

# Partnership Behaviour in Postmodern Times: Singularization of Living Arrangements?

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# Abstract

*The last decades of population development in industrialized countries are marked by postponed marriages - if ever they take place -, and the shortening of marriage duration by high divorce rates. Living in non-marital unions more and more is an alternative living arrangement - not only the initiating phase of the traditional legal marriage. This development will be described on the base of retrospective biographies. It will be discussed if consensual unions (within a common household or even as LAT "living apart together") are a result of the need for flexible, volatile life courses in postmodern times. The empirical base will be the GGS (Generations and Gender Survey), performed 2005 in Germany with a sample of 10,000 persons aged 18 to 79 years.*

# Conceptual framework

- In advance the title had been chosen “Singularization of Living Arrangements - Partnership Behaviour in Postmodern Times”. As will be demonstrated, this title would not fit the reality. Empirical data do not prove the pessimistic view of an ongoing individualization and of a loss of importance of partnerships.
- Of course we are knowing the decline of marriage rates and the increase of the divorce rates.

# Decrease of marriages

	<>	European Union (25 countries)	European Union (15 countries)	Germany (including ex-GDR from 1991)
time				
1950		:	2544004	750452
1955		:	2436057	617228
1960		:	2504161	689028
1965		3040643	2561767	621130
1970		3217228	2625503	575233
1975		3187300	2521072	528811
1980		2841696	2247916	496603
1985		2637886	2088358	496175
1990		2713886	2172399	516388
1995		2313954	1913506	430534
2000		2325658	1934051	418550
2003		2196407	1830389	382911
2004		2178102	1815682	396007

# Falling marriage rates, males

<>	European Union (25 countries)	European Union (15 countries)	Germany (including ex-GDR from 1991)
time			
1950	:	:	:
1955	:	:	:
1960	:	:	:
1965	:	:	:
1970	:	:	<b>0.92</b>
1975	:	:	<b>0.77</b>
1980	:	:	<b>0.68</b>
1985	:	:	<b>0.61</b>
1990	:	<b>0.62</b>	<b>0.59</b>
1995	:	<b>0.53</b>	<b>0.49</b>
2000	:	:	<b>0.53</b>
2003	:	:	:
2004	:	:	:

# Falling marriage rates, females

<>	European Union (25 countries)	European Union (15 countries)	Germany (including ex-GDR from 1991)
time			
1950	:	:	:
1955	:	:	:
1960	:	:	:
1965	:	:	:
1970	:	:	<b>0.98</b>
1975	:	:	<b>0.80</b>
1980	:	:	<b>0.69</b>
1985	:	:	<b>0.63</b>
1990	:	<b>0.65</b>	<b>0.64</b>
1995	:	<b>0.57</b>	<b>0.56</b>
2000	:	:	<b>0.59</b>
2003	:	:	:
2004	:	:	:

# Increasing divorce rates

	European Union (15 countries)	Germany (including ex-GDR from 1991)
time		
1950	:	:
1955	:	:
1960	:	<b>0.1</b>
1965	:	<b>0.1</b>
1970	<b>0.1</b>	<b>0.2</b>
1975	<b>0.2</b>	<b>0.3</b>
1980	<b>0.2</b>	<b>0.3</b>
1985	<b>0.3</b>	<b>0.3</b>
1990	<b>0.3</b>	<b>0.3</b>
1995	<b>0.3</b>	<b>0.3</b>
2000	<b>0.3</b>	<b>0.4</b>
2003	:	:
2004	:	:

# Theoretical approaches

- (1) a value oriented approach,
- (2) an approach following the theory of post-modernisation and
- (3) the system theory



Singularization <>  
individualization

Singularization <> pluralization

# Explaining marriages

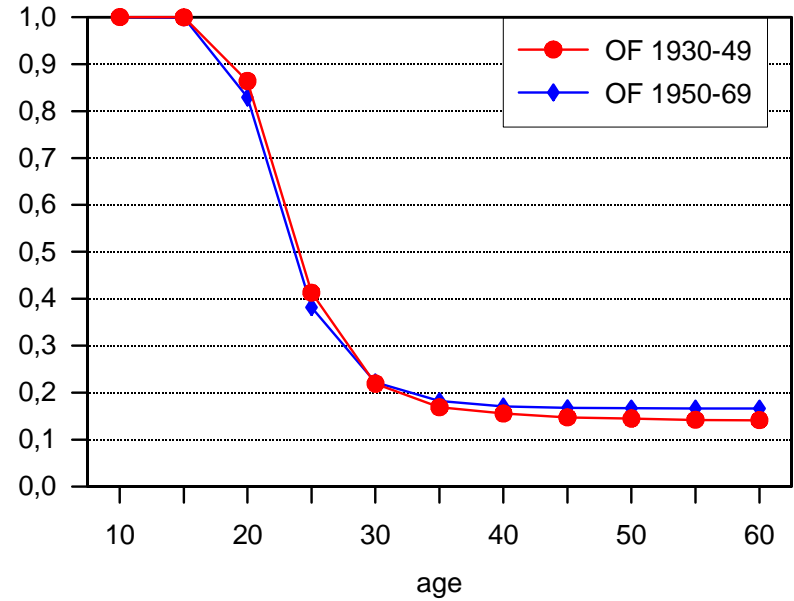
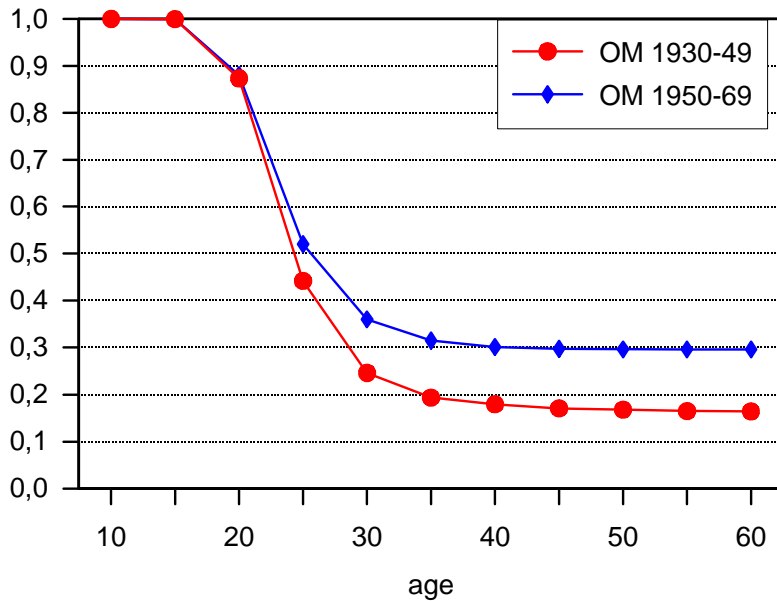
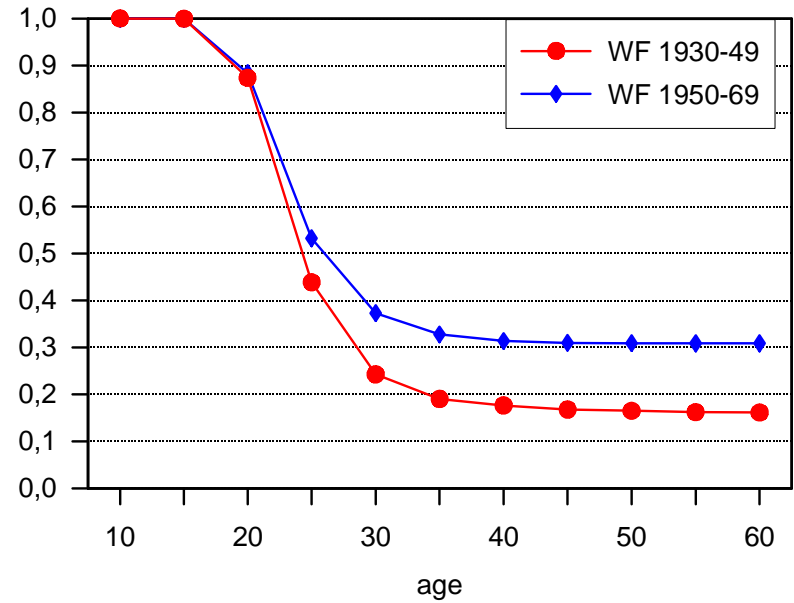
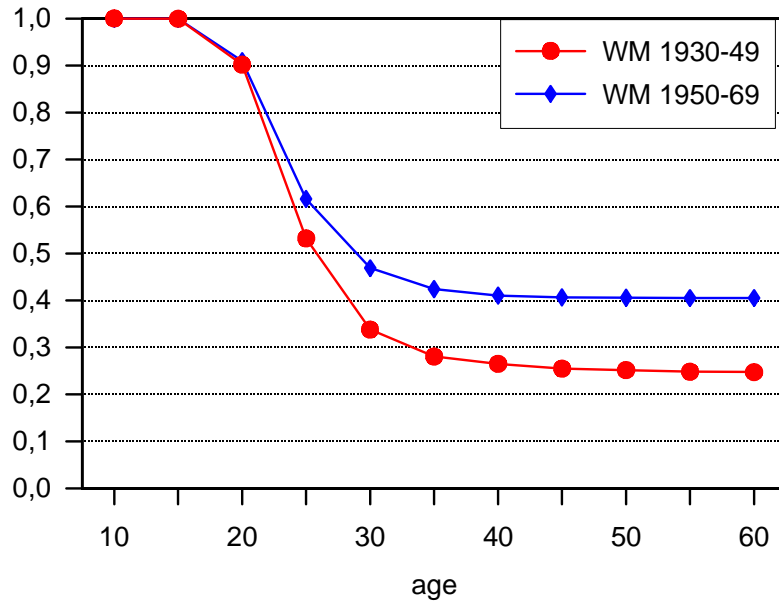
It has been argued that the decision of partners to marry means to strengthen their investments (Hill, Kopp 2004: 184[1]). If partners intend to have children which mostly is linked to a new situation of labour force participation and the division of labour in the household, then it is reasonable to increase the exit costs, i.e. to raise the costs of separation, and to tighten each other to the union also by legal measures.

# Empirical data

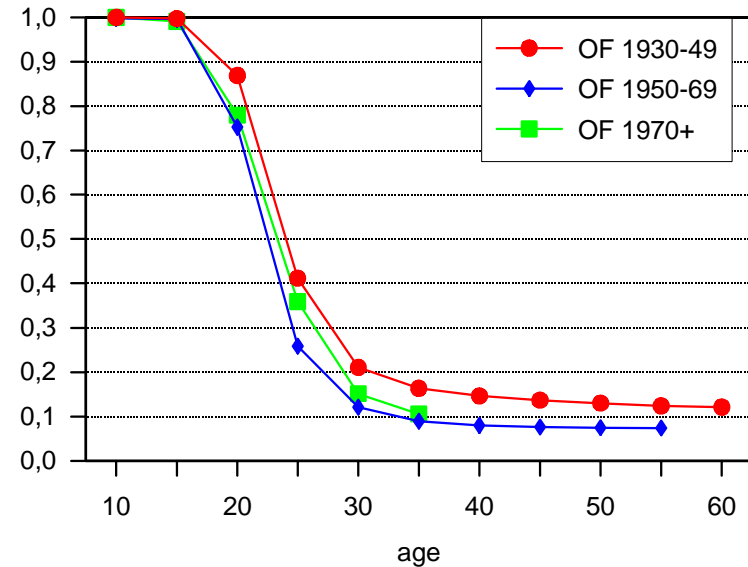
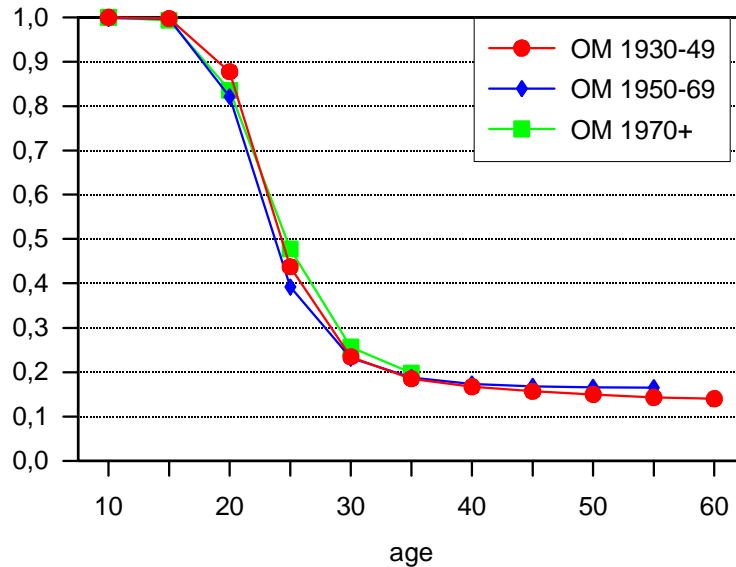
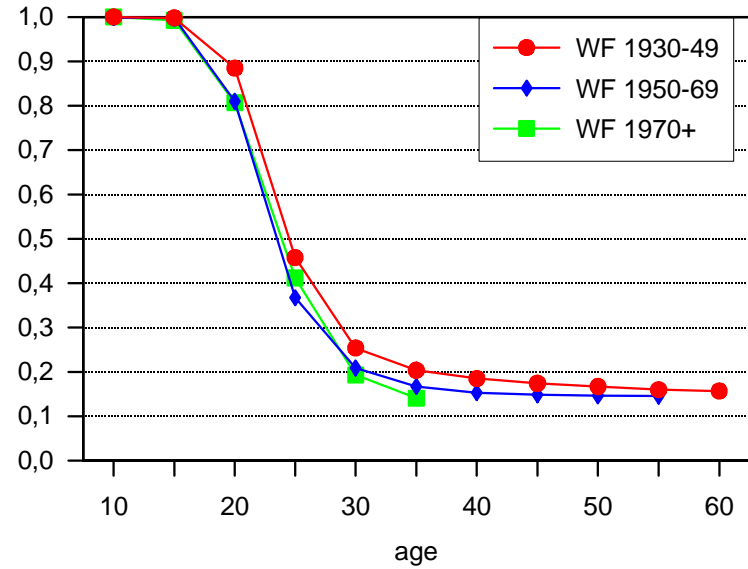
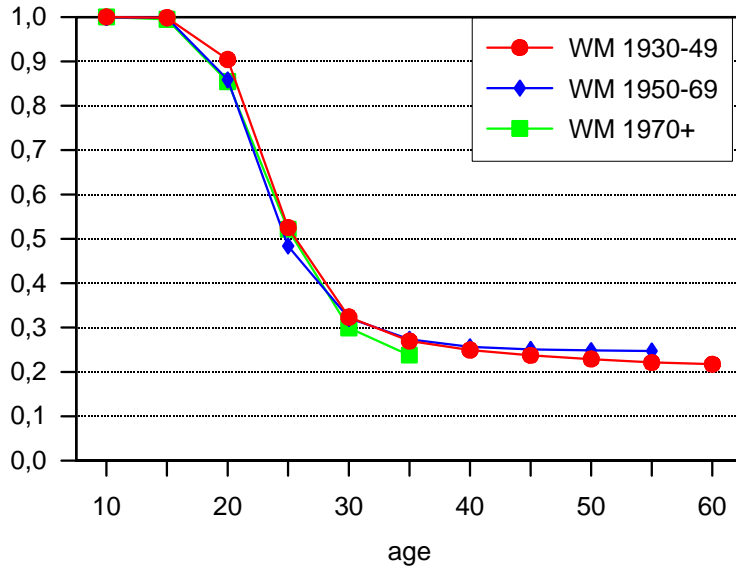
## Pooled data

- Generations and Gender Survey (GGS) which has been performed in Germany in 2005 with 10,000 people at age 18 to 79
- Familiensurvey, performed 2000 by the Deutsches Jugendinstitut
- Family and Fertility Survey (FFS) from 1992
- “Retrospektive Befragung” from 1987

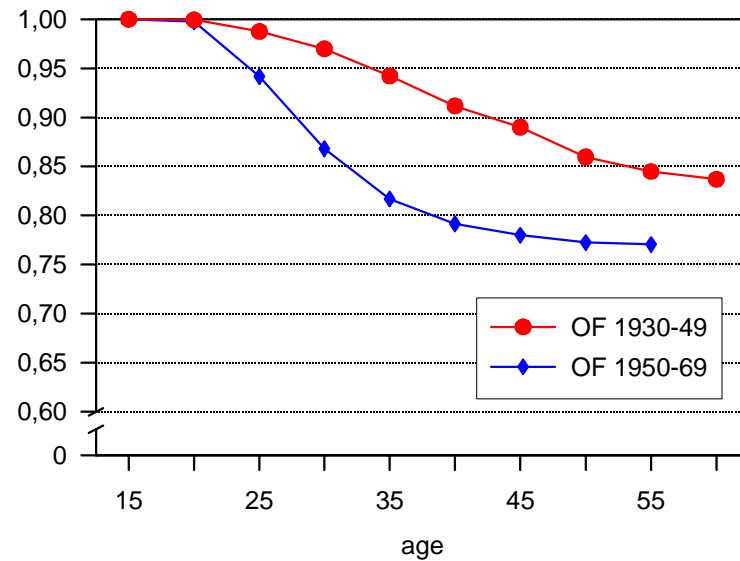
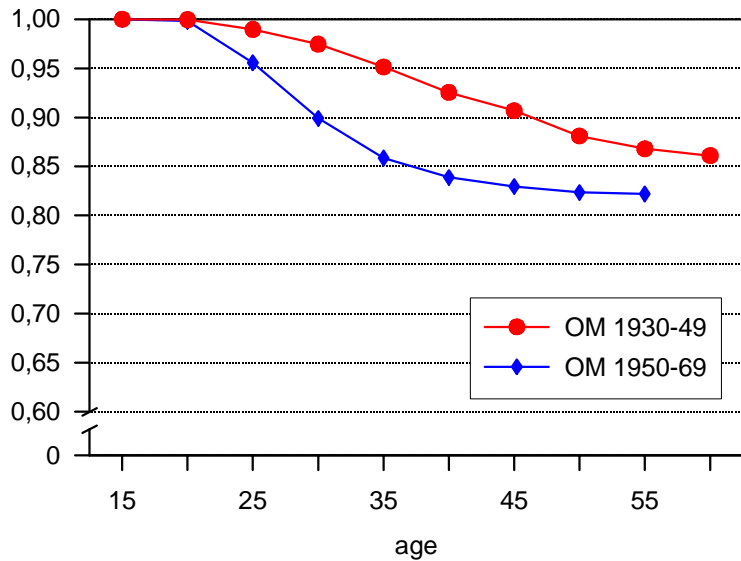
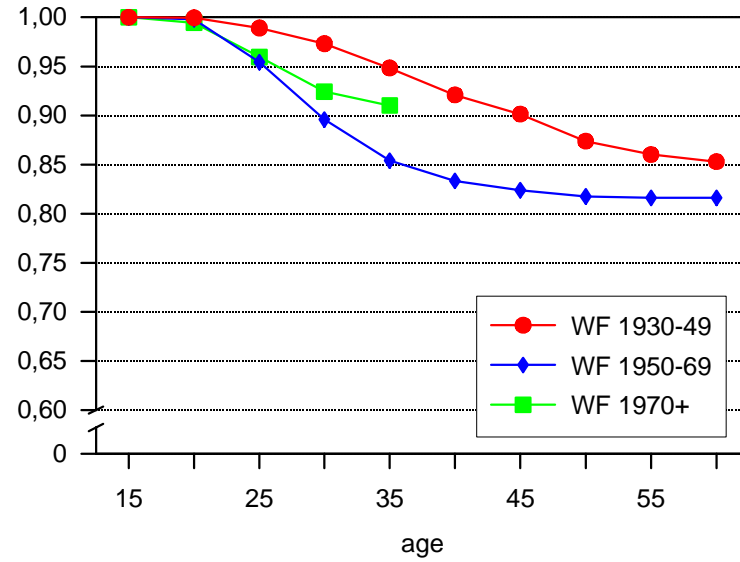
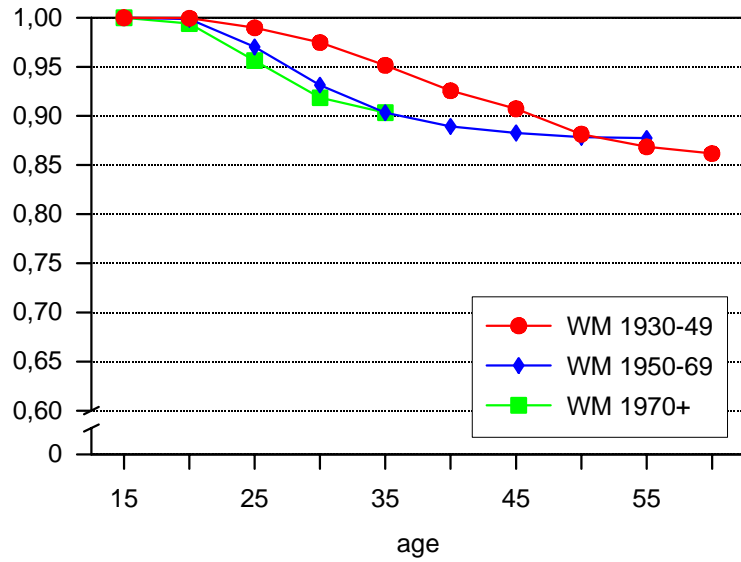
# Decline of marriages



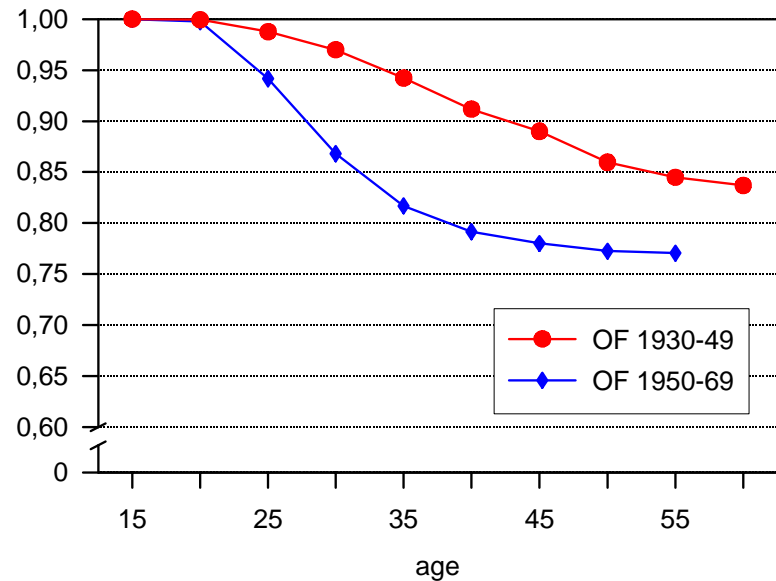
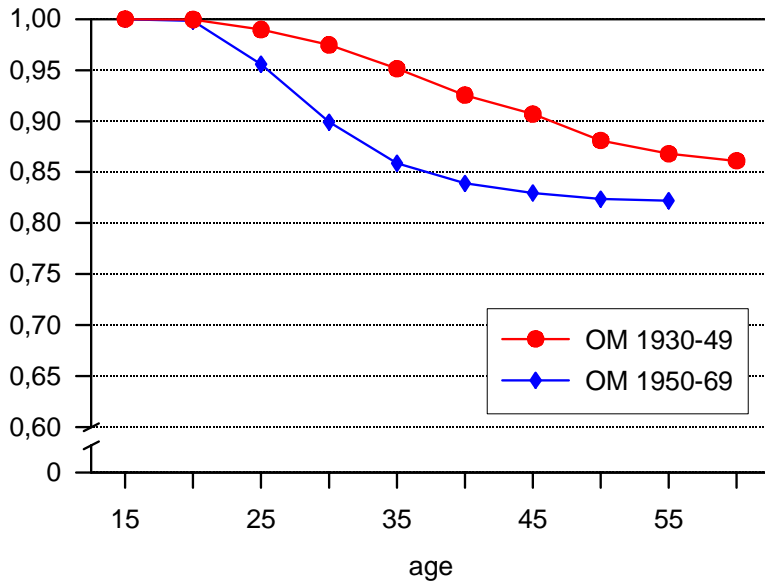
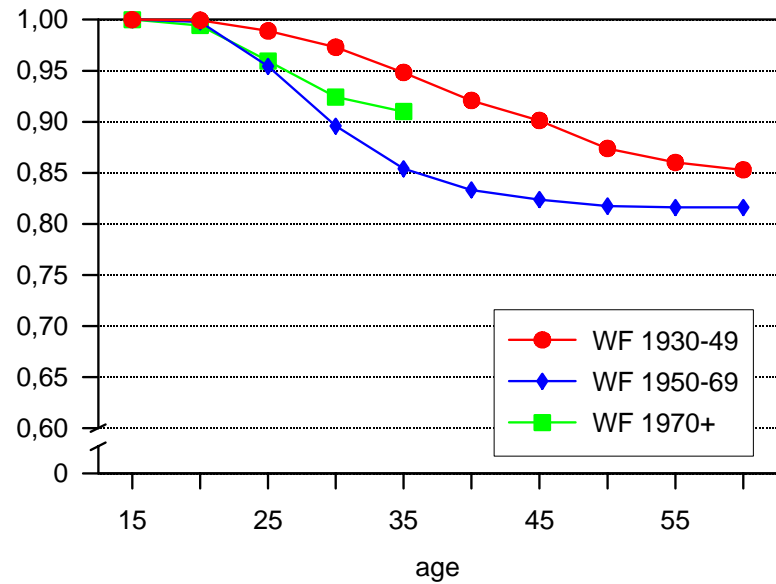
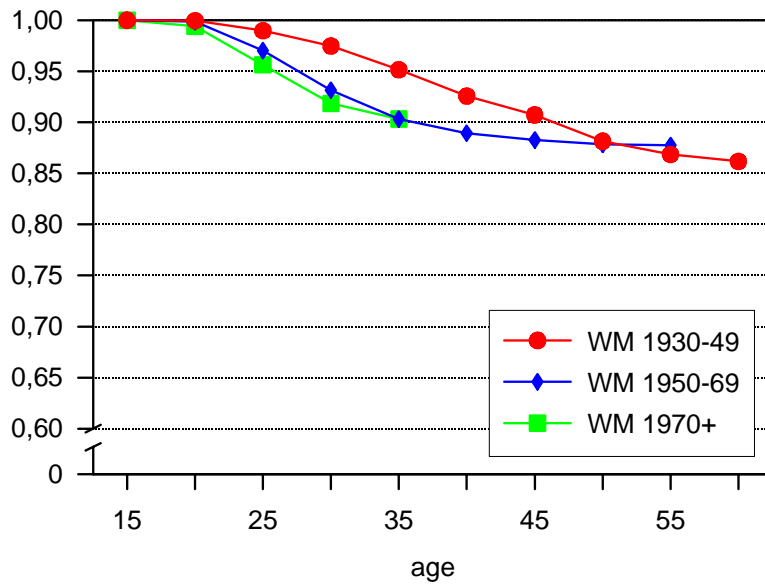
# Stable begin of cohabitation



# Shortened duration of (first) marriages



# Shortened duration of (first) unions





# Interpretation

There is no singularization of living arrangements of young adults

Relations and frames

- traditional relations to family, norms, religion
- labour market
- welfare state
- educational system

It's a pity that in the GGS it has not been asked for reasons and influences to get married