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## *Dear friends of time,*

the year 2022, as the very content of this ZpM issue already suggests, was a special year for the DGfZP: it was the year of its 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary and, once again, a very busy year with many activities in continuation of projects from the year before. Among these activities:

- Efforts to put the right to time on the European agenda and launch a pilot project for establishing a European Academy for Time Policies.
- Participation in the Local and Regional Governments TIME Network, monitored by the Barcelona Time Use Initiative.
- Participation in various international and national campaigns for abolishing daylight saving time (so-called summer time) in favor of a permanent return to standard time and a readjustment of time zones for certain European countries.
- Further elaboration of the “option time model” and first steps towards a laboratory for discussing implementation issues.

In this year of the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary, and in parallel to the year of the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary, we chose “the future” as the overall topic of our Annual Conference. It is a topic that goes way back to the founding of the DGfZP. Our Society aims to integrate time policies in all their facets into the organization of society. Then, as now, we believe that many social issues cannot be understood, let alone resolved, without considering their temporal dimension. Although it is by now widely understood that time is a crucial factor, time-policies aspects are still insufficiently taken into account. A cross-sectional topic *par excellence*, time defies being associated with a specific sector of day-to-day politics. Lacking institutional anchoring, it cannot draw on power and/or financial and personnel resources.

In 2012, the key question of our Annual Conference was: “What will become of the future? The rise and the crisis of a temporal institution”. In 2022, our return to the topic of “the future” took place against the backdrop of a world of multiple crises, and the key question now was: “Who are the real makers of our future? Future policies between utopia, dystopia, and driving on sight”. However, when this topic was chosen and the conference was planned, the world was not the one it is today. There was nothing to suggest, in today's big words, a *Zeitenwende* or *Epochenbruch*, no “epochal turn” or “watershed”. Most of us have grown up as children of the post-war generation and, thus, in an uncommonly long – for our latitudes – period without warfare. A great majority of the population in Western

\* Translated from German and French by Hella Beister  
(exceptions: messages from BTUI, Barcelona, and Marco Mareggi, which were written in English)

Europe, or at least in Germany, was taking peace for granted, anything else seemed unthinkable. On February 24, 2022, “we woke up in a different world,” as Foreign Minister Baerbock put it. Other makers of the future who were not really, and certainly not in this way, on our radar had come to the fore. In an unwanted and frightening turn of events, “the future” had suddenly become a highly charged topic. At the end of last year, we wrote in our annual review that the times would remain uncertain. We did not anticipate the dramatic scale of the changes to come, nor

the no less dramatic increase in uncertainty. At the Conference and in the present ZpM, the extent to which these crises are also temporal crises is highlighted over and over again. Thus, time policies are and will be a crucial element of any sustainable shaping of the future. The outlook may seem rather bleak right now, but the task still remains to make full use of every possibility to contribute to a better and more peaceful world.

Our best wishes to all of you for a new year of positive turns!

*Dietrich Henckel and Karin Jurczyk*

## Introduction

DIETRICH HENCKEL, ULRICH MÜCKENBERGER, HELGA ZEIHNER

Looking back on the first twenty years of the *Deutsche Gesellschaft für Zeitpolitik* (DGfZP; German Society for Time Policies) reveals a success story which indeed warrants some celebration. When the DGfZP first came into being, the rhythms of everyday life had significantly accelerated, with more and more people working and living under time pressure, and suffering from it, on a daily basis. There was an ever-growing avalanche of self-help literature and workshops on time management. Dating back to as early as 1990, there was the Austrian *Verein für die Verlangsamung der Zeit* (Association for Slowing Down Time), which has since been joined by many actors in the cultural realm who are dissatisfied with current time regimes. What was lacking, however, was an association for monitoring the temporal dimensions of policy interventions. In 2002, Ulrich Mückenberger, an expert in labour law with a focus on time-based gender equality, and Jürgen Rinderspacher, a political scientist and advocate of time welfare, invited other similarly engaged researchers and practitioners to join them in a conference scheduled for October, 2002. The purpose of this conference was to create a common platform that would enable them to compile information on the time-policies implications of their respective fields of expertise – ecology of time, times of the city, work and leisure, care work, family, childhood – and bring it to bear in public discourse and political action: the *Deutsche Gesellschaft für Zeitpolitik* – German Society for Time Policies. The founding conference, held in October 2002 at the Evangelische Akademie on Schwanenwerder, Berlin, was attended by 72 participants interested in time-related issues, with 26 of them immediately becoming members of the DGfZP.

### 20 years of time policies in a changing society

The DGfZP was founded when the profound social transformations that accompanied the transition from the industrial to the knowledge and service society – the blurring of traditional hierarchies between genders and generations, the individualization and flexibilization of work and, at the same time, the rising pressure to perform – had increasingly taken hold in most people’s private as well as working lives and had changed traditional time regimes and ways of handling time. In the decades of technological progress and growing prosperity, democratic awareness had increasingly taken hold. Efforts to dismantle the hierarchies between the sexes and the generations, promote gender equality, equal opportunities and co-determination were made, if insufficiently achieved, in all spheres of life. Individuals involved in these efforts initiated and founded the DGfZP. In the first years of its existence, the DGfZP time-policies activities focused on issues of incomplete transformation within the ongoing social transformations of the world of work as well as of citizens’ private lives. After all, when processes in sectors such as production, trade, transport, medical diagnostics are increasingly controlled by digital technologies and their rapid development, this will necessarily affect the time regimes of individuals’ everyday lives, as well.

The year of the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the DGfZP is a year of the “turning point”. The combined impact of the sudden war in Europe, the Covid pandemic, and the growing awareness of the climate change has led to radical changes in the geopolitical and economic systems, to catastrophic famines, and to a populist erosion of democracy worldwide. These radical changes are relevant for time policies insofar as they direct-

ly and indirectly entail concrete changes in people's everyday lives, their handling of time, their time-dependent quality of life. As the effects of the crises get harsher, there is more openness for and active commitment to alternative lifestyles and economic and political regimes, on the one hand, but also fear-driven insistence on sticking to business as usual, on the other. It is becoming increasingly clear that many of these crises are, quite literally, "time crises", that is, the result of our temporal structures, our way of handling time, our failure to take into account the specific rhythms and times of nature as well as of social and technological systems (see the article of *Fritz Reheis* in the present issue, p. 31).

In this year of multiple crises, the DGfZP chose to dedicate its Annual Conference to the subject of "Who are the real makers of our future?" There is no doubt that by bringing to bear time-policies arguments and proposals in public debates and by addressing political bodies to encourage the creation of improved time regimes, the DGfZ, too, has contributed to our future. But a detailed report on when and where the DGfZP has taken a stand in these social transformations and crises would have gone beyond the Conference timetable. The present ZpM issue seeks to bridge this gap.

### Why and to what end time policies?

"Wo uns die Zeit drückt" – "The Time Squeeze" – was the motto of the DGfZP founding conference. This motto goes right to the heart of what time policies are about. Whether focusing on the way people feel about and act in time, or on time-related conditions in the world in which we live, time policies always address the temporal aspects of problems in the relations of the individual and the social, the interplay between time-based options for action and time-related states of mind and the facts and conditions of society. Problems in the relations of the individual and the social arise when social times ignore the times and rhythms of nature, be it human or otherwise, or when consolidated social time regimes clash with people's individual temporal needs. In light of these general goals, time policies address concrete time-related phenomena of everyday life such as acceleration, compression of time, lack of time, and conflicts over time. Time-political activities relate to issues such as gender equality in the distribution of times for care work and times for gainful employment, the blurring of boundaries between day and night, working times and times beyond gainful work, the accessibility, in terms of space and time, of infrastructures and, more specifically, mobility.

Detailed texts on the objective of the DGfZP were published soon after the founding conference, i.e.,

- in the book "Zeit für Zeitpolitik" ("Time for Time Policies", 2003), with contributions by the founding members ([www.https://zeitpolitik.org/zumdownload](http://www.zeitpolitik.org/zumdownload)),
- and, in 2005, following a period of complex discussions, in the DGfZP manifesto, "Zeit ist Leben" ("Time is life") ([www.https://zeitpolitik.org/zumdownload](http://www.zeitpolitik.org/zumdownload)).

DGfZP maxims, too, were laid down in the founding phase: "The DGfZP aims to contribute to a livable balance between acceleration and deceleration and a sustainable structuring of everyday life. It draws up models for time sovereignty and individual and collective time welfare, seeks to promote sustainability, specifies subjects for in-depth analyses and targeted debates, and provides alternative time-policies proposals. We intervene. We want to harness scientific findings for day-to-day time management, public debates and political decision-making processes." (From: *Zeit für Zeitpolitik*, Preface, complemented by extracts from [www.zeitpolitik.org/Startseite](http://www.zeitpolitik.org/Startseite)).

We speak of "time policies" in the narrower sense when public and participative influence is consciously exerted on the temporal elements and/or effects of the political, economic and, more specifically, lifeworld conditions of human existence, with a primary focus on the sites of everyday life: the local/regional proximity. It is, above all, the participative element that distinguishes democratic time policies from traditional forms of intervening in social time regimes (e.g., implementing standard time, changing working times or school times, etc.). Time policies are based on the premise that the claim to democratic self-regulation needs to extend to the temporal elements of human cohabitation and the human-nature relation (Mückenberger 2004). Just as social policies shape the material conditions of life, time policies seek to shape the temporal conditions of everyday life – time as a resource, time as a cultural medium – by deliberate and participative interventions (Mückenberger 2006; <https://zeitpolitik.org/zumdownload>).

The DGfZP had already been founded when an innovative approach came up: linking time-policies goals to the concept of a right to (one's own) time, thus making it a vehicle for their implementation. The right to (one's own) time was significantly developed and promoted by the Belgian legal scholar and philosopher François Ost and his 1999 book "Le temps du droit" ("The Time of the Law"). In this book (p. 31), François Ost, as far as we know, first referred to a "droit à son propre temps" - a "right to one's own time". Ulrich Mückenberger introduced this innovative legal concept into the German language area, integrating it into the European phi-

osophy of time (Mückenberger 2004: 261-287). In 2008, it became the overall topic of the DGfZP's Annual Conference: "Ein Recht auf eigene Zeit – Chancen zeitpolitischer Innovation" ("A Right to One's Own Time – Opportunities for Time Policies-Based Innovation"; for a documentation, see ZpM no. 14, July 2009). François Ost participated in this Conference and contributed a paper on "The times of law and the right to times": "What we need first of all is to bring to mind a habitually neglected prerogative: the right to time, or, more to the point: the right to one's own time. Everybody, whether a group or an individual, must be allowed to go ahead (or stop going ahead) at their own pace and rhythm. Better still: everybody must be allowed to create their own history, discover their own 'diagonal' between long-term trajectories and the present moment and take the 'initiatives' that seem appropriate on this path. Everybody should have the chance of building a past in line with their experiences and a future in line with their expectations" (ZpM no. 14: 5). Since that time, the right to one's own time has been a basic reference for many DGfZP concepts and demands. Another highlight in this sequence of time-policies events was the first reference to the "right to time" in a political document of the Council of Europe (see "The Right to Time" in the present ZpM issue). The conception of this right has since been gaining ground throughout Europe – e. g., with the 2020 "Memorandum: The Right to Time, an urgent topic on the European Agenda!", which was supported by seven European time-policies organizations and published in five languages. In this Memorandum, the right to one's own time was linked to a call for establishing a "European Time Academy" that would be in charge of its conceptional and practical implementation and further elaboration (see <https://zeitpolitik.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/memorandumEN.pdf>).

All those concerned are aware that this right is not yet an applicable, i.e., a "positive" right, but a public policy demand. As a "right in progress", however, it is one of those rights that emerge as a political demand, gather momentum, are gradually fleshed out, and eventually gain the status of an action-guiding right (see Ulrich Mückenberger's article on the right to time in the present ZpM issue).

What has been initiated, what has been achieved by the DGfZP in the first twenty years of its existence?

The DGfZP has always been, and still is, a small non-profit association which is solely supported by membership fees and members' commitment; activities exclusively rely on voluntary work by the members and the board.

So, this is the backdrop against which the questions we ask on the occasion of the 20th DGfZP anniversary need to be seen: Where and when has the DGfZP intervened, by discourse and proposals, in the ongoing social transformation and current crises? What were the issues addressed, by what channels and in what manner? In which domains and by which means has the DGfZP succeeded in arousing public interest and motivating people in politics, associations and business to engage in sustainable time-policies action? Where - and why? - has it failed in its efforts? Where has it met with support, where has it met with obstacles? You will not find an exhaustive answer to all of these questions in the present ZpM. What you will find, however, is a number of partial answers from a diversity of perspectives.

To begin with, there are those who are the DGfZP lifeblood: its members. Relying on extracts from members' self-presentations in the ZpM for her contribution, *Helga Zeiher* outlines their various reasons for joining the DGfZP as well as the ways in which members can discursively participate in its further development. In their self-presentations, members report on time-related aspects of their thematic fields and their relevant time-policies activities as well as on what has been achieved in this respect and what remains to be done. They provide time-policies input to public reform debates, sometimes submitting time-policies proposals directly to various political bodies.

### Initiating concrete time policies-based reforms

A number of members highlight problems in their thematic fields and campaign for appropriate time-policies action. On the strength of their analyses of these problems, they approach actors in ministries, municipalities, political parties, trade unions, associations, or companies and submit specific proposals to them. Due to the initiative of individual DGfZP members, or groups of members, concrete projects of this kind have emerged in several fields, sometimes involving a series of interlocking or successive activities. But it's a long road to success, and no single project has as yet really made it to the finishing line – the DGfZP tends to engage and persevere in uphill battles. Pressing ahead with these projects and, hopefully, seeing them realized will remain a key DGfZP concern.

Since the founding of the DGfZP, and thanks to *Dietrich Henckel* and *Ulrich Mückenberger*, local time policies have been a major practice-oriented thematic field which spans various projects in German municipalities as well as international co-operations. In their joint contribution, the authors outline the diverse activities in this field.

“Atmende Lebensläufe” – “breathing life courses” -, a social utopia conceived of by *Karin Jurczyk*, an expert in the sociology of the family, and labour law expert *Ulrich Mückenberger*, is probably the DGfZP project with the largest public as well as political impact. An “option times model” was specifically developed by the authors as a vehicle for turning this utopia into reality. In their joint contribution, they describe the complex activities that aim to make this sociopolitical utopia eventually come true.

Another uphill battle is the campaign, driven by *Dietrich Henckel* and *Björn Gernig*, against the annual “clock change”, that is, in favor of abolishing “daylight saving time” and returning to “standard time” on a permanent basis. Achieving this goal in all European countries is anything but easy, the very first task being to win enough cooperation partners to help popularize the arguments expounded by the authors in their joint contribution.

### Generating stimuli for enhancing the temporal quality of life

In other thematic fields, members also address current social issues but do not approach the competent political bodies with concrete time-policies proposals. The latter fact is mainly due to a lack of personal and/or financial resources. A number of relevant cases will be addressed in this ZpM issue.

The practices and the temporal conditions of caregiving for people with impairments and for the dependent elderly fall way below the mark of what is needed. Although this implies suffering for both caregivers and those in need of care, the problem has long met with political disinterest. In the DGfZP, *Jürgen Rinderspacher* is a long-term advocate for

improving conditions in this domain. In his contribution, he reports on his experiences.

*Helga Zeiher*, in turn, describes children’s times in her contribution: the times that are imposed on them in our society, the times they are allowed, and their ways of handling time. In the DGfZP, various concrete issues from this thematic field have time and again been discussed at the Annual Conferences and in the ZpM.

Sustainability-oriented policies are time policies since sustainability implies duration and repeatability: in his contribution, *Fritz Reheis* explains why large parts of sustainability policies should be seen as time policies since their purpose is to defend people against attempts to curtail their temporal needs and interfere with their right to time.

### Popularizing time policies

The two objectives that are uppermost on the DGfZP agenda – raising public awareness of time conflicts and implicit time policies and initiating explicit time policies – are mutually reinforcing. In the last contribution by DGfZP insiders, *Helga Zeiher* gives an overview of the ways and channels the DGfZP relies on to popularize time policies. And, last but not least, the anniversary section of this ZpM concludes with the Greetings that reached the DGfZP on the occasion of its 20th anniversary from both academics and practitioners actively engaged in time policies as well as from other long-term companions of the DGfZP and its work, testifying to the extent of the outreach the DGfZP has meanwhile achieved through its double approach of policies-related activities and public information.



# The Right to Time

## Time policy requirements for achieving a just and sustainable policy for men and women

ULRICH MÜCKENBERGER

A few years ago, the right to time was for the first time addressed in a European policy document. At its 19<sup>th</sup> session, October 26-28, 2010, the Council of Europe, Congress of Local and Regional Authorities, adopted Resolution 313 (2010) and Recommendation 295 (2010), entitled “Social time, leisure time: which local time planning policy?”, which included the following considerations:

*“The Council of Europe ... has been dealing implicitly with time policies for many years through its European Social Charter (ETS No. 35, 1961), its revised European Social Charter (ETS No. 163, 1996)<sup>1</sup> and the work of the Steering Committee for Equality between Women and Men (CDEG) on reconciling work and private life. ...*

*Time planning policies view time both as a resource and as a cultural medium, and call traditional spatial planning mechanisms into question. They have resulted in the development of new types of bodies (time offices) and new forms of local participation and co-operation (such as local civil dialogue and public-private partnerships).*

*[T]he Congress calls on the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe to take account of the “right to time”. It recommends that it call on the relevant Council of Europe bodies, particularly those dealing with gender equality and social cohesion, to address time management policies explicitly and incorporate time management into their activities, along with the concepts of “time welfare” and “temporal quality of life”.*

In numerous political acts, “having time” has been recognized as legally valuable – albeit without reference to a “right” to time. Thus, the European Court of Justice as well as national legislators have ruled that compensation must be paid not only for material damage but for the loss of time as such when flights and trains are delayed. The European Court of Human Rights has severely restricted and sanc-

tioned excessive waits for trials or court hearings. With the “right to disconnect”, the European Parliament has set limits to the use of communication and information technologies as a means of keeping workers available at almost any time. In Germany, legislators have, for instance, granted health insurance policyholders the right to get an appointment with a medical specialist within a three-week delay, and parents and children the right to places and times in childcare facilities. They have also advocated granting employees drawing rights for care leave and periods of further training.

Especially among those in employment, there is a growing awareness that time is a fundamental component of prosperity that cannot be compensated for by money. In the past decades, numerous German collective agreements in large sectors (railroads, chemical and metal industries, service sector) have included an option for employees to choose between cash payments and time for care and/or further training. Collective agreements of this type are usually based on prior member surveys – with the result that these temporal drawing rights are being much more widely used than even experts had expected. In the health and care sector there is a growing understanding (a lesson learnt from the Covid crisis) that care work needs its “own times” to be successful; therefore, new regulations for care personnel increasingly focus on staffing and time regimes. All these examples show that in terms of time policies, change is indeed taking place – even though the people involved may not use, or even know, the terms “time policy” or “right to time”.

Time policy aims to sustainably improve the quality of life of people in all biographical circumstances. A “right to one’s own time”<sup>2</sup> is called for where people are without will or action put under stress and pressure; where acceleration and economization have made “time puzzles” of their everyday lives; where they have to endure humiliating waits; where they experience temporal discrimination due to their gender and/or social class.

1 Article 22 – Workers have the right to take part in the determination and improvement of the working conditions and working environment in the undertaking, Article 23 – Every elderly person has the right to social protection, Article 26 – All workers have the right to dignity at work, Article 27 – All persons with family responsibilities and who are engaged or wish to engage in employment have a right to do so without being subject to discrimination and as far as possible without conflict between their employment and family responsibilities.

2 For a more detailed account, see Mückenberger, U., 2004: *Metronome des Alltags. Betriebliche Zeitpolitiken – lokale Effekte – soziale Regulierung (Metronomes of everyday-life. Firms’ time policies – local effects – social regulation)*, Berlin: edition sigma.

## A “right” in the making

To be sure: paper doesn’t blush. Many “rights” have been invented and gone unnoticed in real life – or have not really gone unnoticed but were nevertheless little taken into account and implemented. On the other hand, rights which were initially articulated in terms of moral claims may gain social momentum and gradually (or through radical action) become a legally reliable right. Take, for example, universal suffrage (which has been truly valid, in Germany, for a mere 100 years), equal rights for men and women (70 years), the “right to informational self-determination” (now 40 years) or the rudiments of a “right of nature”<sup>3</sup> (32 years – all years for Germany).

Quite often, rather than being created from scratch, the rights thus proclaimed “somehow” already exist – under labels such as, for instance, human dignity, freedom, freedom of personal development, equality. Under certain conditions, they may reach critical mass and become concrete and assertive – e.g., in Germany, the right to informational self-determination emerged in the wake of the recent data collection and processing mania. As a result, existing norms are reconfigured and new ways, previously hardly considered, of dealing with certain cases and constellations are explored. It often takes a concrete event which symbolically and concretely illustrates what the respective “right” is really about to trigger. In the case of the right to informational self-determination, for instance, this happened to be the 1983 national census (a rather harmless context of data-processing, by today’s standards, for the new right to assert itself!).

All this is true also for the new “right to time”. It is still vague and undetermined. It is intuitively met with approval – so my decades-long experience with time policies tells me – by people who are increasingly time-harassed and, as a result, overtaxed and burnt-out and for whom “time” has become more and more of a problem. To be a “subject” of a “right to time” rather than a compliant “object” echoes with dignity and self-assertion. But self-censorship soon sets in – how is this supposed to work, everyone’s own right to time? Aren’t there more important issues? And where will we end up if even time is to be administered? Should really everyone have a say when it comes to his/her own time?

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<sup>3</sup> Section 90a BGB (Bürgerliches Gesetzbuch, German Civil Code): “Animals are not things. They are protected by special statutes. They are governed by the provisions that apply to property, with the necessary modifications, except insofar as otherwise provided.”

## Why a right to time?

The first characteristic of time – and the first problem for time policy – is its pervasive and ubiquitous nature (which, however, may in the long run turn out to be the very opportunity for the emergence of time-policy action). Time is never an isolated item. Human and natural processes and events invariably take place “in time”, and times are always the “times of something”. As a consequence, time policy can be found in a variety of fields and of combinations with other policies. It can be a complement of

- social policy, e.g., relating to the availability of local public services for individuals;
- family policy, e.g., relating to the temporal conditions for achieving a good work-life balance;
- health policy, e.g., relating to the quality and quantity of nursing times in hospitals and similar institutions;
- ecology, e.g., relating to the influence of acceleration on climate conditions;
- nutrition policy, e.g., relating to the tolerance for “fast food” or laying batteries;
- education policy, e.g., relating to the acceleration of curricula in secondary and tertiary education;
- territorial and urban development policy, e.g., relating to the city of short distances, mixed usage, or revitalization concepts;
- and even the policy of democratic participation, e.g., relating to political decision-making processes such as those which took place in cases of emergencies like the financial market crisis, the recent Covid 19-crisis or the current Russian-Ukraine war.

The fact that issues such as these are perceived and addressed in terms of “time policy” rather than in terms of social, family, city-dwelling, ecologic or democratic policies is probably due to a reason common to all these policy fields: namely that time is perceived, in all these fields, as a component of everyday life that is either particularly stressful or rather well-managed and, thus, the source of an experience of strain or contentment overarching all aspects of everyday life. This leads to the claim of a time policy aiming to achieve a “unity of everyday life” (Helga Krüger) and of a both individual and collective right to self-determination with regard to one’s own time; which, at the same time, means taking a critical stance towards the puzzle- or patchwork-like fragmentation of everyday lives, the alienation of time.

Time policy addresses social fields (e.g., building and urban planning, finance, bureaucracy, etc.) from the point of view

of people's everyday lives, not (or only in a second step) from the point of view of the structurally bounded logic of these policy providers and their way of perceiving and solving citizens' problems.

Times have always been subject to distribution processes and conflicts as well as criteria-based assessments of their socially just distribution. This insight - which is gaining ground today - that time and conflicts over time are a result of social structuration (Anthony Giddens) and that they have to meet standards of justice induced the birth of time policy. Time policy can be seen as a second-generation welfare state. The first generation that configures and (re)distributes material prosperity is joined by the second generation that configures and (re)distributes time. In this, time is not only conceived of (quantitatively) as a resource but also (qualitatively) as a cultural medium (which is why time policy is critical of the current "time management" boom). While the first-generation welfare state could proceed bureaucratically - "top down" - (which has, however, long since been challenged!), time policy requires not only proven standards of justice but the systematic participation of those whose everyday lives are the object of this policy.

### The right to one's own time – what does it mean?

The right to time is composed of what law scholars call components of a subjective right and components of an objective right. On the one – subjective – hand, it empowers individuals and groups to insist that their temporal needs be taken seriously and terms of time use and distribution be negotiated according to standards of social justice even under conditions of power imbalance. On the other – objective - hand, the right to time requires appropriate social arrangements (e.g., state or communal infrastructures) that allow for the social coordination of time and temporal needs in a given territory.

The subjective-component of the right to one's own time includes the right for individuals to have their legitimate temporal needs taken into account in decision processes. To date, we do not yet possess a clear definition of the right to one's own time. However, as starting point, we can now narrow down five respects, three of them negative and the other two positive.

*Negatively*, the right to time is infringed when the individual or collective use of time is (1) directed by others rather than self-determined, (2) structurally unequally distributed between groups of persons – specifically between the two sexes –, that is, bound up with discrimination, and (3)

goes along with a systematic devaluation of certain times (e.g., time contingents which exist but seem to be excluded from communal life – as in the case of many unemployed or elderly people –, thus damaging the use value of time). *Positively*: the right to one's own time provides that the individual and collective use of time (4) includes the option for individuals to engage in activities of their own cultural choice (e.g., times for leisure, communication and entertainment, meditation, sports, learning, body care, being there for others, etc.) and (5) allows for sharing time with others in activities and experiences which can only, or at least to better effect, be pursued in community with these others (family, neighbourhood, the local community, associations, society).

The *objective* component of the right to one's own time requires infrastructural, institutional, and legal settings (i.e., social arrangements) that allow for a self-determined use of time by individuals and groups of citizens. Achieving self-determination in our structuring of time depends on the existence of certain infrastructures – transportation, cultural and social facilities, daycare centers, etc. Examples of the objective-component of the right to time are time offices or local time-political master plans as laid down by the "legge Turco" in Italy, in 2000.<sup>4</sup>

The potential scope of the "right to one's own time" is thus not limited to people's individual or familial living conditions. As an exercised and fortified right, it affects the structure of society as a whole, particularly on the communal and regional level where everyday life predominantly takes place.

The right to one's own time cannot be found in any constitution or statute book. If this utopian idea becomes a positive right, it will be a human right. However, in the context of local time policies the right to one's own time could also be seen as a type of urban citizens' right. After all, its main focus is on relations and arrangements in the local perimeter of the municipality, the town, the region, the organizations that are the sites of everyday life and the main sources of its time structures and temporal arrangements. This urban right to time would cover, in addition to its permanent residents, temporary populations such as commuters, tourists, migrants, business people. It is this multitude of city users that the right to time needs to accommodate. In our society of today, however, it would seem more appropriate to con-

<sup>4</sup> For more recent evidence concerning the cases in Italy and France, see Ulrich Mückenberger (2017), *Kommunale Zeitpolitik für Familien*. Gutachten im Auftrag des Landes Nordrhein-Westfalen (Communal time policies for family-life. Opinion commissioned by the state Northrhine-Westfalia), Baden-Baden: edition sigma bei Nomos



ceive of it as a citizen's rather than an urban citizen's right since many areas of time policy (lifetime working times, mobility, taxes and state subsidies) are handled on a national, or even supranational, level.

### Fields of application

The right to time has to be concretely implemented in specific fields of application. In light of the current state of academic discussions in the domains of employment, gender, and mobility policies, three main social fields can be identified where time arrangements and time policies have become an increasingly important structuring element: the field of employment, the field of regenerative activities, and the structures that mediate between these two (e.g., infrastructure, neighborhood, volunteering and social cohesion, mobility). Time arrangements and policies serve to ensure the necessary interrelations between these fields. It is in this "system of communicating vessels" that the right to time will have to take concrete form and prove its worth.

Many time conflicts arise from the fact that female employment has increased while gender roles in the home have remained more or less unchanged. These conflicts are reflected in novel "employment contracts" – in a valorization of part-time work and, more specifically, male part-time work, in the demand for part-time arrangements in management positions, etc. Obviously, this will have an impact on the temporal organization of work and working hours, as well.

Almost exactly thirty years ago, the German Green parliamentary group – as such a newcomer to the Bundestag at the time – introduced a bill on working hours which sought to achieve a rebalancing of the extent and structure of working hours and the times allocated to other significant social purposes.<sup>5</sup> The intended effect was a reduction in working hours and a redistribution of work in line with environmental, social and gender-policy goals.

Therefore, the bill spelled out what has been described as an "*internal*" reduction in working hours. By introducing so-called individual and collective "disposable times" - i.e., times for employees to discuss and structure work flows and working conditions, but also work-life balance issues - in addition to extended breaks, the bill aimed to reduce the density of work routines and at the same time implement times for communication and reflection as an integral part of the working life. It further proposed a differentiated system of rights to paid and unpaid leaves of absence: activi-

ties which also benefit the employer (such as professional training) were entitled to continued payment; activities that benefit society as a whole (such as parenting and care work) were to be remunerated by earnings replacement state benefits; and activities that primarily serve personal projects (such as a trip around the world) were to remain the employee's own financial responsibility. This system is today known as the system of temporal drawing rights and has to some extent been put into practice.

The idea behind this internal reduction in working hours was a normative concept of "freedom at work", that is, an effort to integrate employees' aspirations to self-fulfillment and meaningfulness into the working place where they are usually either not recognized at all or hard to realize for any length of time. As such it constituted a departure from the normative concept of "freedom from work" which, at the time, was the main driver of discussions oriented to a linear reduction in working hours. It was a response to the increasingly obvious deficit of care work in our society, work which is predominantly not carried out in terms of gainful employment but is nevertheless indispensable for upholding the social fabric; and, more specifically, a response to the gender-hierarchical allocation of this work and the resulting discrimination against women, i.e., their being burdened with dual and triple roles.

Both of these problems – the deficit in care work and the concomitant discrimination against women – remain as unresolved today as they were at the time. Karin Jurczyk and Ulrich Mückenberger (both of them co-authors of the 1984 bill) have meanwhile mapped out a proposal which builds on the former bill but modifies it in two key points. First, "care" (in its most comprehensive meaning) should become the point of reference for the respective drawing rights. Second, instead of specific drawing rights based on various sources of law and other entitlements, there should be a time budget of about nine years for optional use over the entire working life-span (for a more detailed discussion, see Jurczyk & Mückenberger in the present ZpM issue). This, too, is what time policy means: promoting the right to one's own time in an effort to achieve "freedom at work" rather than just "from work".

Where and by whom will the benefits of the right to one's own time be felt?

On its own, the right to one's own time does not provide the solution to the problems faced by our society. Wherever there is a "right", there is the subsequent work of applying

<sup>5</sup> Hoss, Schoppe, Dr. Vollmer und Fraktion – BT-Drs. (printed matter of the German Bundestag) 10/2188, 25. 10. 1984.

and implementing it. The rights of individuals collide with the rights of other individuals – which requires reciprocal coordination and harmonization. Nevertheless, recognizing the right to one's own time is by no means pointless – nor is it just “constitutional lyricism”. If such a right exists, it also needs to stand its test when confronted with the rights and entitlements of others. Thus, working hours must be systematically monitored to ensure compatibility with other life times; opening hours of administrations, childcare facilities, libraries must be justified in view of the temporal needs of their users; mobility times must be systematically coordinated with mobility needs; etc.

Up to now, that is, without the right to one's own time, having time or not having time has been a personal matter: some have it and others don't. Those who “provide” time (such as the above-mentioned agencies) are free to do so in ways that suit their logic of profit, efficiency, or convenience – while those who “demand” time have to comply with them. And when the latter live with a permanent time deficit which leaves them stressed, overtaxed and burnt-out, this is their problem as an individual (and a problem of

their individual “time management”) rather than a problem of the society they live in. This is precisely what the right to one's own time aims to change. For it provides the basis for a social solidarity with regard to time which does not supersede a person's responsibility for his or her conduct of life but offers support where time-based strain is predictable, i.e., where it is perceived to be socially caused and socially curable.

The right to one's own time recognizes that defining one's own time must remain the prerogative of individuals and groups. Social arrangements for the everyday use of time should take care not to create preformed and standardized routines in an authoritarian manner. Instead, arrangements should provide the leeway and create the enabling conditions for the diversity of chosen lifestyles and their respective temporalities. Thus, time policy and a right to one's own time are conceivable and justifiable only if they come with effective participation opportunities for those concerned.

*Translated from German by Hella Beister*

## The DGfZP lives by its members

HELGA ZEIHNER

As a registered association, the DGfZP has a statute that regulates its organizational structure as well as the rights and duties of its members. It also specifies its purpose, i.e., time policies. How this general purpose is conceptually differentiated, implemented in a lifeworld setting, brought to life, depends on the individuals who get engaged, as members, in time-policies activities. DGfZP activities emerge and change with the interests, thematic fields and professional orientations as well as the sociopolitical commitments and mindsets of its members. Those who join the DGfZP come with time-related interests, goals and experiences from their own current or previous research projects, professional activities, or everyday life problems.

Many members contribute to the spreading of time-policies thought by promoting time-policies activities in their community and highlighting time-policies aspects of current political, social and cultural events. Some members publish articles in the print media, on the radio and on the internet,

write books, book chapters and blogs or give talks in which they discuss the temporal implications of social and cultural issues as well as their personal involvement in them (see [zeitpolitik.org/publikationen](http://zeitpolitik.org/publikationen)).

DGfZP activities change with the successive generations of its members. Each generation is born into a different social reality and experiences different phases of social change, being shaped by and shaping them. New members introduce new social orientations, thematic concerns and approaches formed in the course of their life. And when active members become passive, their thematic fields, too, may disappear from the range of DGfZP topics.

### Members' motives

Members who chose to introduce themselves in the “Who is who” section of the *Zeitpolitisches Magazin* (ZpM) have let us know, in so doing, what motivated them to join the DGfZP. In their self-presentations, they describe the bio-

graphical contexts that confronted them with time-based issues and considerations and triggered their interest in time policies. Some of these members highlight the need for specific time-policies reforms, calling on the DGfZP to make these concerns its own and signaling their readiness to cooperate. Many of the reasons given for joining the DGfZP are to do with members' professional or study activities or/and with time-related problems in their family life. Most ZpM issues feature two of these self-presentations, adding up to 62 since the first issue in September 2003. As many of the members who wrote them have over time left the DGfZP while many others have joined it, the number of people who have at some point become DGfZP members by far exceeds the number of those who wrote self-presentations. Thus, while the range of DGfZP topics that can be inferred from these self-presentations is not representative of the totality of its members, whether fluctuating or permanent, it is nevertheless a realistic image of their diversity. It is also not representative in yet another respect because those who initiated or helped found the DGfZP never introduced themselves in the ZpM. The assumption was that due to their relevant activities and/or the fact that they were board members, they were well-known in the DGfZP, anyway.

Complementing these self-presentations, there are the results of a written member survey conducted by the DGfZP board in 2019. In addition to questions concerning a potential interest in a digital platform for exchange and communication among DGfZP members (see below), respondents were asked to specify topics of personal interest and topics which they felt should be addressed by the DGfZP in the future. Only 21 members responded to this part of the survey. Problems that should be dealt with in terms of time policies are found in all domains of everyday life. The motivations reported in the ZpM self-presentations focus on the need to reform temporal structures, or on individual ways of handling time, or on both. In the following, extracts from the self-presentations will serve to exemplify life-world motivations in both of these problem areas. (The year indicated after each contributor's name is their year of joining the DGfZP.)

### Initiating time policies-based structural reforms

#### *Promoting gender equity in the temporal distribution of care work and gainful work*

A frequently mentioned motivation for joining the DGfZP in this survey is the need for reform to achieve gender equity in the temporal distribution of care work and gainful work.

Members report becoming aware of this need during their years of study, or in their working life, and/or as private caregivers for children or dependent adults:

*... my own conflictual experience of trying to reconcile work and family commitments. During the so-called family phase, I once again became a student ... at the Fern-Universität (distance-learning university) in Hagen. In my final thesis for an M.A. degree ... I explored the temporal actions and experiences of women who live with a project-like temporal organization of their everyday life. (Elke Großer, 2006)*

*... self-determination and self-empowerment and the concrete forms this may take in an ever more complex world of work ... as a consultant in the office of the Unabhängiger Beirat für die Vereinbarkeit von Pflege und Beruf<sup>1</sup> at the Bundesamt für Familie und zivilgesellschaftliche Aufgaben<sup>2</sup> in Cologne. At a less abstract and very concrete level, these issues have recently become pressing also in my private life. Fulltime employment and finishing a PhD in combination with starting a family provides a first-class setting for critical time-policies self-reflections. (Tanja Kavur, 2016)*

*As a consultant at the Arbeiterwohlfahrt Bundesverband<sup>2</sup> ... in recent years also time-policies topics ... primarily in the context of ... problems to do with family policies, i.e., the reconciliation of family, care, and career ... I am involved in a wide range of concrete cases in this problem area ... topics as diverse as, e.g., time and time sovereignty for families, operating hours of childcare facilities, and time for care work. Personally, and as a mother, I am looking back on cheerful and turbulent times, sometimes wishing for more time for my family, for regeneration and leisure. (Jana Teske, 2019)*

*... At the Familienbund der Katholiken<sup>4</sup> we would like to see the structures in which the family members are individually involved ... organized in ways that allow for family life in its full diversity as well as for bonding between individual members. ... Flexible option times that support "breathing life courses" could significantly facilitate the use of periods of time-off from work for bringing up children and other care work and, thus, reduce the pressure on families, which is often particularly hard on mothers and women. (Ulrich Hoffmann, 2022)*

#### *Professional commitment to working time reforms*

1 Independent Advisory Council for the Reconciliation of Care and Career

2 Federal Office for Family and Civil Society Tasks

3 AWO, National Worker Welfare Association

4 FDK, Family Alliance of the Catholics

A number of members have joined the DGfZP because they are professionally committed to pushing for temporal reforms for the benefit of their clientele. In the DGfZP, they expect to find like-minded people, offer and seek cooperation and support, and make the most of the mutual benefits of their commitment as a member and as a professional. These are members – mostly women – who work in managerial positions in trade unions, political parties, state, church, or free institutions.

*... in the IG Metall<sup>5</sup> department of in-company union work, I am (since 2017) concerned with regulating in-company working time arrangements, realizing working times that are reconcilable with non-working life and, in this context, with implementing the new working time provisions that were achieved in the 2018 collective bargaining round for the metal and electrical industries. Today more than ever, the struggle for time sovereignty is the major counter-movement to the pervasive commercialization of life. (Hilde Wagner, 2005)*

*... Since 2001 self-employed with my Dortmund-based company Moderne Arbeitszeiten<sup>6</sup>. Project manager of the Zeitbüro NRW<sup>7</sup> ... And to this day, the organization of working hours is a key concern ... At the same time, the demands put on people's time by society in their working life as well as in the social realm are growing significantly. While it is true that companies need flexibility, safeguarding reliable structures for employees remains an important task. (Ulrike Hellert, 2005)*

*... During my studies of economics, reduction in working hours and other working hours models were a major focus. In my professional career and working as a self-employed person, time policies ... have remained an important concern as a professional, but also in volunteer work. ... Today, as a member of BÜNDNIS 90/DIE GRÜNEN<sup>8</sup> ... and of a national working group, time policies are again a major focus of my activities. (Brigitte Hartenstein, 2022)*

#### *Personal experiences of working conditions*

*... I am particularly interested in the time-policies dimension of project work. ... therefore, my aim in the DGfZP is to help develop models for more time-sovereignty in the organization of project work and for handling the temporal conditions inherent in it. My concern is not with better*

*time management but with strategies of how to position oneself, now and in the future, with regard to one's own time. (Etta Dannemann, 2008)*

*... During my active time as a (male) nurse, I had a first-hand experience of the key importance of time – in particular working time – for any participation in social life. (Stefan Reuys, 2006)*

*... The readiness to engage in union work also depends on a number of temporal factors: how we organize work and whether or not our colleagues are able and willing to devote time to political commitment. This requires more time sovereignty in everyday work – work, of course, not only in terms of gainful employment. A fulfilling life includes time in all its facets. (Frauke Gützkow, 2016)*

#### *Improving the temporal conditions of urban spaces*

Spatiotemporal problems that were identified during a member's years of study can now be addressed in the DGfZP setting.

*... My path to time was via Dietrich Henckel who has for quite some time now worked towards the integration of temporal perspectives into the subject matter of urban studies ... an international comparative study of cities which are highly integrated into the global economy and, as a consequence, under constant pressure to keep extending their operating hours, working hours and demand times. ... spatiotemporal differences between cities and between parts of cities, the speed-slowness relation, and liberalization vs. regulation of temporal conditions in urban areas ... (Benjamin Herkommer, 2005)*

*... With my habilitation on the subject of "time for mobility" ... I was finally on my way to time research ... The topics of mobility, multi-locality, spatiotemporal constraints, the impact of the pandemic on our space-time sovereignty and the divergence between our physical and our mental presence in space as a consequence of our reliance on digital means of communication – these are the topics I am currently concerned with. (Caroline Kramer, 2019)*

*... As an architect (...) with urban development as a major field of study, the concept of time and rhythm in view of a sustainable and qualitative development of our urban habitat has been with me since I moved to Paris in 2019, at the latest. ... My aim is to use qualitative interviews with individual inhabitants to evaluate and compare their welfare in terms of time and space. I thus propose to highlight the impact of temporal frameworks in selected Parisian neighborhoods. (Conny Hansel, 2022)*

5 Industriegewerkschaft Metall, Industrial Union of Metalworkers

6 Modern Working Hours

7 Time Office NRW (North Rhine-Westphalia)

8 Alliance 90/The Greens



## Improving individual ways of handling time

### *Teaching in educational institutions*

... As a teacher in the field of civic education, I am particularly interested in the pedagogical consequences of the pressure to accelerate. ... We won't be able to get out of the rat race unless individual efforts to decelerate can rely on a political framework that works along the same lines. (Fritz Reheis, 2002)

... I now have two workshops, one for ceramics and one for jewelry creation. Courses with adults are held in both workshops. At present I am often confronted with students who are talented and interested but find it hard to come to terms with the long time and the patience it takes to learn a craft. Among artisans, this is seen as a problem arising from the current trend in school education to foreground cognitive content and neglect craft and creative activities. We seek to reverse this trend – a task for education policies as well as time policies. (Katharina Kerscher, 2005)

... The focal point is my interdisciplinary study of ecotrophology ... the preliminary studies for the first German time use survey undertaken by the Federal Statistics Office of Germany ... For me, looking at quantities is always helpful and fascinating as a means of investigating the handling of time in our society and promulgating the findings in the language of science as well as in everyday speech. Currently, my interdisciplinary lens is trained on the education sector, and I would like to gain some further insight into it by taking a temporal perspective. Educational processes require temporal breaks and delays to enable reflexivity; so, with some such "delay", I will re-focus on the subject of time. (Christine Küster, 2012)

### *Professional consulting*

... one thing I realize time and again is that what we suffer from is by no means a "lack of time". Rather, we seem to live in a pattern that makes it increasingly hard for us to really see the consequences of our very own actions ... an indecision in the way we conduct our everyday as well as our professional life, with part of our mind permanently on the lookout for something different ... This is a general context which keeps turning up in my consulting projects with companies as well as individuals and which has ultimately led to my commitment to time policies: making it clear to managers and corporate executives where they need to show – and be adamant in showing - determination, clarity and consistency. (Olaf Lange, 2012)

... But for this to happen, one thing in particular is needed:

*time for re-orientation. As a business trainer for resilience, I therefore make it a point to socially highlight the importance of free time for remaining healthy and, thus, creative. (Markus Schulte, 2014)*

### *Gaining aesthetic and philosophical insights*

... Participating in R. Murray Schafer's "World Soundscape Project" heightened my interest in the aesthetic potential of the spatiotemporal distribution of events. Another important factor was the study of the extended concept of music in the Pythagorean tradition where time – the "inaudible music", that is, the processes and rhythms of nature as well as human beings – plays such a prominent role. This contrasts with the more recent approaches to time in everyday life, which tend to shy away from aesthetics. So, I set about combining formal and functional criteria for time in everyday life to create temporal design in analogy to spatial design, which I have since introduced in various contexts (e.g., workshops with trade unionists, conferences, working with people with special needs, and the like). (Albert Mayer, 2010)

... My current focus in the field of time studies (fascinating as it is in all its facets) is on the nexus between the philosophy of time and ethics for nature, ... the progressive destruction of nature leads to changes in the temporal structures, or timescapes, of our lifestyles, and to the evanescence of certain dimensions of experiencing time which are proper to a nature-aesthetics approach: for instance, the experience of recurrence as exemplified by cyclical natural events, or the profound understanding and awareness of deep time we may gain when contemplating a mountain range or a canyon. At present, I am designing a research project on the "ethics for time" at the University of Basel. (Stefanie Schuster, 2021)

### *Promoting awareness of time-ecology and sustainability issues*

In the early years of the DGfZP, one of its key concerns was a time-ecology issue, i.e., the fact that natural rhythms were superseded by socially developed time regimes. Since 1991, this concern was being addressed by the Tutzing Time Ecology Project conducted by Karlheinz Geißler and Martin Held, both of whom had actively worked towards the founding of the DGfZP. Other participants in the project also became founding members. In recent years, sustainability has again turned up more frequently among the motivations given for joining the DGfZP. In 2021, it was the topic of the Annual Conference and, following it, the ZpM.



... *Professionals in land-use and environmental planning who have made sustainable development one of their concerns necessarily face the question of how to reconcile the various time scales of economic time and the times of nature ... for instance, work cycles and natural rhythms ... It was the Tutzing Time Ecology Project that triggered my involvement in time studies.* (Sabine Hofmeister, 2002)

... *My understanding of time is based on self-determination, slowing-down, and ecological mindfulness. It is ecological in that we are mindful about how we are using our physical and mental resources, that is, our potentials and abilities, our attentiveness and our mental resilience, but also the resources of the environment.* (Stefan Boes, 2021)

... *What is the environmental impact of our everyday use of time? What are the limits of and potentials for sustainable development inherent in ... social institutions such as gender relations ... the presence or lack of public infrastructures and services? ... how can changing our time-use patterns contribute to a sustainable transformation?* (Barbara Smetschka, 2022)

## Active involvement in the DGfZP

The work members do in the DGfZP is voluntary work. The DGfZP is a non-profit association, so the running costs for the layout of the *Zeitpolitisches Magazin* (ZpM) and the DGfZP website, for bookkeeping and the Annual Conferences have to be covered by the annual contributions of its (too few) members. Whoever devotes part of his or her lifetime to voluntary work in the DGfZP is personally committed to its aims. And to the success of its efforts. This accounts for the high quality found across the whole range of projects, political interventions, Annual Conferences, and ZpMs – and, ultimately, for the increasing public visibility of and respect for the DGfZP.

All members share a commitment to time policies, which makes them a cooperating community. Active members are bound in mutual friendship, new members who want to engage in active work are readily integrated. Relationships are established at the Conferences, during breaks and informal after-work gatherings. Mutual bonds are also strengthened during the two-day spring meetings where the board (in this case, both the executive and the advisory board) discusses and decides the concept and program of the next Annual Conference, among other things. Over the years, certain Conferences as well as annual board meetings stand out – sometimes due to their location (Berlin-Schwanenwerder,

Fischerhude, Hamburger HafenCity, Schloss Blumenthal), sometimes due to their agenda (the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the DGfZP; Ulrich Mückenberger's retirement after 20 years as the DGfZP chairman, first its initiator, then one of the makers of its success).

## Exchange among members

In their self-presentations, many members recall that when joining the DGfZP, they expected to find others with whom to discuss current work and time-policies goals. This expectation was also very frequently expressed in the 2019 member survey. While the Annual Conferences do provide opportunities for making new contacts during breaks and after-work gatherings, members still feel the need for sites that allow for a more frequent and more in-depth exchange.

Since the foundation of the DGfZP, regional member groups have been a frequently discussed option. It was evident "that board activities and annual conferences do not suffice to make and keep the DGfZP thriving and influential. What is needed is a wide range of ongoing discussions within the DGfZP, among us members, to develop ideas and make them workable." The *Zeitpolitisches Magazin*, which appeared at regular intervals, and regional member groups were created as early as 2003 to this end. In June, the 17 Berlin DGfZP members were invited to the first meeting of an action group charged with setting up member groups. Eleven members came and planned the next steps, which resulted in the *Berliner Zeitpolitische Gespräche* (Berlin Time-Policies Rounds). For many years, these monthly meetings were attended by about a dozen members, sometimes more, sometimes less, with seven of them forming the hard core of regular participants. Members and guests presented time concepts and/or current research projects. Students came looking for inspiration for their time-related exam papers. In 2015, however, participation began to decline until meetings finally fell through altogether. While this decline in attendance may, of course, be due to personal reasons, it may also reflect a societal change: people found themselves unable to devote time for topics not linked to their occupational work, on the one hand, and were increasingly using blogs and online platforms as a forum for scientific discourse, on the other. Following the trend towards digital communication, the offline exchange about time and time-policies topics – "*Zeitpolitische Gespräche der DGfZP*" – is currently relocating to the Internet - "*Zeitpolitische Gespräche der DGfZP – Online*".

## Not everything can be done by voluntary work

During the founding phase, Marion Fabian acted as a very efficient and highly committed administrator who set up the DGfZP's internal organization – membership list, bank account, bookkeeping – and, together with Martina Heitkötter (member of the DGfZP advisory board), the *Zeitpolitisches Magazin* (ZpM), of which she was in charge until 2007. Marion Fabian enlisted graphic designer Anna von Garnier as the ZpM layout artist and co-designer of the DGfZP website. Marion Fabian resigned in 2007 when the DGfZP's efforts to ensure long-term funding for her position

ultimately failed. Since then, the executive board has relied on the support of the secretary of the Managing Director. For many years now, Anne Totz has acted in this secretarial function. The DGfZP's bookkeeping has since 2007 been taken care of by Elvira Rossberg, a freelance accountant recommended by Marion Fabian. Anna von Garnier has for 20 years seen to the ongoing development of the DGfZP website and the design of every single ZpM issue, doing the layout and finding and creatively editing cover photos. The DGfZP and in particular the ZpM editorial staff owe very much indeed to Anna von Garnier's competence and commitment.

## From family-time policies and the critique of “standard employment relationship” to breathing life courses.

### A long-term project

KARIN JURCZYK, ULRICH MÜCKENBERGER

“Zeit für Beziehungen” – “Time for Relationships” – was the title of a book co-published in 2009 by Martina Heitkötter and Karin Jurczyk, both members of the DGfZP, and by the experts in time research, Andreas Lange and Uta Meier-Gräwe. The reference to DGfZP activities was by no means a coincidence since the book was based on its Annual Conference of 2005, which was dedicated to this topic, and on an expert workshop on “time and the family” organized, in 2004, by the Expert Commission of the Federal Government in preparation of the Seventh Family Report. This drawn-out approach already highlights a typical feature of developments in the field of family-time policies: even in the initial years of DGfZP activities as well as the initial years of research on the lifeworld “family” and its temporal structures and problems, the need for family-time policies was already acknowledged by institutionalized politics. At any rate, the fact that the Ministry was willing to lend an ear to the time-policy demands of the expert commission could be construed in this sense. When the Seventh Family Report was submitted in April 2006, the Federal Minister for Family Affairs, Ursula von der Leyen, said that “the most ‘exciting’ message of the Report was the reference to ‘time policies’” (Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, April 26, 2006). With this, the term had made it into the media and, thus, the wider public. And when parental leave on the Swedish model, which had been one of the demands made in the Family

Report, was implemented in January 2007, a turning point was reached: from now on, time policy for families was an explicit political concern and was even “officially” referred to under this name. Time policies became one of the three strong points – in addition to money and infrastructure – of sustainable family policies.

Another typical feature of this drawn-out approach was the fact that the scientific expertise of DGfZP members was time and again in demand in political commissions, or commissions more or less involved in the policy-making process, and that, therefore, we had platforms on which to make ourselves heard. This close interaction was maintained during the next decade: after the Seventh Family Report, there was the Eighth Report which was even exclusively dedicated to the issue of time for families; the Commission of Inquiry for North Rhine-Westphalia; the Family-Policies Commission of the Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung; the scientific monitoring of local time-policy projects; a cost-benefit analysis of local family-time policies; and many more. And even before that, time policies for gainful employment had been elaborated and propagated from a labour law (Mückenberger 1985) and a union work (Steinrücke et al. 2001) perspective. Since then, the critique of the standard employment relationship (SER) and the conceptualization of the “option time model”, by now a concern jointly pursued by Karin Jurczyk and Ulrich Mückenberger (see below), have gone hand in hand.

The DGfZP has been involved in almost all of these activities. Things began to stir, primarily in the form of diverse and dynamic proposals, often at company level, for time accounts for employees, i.e., time for them to use for education, family care, or “one’s own time” (cf. *Zeitpolitisches Magazin* 2016, no. 28). The unions, in turn, negotiated a number of – sometimes rather extensive – collective agreements in recent years, e.g., for postal and railway workers or, by the IG Metall<sup>1</sup>, for the metal sector or, quite recently, by the IG BCE<sup>2</sup> for workers in the chemicals industry, with a collective agreement that includes a demand for a “personal future account” of 1,000 € per year. In these agreements, time is remarkably often used as the new “currency” in place of or in addition to money.

The purpose of all these efforts was to obtain recognition also in the world of work for the rightful needs that arise in the lifeworld of the family and all those belonging to it. In this, family is defined very broadly: it is characterized by care-centered personal relationships. And for all these activities of affection, support, nurturing and provisioning (= care) which are not only beneficial but vital (“of systemic importance”, as one would say today), time is a requisite. Care time has its very own logic: it is geared to emotions and the body, that is, it involves letting things happen, empathy, situativity, and limited predictability. As a result, it can only to a certain extent be rationalized and accelerated. Also, due to the existential dependency of human beings, it is in principle endless. It is oriented to relationships whose processes are all at once dependable, cyclical, and erratic. And it is potentially conflictual since it is a realm where not only the various perspectives and interests of those involved but also the completely different temporal logics of school, work, traffic, opening times, etc. clash.

Given the gender-hierarchical division of labor, care time is very unequally distributed – which means that discussing the topic of family invariably includes discussing gender relations and times of gainful employment (Jurczyk 2015). But what is at stake here is always more than just time use and time in terms of quantity, it is also the experience and the perception of time, it is time in terms of quality or, quite simply, the time constraints experienced in everyday life and over the entire life course. Luckily, we could again extensively draw on the scientific expertise accumulated by DGfZP members in their day jobs.

Against this double backdrop of accumulated knowledge and interventions, family-time policies should by now be a *realpolitik* success story. This, however, has happened only in a very restricted sense. The demands made in the Eighth Family Report – based as they were on the justifiable assessment that labour law is “family blind” – have more or less fizzled out. It is true that there have been many small reforms concerning parental leave and parental allowance. Also, there have been amendments of the statutory law on care times as well as a number of laws that have a direct impact on working conditions, e.g., the so-called “Brückenteilzeit” – the option for employees to temporarily work part-time – and the “Teilzeitbefristungsgesetz” – an employment act promoting part-time work, defining the admissibility of fixed-term employment contracts and ensuring that part-time and fixed-term employees are not discriminated against or otherwise disadvantaged. But taking action on the basis of demonstrable knowledge – namely, that time for care in the family is not everything, but family without time for care is nothing and that, moreover, gender equity cannot be achieved without a thorough revision of current time policies – would have required a major breakthrough. To our regret, no such breakthrough has as yet happened. Rather, time policies have time and again been blocked out by allegedly more relevant policies. The SER is still dominant in labour law legislation and jurisprudence, notwithstanding the sharp increase in precarious employment. Furthermore, the ministerial motivations for introducing time-policy instruments such as parental allowance have been ambivalent from the start. The marketization of family policies has gone hand in hand with the “discovery” of time policies: the objective of reinforcing the integration of mothers into the working life, preferably on a full-time basis, is due to demographic change and an anticipated shortage of skilled workers rather than a heightened awareness of the need for emancipatory times and less time constraints. On the other hand, what we see in the world of work but also in society as a whole is an obvious conflict – or, rather: an unholy alliance – between the demand for more time for the family and retrograde concepts of gender and family. There is only a thin line between these extremes, so what is called for is a more in-depth explication of what and who should be granted the benefit of more time.

Even the growing recognition, stated with ever more urgency since 2013, that there is an ongoing and all but pervasive care crisis has done nothing to change the perfunctory and small-scale nature of official time-policy efforts; nor has

1 Industriegewerkschaft Metall - Industrial Union of Metalworkers

2 Industriegewerkschaft Bergbau, Chemie, Energie – Mining, Chemistry and Energy Workers Union

the current Covid crisis (see the two care manifests at [www.care-macht-mehr.com](http://www.care-macht-mehr.com)). Time constraints and burnout, now experienced by all genders, and the destructive use of human and natural resources have increased rather than decreased. Therefore, DGfZP experts took to addressing the issue of care-centered time policies in a new and more radical way: how to improve temporal conditions, particularly times of gainful work, so as to meet people's needs over the life course with all its various phases and the demands that go with them? How to institute time regimes that are responsive to the needs – in terms of quantity, appropriateness, gender and social equity – of nurturing and care work over the life course?

We felt that neither overall concepts nor concepts that pinpoint situational needs and specific life stages were an appropriate means of fundamentally alleviating the time constraints of families, coping with the care crisis and bringing about gender equity. Our reasons were fourfold: when the contours of what used to be clearly defined structures such as family, employment, and gender relations (Jurczyk et al. 2009) get blurred while the male “standard biography” with its focus on gainful employment and its “punishment” for career breaks persists as the model for adult life in public policies, time-based problems are bound to arise not only in the so-called rush hour of life, but way beyond. Due to the proliferation of precarious working conditions, truly free times as well as care times have become a luxury good. People's “own time” is systematically curtailed. And, finally, the digitalization of the world of work increasingly requires lifelong learning. We – Karin Jurczyk and Ulrich Mückenberger – therefore felt that what was needed, rather than incremental change, was a whole new outlook: a novel comprehensive social- (and labour-) policy model which enables women and men to engage in a need-gearred and self-determined shaping of occupational trajectories, and includes various socially relevant activities and factors in gender and social equity. Between April 2017 and October 2018, pooling the results of many years of preliminary studies and efforts, the basic elements of this model were worked out in detail in an interdisciplinary, BMAS<sup>3</sup>-supported research project ([https://www.fis-netzwerk.de/fileadmin/fis-netzwerk/Optionszeiten\\_Abschlussbericht\\_DJIBroschuere\\_Endg.pdf](https://www.fis-netzwerk.de/fileadmin/fis-netzwerk/Optionszeiten_Abschlussbericht_DJIBroschuere_Endg.pdf)). The metaphor of “breathing life courses” perfectly captures the gist of our concept: in the course of their working life, people of whatever gender should be able to alternate

between periods of gainful employment, private care work, volunteerism, further education, and self-care, or to opt for a combination of reduced working hours and an engagement in any such activities. The option time model (OTM) stands for an unequivocal farewell to the norm of the male “standard biography” and the ideal type of the male breadwinner.

In the years since the Report was published, we have set out the OTM to audiences from the scientific community, from associations, politics, and trade unions. It has met with much interest, but also with many open questions which are currently discussed with actors from all these fields in what we call an option time laboratory (OTL). Also, the 2020 DGfZP Annual Conference was once more dedicated to these issues (see ZpM 2021, no. 38). But while achievements have been made in this respect, at least as many barriers still remain. The difficulties encountered in trying to put the OTL on a solid footing are a case in point: we lack the financial and infrastructural resources, on the one hand, and the time and energy, on the other, to really join forces and push ahead with the project. Which puts us in a paradoxical situation: everybody is already fully stretched with jobs and care work and has no time for time-policy work. This problem seems to find a solution, at least temporarily. But there are other obstacles, too: above all, the reluctance, on the part of representatives from the world of work, to break new ground. As it is, our model still implies too great a challenge for the prevalent culture of SER as well as for the functional principles, still in effect, of the male standard biography, and comes up against too great a reluctance to shape and reshape the world of work with a view to livable time regimes (Mückenberger 2022). The norm of the eight-hour working day remains undisputed and has even made it into the current coalition agreement. And, last but not least, there are the pitfalls of such a comprehensive project: it concerns not only labour law (affecting employers and trade unionists), but also a number of other political fields such as tax law, social security law, etc. Enabling systematically different conditions in the relation of gainful employment and care work and challenging the prevalence of gainful employment is no small matter since it poses a challenge to the balance of power: in the economy, between generations, in politics.

It will be interesting to see whether the cooperation between European countries, such as currently in the context of the Barcelona Time Use Week, will bear fruit. One problem will no doubt be that the European countries have rather diverse welfare and gender regimes. Ultimately, however, almost all

3 Bundesministerium für Arbeit und Soziales - Federal Ministry for Labor and Social Affairs

countries will feel the impact of the care crisis while gender equity in the division of labour is far from being fully realized. This begs the question of why in Germany – given so many other fields for time policies to address – it is care-time policies that have received the major part of political and public attention. Could it be that they are the key to so many current time problems which directly affect so many people in their lifeworld? At any rate, we will continue to take advantage of the situation to further promote both the OTM and, as a prerequisite, the OTL, since in this time-policies field major issues converge, calling for solutions: care, gender equity, sustainability, education and learning, and the world of work.

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## “Women change the times”:

### Approaches and cycles in the history of local time policies

DIETRICH HENCKEL, ULRICH MÜCKENBERGER

The history of the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Zeitpolitik (DGfZP - German Society for Time Policies) has been intricately linked to the history of local time policies and Times of the City because even before the founding of the DGfZP, several of its founding members were doing research, independently of each other and from a diversity of perspectives, on how changes in time structures and developments in cities interact with time-policies regulation:

- At the Deutsches Institut für Urbanistik (Difu)<sup>1</sup>, a major focus of research “Times of the City” was established in 1984. Until 2004, with Dietrich Henckel in charge (temporarily in cooperation with Jürgen Rinderspacher), it produced a number of relevant publications.

- At the same time, a feminist movement emerged in Italy and went public with the draft bill “Le donne cambiano i tempi” (“Women change the times”; German translation in 1992). Their approaches were brought to Germany by Ulrich Mückenberger and resulted in the establishment of the European further education and action research program “Eurexter - Excellence territoriale en Europe” and the Time Research Center at the University of Politics in Hamburg, which also produced many relevant publications.

The main difference between these two approaches was that the research done at the Difu focused on the potential spatiotemporal impact of technological and societal change and on ways to deal with it, thus being more in the tradition

<sup>1</sup> German Institute of Urban Affairs



of Torsten Hägerstrand's (1970) time geography. In contrast, research in Hamburg and Bremen, taking its cue from the Italian movement, addressed temporal constraints and time-related distress and sought to provide remedy by developing, in cooperation with the Eurexter project, novel action-gearred time-policies tools. Thus, they were from the start committed to an action-research approach, that is, to pilot projects and their practical implementation as well as scientific monitoring and analysis. Projects were, among others: "Times of the City" in Hamburg Barmbek-Uhlenhorst; the "Forum Times of the City" and the "Perspective Laboratory" in Bremen; a Time Office in Bremen-Vegesack; the project "Zeitbewusste Stadt Bremen" ("Time-Conscious City of Bremen") as part of the BMBF<sup>2</sup>-supported project "Stadt 2030" ("City 2030"); the BMBF project VERA, with local case studies in Bremen and Hamburg (see Mückenberger 2000 and 2001). As long as it existed, the Time Office in Bremen-Vegesack was managed, and subsequently evaluated in a doctoral thesis, by a member of the DGfZP board (Heitkötter 2006).

Pilot projects were conducted in other cities, as well – among them Hanau and Hannover, the latter with a project with an explicitly local-level time-policies approach. Parts of the Bremen projects as well as the projects in Hamburg and Hannover were even integrated into the EXPO 2000 in Hannover, where they were listed as decentral exposition sites. Their evaluation was carried out by the Difu and published in an expert report (Henckel/Eberling 2001). A number of other cities used their urban discussion forums to address local time policies and the integration of urban development planning and local time policies (e.g., Stadtforum Berlin) or produced reports of their own (e.g., Munich, Vienna). But even where they found a wider echo, all these approaches failed to gain institutional continuity.

Having originated in a European context, the "Times of the City" projects were part of a larger interactive European network, in particular through Eurexter and its sponsor, the European Social Dialogue. "Tempi della città" became the role model for many practice-oriented projects all over Europe. In 2000, the movement "Le donne cambiano i tempi", which had been founded in the mid-1980s, succeeded in having their initial manifest integrated into national law. This was the "legge Turco", by the name of the minister in charge at the time, Livia Turco, who had already played a key role in the 1980s. Since then, all Italian cities have been

under the legal obligation to set up "time offices" and "time master plans". The Italian model of local time policies was taken up in many European countries (among them France, Spain, Belgium, Germany, the Netherlands, Ireland). In France, François Ascher coined the term "chrono-urbanisme" which was also taken up by research in Germany, primarily at the Difu ("Chrono-Urbanistik"). In 2004, the network "tempo territorial" was formed in France, a national association of, mainly, municipality-based time-policies actors. At the international level, too, a first network of time-policies actors was created. Predominantly concerned with conditions in the Romanic countries, however, it suffered from a lack of participants from North European countries, and especially Germany. Building on model projects in Germany and Italy, Eurexter developed a European further education program for Italy, Germany and France (1997-2000). Its aim was to enable practitioners from politics, administrations and trade unions to meet the challenges of local-level time policies (Mückenberger 2000). It was established as a sideline to the Piacenza-based Laurea program of the Politecnico di Milano, and teaching and exams were taken care of by Eurexter directors from France and Germany alongside the Italian directors. Regrettably, these programs could not be established on a permanent basis.

Important impulses also came from two research groups organized by the ARL<sup>3</sup> in the Leibniz Gemeinschaft<sup>4</sup>. Under the direction and with the significant participation of DGfZP members (Dietrich Henckel, Martina Heitkötter Ulrich Mückenberger, Jürgen Rinderspacher, Thomas Sieverts, Albert Mayr, Caroline Kramer), two readers were published as a result: *Raumzeitpolitik* (Space-Time Policies, Henckel/Eberling 2002) and *Zeitgerechte Stadt* (The Time Equity City, Henckel/Kramer, 2019).

Following an initiative of the city's business promoter at the time and drawing on chronobiological findings, the second reader presented a highly ambitious approach for reorganizing the urban time schedules of Bad Kissingen. The time-policies actions envisaged included starting school at a later hour, adjusting times in clinics and spa facilities to the rhythms of their patients, organizing shift schedules in line with employees' chronotypes (early birds vs. night owls), all of which would have required massive adjustments also in terms of public transport. However, this promising project has by now been more or less abandoned.

3 Akademie für Raumforschung und Landesplanung - Academy for Spatial Research and Planning, today Akademie für Raumentwicklung – Leibniz Forum for Spatial Sciences

4 Leibniz Association

2 Bundesministerium für Bildung und Forschung – Federal Ministry of Education and Research

In spite of the efforts of DGfZP actors to win over the local authorities' umbrella associations for Times of the City, the project never made it beyond a number of publications in the associations's magazines or newsletters.

A fresh impetus for time policies, in particular at the local and regional level, came with the Federal Government's Seventh Family Report as well as the subsequent Reports and the ensuing support programs and pilot projects (among them the Aachen project with its large-scale integration of family time policies and urban planning) (see also the article by Jurczyk/Mückenberger in the present ZpM issue). These Family Reports as well as then-Minister Ursula von der Leyen's argument in favor of time policies significantly – if temporarily – enhanced the reach of the concept "time policies" as a subject of public debate. In Europe, the diffusion of the term and the concepts of local and regional time policies entered a new phase when the Council of Europe, Congress of Local and Regional Authorities, adopted a Resolution and a Recommendation entitled "Social time, leisure time: which local time planning policy?" which stipulated the need for all 47 member states to implement time-policies concepts and tools and for the first time recognized a "right to time" at a European level (Mückenberger 2011). But while these documents are frequently cited, practical implementations have as yet – as far as we can see – failed to materialize.

In some countries, the turn of the millennium was taken as an opportunity for a large-scale reorganization of the public sector, with the objective of enhancing its efficiency and making it more citizen-friendly. Especially in Italy, these modernizing efforts initiated a heyday for local time policies. In other countries, no such effect occurred because unlike in Italy, where the relevant activities were seen as elements of a time-policies program, similar activities in Germany were subsumed under the label of citizen-friendly administrations. These overlaps were one of the factors that prevented local time policies in Germany from gaining the necessary momentum across policy areas.

Today, a Google search for the German term "Zeitpolitik" yields around 51.000 hits, "kommunale Zeitpolitik" still gets around 14.000 hits. Most of the latter seem to refer to local family-time policies.

### Institutionalization, volatility, and the relevance of individual actors

Time research (as a social-science discipline in the broadest sense) has quite a history. In recent decades, it has seen

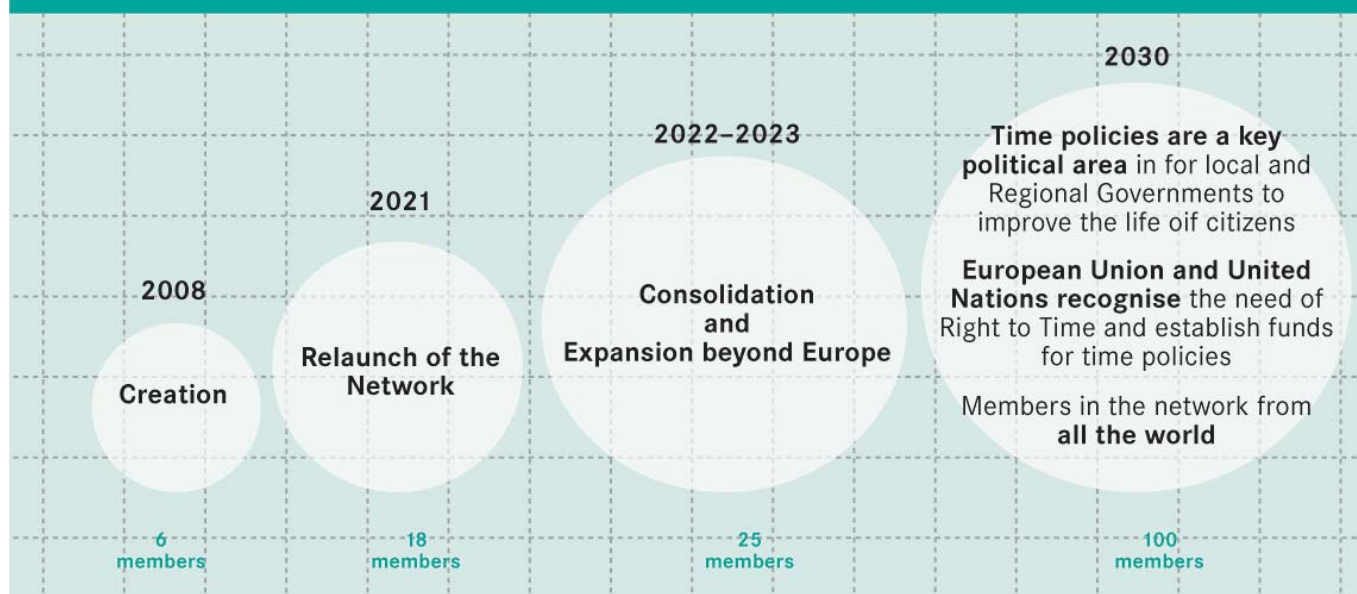
a real take-off, branching out into many individual disciplines. One of the first important time-research societies was the "International Society for the Study of Time (ISST)" which was founded in 1966 as an interdisciplinary researchers' organization. Its first conference was held in Germany in 1969, and since that time there has been an ISST conference about every three years. Another milestone was the founding, in 1979 in Varna/Bulgaria, of the "International Association for Time Use Research (IATUR)" – its current name since 1988 – which brings together academics, practitioners and statistics experts from about 40 countries and has meanwhile organized 44 world conferences. As an association, the IATUR is not explicitly committed to time policies but its academic and statistical focus on people's everyday time use almost inevitably has time-policies consequences. Unsurprisingly, therefore, the IATUR also joined the 2021 Barcelona Time Use Week and subscribed to its time-policies demands (see below).

Another important step was the founding of the journal "Time and Society" in 1992, which meanwhile features a growing number of articles on Times of the City. The long-term existence and growing relevance of the journal can no doubt be taken as an indication that time research has become well-established and institutionalized. But while its scientific output keeps growing, its impact in terms of practical implementations remains low.

Academic teaching, too, frequently covers time-policies issues and contents. It all depends, however, on the initiative of individual academic teachers. To our knowledge, time-policies topics have nowhere made it into the academic curricula, let alone resulted in the creation of a chair of time research or time policies – the above-mentioned Laurea program in Piacenza having remained an episode of a few years. The Eurexter further education program, too, could not be put on a permanent footing.

In spite of the legislation in Italy which obliges cities to take time-policies action and, thus, ensures the legally defined institutionalization of time policies, the number of Italian cities which (still) pursue local time policies is very small, and their focus is often very restricted. While in the early days more than 80 Italian cities had time offices that intensely worked towards an integration of temporal and spatial control, produced extensive expert reports and time-control master plans (among them Bolzano, Milan, Modena, Bergamo, Pesaro, Turin), time offices have been increasingly marginalized, not least due to political shifts (from left-wing to right-wing) in city governments. Today, there are only a few

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cities left (among them Bolzano and Bergamo) where explicit time policies and, above all, the integration of temporal and spatial policies still play a major role while in others the focus has mainly shifted to working time policies and, in some cases, to care, family and school issues (Mareggi 2015).

In Germany, all the above-mentioned municipal projects (among them Hanau, Hamburg, Hannover, Wolfsburg, the Time Office in Bremen-Vegesack) are history by now. In most cases, they lost in importance or even closed up shop when their (mostly female) founders left. The ambitious Chronocity Bad Kissingen project succumbed, after its euphoric beginnings, to an overload of red tape and the complexity of the necessary adjustment processes, the volatile support of the city government and the conflicting interests of relevant actors.

But time-policies concerns are not “done with”, far from it. Rather, they seem to have “departmentalized”, that is, have partitioned into and are taken care of by separate fields of competence. Thus, time-policies achievements have remarkably often been obtained in the context of working time policies (see ZpM 38), gender and family policies (ZpM 28), sustainability policies (ZpM 40) and, as mentioned above, the ongoing modernization of administrations. But while time-policies concerns with a positive everyday-life impact have proved to be remarkably effective in these contexts, they are still not identified as time policies. Given the results, one could say that there is nothing to complain

about – but for the fact that due to the barriers it creates way beyond the boundaries of departments and responsibilities, this departmentalization massively interferes with the development of time policies.

Implementing and establishing cross-departmental and transversal policies seems to be impossible unless, as we have seen in the field of environmental policies, its institutionalization comes with a significant increase in power – i.e., hierarchical positions, personnel, finances and contractually accorded rights. So far, there is no indication that this has happened anywhere in any way that is concrete and tangible. Nor has the legal institutionalization of local-level time-policies actions in Italy been able to prevent that

- interest in Times of the City has been very volatile and dependent on favorable constellations,
- successful approaches tend to be confined to projects or experiments but are rarely able to establish themselves on a permanent basis,
- dependence on the charisma of individuals for implementing time-policies approaches is clearly greater than in other policy fields, with no established structures to fall back on when these individuals are no longer there.

It is part of the volatile and cyclical nature of time-policies topics that each new upswing comes with both new perspectives and a loss of existing knowledge. As a result, many wheels are being reinvented time and again.

A look at the current websites of German political parties and foundations also shows that the topic of time policies, and especially local time policies, has barely taken root – apart from certain approaches that have become firmly established in the fields of youth, gender, and family-time policies (see Jurczyk/Mückenberger in the present ZpM issue).

The description of these developments and conditions just goes to show how hard it is to implement local time policies, especially since the umbrella associations of local authorities in Germany have never really opened up to the topic. This limited success, however, should not detract from the fact that in recent years, things have started to move again.

### Recent developments

Barcelona has long been a city intensely engaged in time policies. In 2014, an initiative for time use reform that had formed in 2013 was officially – i.e., with the explicit institutional support of Catalonia's regional government – instituted, provided with an expert group and given a three-year task: elaborating basic principles, raising awareness and developing a reform agenda for Catalonia. Internationalization has from the start been part of its outlook. The Barcelona Time Use Initiative for a Healthy Society (BTUI) has not only organized annual national conferences but, in 2020, the first international Time Use Week, a precursor to the Barcelona Time Use Week (BTUW) 2021 which was held in conjunction with the 43rd IATUR World Congress (see above). This conference – drawing on large-scale international cooperation for its preparation, with the DGfZP as a significant actor – marks a major restart for (local) time policies, with the Barcelona Declaration on Time Policies as a notable milestone (<https://www.timeuse.barcelona/barcelona-declaration-on-time-policies>; in Spanish, Catalan, English, French, German). At the time of its official publication, the Declaration could boast more than 100 first signatories – both institutions and individuals – from the scientific community, from people engaged in practical time-policies work, from politics, civil society, trade unions, municipalities. In Germany – where the DGfZP had coordinated the acquisition of initial signatories – several institutions in the field of urban or spatial planning could be won over (among them the Deutsches Institut für Urbanistik (Difu), the Akademie für Raumentwicklung in der Leibniz Gemeinschaft (ARL), the Deutsche Akademie für Städtebau und Landesplanung (DASL<sup>5</sup>)). Regrettably, the local authorities' umbrella organizations and/or municipalities

that have experience with local time policies could (again) not be persuaded to commit themselves to time policies and, thus, sign the Declaration.

At the BTUW 2021, time-policies approaches and demands were discussed in terms of “second-generation time policies”. The “right to one's own time” – set up in 2010 by the Council of Europe – was reaffirmed almost as a matter of course. Topics discussed at the conference included the founding of a European Academy for Time Policies; abolishing daylight saving time and establishing permanent time zones; coping with the care crisis; sharing experiences with local time policies with actors in other countries; also, several resolutions were passed concerning international cooperations. Agreement was reached to engage in the following – by now well-functioning – cooperations:

- Founding the “Local and Regional Governments Time Network” with the objective of facilitating the exchange and promotion of best-practice examples in the field of local and regional time policies. Meanwhile, the Network has set up an agenda for documenting practical experiences in various fields. The DGfZP has a seat on the Network's advisory board. The Network also ensures the annual selection of a world capital of time policies – which was Barcelona in 2022 and Bolzano in 2023.
- Campaigning for and preparing a proposal for founding a European Time Academy (cf. Mückenberger in the present ZpM issue).
- Setting up a working group to campaign for the abolition of daylight saving time and a partial reform of European time zones, i.e., those zones that are currently not in line with solar cycles (cf. Henckel/Gernig in the present ZpM issue). In October 2022, the working group published press releases on the topic and started initiatives to put the issue back on the agenda of the European Parliament and Commission.
- Using the BTUW and the contacts made during the conference as a basis for developing proposals for European research or cooperation projects.

The BTUW 2022, held in October 2022, was placed under the motto “Time and (In)Equalities”. The conference also hosted the plenary session of the “Local and Regional Governments Time Network”, which included presenting the current state of the documentation of best practice examples in selected fields as well as updating the Network's agenda and defining significant goals for its future activities (see the schema). Achieving this vision will require substantial collective efforts.

5 German Academy for Urban Development and Regional Planning



The BTUW 2021 and its 2022 follow-up marked a fresh start for time policies and have already resulted in a considerable number of international activities, so there is indeed reason for hope.

## Conclusion

Time policies, and in particular their local specifications, are no doubt still one of the great innovations of our decades: along with the welfare state that was concerned with, and limited to, the redistribution of financial resources, there now is a welfare state that is attentive to the temporal conditions of everyday life and concerned with redistributing and co-shaping them. However, as we have seen, efforts at implementing local time policies are fraught with considerable volatility and discontinuity – not only, but especially so, in Germany. Depending on certain topics, funding conditions, projects, fresh attempts keep being made but have as yet never been able to establish themselves on a permanent basis. This is to do with the extreme reluctance of German municipalities and their umbrella organizations to open up to the issue, and with the low international presence of German actors in this field; a reluctance which was only recently brought home to us by the fact that the German presence at the Barcelona Time Use Weeks 2021 and 2022 was limited to representatives of the scientific community and the DGfZP. There were, however, two significant exceptions: the video message of the former German Minister for the Environment and former Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) Klaus Töpfer, who emphasized the relevance of time policies; and, most importantly, the video statement of the German MEP Rasmus Andresen on the occasion of the announcement of the Barcelona Declaration on Time Policies 2021, who stressed the relevance not only of time policies, in general, but of a right to time and the need for a European Time Academy, in particular.

Since not a single German municipality is, to date, represented in the “Local and Regional Governments Time Network”, efforts should continue to be made to ensure that Germany, too, will join the Network – the sooner, the better. Municipalities have a strong position in Germany, which is why we believe that their contributions could make a difference.

All in all, “Times of the City” can be seen as a success story, albeit riddled with considerable obstacles. Implementing local time policies on a permanent basis will not be for tomorrow.

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# Time policies' uphill battles: the case of daylight saving time

DIETRICH HENCKEL, BJÖRN GERNIG

Daylight saving time (that is, the setting of clocks ahead by one hour in spring and back by one hour in autumn) was introduced in the EU in 1984 by Directive 2000/84/EC. A late consequence of the energy crisis, it was supposed to help save energy. Thus, the underlying reasoning echoed the one given for the very first experiments with daylight saving time, which was originally an idea from England. In many countries, daylight saving time was first implemented in times of war, in Germany in the First and the Second World War. In most cases, however, daylight saving time was soon discontinued when the war-economy justifications no longer applied. In the EU, the regulation has remained unchanged from 1984 to the present day. Yet a – methodologically questionable – EU public consultation resulted in a majority of respondents in favor of abolishing the clock change. The EU Parliament, too, voted by a large majority in favor of its abolition by 2021, with the proviso that regulations should again be the responsibility of each member state but that coordination and concertation was called for. So far, nothing has happened. According to the EU, the process is currently “on hold”.

Implementing daylight saving time (DST) has always been a highly controversial issue, and there is quite a number of countries where it has more than once been implemented, abolished, and reimplemented. The question of which time regime to fall back on once the clock change is abolished has also repeatedly given rise to heated arguments. Especially in North America (the USA and Canada), controversy is running high about whether or not DST should be implemented on a permanent basis – significantly, in the USA, this is referred to as a debate about the “sunshine protection act”.

Changing clock time away from standard time as well as imposing standard time are time-policies actions writ large. The agreement on standard time was reached at the 1884 International Meridian Conference. The world was divided into 24 time zones (since in 24 hours the earth does a full 360° rotation around its own axis), with 12:00 noon the hour at which the sun is at its zenith in the middle of the respective time zone. This regulation alone is a political act to standardize times and facilitate coordination in a globalizing world. However, the division into standard times

was based on the natural light conditions in each time zone, i.e., daylight and darkness – which is quite appropriate for humans who, after all, are diurnal primates.

The implementation of DST is equivalent to a shift in time zones, that is, people are getting up one hour earlier in relation to the habitual time schedules of their society. In other words, the society's activities are advanced by one hour, which is a massive intervention in its temporal framework.

So, unsurprisingly, if we consider that

- energy savings have failed to materialize, and
  - the findings of chronobiology and sleep research have provided overwhelming evidence for the harmful effects of “advancing” social activities in relation to the solar cycle,
- the debates about future regulations in the EU and elsewhere have once more gained in vehemence.

The DGfZP has got involved in this debate through

- an extensive dossier, in German and English ([https://zeitpolitik.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/Zukunft\\_der\\_Sommerzeit.pdf](https://zeitpolitik.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/Zukunft_der_Sommerzeit.pdf) and [https://zeitpolitik.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/future\\_of\\_DST.pdf](https://zeitpolitik.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/future_of_DST.pdf)), discussing the pros and cons of the clock change and making suggestions for a sensible regulation as well as possible ways to proceed. This dossier was widely distributed and had a certain media resonance (including an online article on Perspective Daily and a TV interview);
- participation in various groups that work towards the abolition of DST in favor of standard time (among them, Better Times, International Alliance for Natural Time, (IANT, <https://naturaltimealliance.org/en/>), the working group of the Barcelona Time Use Initiative (BTUI, <https://www.timeuse.barcelona/>)). The BTUI international working group, in particular, has been very active in recent months. In October, it launched a proposal for establishing permanent time zones in Europe (<https://www.timeuse.barcelona/permanent-time-zones-eu>), which was directly addressed to the EU Commission, the EU Parliament and the individual member states.



In the EU and in Germany, the process of abolishing DST is currently on hold for various reasons:

- The global crises overshadow the seemingly trivial clock change, so other topics are paramount on the agenda and keep upstaging the time-policies debate.
- Topics of long-term and creeping relevance find it hard to spur action, as attitudes towards the climate crisis have abundantly shown. Since, as a rule, any causal link between the clock change and certain effects on people's health, wellbeing, etc. can only be established indirectly through long-term observation or complex examinations, we tend to forget or repress them.
- Since the effects concern a broad range of different fields (long-term increase in health risks, consequences of accidents due to sleep deficit, etc.), the bigger picture is hard to see for the individuals immediately affected as well as the relevant institutions. On the other hand, the positive effects of a return to standard time, too, become visible only in the long run, so it is hard to influence the political agenda in this direction.
- As is the case with any complex issue or decision, there are always also those for whom regulations whose overall effects are negative turn out to have a positive side. Certain industries, in particular the leisure industry, benefit from the fact that the clock change makes us get up one hour earlier in the morning and, according to the clock, lets us have one more hour of daylight in the evening (because, clock-wise, daylight hours have been reassigned). The debates in the USA, in particular, show that the leisure industry has no interest in abolishing DST, or even advocates permanent DST which, from a chronobiology perspective, would be the worst-case scenario. Countries that have implemented permanent DST have in most cases revised their decision after a few years.
- Although it is widely accepted that when it comes to energy saving, DST is irrelevant, press articles that seek to highlight, "expert" opinion included, the potential for energy saving keep coming up every now and then. In October 2022, Consumerismo & Sima from Italy initiated a petition on [change.org](https://change.org) which was addressed to the EU Commission, the EU Parliament and Federal Chancellor Olaf Scholz and advocated permanent DST with no reference at all to energy-policies evidence. By October 25, 2022, it had already collected more than 262,000 signatures.

Regrettably, due to the complexity of the issue, the apparent "invisibility" of the negative effects of the clock change and,



**American Academy of Sleep Medicine:  
Thread auf Twitter 18. 10. 2022**

Ahead of the fall time change, AASM is advocating for the adoption of permanent standard time. Why? #StandardTime is better for our overall health and safety.

Standard time matches our body's internal clock. #DaylightSavingTime disrupts our internal clock, leading to sleep loss and poor sleep quality, leading to negative health consequences.

Standard time ensures more light and promotes safety in the morning. Dark mornings caused by permanent daylight saving time pose safety concerns.

Permanent daylight saving time would disproportionately affect the northern part of the U.S. Some parts of Montana, North Dakota, and Michigan would not see sunrise until after 9:30 a.m. during the winter.

The U.S. has tried permanent daylight saving time before, and the results were disastrous. The U.S. attempted to adopt permanent DST in 1973, but it was so unpopular that Congress reverted the nation to standard time after only 8 months.

Seasonal time changes are dangerous overall. Misalignment caused by seasonal time changes has been linked to an increased risk of stroke and hospital admissions and increased production of inflammatory markers, one of the body's responses to stress.

<https://twitter.com/AASMorg/status/1582390709315080194>,  
Zugriff 26. 10. 2022

most importantly, the non-negligible number of citizens and institutional actors who argue for permanent DST (with its particularly harmful effects), and in spite of the empirical evidence for the need to return to permanent standard time (and adjust European time zones), success is not to be expected any time soon. And since there are no major political laurels to be won with it, either, all attempts to launch the topic in various countries when it was their turn to assume the EU Council Presidency have to date also failed.

But with the increasing bulk of – in particular chronobiological – evidence for the harmfulness of DST, and especially permanent DST, the number of campaigns that push for a permanent return to standard time also increases. To avoid stagnation, we need to find partners and potential "allies" who can be supposed to have a genuine interest to ward off the health risks generated by the clock change, and even more so the massive aggravation to be expected from permanent DST. Therefore, we at the DGfZP, together with Better Times, have written to the Federal Ministry of Health as well as a number of major health insurance companies in an effort to draw their attention to the adverse health effects of the clock change and to remind them of their health prevention mandate while signaling our readiness to cooperate. This move was based on an in-depth examination of the

web sites and relevant publications addressing clock change hazards, sleep disorders, etc. Remarkably, in the Ministry of Health as well as most of the health insurance companies, the clock change was at best seen as a minor problem, if at all. If the institutions thus addressed responded at all, they were, with one exception, noncommittal or defensive. Only the DAK<sup>1</sup> that has made sleep deprivation in the society one of its long-term concerns and conducts an annual population survey on the clock change and included questions from the DGfZP in that survey; so, there is reason to hope that health insurances can, after all, be won over to the cause.

The return to permanent standard time (and the adjustment of time zone assignments for certain countries) will presumably take a while yet. But the number of those in favor of the clock change – and, frequently, also of permanent DST – is declining while the empirical findings on its harmfulness are growing both in number and urgency. Therefore, there is hope that the dissemination of information, the networking activities of the proponents of permanent standard time and the potential recruitment of actors with a prevention mandate in the health sector will eventually result in giving the much-needed impetus to the movement.

1 Deutsche Angestellten Krankenkasse – German Health Insurance for Employees

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## Times for those in need of care

JÜRGEN P. RINDERSPACHER

As life expectancy in Germany increases, nursing care becomes an ever more important issue. For years, the number of people in need of care, that is, people who are permanently dependent on assistance due to health impairments or impairments of their physical or mental abilities, has been increasing. About one third of those in need of care are very old, and they are predominantly female. The great majority want to stay at home as long as possible. In Germany, around four out of five people in need of care are in home care. In most cases, care is provided by caregiving relatives, that is, partners or adult children, but also parents whose children are dependent on care. About two million of them are the only caregivers, about one million rely on the assistance of care services. Half of them are working rela-

tives. More than 80% of private caregivers are women, and women also account for three quarters of the professional nurses. Private caregivers often rely on the support of outpatient care services. Residents in nursing homes account for around one fifth of those in need of care in Germany.

As the number of people in need of care grows, so does the need for nursing care services, nursing homes and nursing care places, depending on whether care is provided on an outpatient or inpatient basis. As a consequence, more nursing staff and nursing care specialists such as geriatric nurses are needed. The total number of hours needed for care work in a society is on the rise. This is not only due to the growing number of people in need of care as life expectancy increases. An aging population also means a growing risk

of dementia which requires much more extensive nursing care and, as a consequence, much greater temporal expenditure. The long-term, and to date still largely unanswered, question arising from this development is how a society can sustainably organize the time that is needed for care work in an aging society. Paid nursing care for all those in need of it would be unaffordable as well as undesirable, while care on a voluntary basis or care by relatives has its limits. And these limits tend to become even narrower, as will be shown in the following.

This situation is the result of a decades-long development: the commodification of care work over the past decades and, as a consequence, the tendency and necessity to remunerate care work by the hour. Especially in church institutions for the care of the elderly, the care given to old people by, for instance, nuns could be seen as a “labor of love” oriented to the needs of the individual rather than ruled by the clock. The professionalization and rationalization of the health sector since the late 1990s in conjunction with the implementation of the system of Diagnosis Related Groups (DRG) has, in contrast, resulted in a dictate of the clock for both inpatient and home care. Since then, the care thus dispensed has been dubbed “Minutenpflege” – “care by the minute”. The background was, and still is, an effort to fence in contributions to the mandatory nursing care insurance set up in 1995, not least in order to contain the secular increase in non-wage labor costs for employees.

Although this intention is comprehensible, it soon turned out that the commodification tools thus implemented largely missed the mark. Those in need of care as well as professional caregivers and caregiving relatives alike complain about a considerable decline in care quality. Thus, pre-defined “tasks” – that is, care activities such as dressing, washing, teeth brushing, and the like – are assigned norm times in the Taylorist fashion, which professional caregivers have to comply with if they want to get through with their daily quota of nursing cases. This application of an industrial production logic to human needs is in itself highly problematic.

When applied to the elderly and, more specifically, to demented old people, it becomes inhumane. Since with old age mental states and sensitivities become increasingly incalculable, caregiving temporalities can considerably vary in the course of the day, the week, the year. When the rigid norm times of the nursing care services are confronted with the volatile temporary needs of those in need of care and, considering the overall nursing care setting, the time budgets

of caregiving relatives, volunteers, helping neighbors and friends, who often also have a part in this, the result is a highly complex conglomerate of temporal structures: natural rhythms and biologically controlled temporal requirements, individual time-related psychological needs, private time-related interests, economically founded temporal constraints as well as temporal constraints that result from the external schedules of organizations, administrations, timetables, or traffic conditions (traffic jams, delays).

So, launching a soundly funded research project to empirically explore these conditions which, at the time, could only be inferred but not substantiated by research data seemed the obvious conclusion from our first regular Annual Conference “Zeiten der Sorge – Zeiten der Pflege. Hilfebedürftige im Rationalisierungsprozess” (“Times of trouble – times of nursing care. People in need of care in the rationalization process”), which was held in 2003 at the Johannesstift in Berlin. What we had in mind was a study exploring the microcosm of a home care setting from a temporal perspective. How do all those involved in a care setting cooperate, what are the restrictions, who – given the existing structures – bears the brunt, and how can changes in the temporalities of the care situation help to improve conditions for all those involved?

From the very beginning, that is, the founding conference of our Deutsche Gesellschaft für Zeitpolitik (DGfZP) in 2002 at the Evangelische Akademie zu Berlin<sup>1</sup> on Schwanenwerder, we had discussed the option of setting up external third-party funded projects, with a DGfZP member as a project manager and collaborator, to further pursue time-policy issues we deemed seminal. However, professionally employing project staff proved to be more complicated than we had initially expected. It turned out that for various reasons, the DGfZP as such was not eligible to receive third-party funding, so we had to find cooperation partners. Also, the planned projects had to fit in with the topical focuses and various other general conditions of the funding bodies. Time policies, let alone a subtopic such as time issues in the care sector, still were an unlikely hit in this respect. In subsequent years, however, the fact that several members of the board were engaged in social-science research and teaching at universities and research institutes proved to be a plus factor since it enabled us to establish cooperations with these institutes on a personal basis. Furthermore, we could draw on work contract funds to recruit private research and consulting institutes for specific projects. Thus,

1 Protestant Academy in Berlin



ideas and research approaches that had essentially been inspired by the DGfZP could be explored – at least in the two projects described below – in third-party funded projects with relevant publications. Here, a big thank you is due to the Hans-Böckler-Stiftung whose strong interest and commitment have repeatedly made it possible for us to realize these and other projects.

The project “Times of Care” (J. P. Rinderspacher – project manager, Irmgard Hermann-Stojanov, Svenja Pfahl, Stefan Reuys, all of them DGfZP members at the time) is an empirical qualitative study of individual time management and social time structures in home care settings. The project was conducted at the Sozialwissenschaftliches Institut der EKD (SI)<sup>2</sup> Bochum/Hannover in close cooperation with SowiTra<sup>3</sup>, a Berlin-based institute for social-science research and consulting.

The follow-up project “Reconciling Care and Work” ties in with the findings of the first study. It was conducted in cooperation with the Institut für Ethik und angrenzende Sozialwissenschaften<sup>4</sup> of the University of Münster and the SowiTra Berlin and was also fully funded by the Hans-Böckler-Stiftung (J. P. Rinderspacher – project manager, Svenja Pfahl, Stefan Reuys, Karin Menke, all of them – except Karin Menke - DGfZP members at the time).

Many employees confronted with the need to assume care tasks inevitably have to cut back on their working hours or stop working altogether. In the future, the willingness to assume home care tasks will depend to a large extent on whether or not the overall conditions for reconciling gainful employment and care work can be upgraded. Calling for flexible working hours without further specifications, however, is too abstract an approach. Therefore, we focused on the question of what a concept “pflegesensible Arbeitszeiten” – “care needs-oriented working times” – should stand for. At that time, we were the first to address the problems arising from the interrelationship between the type and scope of private caregiving and the working times of the caregiving individual. We also proposed a model of how the working times of nursing relatives should be concretely configured and handled in both normal everyday care settings and care settings with special requirements. Also, the concept took into account the working-environment as well

as political conditions of the possibility of “care needs-oriented working times”.

The concept integrates a complex set of various working time regulations and adequate measures in the workplace environment. It defines three fields of action at company level: working times in the narrower sense, the in-company work organization, and the company culture. For each of these fields of action, various measures are specified for companies to implement, with the objective of inducing structural change. Importantly, there is no one-size-fits-all solution for all employees with caregiving issues. Rather, the various structuring measures should be seen as elements of a tool kit, to be assembled by the actors in charge in view of the nature of the company and the caregiving situation of the respective employee.

One of these measures are disposable times at the workplace – that is, the possibility for employees to leave the workplace on short notice for a few hours or a few days in case of short-term additional care requirements. Until now, employees have often misused the option of calling in sick for these short-term leaves. Care needs-oriented working times could take the pressure from employees to use illegal means to reconcile work and care and, at the same time, enable companies to switch to policies of controlled leave. Another measure could be “Pflegegerechte Vollzeit” – “care-adjusted full-time work”: since the workload of full-time, let alone full-time-plus-overtime work is often far too high for most caregivers, temporal relief is needed not only in the form of part-time work. Care-adjusted full-time work would be a specific form of reducing working hours that is not tantamount to the usual part-time work arrangements since it is (in part) financially compensated for. It is a full-time job in line with the capacity of the employee who does the care work but with somewhat reduced working times for the duration of the care.

One way to realize this could be a reduction of working times by up to ten hours per week, regulated and quantified by collective agreements, for employees doing care work. Another way could be a time bonus system, for instance in the form of a credit to the work time account of nursing employees. Withdrawals from this credit could be adjusted by employees to meet their individual care-time needs. From a socio-political perspective, this (collective) change in the standard working times of nursing employees is justified on account of their willingness to contribute to the solution of one of the most urgent social problems by taking on the care work for a close relative in need of care.

2 Social Science Institute (SI) of the Evangelische Kirche in Deutschland (EKG)

3 SowiTra – Institut für sozialwissenschaftlichen Transfer (Institute for Social-Science Transfer)

4 Institute for Ethics and Associated Social Sciences

The project has organized a number of conferences on the issue in cooperation with, e.g., the Evangelische Akademie zu Berlin. It has further corresponded with the Federal Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs on the amendment of the Nursing Care Act that was in force at the time.

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## Children's times: how time is set for children and how children live in time

HELGA ZEIHNER

*"The education system is currently under renovation. But the fact that education policies for the most part also make time policies – if implicitly and without reference to time policies goals – has not been noticed so far, and the temporal aspects of education policies have not been critically reviewed – except for the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Zeitpolitik (DGfZP). The latter has now set out to draw public attention to the temporal components of the education system and the current education-policies interventions. And we will begin right now, in the thematic section of the present issue."*

In July 2005, the DGfZP had stated this intention in the editorial of its *Zeitpolitisches Magazin (ZpM)* 5, "Bildungspolitik als Zeitpolitik" ("Education policies as time policies"), which was followed, in 2006, by an Annual Conference on this very topic and, in 2008, by the book "Schulzeiten, Lernzeiten, Lebenszeiten. Pädagogische Konsequenzen und zeitpolitische Perspektiven schulischer Zeitordnungen" ("School times, learning times, lifetimes. Pedagogical consequences and time-policies perspectives of school time regimes"). Critical educationalists and education sociologists had long been calling for structural reforms to be carried out in schools, but it was not before the turn of the millennium that relevant education policies were implemented. In the economy, the ineffectiveness of heteronomy, rigid time standards and long-term planning had already become obvious at that time.

From that time on, education was expected to train young people for flexible and responsible thinking and self-learning. Since then, students at all school levels have been learning to work out and present facts and data on their own. Several Federal States have primary schools with mixed-age first grades that children can complete quickly or slowly, in their own good time. Daily school start times, however, remained unchanged although chronobiological studies

suggest that they should be adjusted to the later onset of sleep in puberty. Research findings on the interrelation between adolescents' sleep-wake cycle and learning outcomes were presented in *ZpM* 30, July 2017, "Zeit zu schlafen" ("Time to sleep"), and *ZpM* 5, July 2005, "Bildungspolitik als Zeitpolitik" ("Education policies as time policies"). As for early childhood, its temporal regulation is ensured by an age-graded sequence of mandatory medical examinations, that is, by social and health policies rather than education policies. This type of time policies was discussed in *ZpM* 19, Dec. 2011, "Normalisierung der frühen Kindheit" ("Standardization of early childhood").

In the school system, the view prevails that whoever wants to become successful in life must have internalized the necessity of achievement striving. Children experience the importance of acquiring the skills they will later need in the world of work at a very early age by witnessing their parents' worrying that they may not live up to the increasing level of qualification that is expected of them in later life – and they make the pressure to perform their own. But learning under pressure of time while lacking peace of mind and patience reduces not only a person's quality of life but also the quality of learning. *ZpM* 27, Dec. 2015, "Geduld" ("Patience"), was dedicated to this topic.

Pedagogy and education policies are about guiding and supporting children's and adolescents' development in order to form socially acceptable adults. In this traditional concept of childhood, children are primarily seen as the objects of a hierarchical relationship between the finished and the unfinished, the knowing and the unknowing, between being and becoming; children's and adolescents' life in the present is subjected to a future devised by grown-ups. In the last third of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, however, a different concept of childhood started to gain hold in pedagogical and sociological theory as well as with authority-averse teachers and parents: within a protective and preparative space, children were no longer only seen as unfinished adults but recognized as subjects in their own right living in the now (see Zeiher 2005).

In personal interactions, this means respecting their autonomy and self-will and accepting them as negotiating partners rather than recipients of orders even though children's prolonged need for care and protection, which is anthropologically founded, sets limits to their autonomy. On children's way to adolescence, these limits are progressively expanded. In the transition from child to adolescent and from adolescent to adult, tensions between becoming and being, dependence and autonomy become virulent in internal insecurity and external breakaway struggles. How adolescents experience and deal with these tensions under current social conditions was discussed at the 2018 DGfZP Annual Conference; a report can be found in ZpM 34, July 2019, "Jugendzeit – Fremdbestimmt selbständig" ("Adolescence – autonomy in other-directed conditions").

Children pass much of their time being cared for by adults, day by day. Young children must be permanently cared for and looked after, older children for certain periods of time. Families share care times with child care facilities and educational institutions, mothers and fathers share the remaining care time, often with the help of grandparents. Regulating both levels of care time-sharing for the benefit of all, the child, the mother and the father, is as difficult today as it was twenty years ago. So, it is this most precarious point of the complex interactions between private and institutional care times, i.e., intra-family care time-sharing, that has become the focus of a major future-oriented DGfZP project "Atmende Lebensläufe" ("Breathing Life Courses"; see Jurczyk/Mückenberger in the present ZpM issue). In this debate, as in all debates on gender equity in the intra-family distribution of care times and working times, children are seen as a cause of parental time issues rather than as

those affected by the respective temporal arrangements. In the DGfZP, we have addressed the emergency situations that occur when the habitual coordination between parental working times and the time schedules of a child's childcare facility breaks down because the child is sick or the parents are unable to fill in. In 2009, situations like these occurred in about one third of all families, highlighting the relevance of grandparental help which, thus, became the focus of ZpM 24, July 2014, "Großelternzeit" ("Grandparents' Time"). But what about the children of parents with no such help to rely on in emergency situations, and what about children whose parents have working times outside of institutional care times? ZpM 23, Dec. 2013, "Kinderbetreuung rund um die Uhr" ("Around-the-clock childcare") discussed the rather disparate institutional options as well as the controversies they gave rise to: on the one hand, institutional night care that was set up on a commercial basis and funded by interested employers, in particular clinics, for their staff but met with little acceptance by parents; on the other, one-on-one home care offered by the Youth Welfare Office, with more parents needing and wanting it than money to fund it. The ZpM's time-policies conclusion: what is needed, in the interest of parents and children alike, is more funding for one-on-one home care in "unusual times", organized by the Youth Welfare Offices or other state institutions. At the time, this was also the context for a study on the effects of night care for children, conducted by several DGfZP members in cooperation with SowiTra<sup>1</sup>, a Berlin-based institute for social-science research and consulting, and the Institut für Ethik und angrenzende Sozialwissenschaften<sup>2</sup> of the University of Münster.

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1 SowiTra – Institut für sozialwissenschaftlichen Transfer (Institute for Social-Science Transfer)

2 Institute for Ethics and Associated Social Sciences

# Just saving the world?

## Sustainability as a time-policies mission

FRITZ REHEIS

“World-saving” books – such as, most notably, Frank Schätzing’s “Was, wenn wir einfach die Welt retten?” (“What if we just save the world?”) – make up quite a list by now. A strange presumption, come to think of it, which some simple questions should suffice to expose: What is supposed to be saved? Who is “we”? And, last but not least, the not at all simple question of the prerequisites and levers needed for this rescue project to succeed.

### Correcting consumer behavior as the key to world-saving?

In most of these books, the focus is on consumption. Consumption indeed characterizes a lifestyle that is the standard for many people in the Global North, and a dream for still more people in the Global South, and is rightfully branded as a manifestation of the “imperial way of life” (Brand/Wissen 2017). But correcting consumer behavior and using it as a lever for correcting this way of life is a highly complex mission, as a few obvious questions will make immediately evident: Can consumers, male and female alike, really be sure that the chocolate they buy is not stained with the blood and sweat of child labor? Do consumers really want to afford the new Fairphone, given all these low-cost alternatives? Is it really an option for consumers to give up their own car when bus service to town is only twice a day? Do consumers really have the stamina to resist the ingenious ad campaign for the new autumn fashion? And can consumers really count on the fact that the seats on the plane to Mallorca that they forgo will not immediately be taken by other passengers?

From a systematic point of view, at least five preconditions must be met for ecologically as well as socially demanding consumer behavior to be possible at all: First, complete information, as far as possible, on the ecological and social conditions of the production, transport, marketing, trade, use, and disposal of products (services always included). Second, a reasonable relation of consumers’ purchasing power to the price of products that comply with high ecological and social standards. Third, the very existence of ecologically as well as socially fairly acceptable alternative products. Fourth, sovereign consumers whose decision-making is governed by their inner values only, that is,

who are not affected by external influences, including advertising messages. And, fifth, a precondition that relates to the specific pitfalls of markets: it must be ensured that individual consumer reluctance really works to relieve the collective consumers’ pressure which this “imperial way of life” keeps exerting on “the world”. As it is, cutting consumption often enough only results in a shift in pressure: as demand falls, prices fall, with the result of all the more effectively attracting other consumers.

In short: consumers are in most cases hopelessly overstretched when they try to consistently align their consumer behavior with ethical and moral principles. So, approaches relying on the consumer to save the world will frequently find themselves criticized for being cynical and only contributing to the blunting of moral and ethical motivations. Moreover, they unquestioningly subscribe to the prevailing economic doctrine of consumer sovereignty (technically speaking: the exogenic nature of preferences), thus bolstering the key legitimizing basis of the prevailing economic order.

### We can’t do without public policies

The more consumers are overstretched in their efforts to live up to a morally and ethically demanding consumer behavior, the more they depend on public policies to support them in their search for ways of dealing wisely with the world and with themselves. With regard to the above-listed five preconditions for morally and ethically demanding consumption, policymakers dispose of at least five analogue tools to facilitate ecologically and socially desirable consumer behavior.

Public policies can, first, require retailers and producers to inform consumers as fully as possible on the ecological and social footprint of their products. Public policies can, second, use taxes and subsidies (which can be applied to prices as well as incomes) to control the markets and, thus, reduce the gap between purchasing power and consumption opportunities. Public policies can, third, provide a public and, as the case may be, free infrastructure to bridge the gaps that the markets create due to their inherent structural blindness. Public policies can, fourth, ensure, by creating all the necessary preconditions, that responsible and inde-



pendent thinking and acting – the guiding principle and primary goal of personality development in humans – is really brought to bear wherever education, and socialization take place (families, schools, companies, the public media). And only public policies can, fifth, ward off – through binding rules (regulations and prohibitions) which, then, really apply to everybody – the undesirable pressure shifts mentioned above.

In a democratic polity based on the rule of law, however, all of this rests on a wide variety of preconditions. While in the early days of the constitutional state and of democracy, the focus was on protecting citizens against state violence, today's constitutional-democratic governance seeks to enable citizens' self-empowerment. What is at stake is nothing less than the goal of superseding the (unequal) right of the strongest by the (equal) right of the citizens and, in the process, making the citizen him- or herself the ruler. Or, to quote the political scientist and philosopher Rainer Forst: democracy "is a normative order where those who are subject to laws are at the same time the authorities that rule on these laws in the mode of public justification", directly by discourse and vote or indirectly by electing representatives (Forst 2020). Democratic policies thus basically consist in the self-empowerment of citizens to engage in collective action.

### Sustainability as repeatability, and the mission of time policies

As a guiding principle of world-saving, the concept of sustainability has widely taken hold. It relates to the temporal dimension of the world. If you take a consistently temporal approach to sustainability, you will first of all come across the popular paradigm of forestry: you must not cut down more trees than you replant, otherwise the forest will sooner or later disappear. The same applies to the use of soils, plants, and animals in agriculture. The essence of sustainability is repeatability or, in temporal terms: cyclicity. In advanced modernity, our all-too-strong fixation on innovation seems to make us forget that we can never renew everything at once, that innovation always presupposes a solid foundation in the return of what is tried and true. Sustainability is in essence the "return of the similar" (Ludwig Klages).

Sustainable forestry and agriculture are only prime examples of a time-sensitive use of natural resources. In advanced industrial societies, using these resources wisely means that our entire throwaway and flow-through economy must be through-and-through transformed into a recycling economy. In short: ecological sustainability is based

on regenerativity as the guiding principle of our dealings with the natural environment.

But one must also be able to afford ecological sustainability. This applies to the insulation of buildings in the Global North just as it does to the nutrition of people in the Global South. In a world with an extremely advanced division of labor, it is the interpersonal relationships that determine what people can – and can't – afford. And here, too, what matters is lasting repeatability. Interaction with other people within and between societies is repeatable only if social structures are fundamentally based on mutual respect and fairness (materially in cooperation, mentally in communication). Only then human beings will, of their own free will, maintain social relationships that have proved their worth, develop creative potentials without fear and take responsibility for their fellow human beings. Wherever mutual respect and fairness are lacking, that is, wherever social relationships are permanently asymmetrical and exploitative, the forces of social cohesion will become depleted as quickly as the forces of nature do when they fall victim to human overexploitation that rides roughshod over their inherent cycles of stress and recovery. In short: sustainability not only presupposes regenerativity with regard to the natural environment, it is also based on reciprocity with regard to the social world we share. Insisting that the concrete forms this reciprocity takes in remote places may be quite different from those we find at close range is trivial – but not a fundamental objection.

However, the principles of regenerativity and reciprocity still fall short of fully capturing the guiding principle of sustainability, understood as repeatability. Sustainability is something that you must really want. This is where sustainability involves us as a person. If you shrug off the deluge after you just as you do the deluge next to you, you may well be paying lip-service to sustainability. But your heart is not in it. Sayings such as "What do I care about my chitchat from yesterday?" or "No idea what I'll want tomorrow, let's see what the others do!" are not a good basis for personal reliability. If, on the other hand, you have got things straightened out with yourself, you will repeat proven behaviors in comparable situations. Here again, time and cyclicity play a major role. The more people are aware of their identity over time, the better they can experience their self-efficacy as something permanent, and the more they will understand their intervention in the world. And the more they succeed in this, the freer they will be in forming their will. This self-relation is a precondition for assuming responsibility

for ourselves as persons. At the same time, it keeps us from getting caught, time and again, in the all-too-familiar psychologization and moralization trap. In short: along with ecological regenerativity and social reciprocity, sustainability requires personal reflexivity.

Just as sustainability is essentially a question of the wise use of time in relation to the environment, the inner and the outer world, public policies that commit to it are essentially time policies. Time policies empower people to behave in a sustainability-oriented way by focusing on the preconditions of the return of the similar: appreciating the natural foundations of life, considering the limits of a solidarity-based interaction with our fellow human beings, and being mindful of oneself. All these are necessary but not necessarily sufficient preconditions. They open up possibilities but offer no guarantees. Or, if you like: whether a wise use of time that focuses on repeatability will bring about whatever people hope for remains ultimately uncertain – it is a question of “resonance” (Rosa 2018, Reheis 2019 and 2022).

The time-policies insights and concepts worked out by the DGfZP in the course of the past twenty years also closely relate to the guiding principle of sustainability. The “right to time”, understood as a fundamental right to times that are free of imposed tasks (cf. *Zeitpolitisches Magazin – ZpM – 14*) provides a space for people to pause and reflect. This can have major consequences for their behavior with regard to education, work, nutrition, and leisure. The “option time model” and “option time budget”, understood and implemented in law as limited time-off from work or reduced working hours aligned with the changing requirements in various phases of life (cf. *ZpM 28*), enables people to temporarily devote more time to reproductive tasks (nursing, care, voluntary work, professional reorientation, personal development). This could strengthen the principle of reciprocity in society. “The Big Consultation” and other citizens’ assemblies, understood as civil-society institutions that draft recommendations for parliaments, provide an opportunity for bridging the gap between society and politics (“us down here” and “those up there”) and, thus, strengthen the democratic principle (cf. *ZpM 22*, and Ulrich Mückenberger’s “Nach-Gedanken zu >Demokratie braucht Zeit<” (“Afterthoughts on >Democracy needs time<”) in *ZpM 23*).

It can be presumed that enlarging citizens’ involvement in political decisions will also enlarge the time horizons of

democratic decision-making. Citizens’ assemblies not only confront both the authors and the addressees of recommendations with the obvious contradiction between the time horizons of private life planning, which tend to be relatively long (starting a family, procreation, housebuilding, saving and bequeathing), and the time horizons of politics, which are relatively short (electoral cycles, lobbying, economic competition). This confrontation could lead to more (relative) emphasis being placed on the future as compared to the present and, thus, raise the collective awareness of the need to ensure the regeneration of the natural foundations of life.

Finally, the ways in which the political shaping of time can contribute to the urgent socio-ecological transformation was also demonstrated at the DGfZP Annual Conference in the fall of 2021, “Time and Sustainability” (cf. *ZpM 40*). Using examples from diverse areas of everyday life, it could for instance be shown how time-saving technologies and behaviors may have the paradoxical result of exacerbating time constraints (the time-rebound effect) which, in turn, adversely affect people’s personal well-being and, not infrequently, even the degree of ecological sustainability. Sometimes, deceleration may actually mean gaining time.

## Conclusion

The wide-spread idea that sustainability is primarily a consumer responsibility is an illusion. The responsibility is with public policies. If – in accordance with the implicit temporality of the concept – we understand sustainability as repeatability, a major share of these public policies must be understood as time policies. As such, it seeks to protect people against all attempts at forcibly interfering with their time needs and to safeguard their right to their own times and cycles. To this effect, it empowers citizens to handle time wisely, and motivates them to really put their mind to it.

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# Popularizing the DGfZP

HELGA ZEIHNER

The Deutsche Gesellschaft für Zeitpolitik (German Society for Time Policy) – DGfZP – was founded to enhance public and political awareness of the relevance of time policies. So, there are two addressees: the *political authorities*, whom the DGfZP seeks to advise of the temporal implications of their actions as well as of the time-policies options to revise and adjust them to the time needs of those concerned; and the *citizens*, with the DGfZP aiming to enhance their knowledge about how their own well-being depends on temporal conditions which society creates and time policies can change. Encouraging reflection on everyday experiences of time is civic education with a reach into civic society. On these grounds, the DGfZP is recognized as a non-profit organization.

As a small association with modest resources, the DGfZP needed from the start to focus on a few formats with high standards of content that could be expected to have the broadest possible impact without relying on large-scale advertising. In the following, these formats will be briefly explained:

## Annual Conferences

DGfZP *Annual Conferences* are usually held at the end of October, i.e., the end of daylight saving time. Suggestions for conference topics are made in the course of the general assembly that follows each Annual Conference. These suggestions are, then, discussed by the members of the full board (executive and advisory) at their two-day spring meeting, who also decide on the topic of the next Annual Conference. Decision criteria are the relevance and topicality of the content, on the one hand, and the willingness of a board member to substantively prepare the topic and the program, on the other. In terms of content, the Annual Conferences therefore also depend on the respective member's specific interests, experiences, expertise, and contacts. The Conferences are frequently organized in cooperation with various partners (universities, academies, foundations) to achieve synergies in competence and scope. For the range of topics, see <https://zeitpolitik.org/veranstaltungen#tagung>.

## Zeitpolitisches Magazin – ZpM

The Zeitpolitisches Magazin – ZpM – is published twice a year (July, December) as a free download. Members and registered interested parties receive it by e-mail. In the sum-

mer issue, the extensive thematic section features the previous year's Conference contributions. The topic of the winter issue is chosen by the editorial staff in consultation with the board and reflects current social developments and debates. The ZpM, too, relies on the readiness of a member to take on the substantive and editorial preparation of the respective issue, which again means that it will largely depend on this member's interests, expertise, and contacts. The cover of the present issue should give a rough impression of the broad spectrum of topics addressed over time. Each issue also features reports on the present state of DGfZP initiatives and impulses, references to events and projects as well as recent publications and reviews. Furthermore, readers will usually find two self-presentations by DGfZP members (<https://zeitpolitik.org/zeitpolitikmagazin>).

## Web presence

The website provides the broadest access to the DGfZP. A Google search for "Deutsche Gesellschaft für Zeitpolitik" yields about 30,000 hits for the Society as well as for specific activities, cooperations, etc. The website is the DGfZP's key communication platform, offering information on its current time-policy activities, giving early notice of the next Annual Conference and serving as the publishing outlet for DGfZP dossiers, manifests, and other time-policy texts. On the site, the entire range of ZpM issues as well as reports on all previous Annual Conferences are permanently available for download. And it is only here that the seminal early DGfZP anthologies are still available for reading. In addition, there is a permanently updated list of members' (book) publications and other relevant publications as well as information on upcoming events and conferences. All this makes the DGfZP a treasure trove for all those concerned with time policies, while at the same time serving as a kind of DGfZP archive. Of course, this is also where you will find the basic data on the Society: the statute, the mission statement, a membership application form, etc. Between September and November 2022 (that is, in the course of 12 weeks), the DGfZP website was visited 11.350 times on Google, and there were 419 downloads of documents.

## Campaigns

DGfZP manifests and campaigns, organized single-handedly or in cooperation with partner institutions, have time

and again played an important role, with a significant rise in recent times. Examples are the manifest “Zeit ist Leben” (“Time is Life”, 2005), and the “Memorandum: Das Recht auf Zeit gehört auf die europäische Tagesordnung” (“Memorandum: The Right to Time, an urgent topic on the European Agenda”, 2020), which was drawn up in cooperation with European partners, published in five languages, distributed in the participating countries and submitted to the EU Commission. Other notable DGfZP activities are its intensive cooperation in the drafting of the “Barcelona Declaration on Time Policies” (2021) and its efforts to establish a “Europäische Akademie für Zeitpolitik” (“European Academy for Time Policies”; see Henckel/Mückenberger and Mückenberger in the present issue). And, last but not least, there is the dossier “Die Zukunft der Sommerzeit” (“The Future of Daylight Saving Time”, 2021) and, building on it, various cooperations with institutions that also push for abolishing daylight saving time (Barcelona Time Use Initiative BTUI; International Alliance for Natural Time IANT; cf. Henckel/Gernig in the present issue).

### Other Formats

As public awareness of the DGfZP has grown, so has the number of requests for its members to comment on time-policies issues at hearings, conferences etc., participate in the organization of events, comment on current issues in the media. These requests are either addressed to the DGfZP office or directly to individual members known for their specific expertise.

In addition, many members contribute to the dissemination of time-policy concerns and, thus, to the public awareness of the DGfZP by their own publications (books, papers in journals, statements in the public media), either directly on behalf of the DGfZP or indirectly since as DGfZP members they are seen as its representatives.

Several members have their own blogs on time-related and time-policy concerns or provide contributions to the blogs of others. These activities have over time resulted in thematic networks – e.g., on time welfare – where the virtual exchange has sometimes led on to real-world cooperations such as, for instance, organizing conferences, being called on to provide expert opinions to political institutions, or collaborating on publications.

Local *lecture series* have been another frequent activity:

- Between 2011 and 2013, the “Bremer Gespräche zur Zeitkultur” (“Bremen Talks on Time Culture”) were a quarterly event held at various venues, to which all Bremen

citizens were invited (see event archive at <https://zeitkultur.wordpress.com>). The format featured an introduction into the respective topic given by a time expert, comments provided by Bremen public figures, and a discussion by and with the audience.

- Between 2003 and 2015, the “Berliner Zeitpolitische Gespräche” (“Berlin Time-Policies Rounds”) were organized at regular intervals at the Technische Universität Berlin, with DGfZP members and external referents debating on current time-policy topics.
- Between 02.03.2018 and 18.10.2018, a lecture series “Rätsel Zeit” (“The Enigma of Time”) was held on the occasion of the 130th anniversary of the Urania Berlin<sup>1</sup>. Here, the DGfZP had been invited to cooperate in the organization of the series. The wide scope of the title was matched by the diversity of presentations given by experts – often DGfZP members – in the fields of theoretical physics, astronomy, urban ecology, history, sociology, philosophy, and psychology.
- By now, online formats have become the standard in many areas. Therefore, the DGfZP considers establishing a discussion format consisting of sporadic time-policies workshops, to be used in particular, but not exclusively, by its members.

With the aim of enlarging public awareness of time-policies thinking and enabling a lively virtual exchange, the DGfZP is also active on Twitter and Facebook, using them as platforms for up-to-date time-policy information and information on conferences and the ZpM.

### Conclusion

Overall, with modest means, the DGfZP has achieved a level of public recognition and awareness that allows us to say that we can look back on twenty years of success. Information on time policies and DGfZP activities has found its way, both through the media institutionalized by the DGfZP and through individual members, to parts of the public and to relevant political actors, convincing them of the necessity and topical quality of DGfZP work. This also comes to be expressed in the messages and congratulations addressed to the DGfZP on the occasion of its 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary by individuals engaged in time policies in science and practice as well as by many of those who have over the years followed the work of the DGfZP.

<sup>1</sup> The Urania is a science Center and scientific society in Berlin; see [https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Urania\\_\(Berlin\)](https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Urania_(Berlin)) or [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Urania\\_\(Berlin\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Urania_(Berlin))



## Messages and congratulations\*

### Time policies and spatial development – an inter- and transdisciplinary ARL topic

Time policies are a cross-sectional – and frequently implicit – topic in many fields of action relevant to spatial development, and a determinant of the way space use is organized at various spatial levels. This concerns the space allotted to living and working as well as the use of space for leisure and recreation and their embedding in the settlement structure. Online services, being independent of time and location, have changed space and time use as well as mobility patterns in almost all areas of life, in particular supply, leisure, culture and education. This applies, first of all, to gainful employment with its various facets (in particular the nature and scale of activities, places of work, scope of working times, self-determined/other-directed times) and, most specifically, to care work (in particular household/supply organization, child care, nursing care for relatives), all of which, moreover, needs to be approached from a gender-based perspective. A heterogeneous society with a multitude of mobility patterns requires integration- and coordination-oriented spatial planning not only for public transport. Regional public services in rural areas include the safeguarding and developing of social as well as technical infrastructures.

Energy production, its locations and its grids, attract more and more attention not only in the context of climate change. Here in particular, temporality is of major significance, for instance in view of the need to align the production times of regenerative energies (strongly dependent on wind, sun,

precipitation) with consumption peak times.

The quality of life depends, in all phases of life, on mobility offers and the resources they require in terms of time and costs. The use of supply of goods and services and of open-space options and the time it takes to reach them essentially depend on whether, due to an adequate small-scale neighborhood infra-structure, locations can be accessed by active mobility (i.e., by foot/bicycle) or are far away and can perhaps only be reached by car. In urban areas, temporally unlimited offers and multifunctional (multiple) uses frequently lead to conflicts over noise in existing urban structures, a challenge planning has to cope with.

Last but not least, given today's multiple crises – climate change as a trend, shock crises such as the pandemic, floods, war – critical infra-structures, in particular, and their reliable functioning must be technologically and socio-economically ensured also in terms of time, which highlights the need for time policies-based cooperation with spatial development regarding their locations, spatial connections, and protection.

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### Good time policies for families starts in the municipality

Taking on family tasks in partnership, such as raising children or nursing a relative, takes time. Therefore, we need to work towards a better coordination of working times, commuter times, daycare or school service hours, public transportation schedules and the opening hours of service providers for families such as pediatricians' offices or administrations. Better coordination will take stress out of everyday family life and may even open up opportunities for families to have time for themselves. Municipalities are an essential actor for successful time policies. After all, it is in the municipalities that most of the relevant temporal

schedules and regulations converge. It is here that it will be immediately brought home to you whether or not current time policies are family-oriented. Our family-policies goal is to support municipalities in identifying the time needs of families, determining the pace to be set, and by whom, and thus create the conditions for a better family life for mothers, fathers, and children. Ultimately, it is not only families that benefit from good time policies but employers and municipalities, as well.

*Katharina Binz*

*Minister for Family, Women, Culture and Integration  
of the state of Rhineland-Palatinate*

\* In alphabetical order by authors' last name

## Thinking forward means rethinking time policies

Our world today is marked by change in more than one respect: on the one hand, life expectancy has increased, and at the same time life keeps accelerating. Families are permanently under pressure, demands increase from all sides – in their working life, too, employees face increasing pressure to perform. As it is, the struggle for better working conditions and a better work-life balance is nothing new for us: the forty-hour week and the eight-hour day were not gifts from heaven but the hard-won results of industrial and political action. In the 1950s, trade unions coined the slogan “Samstags gehört Vati mir” (“On Saturdays, Daddy’s all mine”), pin-pointing a fundamental need felt by many people: family and togetherness. Today, this type of campaign no longer suffices – the five-day week may well be legally achieved, but meetings, telcos and video calls increasingly encroach on people’s everyday life. Time management is no longer a competence expected from managers but even from students who want to engage in a sports club or other voluntary after-school activities. Modern time-policies need to be reconsidered also from a gender-equity perspective: unpaid care work is still primarily a women’s burden, lead-

ing to either lower pension entitlements or to a form of double responsabilization that is barely manageable. That the tool of “time policies” is meanwhile no longer seen as a luxury good but as a civic right – as outlined in the Barcelona declaration – is a step in the right direction. We need a wide variety of forms of cooperation, a wide variety of forms of living together, a variety of answers to a variety of life plans.

A modern state supports individuals in the structuring of their lives, and structuring one’s life involves structuring time. I firmly believe that thinking forward means rethinking time policies. Time policies, rethought, will create ingenious and future-oriented concepts for more self-determination, more equity and more health – and in this spirit I would like to offer my congratulations to the DGfZP on the occasion of its 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary: stay attuned, keep up your involvement. Your contributions to the debate help us progress.

*Daniel Born*

*Member of the Landtag, Vice President of the Landtag  
of Baden-Württemberg*

## A statement on time policies

Time policies are, or at least should be, a key issue for urban studies. The history of urbanization is intricately linked to the rationalization of time regimes and the social conflicts arising from it. Just think of the – often radical – struggles over the eight-hour day in the late 19th century. Or of the debates on opening hours, or the current controversies over daylight saving time in the EU.

It is the task of time policies with a historical or present-day orientation to question the phenomenon of temporality and anchor it in society. Especially in the urban context, this gives rise to a number of significant fields of activity. Research tends to conceive of cities primarily in terms of space. But urban temporalities are multi-faceted and central to our understanding of urban settlements. As an environmental and urban historian, I am primarily interested in the socio-cultural processes and environmental aspects that throw into relief the interaction of rational and natural time regimes. Currently, my research focuses on how

seasonal changes manifest themselves in many places in urban life. Here, too, time policies are called for, as the debate about, for example, the abolition of daylight saving time has abundantly shown. Also, there are new challenges that future-oriented time policies need to face. I am thinking in particular of climate change and the protection of biodiversity. Here, a new understanding of time policies is called for which, seeking to promote the new political approaches that we so urgently need, highlights and critically comments on, for instance, the discrepancy between the relatively short time spans of political intervention, i.e., legislative periods, and the long-term thinking and planning required for issues such as climate change and biodiversity. In other words: time policies should increasingly focus on the times of climate and species, with the aim of enabling new ways of co-habiting in the planetary time structure.

*Prof. Dr. Dorothee Brantz  
Technical University Berlin*

## The heuristic dimension of DGfZP work

For a French researcher in the field of time policies an institution such as the DGfZP is particularly interesting both for the composition of its membership and the issues it has taken on. This think tank brings together academics from different disciplines, practitioners (physicians, business leaders, trade unionists, etc.), church representatives and representatives of political parties, etc. and is committed to the analysis of the various temporal aspects of our societies.

DGfZP members take a transversal approach to the various dimensions of time. Seeking to improve the quality of life, promote citizens' well-being and build a better society, each of time's components and dimensions is analyzed taking into account its interactions with other components and dimensions. The DGfZP was launched at the beginning of the third millennium, at a time when flexible working hours and the introduction of new information and communication technologies had triggered a fundamental transformation of our relationship to time as well as our ways of handling our various social times.

Through its activities, the DGfZP has helped to raise awareness of the need to address the issue of time in all its various social, economic, cultural, and ecological dimensions. It suffices to refer to the Conferences the DGfZP has organized over the past twenty years to see the amazing diversity of issues raised by a time-policies approach. At these Conferences, new concepts have been developed, starting out from

the fact that there are massive disparities in time use between those (mostly women) who find themselves in a time squeeze and those who benefit from a (relative) wealth of time, or between those who enjoy a certain temporal autonomy and those whose time is constrained. This approach has given rise to the key concept of the "right to one's own time" which the DGfZP has promoted, and continues to promote and disseminate, throughout Europe. The realization of this right rests on certain premises: it requires new regulations in terms of working hours, in particular in the Covid 19 post-pandemic context which has led to a strong increase in telecommuting as well as to changes in the relationship to work and to the company, as illustrated by the craze for the four-day week; it also requires reviewing the social organization of time, which is a basic concern of local time policies (Tempi della Città in Italy, local time policies in France, time use-policies in Barcelona). Efforts to win over other actors for this cause is manifest also in the relations the DGfZP has built with, for instance, Tempo Territorial in France, or the Barcelona time Use Initiative in Catalonia, or an academic association such as the International Association for Time Use Research (IATUR), whom they could convince of the relevance of implementing citizens' "right to one's own time" and engage in a collaboration to establish a European Academy for Time Policies.

*Jean-Yves Boulin,  
Université Paris-Dauphine*

## Time policies for a good life – a statement on the relevance of time policies

In an ever more breathless and accelerating society, we are increasingly striving to counteract the omnipresent time squeeze and enable the conscious experience of time. From this point of view, time policies today are policies of the good life. Time policies cannot create personal happiness and meaningful relationships, but they can provide the conditions for them: by making sure that there are free times where relationships can develop – with the family, with friends and colleagues, but also with work, the arts, religion, and the self.

Time policies imply the dimensions of equitable distribution and freedom. As time is a limited good, time policies are always also distribution policies. Through time-policies action, time must be distributed so that everything comes

into its own and every task has its own time. Family policies are primarily concerned with ensuring that there is enough time for the family and with gender-equity in the distribution of family work and gainful employment. But by striving to achieve an equitable distribution of time, time policies may also create new temporal straightjackets and strains that run counter to the subjective idea of a good life. Time policies must resist the temptation of deciding on the distribution of time for each and everyone. Otherwise, it just substitutes one standard biography for another and creates new inequities and discontent.

Modern time policies should therefore focus on freedom. It should tie in with individual wishes and offer options. It should allow freedom rather than prescribe and limit it.

Everybody should at any time be able to achieve the right balance between family and work, honorary post and commitment, time for him- or herself and time for others. The image of the “breathing life course” aptly captures what the transitions between these dimensions of life could ideally be like: free and flowing, faster or slower, more even or more focused. And every now and then taking a deep breath

and pausing ... and, most importantly: in coordination with the near and dear. In this sense, time policies are the basis of any family policies.

*Matthias Dantlgraber  
Federal Executive Director  
of the Family Federation of Catholics*

## 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Zeitpolitik – DGfZP

The DGfZP celebrates its 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year. On this occasion, I would like to extend the congratulations of the Association of Liveable Cities Cittaslow Germany to it, together with our best wishes for a future of many more enlightening insights into the handling and the relevance of time against the backdrop of political decisions.

*“There is more to life than increasing its speed.” (Mahatma Gandhi)*

The title of the 2022 Annual Conference, “Who are the real makers of our future?”, is more topical than ever because never before in the history of the Federal Republic of Germany, citizens’ disenchantment with politics has been as great as it is today, which is all the more alarming given the current backdrop of a highly dangerous and complex situation marked by issues such as climate change, the pandemic, war, energy shortages, and inflation. Public-policies action is increasingly defensive and time and again reduced to responding to events and crises after the fact. At present, we are lacking forward-looking decisions and visions for a society that should also renew itself and participate in the shaping of its living conditions.

And this is where the communities and cities come in, where citizens at the grassroots of society experience policies

and their effects, firsthand and directly, day by day. Here, guiding principles are most welcome, helping as they do to counteract the permanent time pressure from which even important political issues and decisions are not exempt. Cittaslow, which originated in Italy in 1989 and now has more than 300 member cities and communities in more than 30 countries, is such a guiding principle. Placing people at the center of its work, it aims to raise awareness and promote deceleration, among other things. A sensible use of resources and well-informed political decisions that take into account citizens’ needs and wishes can bring about more quality of life and more contentment and, thus, strengthen the resistance against populism and political agitation. What is at stake here is nothing less than the fundamental values of our democracy!

To this end, we need to allow for the time it takes, and think things through. Then future-oriented policies may indeed work out, and peace among all of us may emerge. In this sense, we should push for the transformations our society so urgently needs, keeping in mind, as the saying goes, that “there are things where you can’t slow down fast enough!”

*Manfred Dörr  
Mayor of the town of Deidesheim  
and President of Cittaslow Germany*



## Congratulations from Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania

Time use depends on various factors. On closer inspection, two dimensions stand out: a gender difference, on the one hand, and a spatial difference, on the other.

Gender differences are manifest in the amount of time dedicated to support activities such as household chores and care work. The same applies to social activities such as, for example, leisure activities or volunteer work. In addition, there are spatial structures – e.g., unequal accessibility of public services - that have a temporal impact on rural living conditions. Everyday trips to daycare centers, doctors, the municipal office or the bank branch take time. Moreover, rural working conditions are changing. Gainful employment is usually no longer a local matter; instead, many people have to commute to work. With this, a variety of fields of action that are highly relevant not only in terms of gender equality but also from a temporal perspective come into play. Cases in point are the reconciliation of work and private life, or the participation in local political bodies. In short: women's everyday experiences in rural areas are marked by a persisting inequality. More specifically, Meck-

lenburg-Western Pomerania as a predominantly rural state has a score of only 51.4 for time use on the gender-related development index of the Federal Institute for Research on Urban Affairs and Spatial Development. The score for absolute equality would be 100.

So, there is much to be done. Like the DGfZP, we – the Women's Committee of the state of Mecklenburg-Vorpommern e. V. – intervene. We defend the interests of women and gender equality in the public, in the economy, in politics. To this end, we can draw on a broad range of expertise from our more than 50 member associations as well as on the DGfZP's expertise in time-relevant issues.

We would like to congratulate the DGfZP on its 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary and say thank you for repeatedly being offered the opportunity to report on time policies in rural areas in its online magazine. We are looking forward to further time-policies impulses.

*Karola Frömel and Dr. Melanie Rühmling  
Women's Advisory Council of the state of  
Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania e. V.*

## Happy anniversary from BTUI, Barcelona

The German Society for Time Policies celebrates its 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary, and we as coordinators of the Barcelona Time Use Initiative for a Healthy Society are more than happy to celebrate this important milestone.

The German Society for Time Policies has been a reference for many, and especially for us, when studying and promoting time policies and key concepts, such as the "right to time", theorized by Prof. Ulrich Mückenberger. The German Society has added value to the network of associations concerned with a better use of time, and they have been a key point of contact to reach all our German colleagues.

As happy as we are to celebrate your 20th anniversary, we are even more excited about the opportunities the future holds. We hope that the path opened by the Barcelona Declaration for Time Policies (<https://www.timeuse.barcelona/barcelona-declaration-on-time-policies>), which was signed by the German Society for Time Policies in 2021, will con-

tribute into developing time policies in Europe and beyond and making the "right to time" a right of all citizens in this century. Likewise, the German Society for Time Policies' collaboration with the Local and Regional Governments Time Network (<https://timeusepolicies.info/local-and-regional-time-governments-network/>) remains a key support to reach municipalities and regions throughout Germany that are interested in implementing time policies and learning about good practices related to time and the work-life-balance, mobility, and democracy and participation, etc. We are sure that by collaborating on these and other future initiatives, we will spread time policies throughout Europe.

For all these reasons, we wish you a happy anniversary and we hope to keep working together towards the right to time for many years to come!

*Ariadna Güell and Marta Junqué  
coordinators of the Barcelona Time Use Initiative*

## Time Policies for Families

Time is a key element also for families. Along with their internal time needs as a family, in particular for care and being-together, families are involved in diverse external time structures that are a major co-determinant of their everyday life. These include, among others, work, school, and day-care. It takes a lot of power and energy for family members to consistently coordinate these time structures, in the life course and across family phases, to meet the requirements of the moment. Therefore, we need (family) time policies that prioritize the needs of families and eliminate the barriers that keep people from taking on family responsibilities. These policies should aim to enable families to realize indi-

vidual family life plans and promote the wellbeing of families. We need structural measures and strategies that allow families more time to share in everyday life and strengthen their potential influence on time use.

Therefore, it is good and important that the DGfZP has made the analysis of self-determination in terms of time sovereignty and the social and individual effects of time conflicts a major concern of its work and keeps pushing for family-oriented time-policies relief measures.

*Sven Iversen*

*Managing Director of the Working Group  
of German Family Organizations*

## Family-friendly time in Aachen

In the field of family time policies, Aachen is an active municipality. Administrative action can draw on a strong basis of family-friendly municipal policies. This basis was established as early as in 1996, with Aachen's participation in the First National Competition "Child- and Family-Friendly Municipality".

It soon became apparent that family policies must be a natural element rather than a chance product of municipal policies and administrative action. Good family policies enable both men and women to find their very own way, in everyday life as well as in the life course, of reconciling family care work (for children and those in need of nursing care), gainful employment and civic engagement.

Time is a scarce resource. Families are particularly likely to experience time conflicts when they have to reconcile family wishes and obligations and the demands of work. To resolve time conflicts, we need to closely coordinate working times and care times, provide solutions for emergencies, flexible time bands and vacations, work towards family-friendly general opening hours of city administrations, doctors and libraries, ensure children's and young people's participation, and much more.

As it is, the municipality is called for to boldly lead the way. Thus, Wednesday opening hours of the Aachen-Haaren district administration were extended, on one Wednesday per month even until 7:30 p.m. The arrangement was welcomed by both citizens and staff. So was the implementation of flexible work times from 6:00 a.m. onwards, and

the 2-days-per-week home office option. Covid-19, too, has certainly helped to accelerate the implementation of certain family-friendly changes. But notwithstanding these encouraging outcomes, it is not always possible to meet everybody's interests.

Families are themselves experts in their time conflicts, they can and want to make major contributions to their resolution. For local family time policies to be successful, they need to systematically draw on the involvement and participation of families as early as in the planning processes, e.g., mobility planning and urban planning. Therefore, we create participation opportunities in family centers, at parent-teacher conferences at schools, in discussion rounds and at public events. Family time policies must become a cross-sectional concern in the city.

We firmly believe that improving the quality of life in the municipality will strengthen its appeal as a business location and make it particularly attractive for skilled workers. A good framework for families is a crucial factor also in the competition for skilled workers. As a municipality, we can adjust our own framework but also encourage and support change in other players, e.g., from business or the universities.

Because one thing is clear: only if we succeed in improving the coordination of time cycles and overcoming time conflicts can we also improve the framework for families and promote a good family life.

*Sibylle Keupen*

*Mayor of the City of Aachen*

## A paradigm shift in family policies

The Central Committee of German Catholics (ZdK) as the largest democratically legitimized association of Catholics in Germany has been addressing issues of social justice since its founding. This of course includes the work-life balance, an equitable distribution of care work and an equivalent treatment of different forms of work.

In numerous points of convergence with the DGfZP we could, as the ZdK, consolidate and retarget our attitude towards political lobbyists: for many years now, we have supported the option time model for breathing life courses

which we consider to be the key factor of the family policies of the future. This implies a bold multi-dimensional and sustainable paradigm shift in family policies which we strongly support. So, we would like to say thank you for this cooperation which, based on our joint work in workshops on the option time model, is and will remain a driving force in the present and in the future.

*Lucia Lagoda*

*Central Committee of German Catholics*

## So good to have you!

If the DGfZP had not been founded twenty years ago, this would have to be done right now. Yes, as the chairman of the Association for Slowing Down Time, I say: right now! We slow-downers of time who see ourselves as a movement that seeks to shine a light – sometimes the light of science, often the light of art, sometimes very seriously and often with a great deal of humor – unto the manifold aspects of the pace of our individual as well as social life, look at the political initiatives of the DGfZP with the greatest respect. In both organizations, we are well aware of how important the structuring of time is for a meaningful life and living-together. In our approaches, we are ideally complementary: the Association for Slowing Down Time focuses on changing people's awareness of the right time; the DGfZP is primarily concerned with very concrete social projects – and does so always with a high level of competence and admirable per-

severance. We need the well-advised activities of the DGfZP to reasonably meet the challenges of the future. Given our hitherto far too rapid consumption of resources and the resulting need for a significant change in our life style, dealing with time as a dimension of social structuring is getting more and more important. So, when the search for alternatives to growth-driven material welfare results in the idea of time welfare, it comes as a gift that committed people in the DGfZP are making suggestions as to what this time welfare might be like in concrete terms – and are putting a great deal of energy into making it come real.

Chapeau! And congratulations, esteemed DGfZP!

*Martin Liebmann*

*Chairman of the Verein zur Verzögerung der Zeit*

*(Association for Slowing Down Time)*

## A continuous debate on urban times (with or without conscious public policies)

Recently the pandemic has brought a new interest in the debate to the “time of the city” issues.

At the end of the previous and the beginning of the new millennium, in different large Western cities – such as Paris and Barcelona, but also Portland, Melbourne, and others – politicians and planners have proposed a new urban organization starting from a slogan inspired by the dimension of time: the Parisienne famous 15-minutes-city. This has invited to design a dense city, endowed with a mix of public and private services, efficient digital infrastructures and well-equipped walk and cycle paths. The expected results are quality and effectiveness of proximity.

In the 1990s, in some European towns and cities, the Time of the city movement proposed and experimented with local urban time policies starting from municipalities. First, they have implemented new organization and/or management of services for daily life to improve their accessibility (such as pre- and post-time schedules in the school or “open school” all day long; family care during holidays; de-synchronization/synchronization of means of transport; coordination of the shops' opening hours and tourists' services; harmonization of the events calendar; on-line services of public administrations). Secondly, they have stimulated sustainable mobility for the reduction of pollution provoked by means

of transport (collective cabs, environmental-friendly shuttle buses, on-demand transportation, “pedibus” and “bicibus”, night transportation, bike sharing, house-school transportation). Moreover, they have had the ambition to introduce time-oriented guidelines in land use planning, specifically concerning public (and sometimes private) equipment organization (such as testing open space usability and accessibility). The main aims are quality of individual daily life, accessibility for everybody, spatio-temporal proximity, and

work-life balance. This approach considers the city as a support for personal and familiar time management.

The German Society for Time Policy, DGfZP, supported this movement and, with continuity, shaped the European debate, enlarging it to new relevant fields such as the evening and nighttime economy studies and temporal justice.

*Marco Mareggi,  
Department of Architecture and Urban Studies,  
Politecnico di Milano*

## Redistributing time – a political mission

Gender care gap, gender pay gap, gender pension gap – these major gaps do not only highlight gender inequities in pensions, pay, or care work, they show the extent to which both genders vary in the amount of time they (can) invest in the different spheres of life. We know that women still do the lion(esse)’s share of care work. This leaves less time and energy for them to participate in the labor market, with negative consequences for their professional development or their retirement pension expectancy. But the idea of all adults working full-time also misses the point of enabling them to reconcile the various spheres of their life – family, civic engagement, friends, hobbies, and work.

The Zukunftsforum Familie e. V. (ZFF, Forum for the Future of Families) joins the DGfZP in its efforts to promote the redistribution of time as an integral part of family policies oriented to a good work-life balance for both partners as a guiding principle. We believe that the gender-equitable

redistribution of care work, i.e., away from the (for the most part) sole responsibility of women and towards the responsibility of men is a key concern. We need a gender-equitable division of time!

This requires accompanying measures such as gender-equitable taxation, additional parental leave for the second parent after the birth of a child, or family working time benefits. Another important factor would be a labor market that says good-bye to the idea of long-hours full-time employment and sees care times as a natural element of employment biographies.

By the way: the ZFF also turned 20 this year. So, it’s not only perspectives we share with the DGfZP, it’s also time. Congratulations to you!

*Alexander Nöhring,  
Managing Director Zukunftsforum Familie*

## Families need time (policies)!

In the past three decades, mothers and fathers, both working and non-working, have significantly extended the time they spend with their children. Mothers allot about twice as much time to family work as father do (mothers 5.9 hours, fathers 3 hours, on workdays). And yet, according to a 2020 survey conducted by the Allensbach Institute, parents feel that the time they have does not suffice for them to give their children all the encouragement they think they need. What to make of this paradox: having both more and not enough time?

Parents feel a great deal of social pressure to give their children sufficient stimulation and encouragement and to be

there for them. They want to “do it well”. This is not something they imagine, they really face pressure due to high expectations. Almost all parents work, mothers often in part-time jobs. Single parents, almost 90 % of them mothers, also work. Eking out enough time for the family in addition to work and household chores is not an easy task. As a result, there often is not enough time left for themselves and as a couple. This creates discontent, puts a strain on the couple’s relationship and may, at the worst, even make them sick. But in life with children, time is a major resource since their parents’ – rushed – everyday life is their childhood. Parental benefits have provided some relief for the early periods

with a young child, but parents need time also after that. Therefore, incentives should be set so as to enable parents to allot family work equitably, i.e., allowing fathers, too, to spend more time with their children since this is what they want. Equalizing work-centered life cycles in favor of family-centered life cycles remains a challenge for the future.

## Thinking about time

The most exciting thing in our dealings with time is its manifold nature. For me as a junior scientist, the temporal perspective provides access to various topics which generations before me have already analyzed – even beyond the linear logic of clock time, and in particular in crisis-ridden times: social power structures, economic outsourcing trends, but also the interdependencies of ecological and social reproduction processes. The latter are structured by rhythm rather than linear time. As such, they go against the time-is-money formula – especially in times of speed-loving digitalization and its promise of ubiquity. I can't speed up being a good friend, and planting a tree without using a locatable surface is impossible. These dependencies on time and place are significant reminders of human finiteness and planetary limits.

## Time Policies

I first used the term of "time policies" in 1987 in a talk I was giving, in Vienna, on issues of urban development – the DGfZP did not yet exist. Starting out from the observation that there were "trends in the social practice of younger people towards a cultural and social integration of work and leisure", I argued that we should "move away from the concepts of working time policies and leisure time policies" and rather work with a concept of time policies. The concept of "time policies" would be oriented to the social question of how to enable all people to organize their lifetime in ways that meet their private, social, economic, and cultural needs in accordance with the idea they have of how they want to live. "In this sense, time policies provide a unique opportunity for the welfare society of the late 20<sup>th</sup> century, characterized as it is by the fact that industrial and agrarian production and, thus, meeting basic economic needs take less and less time and that, at the same time, we now have the opportunity to experience fulfilment in a new dimension in the various lifetime phases".

So, in terms of time policies, quite a lot remains to be done in the next 20 years and, probably, even beyond that ... Congratulations to the DGfZP on its 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary!

*Dr. Insa Schöningh  
2004–2022 Federal Executive Director  
of the Protestant Family Working Group e.V.*

Thinking about time is helpful and offers orientation for understanding the closely interrelated current crises. In the words of Barbara Adams: "our thinking about time is always thinking in time and with time." This positioning in the present always implies relating to things past as well as to what the future may hold. For 20 years now, the DGfZP has done this relational work and provided a framework for what is permanently changing and cannot be pinned down. Yes, the DGfZP itself may be rhythm – "time as framework and change united". Here's to what's coming!

*Hanna Völkle, social scientist  
at the Harriet Taylor Mill Institute for Economics  
and Gender Studies at the Berlin School  
for Economics and Law (HWR Berlin)*

35 years later, I see that this use of the concept was tailored to conditions in the western parts of Europe rather than the whole world. Meanwhile, we have had various global transformations: the world's population has grown from 5 billion to 8 billion, average life expectancy has increased by about 10 years, from 63 to 73 years. In 1987, the combined lifetime of all the world's people was 315 billion years, after 2020 it will be 580 billion years. How much of this time is open to flexible use and how much cannot be freely disposed of due to hunger, poverty, floods, migration, and wars is more or less impossible to assess.

Germany is only marginally affected by these global transformations, but what is relevant here is the decline in the number of children to less than 1.5 children per woman. At the same time, we see that the younger generation of 1987 has found culturally diverse ways of socially integrating work and leisure. Only 20% of the workforce are still working in industrial production. Statutory working hours



have been reduced, part-time work is widespread, home office has since the Covid-19 epidemic become a new mode of allocating time, a 25-hour week is being discussed at the political level. The amount of time that mothers allot to caring for their children has socially changed, but whether the 1.5 average as opposed to large families really means less – and not just an intensely different – time for childcare is an open question. The necessity of extending the working life, brought on by the increasing life expectancy, is almost a taboo subject. The expert in aging research Nir Barzilai predicts that people will be working even in their 80s and 90s. From a social perspective, flexible time distribution for

all age groups, on the one hand, and income distribution along with an adequate pension system, on the other, can no longer be seen as separate issues.

So, time policies in a free society will continue to face major challenges. Yet many things will happen for many people without time-based political regulations – writes an almost 80-year-old, using his flexible time in this way.

*Prof. Dr. Christoph Zöpel*

*Honorary Professor at the University of Dortmund,*

*Professor at the GJU Amman, Jordan*

*Former Minister of the State of North Rhine-Westphalia*

*Former Minister of State at the Federal Foreign Office*

