

Effects of Family Policies on Childbearing Behavior in Developed Countries

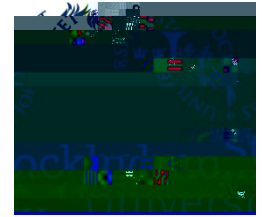
Gerda Neyer

United Nations Expert Group Meeting
on Recent and Future Trends in Fertility

New York, 2-4 December 2009



Fertility and Family Policies in Europe



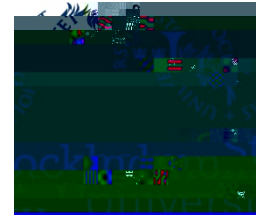
- Increase in low fertility concerns
 - 2/3 of EU-countries, Japan, South-Korea, Singapore, Australia, Canada, and several other developed countries

Upsurge in family policies to raise fertility

- 3/4 of EU-countries, Japan, South-Korea, Singapore, Australia, and several other developed countries

$\frac{3}{4}$ Family policies – impact on childbearing?

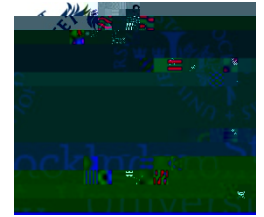
Fertility and Family Policies as Research Area



- What are family policies?
- How should we study (potential) impact of family policies on demographic behavior?
- Do family policies affect fertility?



What are Family Policies?



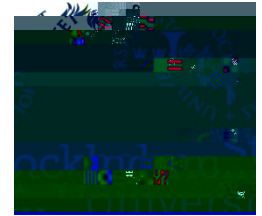
- state activities which aim ‘to favour a certain kind of family organization and to strengthen those who are in a position to conform to this form of organization’ (Bourdieu 1996)

$\frac{3}{4}$ normative aims of family policies

$\frac{3}{4}$

$\frac{3}{4}$

What are Family Policies?



- policies that structure society and markets through structuring private relationships, that is:
 - partnerships
 - parenthood

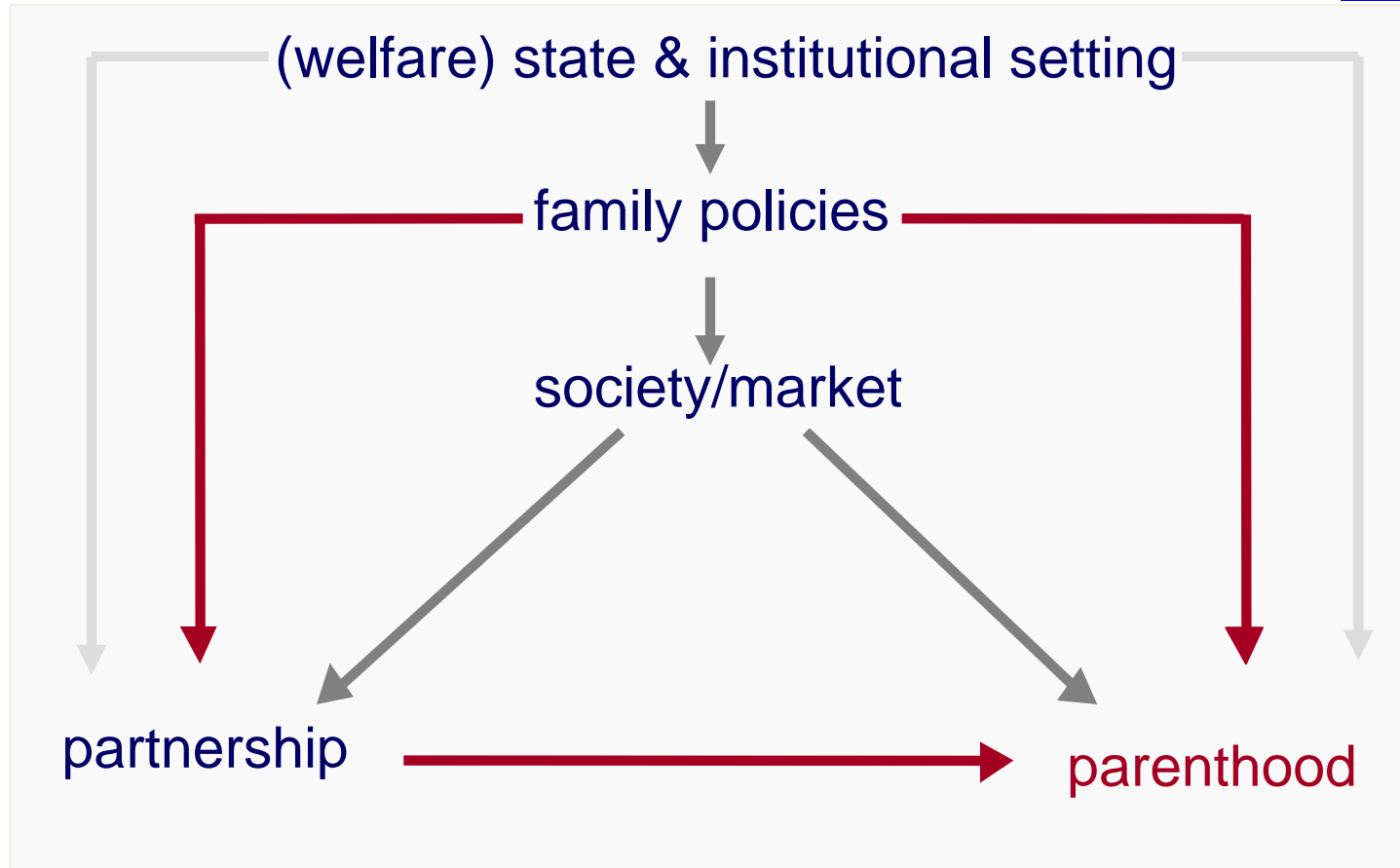
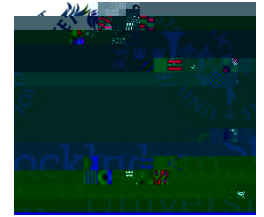
(Orloff 1993; Lewis 1992; Langan/Ostner 1991; Neyer 2003)

$\frac{3}{4}$ family policies part of (welfare-)state policies

$\frac{3}{4}$ institutional aspects of family policies



(Welfare)-state and family-policy impact

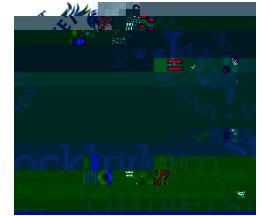


Conception of Family Policies



- **set of different policies**
 - belong to different policy areas
 - vary across countries and/or regions, communities
 - change over time
- **embedded in socio-economic, political, and cultural environment**
 - in line with or contrary to other policies
 - interact with environment and its changes
- **normative/cultural aspects**
 - symbolic meaning

Consequences for Research

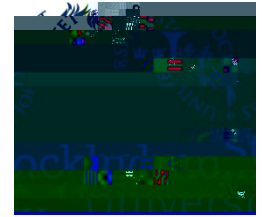


$\frac{3}{4}$ Policy Analysis:

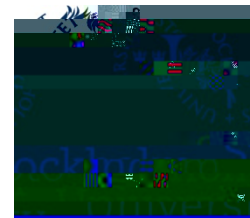
- **WHAT:** content of policy and policy context
- **WHEN:** timing aspect (‘critical junctures’)
 - before-after
 - implementation, and sequencing
 - socio-economic, political changes
- **WHERE:** spatial and cultural aspects
 - regional, single country, comparative perspective

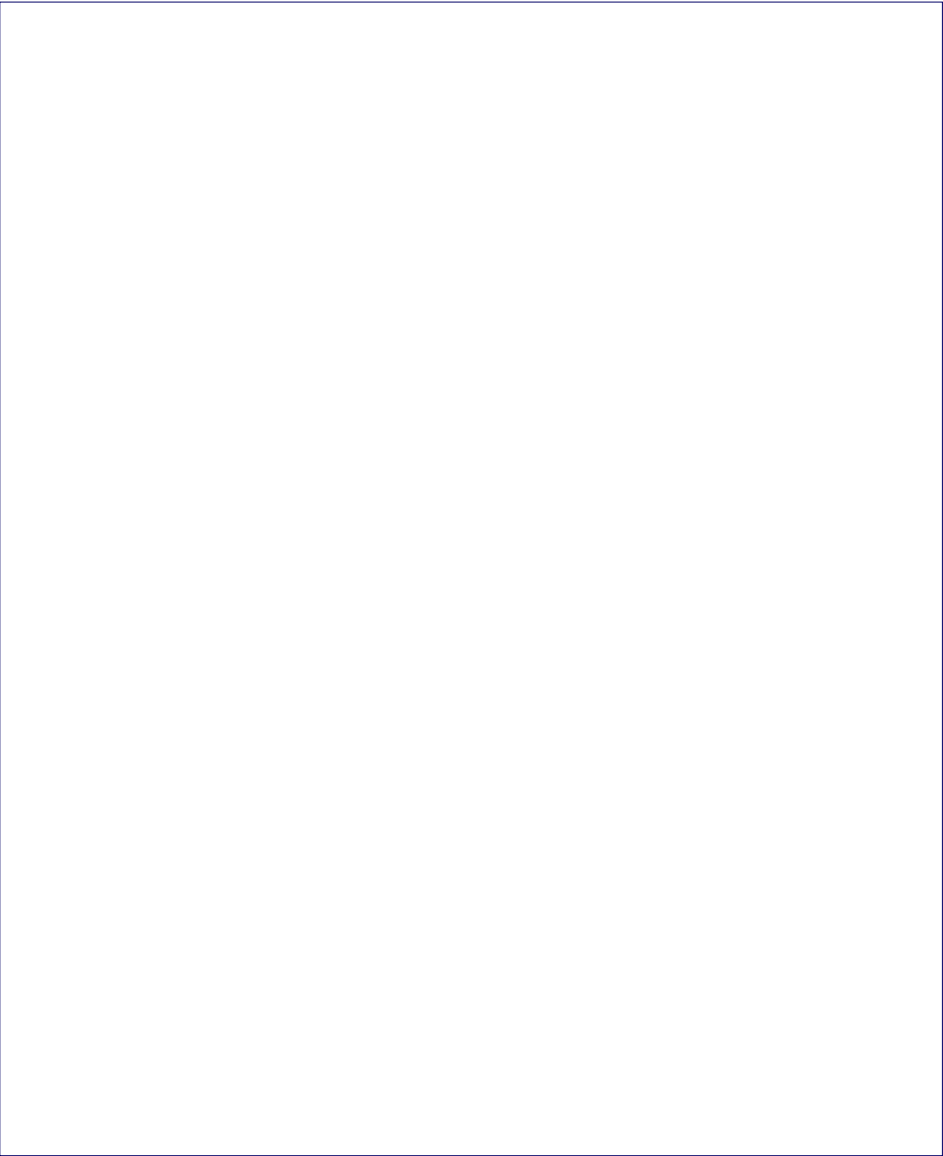


Effects of Family Policies on Childbearing Behavior



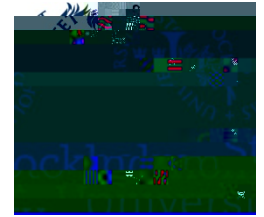
- 'critical junctures' (what and when):
 - introduction of employment-supporting family policies
 - effect of such policies under different socio-economic conditions
- spatial and cultural aspects (where)
- use of policy: differential effects of policies on different social groups (who)







Effects of Policies on Childbearing



- policy may have an effect on childbearing behavior (on timing and quantum) (effect may be delayed)
- changes in behavior may also be brought about by other factors than policies
- policies may have only temporal effect
- policies may have different effects in different socio-economic circumstances

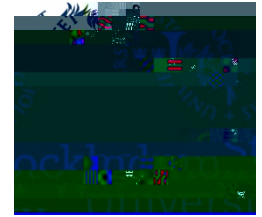


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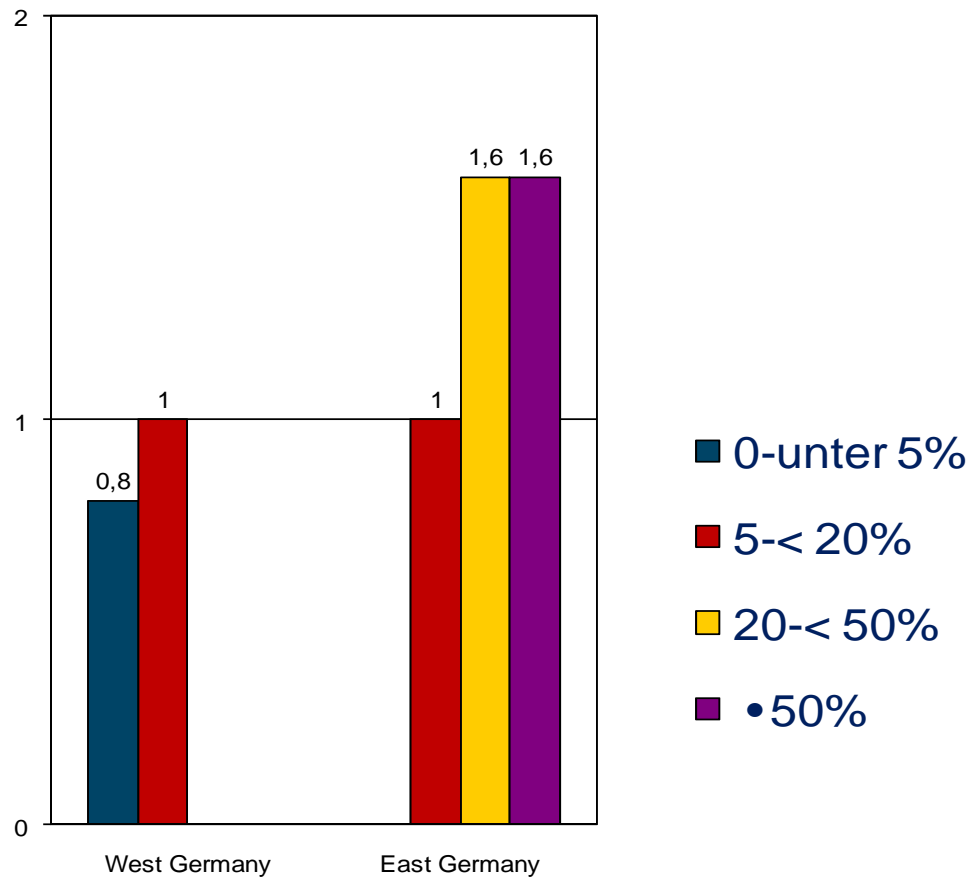
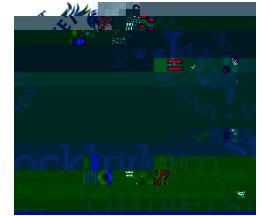
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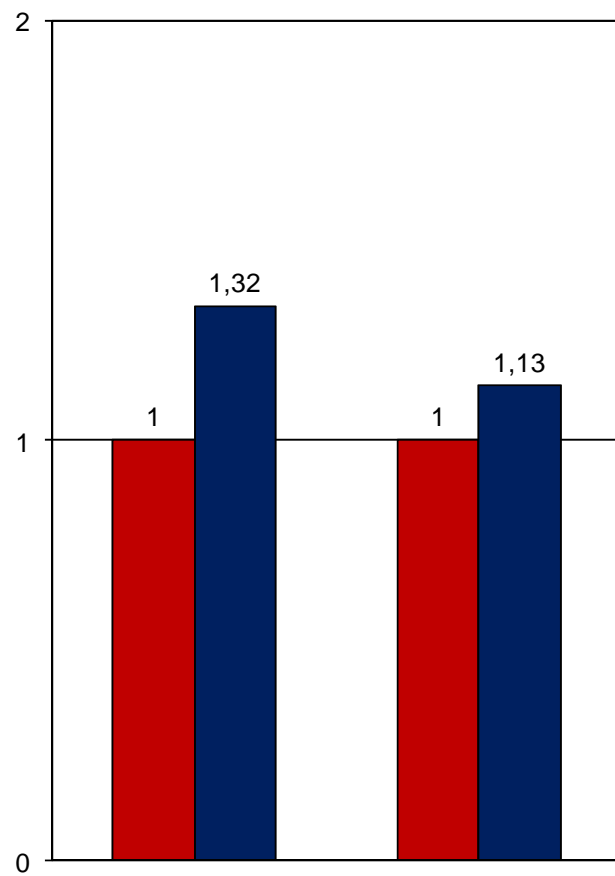
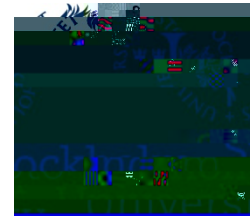
Space – Symbolic Implications?



- Child-care characteristics – differences between regions
 - Interaction/feedback effects – Norway
 - Cultural effect – Germany

First-birth Risks and Availability of childcare (0-3 Jahre) in Germany





Effects of Policies on Childbearing



- Cultural aspects may determine the effects of policies
(congruence or cleavages between cultural aspects and policies may determine effect)
- Transferability of policies to different (cultural) settings (?)

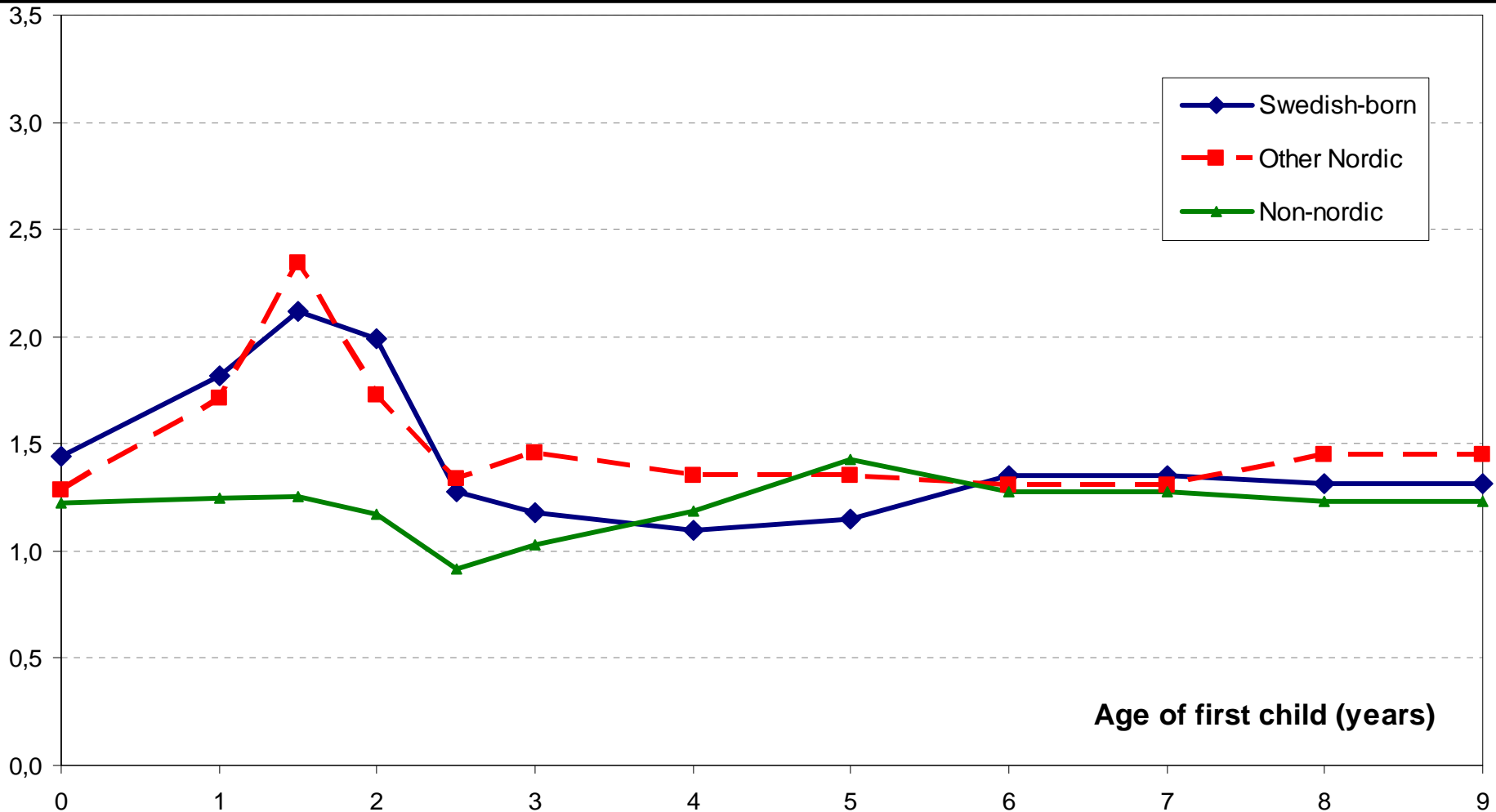
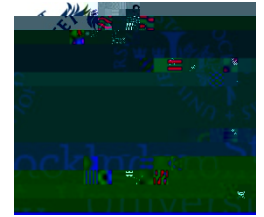


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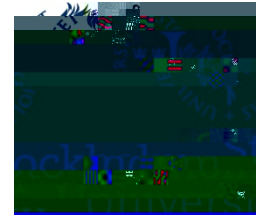


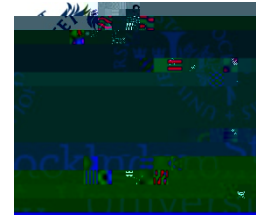
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Changes in second-birth rates, 1990 relative to 1981, by duration since first birth and country of origin



Family Policies, Fertility & Research





Thank You