant differences in ideal number of children by labor market status. Individual labor income seems to matter for women, where women with higher personal incomes report smaller ideal numbers of children. We do not find an effect for men, but the gender differences

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[5] A pooled model that constrains all coefficients except the effect of siblings to be identical for men and women is available in Appendix 1.

(based on a fully interactive pooled model) are not significant. Household income is not associated with the ideal number of children for either men or women. We cannot estimate a model that includes all economic factor simultaneously, since personal (labor) income is closely linked to employment status, and adjusted household income and personal income are identical for respondents who live on their own. In supplemental analyses, we examined various combinations of the economic components and we find no changes in the substantive findings compared to examining them separately. Our results are in partial support of the opportunity cost hypothesis H4a, but only for women. We fail to find support for hypothesis 5 as we do not find evidence of a link between education and ideal number of children.

In the second part of our analyses, we examine the predictors of the realistic number of children (Table 7). Once again, we find that once we take into account individual characteristics,, men and women do not differ in the number of children they expect. Similar to the results of our analysis of ideal fertility intentions, our results support hypotheses 1, 2, and 3. We find that compared to married individuals, those in other relationship statuses expect significantly fewer children. The magnitude of the effect of relationship status is significantly larger than for the pervious analysis for ideal number of children. Once again we find that those with more siblings have higher fertility intentions and expect to have more children, and the effects of siblings also a strong effect on the realistic fertility expectations of women compared to men. Education has no effect on the realistically expected number of children for men, but for women more education is associated with fewer expected children (difference significant at the .10 level), lending partial support for hypothesis 5.

[Table 7 about here]

There is no association between men's labor force status and the number of expected children, but for women, being out of the labor force or enrolled in schooling is associated with more expected children, which provides very limited support for hypothesis 4a. Similar to the results presented for ideal number of children, women with higher individual incomes expect fewer children, and the difference between the effect of personal income on expected number of children is significant at the .05 level, clearly supporting Hypothesis 4a. Once again we find no effect of household income. In supplemental models where we combined the different indicators

of economic context, the effect of personal income for women on their expected number of children remains stable, but once combined with other factors the gender gap in the effect of education disappears.[6]

In a final step, we examine what shapes the chances of compromising in fertility intentions and present these results in Table 8. We define fertility intention compromise as when the realistically expected number of children is smaller than the reported ideal number of children. Overall, women are much more likely than men to compromise fertility plans. We find that married individuals are less likely to make compromises in the fertility intentions than those in other relationship categories, among both men and women. Among men, age is associated with greater odds of compromise, but not so for women.

[Table 8 about here]

The differences in the effects of education (no effect for men, positive association for women), and labor force status (women in school are less likely to compromise compared to women who work for pay) are not statistically significant. We do find, however, the higher personal income is associated with compromised fertility intentions for women, but not for men. Once we account for individual income, the regional differences between East and West German respondents also become significant, with women in East Germany being significantly less likely to compromise in the fertility intentions than women in the West, but no such difference exists among men. We include a pooled model that estimates the models jointly for men and women (allowing only the effect of age to vary between the two groups) in Appendix 2.

Summary and Conclusions

To summarize, our analyses reveal that demographic and economic characteristics are important predictors of fertility intentions but there are important differences when looking at ideal versus expected family size. In particular, relationship status has a much larger effect on expected versus ideal family size. Also, education is only weakly associated with fertility

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[6] Models that included more than one aspect of economic context had worse fit statistics than models that included only one dimension at a time.

intention, but we find a positive link with ideal family size, but a negative association with realistic family size. This finding is in line with theories about role conflict and entry into motherhood (Rindfuss and Brauner-Otto 2008). Furthermore, the relationship between fertility intentions and demographic and economic characteristics is highly gendered. Personal income, rather than household income predicts fertility intentions for women in line with opportunity cost explanations of fertility intentions. For men, we find no such effect. We do not find very clear patterns for labor force participation's effect on fertility intentions, expect that women who are out of the labor force (presumably those who are already in parental leave or who are homemakers) have higher fertility intention, most likely reflecting a sorting mechanisms rather than a causal effect. In general, young women are much more likely than men to reflect the expected limitations of their fertility ideals, in that they are much more likely than men with similar characteristics to expect to have fewer children than they consider ideal. There is some evidence that women with higher income expect their fertility to be below their fertility ideal, but for men no such relationships can be found. Our findings support approaches that stress the importance of opportunity cost for women's fertility intentions and subsequent behavior. We also show that the role of economic circumstances in highly gendered, showing that women's fertility intentions are much more sensitive to economic context. Men's fertility intentions are largely shaped by their relationship status. This underlines that for men, fertility is clearly bound to having a partner, especially a married partner, whereas for women relationship status is only one of many factors that shapes fertility intentions. Our analysis of fertility intention compromise suggests that women's fertility plans are based on compromise from early adulthood on. Research on forgone fertility due to fertility delays has addressed sub-ideal fertility among older women, but our results suggest that even young women, many of whom have not started to have children, foresee that their ideal family sizes are unlikely to be met. Our results do not show evidence that the strong breadwinner ideals of Germany are reflected in men's fertility intentions, but the possible role conflict experienced by women is reflected in results' support of opportunity cost based explanations of fertility intentions. The only difference we find between East and West Germany hints that East German women's outlook on their future may be more pessimistic than their west German counterparts' as they seem somewhat more likely to expect to compromise in their fertility plans.

This paper is limited by the narrow time window we examine. As additional waves are available, we are able to focus on the effect of changes in individuals' circumstances on their fertility intentions is. As it stands, this is an important first step in understanding the fertility intention of young adults in Germany.

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Tables

Table 1: Fertility Intentions (Wave 2)

	All	Men	Women
Ideal # Children	2.25	2.17*	2.31
Realistic # of Children	1.99	1.90*	2.06
Fertility Compromise	0.29	0.28	0.30
N	2049	939	1110

Note: * indicates that gender differences are significant at p<.05 level.

Table 2: Labor Force Status (Wave 1)

	Men	Women	Total
In School	17.78	13.87	15.67
Out of labor force	1.28	19.82	11.32
Unemployed	9.58	7.03	8.2
Working	71.35	59.28	64.81
N	939	1,110	2,049

Table 3: Education and Income (Wave 1)

	Women	Men	Total	Std. Dev	Min	Max
Years of Education	12.89	12.55	12.73	2.56	0	20
Personal Income	627.29	992.73	794.76	899.31	0	23000
Household income	1318.24	1382.09	1347.50	965.02	0	10000

N: 2049

Table 4: Relationship/Partner Status (Wave 1)

	Men	Women	Total
No partner	34.29	21.08	27.14
Partner	23.64	16.76	19.91
Cohabiting	25.99	30.99	28.70
Married	16.08	31.17	24.26

N: 2049

Table 5: Demographic Characteristics (Wave 1)

	Women	Men	Total	Std. Dev	Min	Max
Age	26.11	26.06	26.09	0.89	24	28
# of Siblings	1.48	1.38	1.44	1.27	0	9
East	0.22	0.22	0.22	0.42	0	1

Table 6: Fertility Intentions: Ideal Number of Children (N=939 Men, 1110 Women)

	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3		Model 4		Model 5	
	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women
Single[a]	-0.255**	-0.156+	-0.261**	-0.163+	-0.254**	-0.051	-0.257**	-0.131	-0.248**	-0.160
	(0.093)	(0.091)	(0.093)	(0.091)	(0.093)	(0.110)	(0.093)	(0.093)	(0.093)	(0.099)
Partner[a]	-0.184*	-0.002	-0.199*	-0.015	-0.201*	0.104	-0.186*	0.033	-0.178*	-0.004
	(0.090)	(0.102)	(0.091)	(0.102)	(0.092)	(0.112)	(0.091)	(0.103)	(0.090)	(0.100)
Cohabiting[a]	-0.145	-0.149*	-0.152	-0.161*	-0.148	-0.066	-0.146	-0.120	-0.146	-0.149*
	(0.096)	(0.074)	(0.096)	(0.075)	(0.097)	(0.084)	(0.096)	(0.076)	(0.096)	(0.074)
Age	0.002	0.027	-0.002	0.027	0.006	0.027	0.002	0.035	0.001	0.028
	(0.034)	(0.043)	(0.034)	(0.043)	(0.034)	(0.044)	(0.034)	(0.043)	(0.034)	(0.043)
Siblings	0.093***	0.151***	0.094***	0.155***	0.094***	0.152***	0.093***	0.148***	0.093***	0.151***
	(0.023)	(0.027)	(0.023)	(0.027)	(0.023)	(0.027)	(0.023)	(0.027)	(0.023)	(0.027)
East	-0.051	-0.083	-0.049	-0.080	-0.044	-0.079	-0.052	-0.102	-0.046	-0.085
	(0.065)	(0.070)	(0.065)	(0.071)	(0.065)	(0.069)	(0.065)	(0.069)	(0.066)	(0.072)
Education			0.014	0.015						
			(0.011)	(0.011)						
In School[a]					0.070	0.100				
					(0.076)	(0.083)				
Out of Labor Force[a]					-0.214	0.294**				
					(0.386)	(0.102)				
Unemployed[a]					-0.091	-0.143				
					(0.101)	(0.099)				
Personal Income							-0.001	-0.022*		
							(0.009)	(0.009)		
Household Income									0.008	-0.004
									(0.017)	(0.024)
Intercept	2.182*	1.474	2.115*	1.307	2.075*	1.345	2.182*	1.355	2.134*	1.486
	(0.894)	(1.113)	(0.895)	(1.124)	(0.902)	(1.120)	(0.895)	(1.110)	(0.901)	(1.119)
BIC	2498.600	3286.039	2504.112	3291.580	2516.571	3292.499	2505.422	3287.699	2505.175	3291.868

Note: Independent Variables are measured at wave 1, dependent variable measured at wave 2. Numbers in parentheses are robust standard errors.
+ p<0.10, * p<.05, ** p<.01, *** p<.001. [a]Married and working for pay are reference categories

Table 7: Fertility Intentions: Realistically Expected Number of Children (N=939 Men, 1110 Women), OLS Regression

	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3		Model 4		Model 5	
	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women
Single[a]	-0.493***	-0.503***	-0.493***	-0.491***	-0.495***	-0.350***	-0.496***	-0.452***	-0.489***	-0.520***
	(0.091)	(0.087)	(0.092)	(0.087)	(0.090)	(0.097)	(0.090)	(0.087)	(0.091)	(0.092)
Partner[a]	-0.345***	-0.489***	-0.346***	-0.464***	-0.360***	-0.326***	-0.349***	-0.418***	-0.342***	-0.497***
	(0.090)	(0.082)	(0.092)	(0.081)	(0.091)	(0.090)	(0.091)	(0.082)	(0.090)	(0.082)
Cohabiting[a]	-0.345***	-0.389***	-0.345***	-0.367***	-0.349***	-0.262**	-0.346***	-0.329***	-0.346***	-0.387***
	(0.092)	(0.075)	(0.094)	(0.075)	(0.092)	(0.083)	(0.092)	(0.076)	(0.093)	(0.075)
Age	0.008	0.026	0.008	0.028	0.011	0.027	0.008	0.041	0.008	0.029
	(0.031)	(0.032)	(0.031)	(0.032)	(0.031)	(0.033)	(0.031)	(0.033)	(0.031)	(0.032)
Siblings	0.104*** +	0.190***	0.104*** +	0.184***	0.105*** *	0.187***	0.103***	0.184***	0.104*** *	0.189***
	(0.029)	(0.030)	(0.029)	(0.030)	(0.029)	(0.029)	(0.029)	(0.029)	(0.029)	(0.030)
East	-0.040	-0.096	-0.040	-0.102	-0.040	-0.114+	-0.042	-0.134*	-0.038	-0.103
	(0.071)	(0.066)	(0.071)	(0.066)	(0.072)	(0.066)	(0.071)	(0.066)	(0.072)	(0.067)
Education			0.001 +	-0.026*						
			(0.012)	(0.011)						
In School[a]					0.062	0.152*				
					(0.069)	(0.073)				
Out of Labor Force[a]					-0.182	0.481***				
					(0.451)	(0.096)				
Unemployed[a]					-0.023	0.026				
					(0.116)	(0.104)				
Personal Income							-0.002 *	-0.044***		
							(0.009)	(0.009)		
Household Income									0.004	-0.016
									(0.016)	(0.016)
Intercept	1.912*	1.427+	1.909*	1.729*	1.834*	1.185	1.912*	1.188	1.887*	1.472+
	(0.806)	(0.855)	(0.804)	(0.859)	(0.810)	(0.874)	(0.806)	(0.857)	(0.808)	(0.858)
BIC	2453.211	3052.990	2460.052	3054.070	2472.413	3034.579	2459.997	3033.337	2459.981	3059.342

Note: Independent Variables are measured at wave 1, dependent variable measured at wave 2. Numbers in parentheses are robust standard errors.
+ p<0.10, * p<.05, ** p<.01, *** p<.001. [a]Married and working for pay are reference categories

Table 8: Comprised Fertility Intentions, (N=939 Men, 1110 Women), Logistic Regression (Odds Ratios shown)

	Model 1 Men	Model 1 Women	Model 2 Men	Model 2 Women	Model 3 Men	Model 3 Women	Model 4 Men	Model 4 Women	Model 5 Men	Model 5 Women
Single[a]	1.555+	1.434+	1.548+	1.403+	1.555+	1.397	1.539+	1.354	1.542+	1.486*
	(0.368)	(0.276)	(0.367)	(0.270)	(0.372)	(0.286)	(0.370)	(0.264)	(0.370)	(0.291)
Partner[a]	1.220	1.885**	1.206	1.800**	1.197	1.810**	1.205	1.744**	1.212	1.920**
	(0.314)	(0.378)	(0.312)	(0.362)	(0.311)	(0.385)	(0.312)	(0.352)	(0.312)	(0.388)
Cohabiting[a]	1.618*	1.471*	1.609+	1.413+	1.610+	1.416+	1.611+	1.374+	1.620*	1.464*
	(0.397)	(0.258)	(0.395)	(0.250)	(0.396)	(0.260)	(0.397)	(0.245)	(0.398)	(0.257)
Age	1.154 *	0.905	1.150	0.901 *	1.157+	0.887 *	1.156	0.887 *	1.154	0.899 *
	(0.101)	(0.069)	(0.102)	(0.069)	(0.102)	(0.068)	(0.102)	(0.068)	(0.101)	(0.069)
Siblings	1.010	0.944	1.012	0.955	1.013	0.949	1.010	0.950	1.010	0.946
	(0.064)	(0.051)	(0.064)	(0.052)	(0.064)	(0.052)	(0.064)	(0.052)	(0.064)	(0.051)
East	0.931	1.314+	0.932	1.333+	0.924	1.364+	0.927	1.378*	0.926	1.333+
	(0.167)	(0.204)	(0.167)	(0.208)	(0.166)	(0.219)	(0.167)	(0.217)	(0.167)	(0.210)
Education			1.010	1.053*						
			(0.030)	(0.026)						
In School[a]					1.069	0.687+				
					(0.211)	(0.138)				
Out of Labor Force[a]					0.494	0.745				
					(0.377)	(0.144)				
Unemployed[a]					1.019	0.704				
					(0.259)	(0.197)				
Personal Income							+ 0.993	+ 1.053*		
							(0.023)	(0.022)		
Household Income									0.991	1.035
									(0.036)	(0.050)
Intercept	1.555+	1.434+	1.548+	+ 1.434+	1.555+	* 1.403+	1.539+	1.354	1.542+	1.486*
	(0.368)	(0.276)	(0.367)	(0.270)	(0.372)	(0.270)	(0.370)	(0.264)	(0.370)	(0.291)
BIC	1147.840	1381.686	1154.570	1384.620	1167.290	1396.813	1154.591	1382.170	1154.627	1388.118

Note: Independent Variables are measured at wave 1, dependent variable measured at wave 2. Numbers in parentheses are robust standard errors.
+ p<0.10, * p<.05, ** p<.01, *** p<.001. [a]Married and working for pay are reference categories

Appendix

Appendix 1: Fertility Intentions: Ideal Number of Children, OLS Regression, Joint Models for Men and Women

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Single[a]	-0.196**	-0.202**	-0.147*	-0.193**	-0.192**	-0.184**
	(0.065)	(0.065)	(0.073)	(0.065)	(0.066)	(0.067)
Partner[a]	-0.085	-0.099	-0.043	-0.082	-0.083	-0.086
	(0.068)	(0.068)	(0.073)	(0.068)	(0.067)	(0.068)
Cohabiting[a]	-0.141*	-0.150*	-0.099	-0.132*	-0.141*	-0.142*
	(0.059)	(0.060)	(0.064)	(0.060)	(0.059)	(0.060)
Age	0.017	0.015	0.020	0.020	0.016	0.018
	(0.028)	(0.028)	(0.028)	(0.028)	(0.028)	(0.028)
Siblings	0.092***	0.093***	0.091***	0.091***	0.092***	0.093***
	(0.023)	(0.023)	(0.023)	(0.023)	(0.023)	(0.023)
Female* Siblings	0.059+	0.061+	0.059+	0.058	0.059+	0.060+
	(0.035)	(0.035)	(0.035)	(0.035)	(0.035)	(0.035)
East	-0.069	-0.067	-0.061	-0.077	-0.067	-0.070
	(0.048)	(0.048)	(0.048)	(0.048)	(0.049)	(0.048)
Female	0.017	0.008	-0.017	0.008	0.017	-0.008
	(0.062)	(0.062)	(0.064)	(0.063)	(0.062)	(0.063)
Education		0.014+				0.015+
		(0.008)				(0.008)
In School[a]			0.079			
			(0.056)			
Out of Labor Force[a]			0.221*			
			(0.092)			
Unemployed[a]			-0.115			
			(0.072)			
Personal Income				-0.011+		-0.016*
				(0.006)		(0.007)
Household Income					0.004	0.015
					(0.014)	(0.016)
Intercept	1.751*	1.640*	1.628*	1.712*	1.735*	1.505*
	(0.724)	(0.726)	(0.729)	(0.724)	(0.733)	(0.737)
N	2049	2049	2049	2049	2049	2049
BIC	5782.858	5787.881	5792.754	5787.613	5790.401	5798.405

Note: Independent Variables are measured at wave 1, dependent variable measured at wave 2. Numbers in parentheses are robust standard errors. + p<0.10, * p<.05, ** p<.01, *** p<.001. [a]Married and working for pay are reference categories

Appendix 2: Comprised Fertility Intentions, Logistic Regression (Odds Ratios shown), Joint Models for Men and Women

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Single[a]	1.521**	1.499**	1.473*	1.511**	1.538**	1.466*
	(0.222)	(0.220)	(0.224)	(0.221)	(0.229)	(0.220)
Partner[a]	1.549**	1.496*	1.496*	1.534**	1.559**	1.471*
	(0.243)	(0.236)	(0.244)	(0.240)	(0.245)	(0.233)
Cohabiting[a]	1.549**	1.513**	1.491**	1.516**	1.546**	1.487**
	(0.220)	(0.216)	(0.219)	(0.216)	(0.220)	(0.212)
Age	1.167+	1.156+	1.157+	1.155+	1.166+	1.145
	(0.101)	(0.101)	(0.101)	(0.101)	(0.101)	(0.100)
Age*Female	0.775*	0.781*	0.778*	0.776*	0.774*	0.783*
	(0.089)	(0.090)	(0.089)	(0.089)	(0.089)	(0.090)
Siblings	0.967	0.973	0.971	0.971	0.968	0.975
	(0.039)	(0.040)	(0.040)	(0.040)	(0.039)	(0.040)
East	1.131	1.139	1.151	1.156	1.137	1.154
	(0.133)	(0.134)	(0.137)	(0.136)	(0.135)	(0.137)
Female	910.782*	745.893*	852.912*	906.853*	946.728*	714.222*
	(2726.114)	(2237.128)	(2552.339)	(2712.345)	(2836.210)	(2140.146)
Education		1.034+				1.031
		(0.020)				(0.020)
In School[a]			0.844			
			(0.119)			
Out of Labor Force[a]			0.751			
			(0.135)			
Unemployed[a]			0.858			
			(0.160)			
Personal Income				1.028+		1.030+
				(0.016)		(0.018)
Household Income					1.011	0.983
					(0.029)	(0.032)
Intercept	2049	2049	2049	2049	2049	2049
	2507.959	2512.609	2526.902	2512.142	2515.428	2524.775

Note: Independent Variables are measured at wave 1, dependent variable measured at wave 2. Numbers in parentheses are robust standard errors. + $p<0.10$, * $p<.05$, ** $p<.01$, *** $p<.001$. [a]Married and working for pay are reference categories