

## **The Ageing of the Babyboomers: Current Issues of Work and Retirement Research in a European Perspective**

### **Call for Abstracts**

The babyboomers, born in the decades after World War II, are currently reaching retirement age in many countries. This poses challenges for social security systems. Most European countries have responded to these challenges primarily with political and institutional reforms. The latter have resulted in increasing labor force participation rates among older adults and an extension of working lives until retirement age and sometimes even beyond. These changing macrosocial conditions of employment in later adulthood, together with higher individual resources compared to previous cohorts (e.g., healthy life expectancy and educational attainment) have a direct impact on retirement transitions.

In addition, older people continue to be engaged in volunteering and family caring after the retirement transition. These informal activities, together with prolonged labor market participation, represent a key dimension of older people's potential. This can be of both societal and individual benefit in populations that will be characterized by progressive ageing in the coming years. The question here is to what extent informal activities can act as functional equivalents of the employment role in the retirement phase and how these transitions and continued activity in the second half of life affect health, well-being and life satisfaction. Particularly under the conditions of the COVID-19 pandemic, new challenges arise here, especially for vulnerable groups. Thus, recognizing an accumulation of social and individual risks (e.g., health restrictions, material deprivation or social isolation), identifying protective factors and preventing adverse outcomes through suitable interventions become important issues for civil society, employers and policy makers alike.

In this context, the following research questions are highly relevant:

- How have transitions to retirement changed against the backdrop of an ageing population in Germany and other European countries? Which institutional, cultural, socio-economic, familial and individual characteristics influence the changing patterns and timing of retirement transitions?
- How do older people adapt to the post-employment life phase? What role do extended working life, formal and informal activities (e.g., paid work beyond retirement age or volunteering) as well as the family and the partner play for retirement transitioning and adjustment in terms of life satisfaction and well-being? How do social inequalities, which for older people mainly take the form of an accumulation of disadvantaged living conditions, affect the transitioning and adjustment to retirement?
- What is the meaning of contemporary retirement for older people? How might the perception and the shaping of the babyboomers' retirement phase develop in the near future? What are the challenges for society, economy and policy makers?

The interdisciplinary online-symposium "The Ageing of the Babyboomers: Current Issues of Work and Retirement Research in a European Perspective" takes up these considerations and aims to develop them further theoretically and empirically. The contributions requested can refer to the above-mentioned aspects from both a theoretical-conceptual and an empirical perspective or supplement them with novel perspectives. Proposals from social and political sciences, economics, psychology, geography and gerontology are welcome.

The event will be held on November 25-26, 2021 and is organized and hosted by the Federal Institute for Population Research (BiB) in Wiesbaden, Germany. The symposium will be fully virtual.

Each day will start with an online keynote speech. The keynote speakers are Kène Henkens, Netherlands Interdisciplinary Demographic Institute (NIDI) and Monika von Bonsdorff, University of Jyväskylä, Jyväskylä University School of Business and Economics.

We ask you to send abstracts for oral presentations of up to 300 words by July 31, 2021 to [andreas.mergenthaler@bib.bund.de](mailto:andreas.mergenthaler@bib.bund.de). Submitters will be notified about selection decision by August 6, 2021. We look forward to receiving your submission.

**Date of event:** November 25-26, 2021

**Deadline for submission:** July 31, 2021

**Organizing committee:** Andreas Mergenthaler\*, Volker Cihlar\*, Frank Micheel\*

**Moderator:** Katja Patzwaldt\*

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