



Federal Ministry for  
Family Affairs, Senior Citizens,  
Women and Youth

# **Seventh Family Report (Summary)**

**Families between flexibility and  
dependability – Perspectives for a  
life cycle-related family policy**

**Statement by the Federal  
Government**

# **Seventh Family Report (Summary)**

**Families between flexibility and  
dependability – Perspectives for a  
life cycle-related family policy**

Statement by the Federal Government  
Results and scenarios of the report drafted by  
the committee of experts

april 2006

## **Statement by the Federal Government**

### **I. Purpose of the report**

The Federal Minister for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth appointed an independent committee of experts in February 2003 which was to submit by 2005 the Seventh Family Report on the topic of the future of the family – social change and social cohesion. The aim of the report was to be to examine fundamental and longer-term trends in demographic development and changes in the world of work and in the economy, as well as in gender roles and also in social cohesion. It was to develop recommendations on the basis of its deliberations. The Seventh Family Report is to open a time window for the next ten to 15 years and to provide a foundation for future-orientated social policy activities. The committee was explicitly requested to include international experience on family development and family policies in other countries. The Federal Government has made an extensive statement on the commission's report. The Seventh Family Report was submitted to the Federal Parliament and published in April 2006.

### **II. Policy change towards sustainable family policy**

The Seventh Family Report is a plea for sustainable family policy, the new goals of which are also underpinned by demographic and economic arguments. Family policy is key to the policy of the Federal Government. It aims to support families and to promote the reconcilability of family and work, thereby helping to make it possible to achieve life plans which include children. The Federal Government has also initiated a paradigm shift and is orientating its family policy more towards expanding an effective infrastructure which supports families and children for education and care, as well as towards measures to integrate women into the world of work and allow a better balance to be achieved between family and work. In the context of the re-orientation towards sustainable family policy, the objective is for Germany to catch up with the most family-friendly countries in Europe by 2010.

Our society attaches a high value to families. Family is the most important area in the lives of more than 90 percent of people. Appreciation of family is also high among young people, both with regard to their families of origin, and to their own life plans.

The family as a living arrangement is able to change. Never before have so many age groups lived

together in families at the same time, in some cases spread over a multiplicity of locations, but nevertheless in regular contact, and seldom before was there a healthier atmosphere between the generations. The family is in the truest sense of the word the kernel where everyday solidarity is practiced. The goal of the Federal Government's policy is to promote and strengthen cohesion between the generations, and hence within society as a whole. Even if families are becoming smaller, more colourful and more mobile, we cannot dispense with the give-and-take of everyday solidarity. New networks must be created to be able to transfer the advantages of yesterday's large families to modern social structures.

Families guarantee quality of life and cohesion, and just as importantly they ensure social growth and economic prosperity within our society. The lifestyle to which the overwhelming majority aspires includes harmonising parenthood and gainful employment. It is only with newly-developed measures that it will be possible to satisfy changed attitudes towards life and newly-developed life plans. A sustainable family policy consists of a threesome of time policies, infrastructural promotion and a new type of cash support.

### **III. Infrastructure for families – promotion of children**

The Federation, together with local government and the Länder, has adopted the particular objective of expanding childcare for the under-threes. High-quality childcare meeting specific needs makes a decisive contribution towards improving families' living conditions. It supports individual life planning and is key to enabling parents to reconcile family and work. Better possibilities for fathers and mothers to engage in work expand their financial capacity and reduce the poverty risks faced by families and children. Early promotion and early assistance are also key to more equal opportunities for all children in our country. The Day-care Expansion Act (Tagesbetreuungsausbaugesetz - TAG) of 2005 takes care of this necessary expansion by creating a total of at least 230,000 additional care places by 2010. Considerable importance also attaches to the expansion of day care as an expedient method of creating more care infrastructures for children under three. Voluntary commitment by enterprises is a helpful supplement to the manner in which the state shoulders responsibility for the expansion of the care infrastructure.

Parents' educational skills must be enhanced in order to enable them to take on their responsibilities. The Federal Government will be launching a national programme from 2006 onwards to initiate low-threshold multi-generation houses providing a central support agency for families offering promotion, support and assistance for families from one provider and under a single roof.

The Federal Government is relying on strategic local partnerships to develop greater family friendliness in local government. With this goal in mind, the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth launched in 2004 the initiative "Local Alliances for family". Local government decision-makers collaborate in local associations with local partners, churches and welfare organisations which are able and willing to do more to enhance family friendliness. Roughly 1,200 enterprises, more than half the chambers of industry and commerce, as well as various trade chambers, are already involved.

#### **IV. Time in the family – Time for the family**

Families need to be relieved of more of their burdens, and they need options to shape their everyday family lives and their life planning as a whole. The Federal Government, together with companies, the Länder, local government and welfare associations, aspires to a family-friendly time policy. The Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth has founded the "Alliance for the family" together with personalities from the business community and trade unions, foundations and the sciences. A large number of projects and measures have been carried out since 2003 in the context of the "Alliance for the family" in order to make it easier for workers with children or family members in need of long-term care to balance time dedicated to family and to work. "Local Alliances for the family" develop innovative solutions regarding flexible care and possibilities to balance family and work in line with concrete needs.

#### **V. Effective financial promotion for the family**

The policy of the Federal Government aims to make it easier for young people to choose to have children and to enhance families' economic stability, above all through their own gainful employment. It has hence started to re-focus families' financial benefits in order to increase their effectiveness. A major project of the Federal Government is to refine the previous child-raising allowance to become a one-year income-substituting parental benefit in line with successful examples in Sweden and other countries. The slump in income previously experienced after the birth of a child is hence largely avoided. Families receive support when they particularly need financial security. Since the material loss for the family is less marked, fathers have better possibilities to take advantage of parental leave and to spend more time in childcare. At the same time, a parental allowance offers an incentive for fathers and mothers to return to work faster after the child-rearing phase than was previously the case. The parental allowance is to be introduced in 2007.

The Federal Government regards it as a priority task to reduce the poverty risks faced by families and children, particularly in lone-parent families. Early promotion of children and better possibilities for gainful employment for mothers and fathers reduce poverty risks and help people to break out of the poverty spiral. The supplementary child allowance was introduced on 1 January 2005 as a family policy allowance aiming to increase families' economic independence. The supplementary child allowance is up to Euro 140 per month per child, and is paid to parents whose incomes are sufficient to meet their own needs, but not those of their children.

For greater transparency, more efficiency and target achievement in the interest of families, information is to be coordinated and made available as a bundle regarding the benefits which families can claim from the Federation, Länder, local government and social insurance. An initial step towards greater transparency which has been taken since the autumn of 2005 has been the provision of a central Internet service by the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth. This family information service provides families – from future parents through to families with members in need of long-term care – with important information on state benefits and services offered by society.

## **VI. A new family policy culture – daring to live as a family**

Family policy should be at the heart of the political efforts of the years to come. The goal of bringing more children into families, and more family into society, requires a re-evaluation of the family and a family policy which dares to take new paths.

## **Results and scenarios of the report drafted by the committee of experts**

### **1. Is family a private matter? Family policy a task for all of society**

What is done in families in private has considerable consequences for all of society. Families create goods and provide benefits for society as a whole. They provide children, carry out educational work and form the basis of life-long solidarity between the generations and the willingness to take care of others. The task of family policy is to create a framework which is supportive of families in providing these essential benefits for society.

The transition from an industrial society towards a service- and knowledge-based society poses considerable challenges for families. The change in people's life cycles, such as longer life expectancy, a higher level of qualification and a greater variety of vocational and private life stages in careers, entails major changes in family living arrangements.

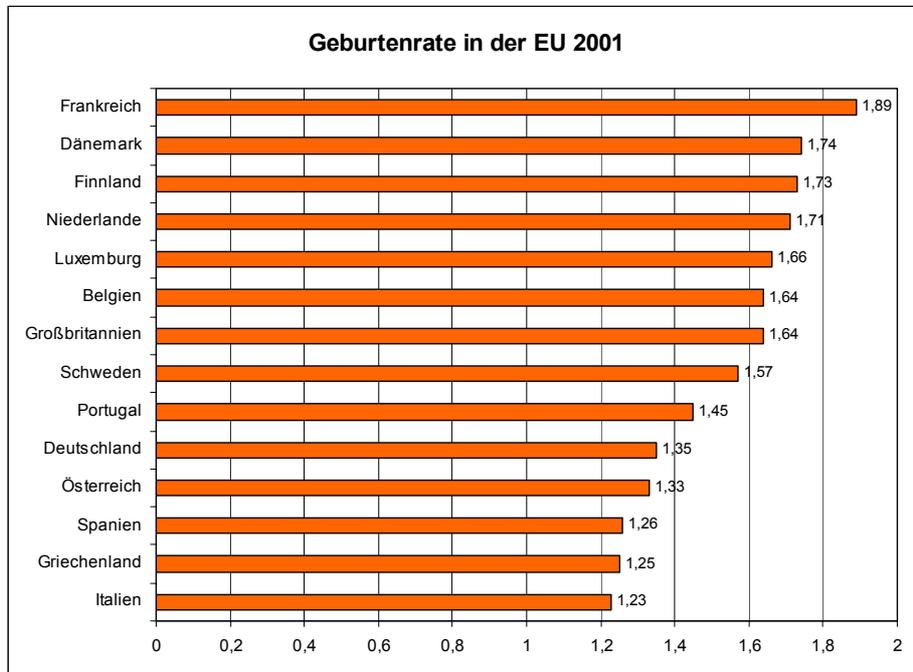
So that families can also be practiced in the future, a new balance is needed between the various areas of life such as family, work and the environment in which families exist. There is an imbalance in Germany today between time structures defined by work, those of schools, kindergartens and other educational institutions and time for families and care. Without new concepts making it possible to link education, work, partnership, parenthood and solidarity with the older generation, there is a danger that care for the coming generation, as well as solidarity between the generations, will become insecure.

The goal of a sustainable family policy must hence be to create the social, economic and political framework in which the coming generation can regard families and development of families as equal, integral elements of the personal life cycle. Establishing stable family relationships, opting for children and showing a willingness to take care of one another should also form part of the life perspective of young women and men in the future. To this end, family policy requires a triad of time policy in the life cycle and in everyday time, the development of integrative infrastructures in neighbourhoods and municipalities, as well as financial transfers to safeguard the ability of families and children to face the future.

## **2. Families and family policy in a European comparison**

Family development in Germany can be interpreted as part of a European development. A major characteristic of European families is the plurality of family living arrangements, such as one-person households, lone parents, unmarried co-habitation, living-apart-together relationships, with or without children, or step or patchwork families. The demographic development of other European countries can also be compared with Germany. The introduction of the contraceptive pill and the educational reform entailed a drop in the birth rate all over Europe. The social policy responses found to these similar developments met with varying rates of success.

## Deutschland: Wenig Kinder



Quelle: Council of Europe. Recent Demographic Developments in Europe, 2003

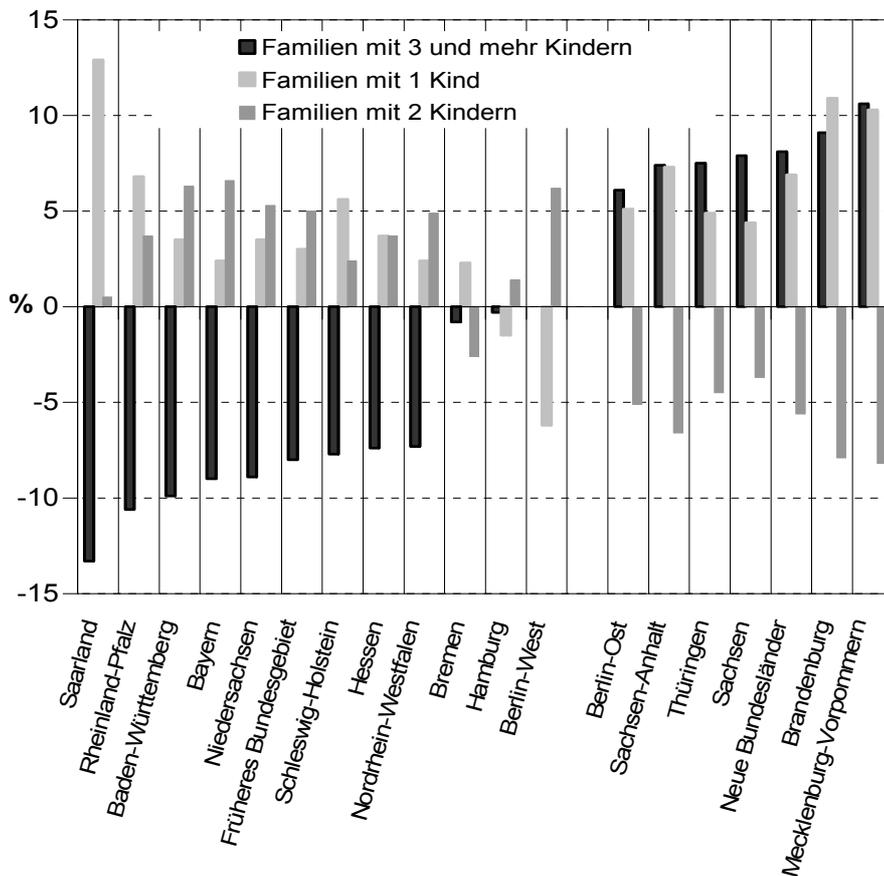
1

### Germany: Small numbers of children

#### Birth rates in the EU 2001

Other European countries are therefore in a better demographic situation today than Germany. The birth rates are higher in these countries, and the balance between family and work can be managed more easily. The actual problem in Germany is not childlessness, but the low share of multiple-child families which could compensate for childlessness.

**Changes in shares of families with 1, 2 or 3 and more children in the old Federal Länder (from 1972 to 2002) and in the new Federal Länder (from 1991 to 2002)**

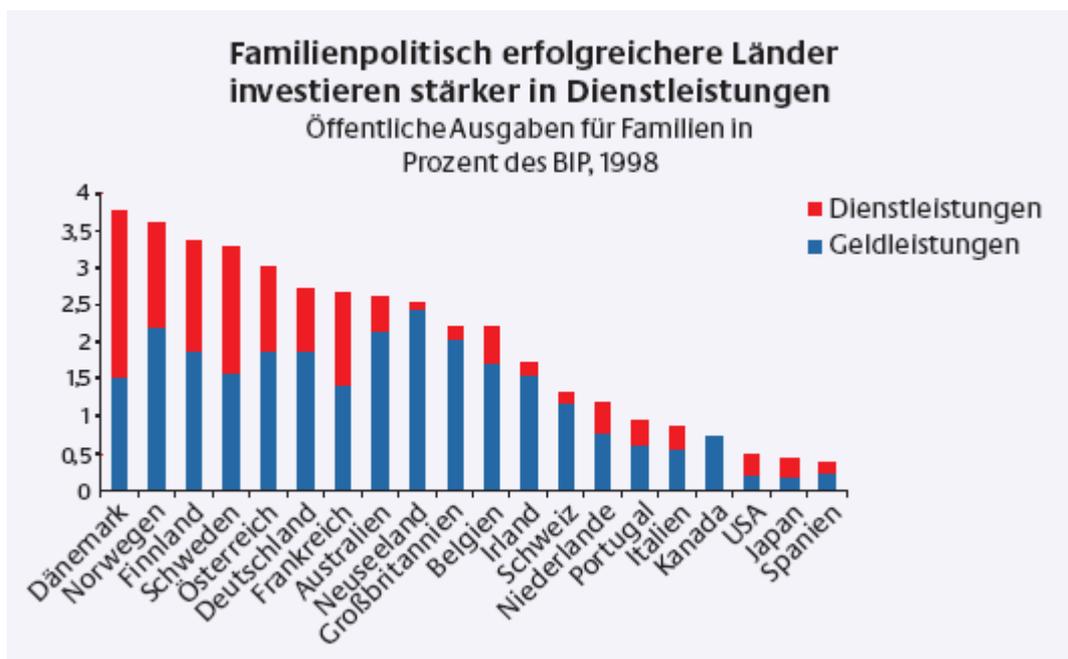


Source: Federal Statistical Office, Fachserie 1, Reihe 3 "Haushalte und Familien", various years

Why have these major differences emerged in the European countries although the starting conditions were so similar? The vital cause lies in the specifically German life cycle planning. The time-span available to Germans to choose to have children is for instance particularly short. The German life cycle is split in three: training, then work, followed finally by retirement. Germans spend one-third of their lives in (very long) training. Then they start work. In other European countries, by contrast, it is much easier to acquire initial training at a fairly young age and then enter into ongoing education, for instance after a family phase. For instance, it is possible in France to progress from being an auxiliary teacher to a professor at an age beyond active parenthood. Germany, by contrast, has a "rush hour of life". Female German academics have about five years after completing their education and starting work to choose whether to have children or not. Assuming a life expectancy of almost 100 years for women born in 1970, this is a life share of 2 %!

This pinch-point does not present itself in Finland. Whilst Finnish women, like German women, have a high age at the birth of their first child, they have children for longer. The reason for this is that attention was paid much earlier in Finland to the fact that the economic foundation of a family is more stable if it is held up by two shoulders (incomes). If one income is lost because of parental leave, compensation is provided by the Finnish child-raising allowance (which is in line with the most recent parental income). This method does a better job of ensuring continuity of income.

Families in Germany, by contrast, experience an economic downward spiral: Family income is still high at the start of parental leave, followed by a marked decrease when parents start to draw child-raising benefit, which is not linked to the previous income. Whilst parental leave in Germany is treated more or less as a private matter, it is viewed in Finland as a training period. There is therefore an urgent need in Germany to develop new life cycle models in order to realign and extend the time periods spent on training, work and family-formation.



**Countries with more successful family policy**

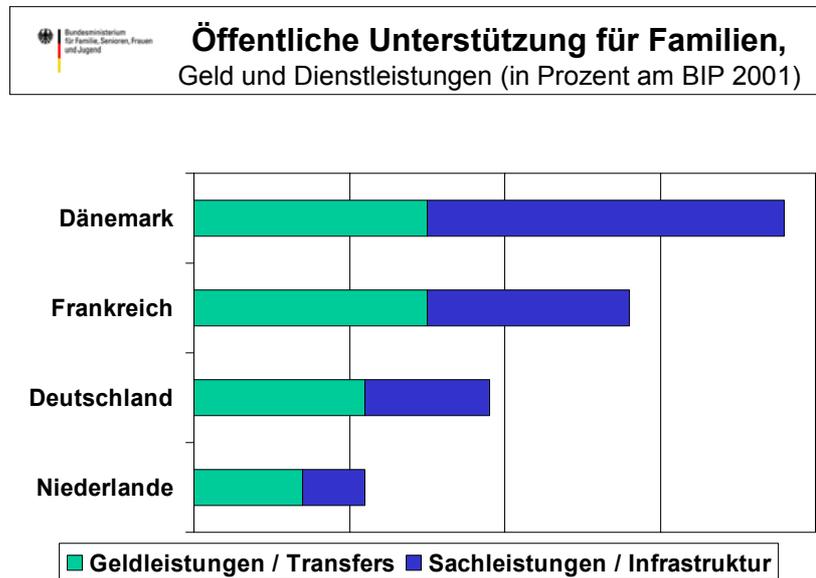
**invest more in services**

Public expenditure on families  
as a percentage of GDP, 1998

Services

Cash benefits

Source Bertelsmann Foundation, Gütersloh 2002



Quelle: 7. Familienbericht

### Public support for families

Money and services (as a percentage of GDP in 2001)

Cash benefits/transfers

Benefits in kind/infrastructure

Source: Seventh Family Report

Furthermore, the relationships between the genders differ in other European countries from those in Germany. Northern Europeans have for instance been operating consistent equal rights policies for a long time, whilst the standard of the sole male breadwinner is still the norm in our country. The structural framework which has been created in Germany to date frequently requires families to be orientated in the traditional fashion to the male breadwinner model or to a household-based marriage. This thus creates a competitive disadvantage at work for women with children. Having said that, Scandinavian equal rights policies have only really led to changes at work, whilst in the private domain, for instance, it has only enticed men to do seven minutes more work in Swedish households.

Although the policies intended to create equal opportunities in the Northern European countries have certainly contributed to the higher birth rates, there is also a fall in the birth rate among female academics in Northern Europe. A higher educational level increases women's options, and

hence childlessness also increases. This is related to life decisions on which a family-friendly framework exerts only a limited influence.

One reason for the low birthrate in Germany is the perception of motherhood. Whilst a working mother is regarded in Germany as a “bad” mother, for instance in France it is taken completely for granted that mothers work. Although the chronological identity of mothers’ and women’s roles which has applied for centuries today in fact no longer applies and is also no longer accepted by the young generation of women, many German mothers have no option whatever but to accept the traditional role.

What we therefore see is a retraditionalisation of the perception of women. The maternal role with its traditionally family-centred way of life is expanded to include the time burden of gainful employment. The man continues to take on the work-related role in many cases.

The model in Denmark, however, is different, given that it is clearly based on a newly-defined perception of the roles taken on by the genders. Here, both partners have the same rights and duties at work and in the family. 75% of all couple households are dual-earner households. Childcare was already considerably expanded in the nineties. In the Netherlands as well, an attempt is being made to include fathers more in family work. This is taking place via a deliberate policy relating to time. 25% of all men in the Netherlands now work part-time because it has been possible to decouple the social security systems from income. Time policy also plays a major role in Sweden: Unlike the situation in our country, a woman is deemed to work full-time if she works approx. 32 to 33 hours per week, whereas in our country a woman is still regarded as working part-time if she works for 30 hours per week.

These examples show that a combination of the three elements new definition of financial allowance, time policy and infrastructural policy creates family-friendly frameworks. Germany has so far not reacted appropriately to social developments in any of these three areas. The problem is not one of a lack of money. There is sufficient money available, and all that is needed is for it to be distributed differently.

The Swedish or Finnish model is no more expensive in total than the German one. Using the salary group BAT\* IIa, this can also be proved with a model calculation (cf Figure). This is based on the current payments to unmarried women up to 36 months after the birth of the first child. The

---

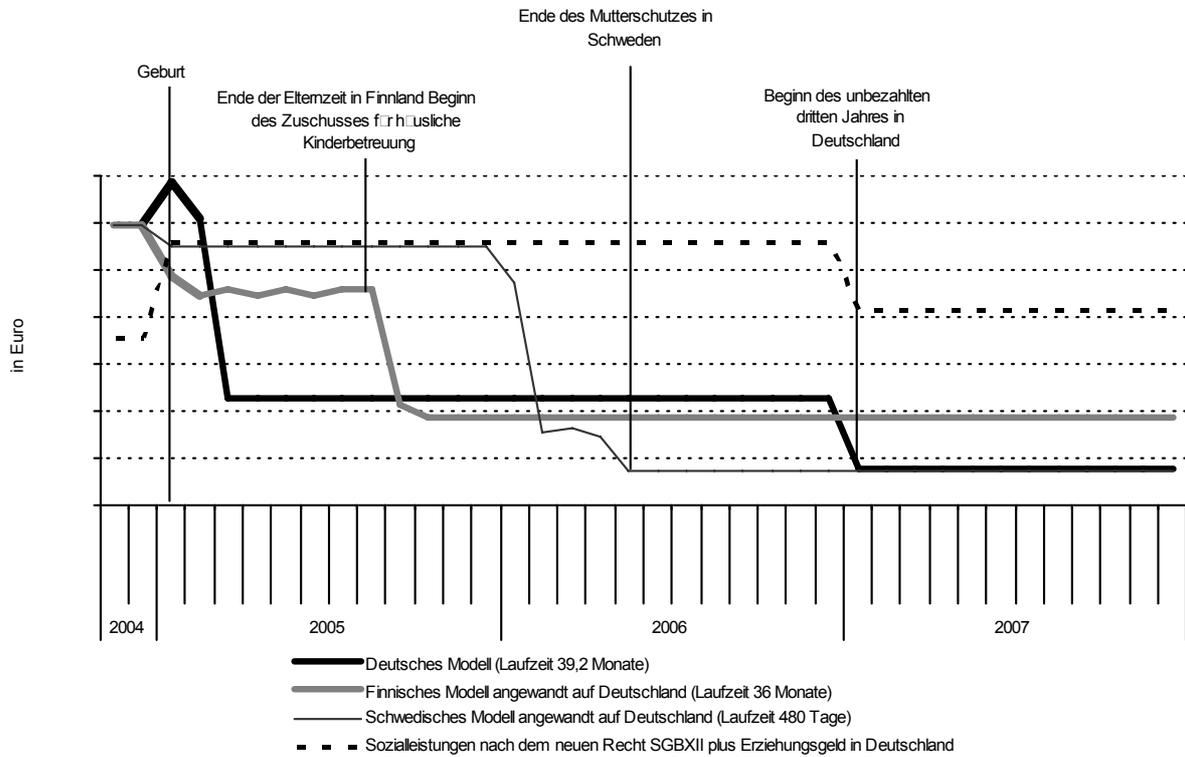
\* Translator's Note: Salary grade under the Federal Employees' Collective Agreement

comparison includes Finland and Sweden, as well as benefits in accordance with Book Twelve of the Social Code (SGB XII) plus child-raising allowance in Germany.

|          |       |   |  |  |
|----------|-------|---|--|--|
|          | Birth | End of parental leave<br>in Finland<br>start of allowance for<br>domestic childcare   | End of maternity pro-<br>tection in Sweden | Start of the unpaid<br>third year in Germany |
| in Euros |       |   |  |  |
|          |       | German model (duration 39.2 months)<br>Finnish model applied to Germany (duration 36<br>months)<br>Swedish model applied to Germany (duration<br>480 days)<br>Social allowances in accordance with the new<br>law, Book Twelve of the Social Code, plus<br>child allowance in Germany |  |  |

**Monthly allowances drawn by unmarried women belonging to salary group BAT IIa up to 36 months after the birth of their first child according to selected European models. Fictitious birth date 1 January 2005**

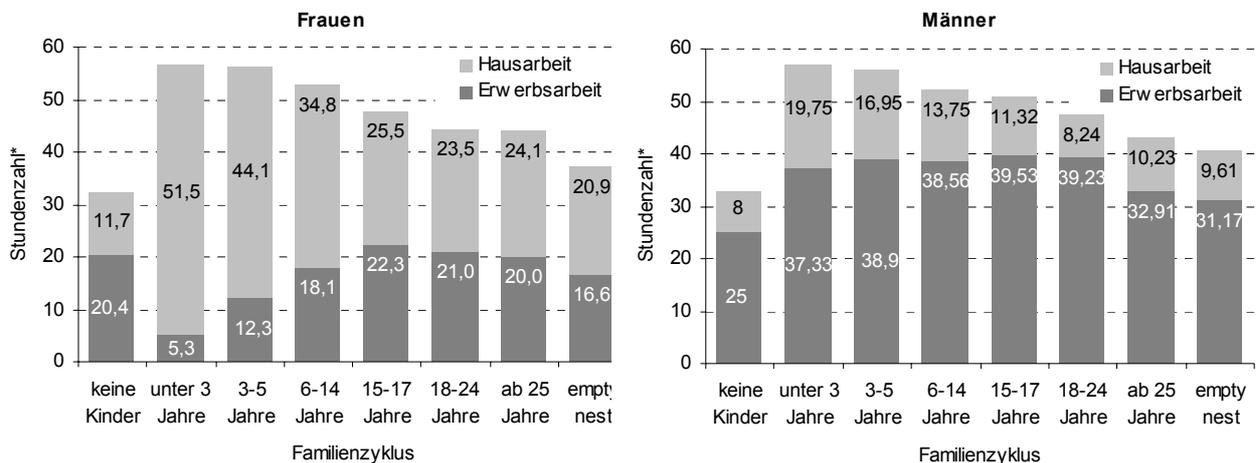
Source: Prof. Hans Bertram



This shows clearly how strong the roller-coaster effect is in Germany. By contrast, the allowances in the other countries, which continue to pay either 67% (Finland) or 80% (now in Sweden) of the net income reduce this effect and guarantee a relatively smooth level of income. In Germany, by contrast, women drawing social assistance allowance most because child-raising allowance is not counted against this benefit. This therefore favours non-employment. An income-linked parental benefit would hence also be an important new development in Germany.

In contrast to other countries, German policymaking has slept through the rapid change from the industrial to the service society. A completely new infrastructure of work has come about with new perceptions of work which offer new employment opportunities to women in particular.

### Gainful employment and household work by men and women depending on the family cycle



| Women                                    |                             |                              |                  |                       |                        |                        |                             |                   | Men                                      |                             |                              |                  |                       |                        |                        |                             |                   |
|--|-----------------------------|------------------------------|------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------|--|-----------------------------|------------------------------|------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------|
| Domestic work<br>Gainful employ-<br>ment |                             |                              |                  |                       |                        |                        |                             |                   | Domestic work<br>Gainful em-<br>ployment |                             |                              |                  |                       |                        |                        |                             |                   |
| No. of                                   |                             |                              |                  |                       |                        |                        |                             |                   | No. of                                   |                             |                              |                  |                       |                        |                        |                             |                   |
|  | no<br>chi<br>l-<br>dr<br>en | un-<br>der<br>3<br>yea<br>rs | 3-5<br>yea<br>rs | 6-<br>14<br>yea<br>rs | 15-<br>17<br>yea<br>rs | 18-<br>24<br>yea<br>rs | fro<br>m<br>25<br>yea<br>rs | emp<br>ty<br>nest |  | no<br>chi<br>l-<br>dr<br>en | un-<br>der<br>3<br>yea<br>rs | 3-5<br>yea<br>rs | 6-<br>14<br>yea<br>rs | 15-<br>17<br>yea<br>rs | 18-<br>24<br>yea<br>rs | fro<br>m<br>25<br>yea<br>rs | emp<br>ty<br>nest |
|  |                             |                              |                  |                       |                        |                        |                             |                   |  |                             |                              |                  |                       |                        |                        |                             |                   |

\*) Number of hours in the last week, including the weekend

Source: Hans Bertram, based on data from the DJI family survey 2000, 10,318 respondents

There has been a very considerable expansion in the number of working hours in the transition from the male sole earner to the individual adult worker model (in which men and women are potential workers). For instance, a man still worked for 48 hours per week at the beginning of the sixties, whilst today on average men and women together spend more than 70 hours at work. Family policy must react to this development by providing appropriate time and infrastructure policies.

### 3. Intrafamily dynamics

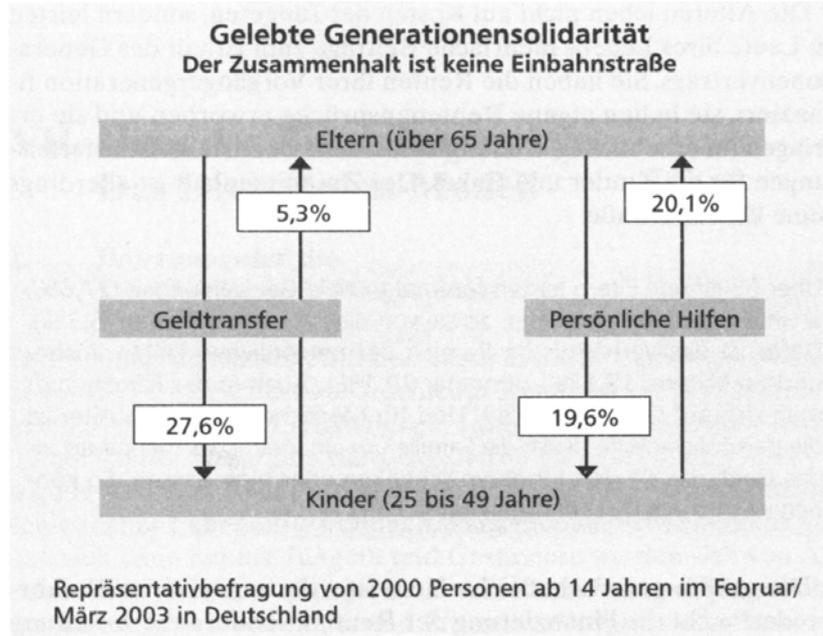
The family today is a stable living arrangement to which people aspire, but which in its manifestation is no longer a fixed establishment, but a living arrangement which is continually re-examined and changed, whilst also being prone to defects. A major disadvantage is suffered after the birth of the first child. Couples in Germany who were previously egalitarian fall back into traditional roles: The women give up their jobs to assume child-care and household tasks, whilst the men work even harder and do not become involved in the “care” tasks (willingness to take on responsibility for one another, assistance, support). Many young marriages fail because of this.

There is a need here to facilitate skill expansion for girls and boys when they are still children, in addition to the necessary infrastructural measures mentioned (such as childcare and all-day schools). Boys are to develop more feminine “care” skills, and girls should acquire more male work orientations. The question also arises of why men “opt out of” the family. The family role is so far unattractive to men: They have foregone their role as breadwinner, but they are mostly only permitted to assist in the household. In order to make family work attractive, “care” must also be recognisable for men as a gain.

This is not a matter of compensating between the genders, but of expanding the male/female roles. Choosing to take on family work depends on the attractiveness of the father role. New family life models are also needed for men – an aspect which has been neglected until now. It is however also important not to dramatise the problems that are encountered in the division of labour within the family, just as the areas of separation and divorce, and to see them as manageable phases in family members’ life cycles by offering practicable solutions.

Relations between the generations are also a major element of intrafamily dynamics. Thus far, the focus has been more on the benefits provided by the young to the elderly generation (long-term care). However, the elderly generation also provides benefits for the younger generations, such as cash transfers, time and care. There can be no question of a generation conflict. Germany is a relatively immobile society in which 50 to 60% of the elderly live very close to their children and meet with them on a regular basis. The question is how to support these complex relationship patterns in order to retain them as an important resource for families.

### **Generational transfers and assistance**



**Practical solidarity between the generations**  
**Cohesion is not a one-way street**

**Parents (over 65)**

**Cash transfer**

**Personal assistance**

**Children (25 to 49)**

Representative survey of 2,000 individuals aged from 14 in February/March 2003 in Germany

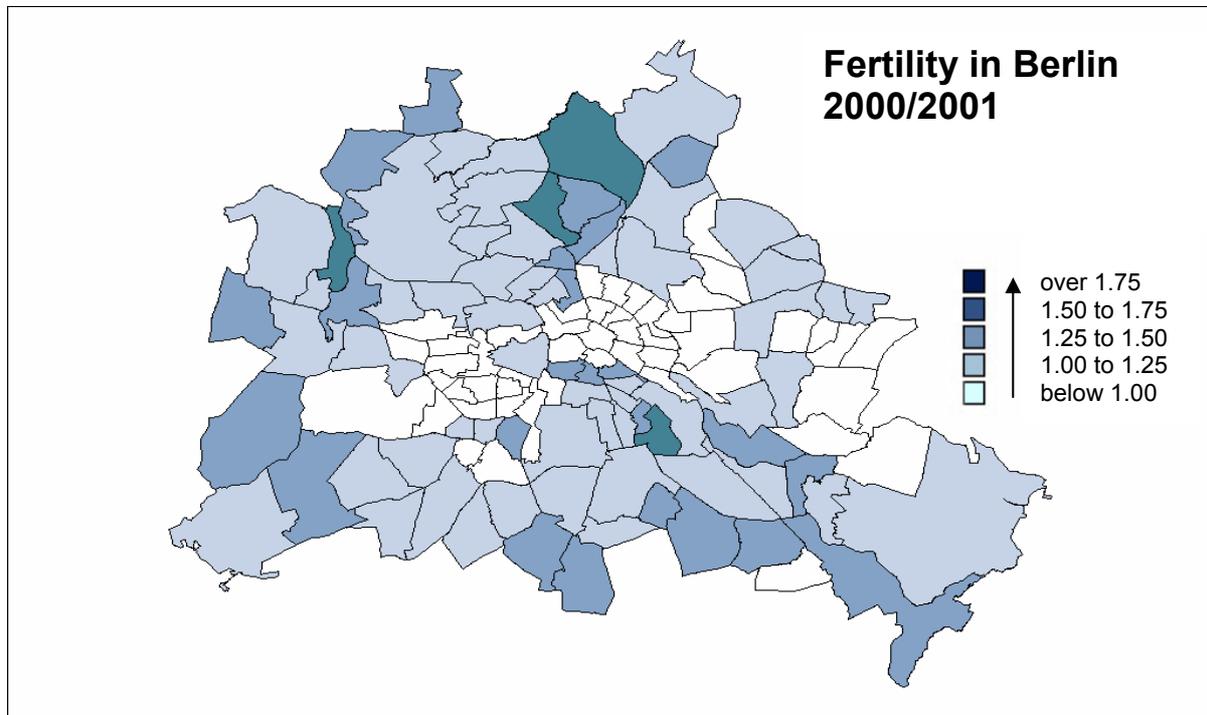
Source: Horst W. Opaschowski: Der Generationenpakt. Das soziale Netz der Zukunft. Darmstadt 2004, p. 157

#### **4. The family in context**

##### **4.1 Family-poor cities**

The future of families is closely intertwined with the future of the cities. The German cities are experiencing an increasing “polarisation” of living arrangements, jobs and ethnic differentiation.

### Total fertility rate of German women in Berlin districts 2000/2001



Borders: 129 territorial units

Source: Prof. Hans Bertram

The “polarisation” arises, firstly, as a result of the different reproduction patterns in German families and in families with a migration background which so far still bring a larger number of children into the world. Secondly, it is a result of the migration movements of higher-income families from the city into the surrounding area. This means for the cities that their inhabitants are increasingly composed of single people on the one hand and of low-income families (families with a migration background, lone parents, social assistance recipients, the unemployed, the old) on the other. Families, which also invest in municipalities as the principle motors of social commitment, now have scarcely any effect on the urban atmosphere. Many parts of cities hence become virtually childless zones; cities age because there are no more young people coming in from the country. We thus experience the phenomenon of shrinking inner cities.

As a result, the familial living arrangement suffers a loss of status and significance in the large cities thus also endangering the infrastructure for families. For these reasons, cities and urban regions are particularly called upon to develop strategies in order to create a family-friendly city which is attractive for families. Because of the economic potential and skills offered by their inhabi-

tants, as well as of a sufficient number of children, cities and local authorities with urban middle classes will find it easier to improve the infrastructure for their children and to be attractive for investors who bring jobs. Family friendliness will be a key locational factor in the future.

#### **4.2 Family poverty**

A constantly growing number of family households in Germany have to run their everyday lives in insecure income situations. The incomes of young families, in other words of families with children below the age of three or where the mothers are aged under 35, are particularly low. Children of married parents are better off by comparison than those who live in other family living arrangements. The poverty risk to which lone mothers and their children are exposed is particularly high. The income situation of a family household is of considerable significance for the achievement of the many everyday tasks of a family and for the development opportunities of the children. In addition to money and income, the resources education, health, time, region and housing also make a contribution towards family development. Family households' disposable family income nonetheless exerts an influence on these resources. An unstable family income frequently has a negative impact on the areas of housing and health, and results in shortcomings in education and in careers.

All in all, it is necessary to ask more frequently in the poverty debate how one can encourage families to activate their own resources (in the sense of an "enabling social welfare state"). The concepts range here from strengthening everyday concepts by providing advice, through to targeted promotion of children in low-threshold centres analogously to the Early Excellence Centres in England.

### **5. Future scenarios**

A new balance between gainful employment and welfare in the life cycle, as well as a new pattern of male and female roles, is key to the future of the family. Borrowing from the triad of time, infrastructure and financial allowances for families, the following measures are proposed above all.

#### **5.1 Breaking up the traditional life cycle by means of option times**

The classical life cycle which is still common today must be removed from the three-fold division into the phases child/participant/retiree. The dismemberment into not necessarily sequential phases can realign the now massively intensified "rush hour of life" through the concurrence of family-formation and starting work. It is also possible to obtain time for other socially important "care" and/or participation tasks. So-called option times are proposed in the shape of educational,

training or long-term care time, or indeed other forms of social work (option time model). In addition, the possibility should be examined to expand the lifespan in which desired fertility is realised (wish time model). It is important that the option time does not appear to be inferior to career time and rising incomes because otherwise it will again only be used by women. It is however necessary to develop a gender-neutral model. This will make it possible for family-foundation to become a stress-free part of the life cycle – naturally always on condition that a needs-based child-care infrastructure is available. Furthermore, the time structures and forms of the division of labour are to be developed in such a way that they are a reliable precondition for care and relationships with others (time coordination model).

Option times might also use the longer life expectancy years instead of spending them in retirement. The present roughly 25 years of “participation time” (= career time until retirement) would be extended. The model is to be funded via pensions: It would be possible to divide the current total of 45 years of employment which are served all at once until drawing a pension into several phases in order to draw for instance 67% of the net income in intermediate option times so to speak as an “advance” on the pension. Even if this led to loss of income or job insecurity, the idea of continuously advancing careers and secure income increases is in any case a thing of the past. Working lives will also increasingly consist of a patchwork resulting in a fragmentation of the classical life cycle model.

This would mean carrying out further modularisation in the area of training, as takes place for instance in the Anglo-Saxon countries. This kind of life planning does not constitute a disadvantage in the latter model, as it is possible to re-enter one’s career at any time. The same can be found in Germany currently only among officers of the Federal Armed Forces, whose training and work phases alternate. This development is already taking place in companies in the shape of so-called *sabbaticals* (personal working time accounts to save up leave or a specific wage percentage over a period of years in order then to be released for a year). The conversion of some university training courses to B.A. or M.A. studies in our country is also a beginning.

## **5.2 Local infrastructures for families**

At the level of local government policy, families no longer need to be seen and treated solely as benefit recipients, but on the contrary as “investors” in the local community and in social development. There is a need to set up not only high-quality childcare services, but also new forms of housing and working. Furthermore, a lot can be achieved for families at local level in the context of time policy (coordination of public institutions and infrastructures in line with families’ time budgets). Offerings to support families must be re-integrated at all levels of society. The environment must

be shaped such that it provides families a framework offering security, reliability and a place in which ties can be formed. The Federal initiative “Local Alliances for the family” is explicitly welcomed as a novel approach to design local family policy successfully.

### **5.3 Introduction of a single family cash office**

In order to remedy the current splintering of competences for individual family policy measures, all cash transfers for families should be combined in a “family cash office”, not only to provide families with a single point of contact, but also so that such an institution can have a correspondingly broader political influence. The financial allowances must create possibilities for young adults to be able to have children as a part of a joint life planning. Child poverty is to be targeted and fought against.

### **5.4 The parental allowance as an investment in the future**

An income-linked parental benefit has the same significance as further training for work since it constitutes a release from gainful employment to support the development of the human assets and human capital of a knowledge-based society. A parental allowance along Scandinavian lines is therefore favoured. In the interest of sustainable family policy, it is hence an investment in the future of a society. The extensive debate on a transfer payment linked to individual income during the earliest phase of child-rearing presumably also has a positive demographic effect if one compares the Northern European countries with the Federal Republic as to the number of multiple-child families. These allowances make it possible to choose to have another child since there is no reason to fear that the presence of one more person in the family will set off a roller-coaster effect which also entails a long-term reduction in income.

### **5.5 Research along US lines**

As to research in Germany, there are areas which can stand up to international comparison (e.g. research into life cycles and on time use), but there are also fields where there are marked gaps in the research (such as infrastructure for children and quality standards). It is hence proposed to establish interdisciplinary, nationwide research more along US lines. It is extraordinarily fortunate that in addition to the activities of the major research facilities such as the German Research Foundation, private foundations are also investing considerable funds in research with visible success (such as the Hertie Foundation, the Bertelsmann Foundation and the Robert Bosch Foundation).

You will find the Seventh Family Report and extensive information on the homepage of the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth at [www.bmfsfj.de](http://www.bmfsfj.de).

## **Members of the Expert-Commission in Charge of the 7th „Family-Report“**

Prof. Ph. D. Jutta Allmendinger

Direktorin des Instituts für Arbeitsmark- und Berufsforschung (IAB) Nürnberg;  
Professorin für Soziologie, Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München

Prof. Dr. Hans Bertram (Vorsitzender der Kommission)

Professor für Mikrosoziologie und Leiter des Lehrbereichs Mikrosoziologie an der Humboldt-Universität Berlin;

Prof. Dr. Dr. Dr. Wassilios E. Fthenakis

Direktor des Staatsinstituts für Frühpädagogik München; Professor für Entwicklungspsychologie und Anthropologie an der Freien Universität Bozen/Italien

Prof. Dr. Helga Krüger (Stellvertretende Vorsitzende)

Professorin für Familiensoziologie, familiale und berufliche Sozialisation, Leiterin des Schwerpunkts Institutionen des Lebenslaufs und Geschlechterkonstruktionen an der Universität Bremen

Prof. Dr. Uta Meier-Gräwe

Professur für Wirtschaftslehre des Privathaushalts und Familienwissenschaft und  
Lehrstuhl-Leitung des Instituts für Wirtschaftslehre des Haushalts und Verbrauchsforschung  
an der Justus-Liebig-Universität Gießen

PD Dr. C. Katharina Spieß

Wissenschaftliche Mitarbeiterin in der Abteilung "Längsschnittstudie Sozio-oekonomisches Panel" am Deutschen Institut für Wirtschaftsforschung (DIW) Berlin

Prof. Dr. Marc Szydlik

Professor für Soziologie an der Universität Zürich;

### **Permanent Guest**

Dr. Karin Jurczyk

Leiterin der Abteilung „Familie und Familienpolitik“ am Deutsches Jugendinstitut München

This PDF is a publication of the Federal Government;  
it is distributed free of charge and may not be sold.

**Published by:**

Federal Ministry for  
Family Affairs, Senior Citizens,  
Women and Youth – BMFSFJ  
11018 Berlin  
[www.bmfsfj.de](http://www.bmfsfj.de)

**Available through:**

Publikationsversand der Bundesregierung  
Postfach 48 10 09  
18132 Rostok  
Tel.: +49 –(0)18 05/77 80 90  
Fax: +49 –(0)18 05/77 80 94  
E-Mail: [publikationen@bundesregierung.de](mailto:publikationen@bundesregierung.de)  
Internet: [www.bmfsfj.de](http://www.bmfsfj.de)

**Valid:**

April 2006

**Text, editing and layout:**

KIWI GmbH, Osnabrück