



Wittgenstein Centre

FOR DEMOGRAPHY AND
GLOBAL HUMAN CAPITAL



WIC Colloquium

Wednesday, 24 June 2026

11:00-12:00 (CEST)



Location:

Meeting Room 2, 3rd floor, PSK, Georg-Coch-Platz 2, 1010 Vienna

Please register [here](#).

Unrealized Fertility Across the Life Course: Experiences, Causes, and Consequences

Sara Yeatman,

Sara Yeatman, University of Colorado Denver & University of Colorado Population Center (CUPC)

Abstract:

Unrealized fertility has gained growing attention within demography amid persistent low fertility and the recognition that people frequently end their reproductive lives with fewer children than desired. Yet, the implications of unrealized fertility—as a reflection of unmet family-building aspirations—can affect people throughout the reproductive life course, not only at its end. Using novel pilot data from a U.S.-based sample of 2,700 individuals aged 18-69, I examine how experiences of unrealized fertility vary across age groups using a direct measure of unrealized fertility. I further examine the perceived causes of unrealized fertility, highlighting differences by age, gender, and parity. Finally, I identify the key predictors of unrealized fertility, differentiating between experiences of unrealized fertility that respondents describe as deeply impactful and those with minimal personal significance.

About the presenter:

Dr. Sara Yeatman is Professor of Health & Behavioral Sciences at the University of Colorado Denver and Development Director of the CU Population Center. Her research expertise is in the areas of fertility and reproductive health, and her research focuses broadly on understanding the causes and consequences of the misalignment of fertility desires and behaviors. Between 2009-15, she co-led Tsogolo la Thanzi, a panel study of over 3,000 young adults in Malawi. Her current research focuses on reproductive healthcare access in the U.S. and the consequences of changes in access (rhdproject.org).

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.

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