

**Other****Information on ERC Consolidator Grant 2019 for a Polish demographer**

Anna Matysiak

ERC Consolidator Grant 2019

## **Globalisation- and Technology-Driven Labour Market Change and Fertility (LABFER)**

In December 2019, the European Research Council awarded three demographers with its ERC Consolidator grants. One of these prestigious grants went to the Polish demographer, Anna Matysiak. Her project, Globalisation- and Technology-Driven Labour Market Change and Fertility (LABFER), will be conducted at the Interdisciplinary Centre of Labour Market and Family Dynamics. The Centre was established at the Faculty of Economic Sciences, University of Warsaw, thanks to the financial support of the Polish Returns Programme of the National Agency of Academic Exchange (NAWA) upon the return of Anna Matysiak from a six-year long research stay at the Vienna Institute of Demography. The LABFER project will start on 1.10.2020 and will last five years. Anna Matysiak plans to employ 3 post-docs and 2 PhD students from the funding of 1,998,000 EUR in order to study the fertility behaviours in the changing world of work.

The world of work has undergone tremendous changes as a result of globalisation and the technological advancement and these changes are now gaining on importance with the COVID-19 pandemic. They provide many opportunities for workers but also create new risks. On the one hand, new jobs and earning opportunities have emerged

and we are now more flexible in how, where, and when we work. On the other hand, the demands on workers increased with the intensification of global competition and the availability of smartphones and the internet makes it more and more difficult to disconnect from work. Our jobs are also increasingly taken over by robots or moved to countries with lower labour costs. These changes have a tremendous impact on various aspects of our lives, such as our time availability, economic and mental well-being or health. They are also likely to influence our family lives, including childbearing decisions, yet this influence has neither been studied nor understood.

LABFER is thus the first project which will comprehensively describe and evaluate the consequences of these dramatic labour market transformations on fertility. It concentrates on contemporary post-industrial societies (defined here as OECD countries), paying special attention to the most advanced European economies over the last two decades. It will address the following research questions:

- 1) What is the general impact of the ongoing labour market change on total fertility?
- 2) What is the impact of the ongoing labour market change on fertility across various social groups (e.g high vs. low and medium educated, women vs. men, younger and older individuals in reproductive age)?
- 3) What are the mechanisms behind the fertility effects of the ongoing labour market change? For instance, what is the mediating role of union formation, gender equality, financial situation, experience of employment uncertainty or health in the examined relationships?
- 4) How does the social context moderate the effects of the ongoing labour market change on fertility? Which family and employment policies may alleviate the negative consequences of the ongoing labour market change on fertility? What is the role of the cultural context?

These research questions will be addressed with the use of innovative methods. First, the LABFER team will link data at several layers of observation (country, region, industry, firm, couple and individual) to account for the policy, work, and family context of childbearing. Using firm-level data will be particularly innovative as such data has been so far rarely used in family research. Secondly, LABFER will apply novel labour market measures which have been recently developed in labour economics, such as exposure to automation or exposure to high work demands. These measures should perform better at capturing the ongoing labour market change than the standard labour market measures used so far in social research (such as the unemployment rate or temporary employment). Finally, new analytical approaches will be employed as well. The project will rely on mixture cure models in order to study whether the changing work conditions affect only the timing or also the probability of births. The team will also make use of mediation models for

event-history data in order to understand better the mechanisms behind the fertility effects of the ongoing labour market change.

LABFER will be conducted at the Interdisciplinary Centre of Labour Market and Family Dynamics where two researchers have already been employed to investigate the impact of the labour market transformations on men's and women's performance in the labour market. The research conducted under the ERC grant will complement their work, extending the Centre research focus to fertility. Further applications for funding are planned in the future as labour markets continue to change and affect various spheres of family lives.