

Value Changes in Parenthood and Partnership in Bulgaria: Some Results from a Multi-Method Study

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The presentation will aim at highlighting the connection between the observed changes in marital and fertility tendencies and the underlying shifts in the value orientations regarding parenthood and partnership during the 1990s in Bulgaria. The changes in the individuals' values and behaviors will be elaborated from the perspective of a **multi-method study**. The main focus of the presentation will be put on the **complementarity or divergence** between the finding originating from both country specific quantitative analyses and a qualitative study based on in-depth interviews.

In particular, the results from factor and cluster analyses applied to the Bulgarian datasets of the World Value Surveys (1990 & 1997) and European Value Survey (1999) bring into light some peculiarities and ambivalences in the dominating value orientations regarding parenthood in post-socialist Bulgaria. The analyses reveal the persistence of the value orientations towards the altruistic parenthood favoring the wellbeing of the "king-child" (Ph Aries) in the family. However, the strong and enduring altruistic orientations of parenthood fall into contradiction with the behavioral changes reflected in the decreasing fertility tendencies. Moreover, the strong preferences towards the full nuclear family uncovered on a macro level and kept stable over time diverge from the remarkable increase in the extra-marital births and mono-parental families during the 1990s in the country.

All these issues are additionally explored by the means of a qualitative study. In the presentation I will sketch in brief some results from it which shed light on the uncovered ambivalences between the values of parenthood and reproductive behavior. The most important finding refers to the changes in the concepts of postponement of childbearing and parenthood which occurred to be strongly dependant on the subjective perceptions about the timing of the life events held by the contemporary young people and the older generations in Bulgaria.