

Abstracts

Marion Bayerl, Elke Mack: Child-Parent Bonds und External Childcare. How can the Interests of young Mothers and Women and the Well-Being of Children be Balanced?

The debate about childcare for children under three is dominated by conflicts of convictions and calls for a matter-of-fact evaluation. Therefore the question of childcare is considered from of an ethical perspective bringing those concerned into focus, namely children and women who carry the main burden of family work and take the main decision for or against children. A look at the most recent research on childcare shows that there are no negative effects from external care on those children who have strong ties to their parents, but rather meets their desire for social contacts even better. The social structures in Germany do not meet these standards, because women, who want to have children, are left alone with the dilemma to choose between professional life and caring for their family. The article presents a perspective to solve this problem.

Jörg Althammer: Quo vadis Family Politics? Some Remarks on a Paradigm Shift in Family Politics

Public family politics over the last years was subject to a paradigm shift. This article surveys the normative change of perspective and the change of methods employed in family politics, and provides a critical assessment of the recent reforms. It concludes with a call for „more market“ in family politics.

Bernhard Laux: Marriage as Asset. On Public Interest in Partnership

Marriage as an established social institution is no longer a matter of course. The plurality of modes of life is a commonly accepted fact in modern society. In view of this fact the author takes a look at the social significance and the particular dignity of marriage. The irreplaceable value of marriage for a fulfilled life of both partners, for the decision to have children and a reliable education is being shown. In social respects marriage is an important demographic factor. By its commitment and regular willingness to take on long-term responsibility for a family, marriage shapes the level of solidarity in a society. Vice versa, the institution of marriage needs social support by appreciation and acceptance, legal protection, equal taxation and a privileged link between marriage and family.

Martin Lampert: Demographic Change in Germany. Analyses – Consequences – Recommendations

This contribution discusses the impending demographic challenges with their ensuing problems for the economy, the state and society. Right now demographic change triggers off emotional debates, in which the predicted so-called „pensioners' wave“ has to serve as an explanation for the dismantling of the welfare state, for the purported discrimination of the younger generations and finally even for the loss of democratic culture. Which demographic development are we to expect? Which will be the consequences? What is to be done? With reference to the first two questions the author presents relevant surveys and recent estimates and calculation. As to the third question he offers suggestions for better integration of women and old-

er employees into professional life, for the avoidance of old age poverty and for the partial disengagement of wages and pensions.

„Parents are the Key to all Educational Processes“ – In Conversation with Klaus Hurrelmann on Children and Parents, Education and Family

Today, children and adolescents grow up in smaller families. The relationship between the generations is easy. There are, however, many difficult challenges for children, adolescents and their parents as well as many controversial questions of education that touch on the field of current family politics: How early and to what extent do kids require social contacts outside the family? What disadvantages do children from poor or socially problematic families have? What would a functioning interaction between those concerned in education look like? Which rôle does the media play as sort of a co-educator? What particular significance do male educators have? Klaus Hurrelmann pleads for a more imaginative approach and for a variety of models, in order to make a strong family life compatible with modern professional life. Apart from better general conditions a reinforcement of educational skills of fathers and mothers is required in the first place.



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„Market Economy not without a Functioning Welfare State“ – In Conversation with Bishop Reinhard Marx about 10 Years of the Joint Statement of the Churches on the Economical and Social Situation in Germany

Ten years ago the joint social statement of both Catholic and Protestant churches achieved a resonance that even

today can still be felt. All later church communiques on social-ethical matters were compared to the social statement of 1997. The bishop of Trier reminds us in his talk of the very special aspect of this joint statement: the dialogue that led towards it, the high ecumenical quality, the link between ethical fundamentals and dedicated commitment for the unemployed, for the poor, for a natural en-

vironment and for a new social culture. Moreover, today's social challenges are discussed in view of the criteria formulated in the common statement, namely: Changes in the welfare state and allocational justice – distortions in the relation between capital and labour – the new family politics.

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