

Social Research Call

Title:

Modelling work, family, and policy conditions to forecast the fertility gap in Spain



Acronym: CLOSEGAP

Project leader: Mariona Lozano

Host organisation: Centre d'Estudis Demogràfics, Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona

Main purpose of the project: This project aims to study working and family trajectories associated with different fertility outcomes, and to identify the combination of factors that minimize the gap between actual and desired fertility. The interest lies in the economic, partnership, and political conditions that enable people to have their desired number of children.

Design/methodology/approach: CLOSEGAP will use the 2018 Spanish Fertility Survey to simultaneously examine partnership and employment trajectories associated with different fertility outcomes, and then design agent-based models (behavioral models) to predict observed fertility using counter-factual scenarios.

Potential results: The project main result will be a model that display the equilibrium between family policy and labor-market conditions under which people would be able to have the desired number of children.

Social relevance of the research: The large fertility gap in Spain is problematic and requires attention for two main reasons. First, it indicates that there is a social welfare deficit and individual frustration. Second, low fertility reduces population size among the youth, which will reduce the size of the labor force in the future.

Originality/value of the project: The project novelty lies in using simulation techniques to guide public policies. We do not know yet which combination of factors will translate into different fertility outcomes along the life course, and which political actions can guarantee that people have all the children they say they want.