

Abstracts

Oliver Arránz Becker and Daniel Lois

Differences in Nuptiality Between West German, East German, and Mobile Women. The Role of the Transformation Process and of Socio-Cultural Orientations

The present study compares the nuptiality of East and West German women after the German unification, based on data from the Socioeconomic Panel (GSEOP). In the initial model, East German women exhibit a lower risk of first marriage than the West German sub-sample. Multivariate event history analyses suggest that two East German peculiarities account for this difference: first, particular socio-cultural orientations of East German women (e.g., their lower religiosity and their higher work aspirations), and second, consequences of the political transformation such as lower household incomes and a reduced global life satisfaction in East Germany. Complex findings result concerning both the transition to parenthood and to cohabitation. Although the odds of these transitions are generally higher in the East German sample, both events are less strongly linked to marriage in this subgroup. Surprisingly, the nuptiality of mobile women (i.e., those who have moved from East to West Germany after 1990) resembles the West German pattern, despite the fact that this group is characterised by a lower religiosity and by a slightly higher work orientation, compared to West German women.

Christian Hohendanner and Hans-Dieter Gerner

The Conversion of Fixed-Term into Permanent Contracts in the Context of Personnel Policies of Firms

The study contributes to the debate on the erosion of standard employment relationships. Based on the IAB-Establishment Panel we investigate under which conditions firms convert fixed-term contracts into permanent ones. On the one hand fixed-term contracts help to maintain an adequate relationship between stability and flexibility. In this case, conversion is less probable. On the other hand fixed-term contracts are used in the context of recruiting. In this case, the bargaining position between the contracting parties plays a major role. In firms with problems in hiring qualified employees, conversions are more probable. In the – mainly public and non-profit – social service establishments fixed-term contracts are predominantly used to maintain flexibility. High proportions of fixed-term contracts are accompanied by low conversion rates. In the production sector fixed-term employees are rather used as a recruiting instrument. In general, the results indicate that international competition is not directly responsible for the rise of fixed-term contracts.

Ulrich Rosar, Jörg Hagenah and Markus Klein

Physical Attractiveness and Individual Performance – or: Why and When Unattractive Men Are the Better Football Players

The fact that attractive people have more professional success than unattractive people is broadly documented in the social psychological literature. It has not been examined yet, however, if the success of attractive people is also based on a better performance. It is possible that attractive people achieve success with less effort than unattractive people as they are usually better treated by their social environment. The question is how a person's performance is

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influenced by his or her attractiveness. As the performance of professional football players can be measured rather simply and is comparatively well documented, we examined the 483 professional players of the 18 teams playing in the German premier league in 2007 and 2008 to answer this question. Each player's attractiveness was measured using the Truth of Consensus Method by averaging the attractiveness ratings obtained from an online survey based on portrait photographs. The players' performance was measured observing playing habits in detail. The statistical evaluation shows that a player's attractiveness tends to influence his performance negatively. This effect, however, depends on the players' attractiveness within his team: a high and homogenous attractiveness of all players in a team reverses the direction of the effect of attractiveness on performance.

Ludger Pries

Why Do Some Migrants Commute Frequently Between Countries? An Empirical Study of Transnational Migration Between Mexico and the USA

Research on transnational migration and transnational social spaces becomes an increasingly important research field. Based on the educational, housing and work trajectories of 648 Mexican labour migrants that had worked at least once in the Metropolitan region of New York City and examining qualitative fieldwork and biographical interviews new migration pattern of transnational migrants have been observed. These migrants commute many times between the two countries with stays lasting several years. They cannot be considered as 'failed immigrants' or 'return migrants'. Rather, their contexts of migration unravel dense transnational family networks. The data analysis explains the number of country shifts by variables related to personal, family, time and work characteristics of the surveyed migrants. The findings are crucial for understanding new processes of international migration and incorporation and for developing adequate means for recognizing and integrating transnational migrants.