Wittgenstein Centre
FOR DEMOGRAPHY AND
GLOBAL HUMAN CAPITAL
IIASA  ÖAW  universität wien

Due to the COVID-19
pandemic, the seminar will
be held online via Zoom.

# WIC Online Colloquium

## Baby bust in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic?
## First results from the new STFF data series

Wednesday, April 21st, 2021
14:00-15:00 (CEST)

Please click **here** to register online.
Login information will be sent to registered
participants the day before the presentation.

### Tomáš Sobotka & Kryštof Zeman
Wittgenstein Centre (IIASA, OeAW, University of Vienna)

Past evidence on fertility responses to external shocks, including economic recessions and the outbreaks of infectious diseases, show that people often put their childbearing plans on hold in uncertain times. We study the most recent data on monthly birth trends to analyse the initial fertility responses to the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic. Our research, based on new Short-Term Fertility Fluctuations (STFF) data series, embedded in the Human Fertility Database, shows the initial signs of the expected "birth recession". Monthly number of births in many countries have fallen sharply since October 2020, often bringing about a clear reversal of the previous trend. Across 17 countries with lower fluctuations in births, births fell on average by 5.1% in November 2020, 6.5% in December 2020 and 8.9% in January 2021, compared with the same month of the previous year. Spain sustained the sharpest drop in the number of births among the analysed countries, with the number of births plummeting by 20% in December 2020 and January 2021. The combined effect of rising mortality and falling birth rates is disrupting the balance of births and deaths in many countries, pushing natural population increase to record low levels.

### About the presenters
**Tomáš Sobotka** leads the research group Fertility and Family at the Vienna Institute of Demography (OeAW). He also serves as an external lecturer at the Charles University in Prague and since 2021 as Editor of the Vienna Yearbook of Population Research.

**Kryštof Zeman** is a research scientist with main focus on the Human Fertility Database project at the Department of Demography (University of Vienna).

The presented work was created in collaboration with **Aiva Jasilioniene**, **Ainhoa Alustiza Galarza**, **Dmitri Jdanov** and **László Németh** from the Max Planck Institute for Demographic Research (MPIDR).

The Wittgenstein Centre is a collaboration among the Austrian Academy of Sciences (OeAW), the International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis (IIASA) and the University of Vienna.

If you would like to be added to the WIC Colloquium mailing list, please click **here**.