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BIC.LATE - Biological, Individual and Contextual Factors of Fertility Recovery

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A few decades ago, most women had their children in their 20s. Today, across the high-income countries, they tend to have them in their 30s. Whether women and men will have children or not, and how many, is thus increasingly determined by their desire and ability to have children at later reproductive ages.

In that context, the conditions met by individuals in their 30s have become key to having children. The objective of BIC.LATE (“biological, individual and contextual factors of fertility recovery”) is to study these conditions. We will assess the importance of infertility and assisted reproduction for fertility recuperation; we will detect new inequalities that could raise in that context; and we will explain differences in fertility levels across the low-fertility countries.

We will use survey and panel data, data from fertility clinics and aggregate cohort fertility trends in Europe, the English-speaking overseas countries and East Asia. BIC.LATE will no longer consider that fertility is explained globally, but that it is driven by different factors depending on the age. It will link the conditions at the time of fertility recuperation to today’s and tomorrow’s fertility levels. And finally, it will inform policy-makers about the major contextual drivers of future fertility, using clearly articulated storylines and their associated scenario.

Eva Beaujouan is assistant professor at the Department of Demography of the University of Vienna, within the broader Wittgenstein Centre. After a Ph.D. thesis at the French Institute of Demographic Studies INED, she joined the ESRC Centre for Population Change (University of Southampton) as a postdoc for three years. She has been part of the Wittgenstein Centre for Demography since 2012, first at the Vienna Institute of Demography, then at Vienna University of Economics and Business, and now at the University of Vienna. She is also leading a three-year project on late fertility in Europe, funded by the Austrian Research Fund.