

VID Colloquium

Vienna Institute of Demography
Welthandelsplatz 2 / Level 2
Nathan Keyfitz Library
1020 Vienna

Cuiling Zhang

China Population and Development Research Center (CPDRC)

Thursday, 20. September 2018
15:30-16:30

"The surprising normalization of the sex ratios at birth in China"

At the turn of the century China had become a country with the most distorted sex ratio at birth (SRB) globally, with a pronounced deficit of girls reported every year. The phenomenon of "missing girls" – or "gendercide"— raised alarm among experts, policymakers and general public. Initial responses in the form of laws and regulations prohibiting sex-selective abortion and the campaigns to promote the value of girls seemed to have very little effect. However, our exploration of recent trends reveals a sharp and lasting fall in the SRBs in China during the past 15 years. This trend, if sustained, marks an end of an era of unprecedented demographic gender discrimination that will have negative consequences on the lives, partnerships and marriage prospects of men and women born in the past three decades. We document and discuss the welcome "normalization" of the SRBs in China using previously untapped birth registration data..

About the presenter

Cuiling Zhang is an Associate Research Fellow and the Director of the Demographic Modelling Laboratory at China Population and Development Research Center (CPDRC) and a visiting scholar at the Vienna Institute of Demography (VID) from 2017 to 2018. Her research interest lie in low fertility, birth timing, and reproductive health of China. She is currently working on the effect of birth timing on low fertility in China and conducts a study of second birth spacing among women of reproductive age in China under different population policy scenarios with Tomas Sobotka.