DEMographic ASPECTs OF EDUCATIONAL EXPANSION AND LABOUR-FORCE DEVELOPMENT IN THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY

Manfred TESSARING *

Institut für Arbeitsmarkt- und Berufsforschung der Bundesanstalt für Arbeit, Nürnberg, FRG

Abstract. This paper assesses the impact of the baby boom and the subsequent decline of fertility to below-replacement level for both the educational system and the labour market. The experience of the last 25 years is documented and projections through to 2030 are presented. Particular attention is paid to comparison of the effects of demographic change with the effects of changing educational needs and aspirations.

Résumé. Aspects démographiques de l'extension de l'enseignement et du développement de la main-d'œuvre en République fédérale d'Allemagne

Cet article évalue l'impact qu'ont eu sur le système éducatif et sur le marché de l'emploi le baby-boom et le déclin ultérieur de la fécondité au-dessous du niveau de remplacement. Il décrit l'expérience des vingt-cinq dernières années et présente les perspectives jusqu'à 2030. L'accent est mis sur la comparaison entre les effets de l'évolution démographique et ceux de la modification des besoins et aspirations en matière d'éducation.

1. Introduction

Both the baby boom and, especially, the subsequent decline of fertility to below-replacement levels have been striking in the FRG. Both have serious consequences for the educational system and the labour market. For example, between 1960 and 1985 the total resident population of the FRG increased by about 9%, but because of the baby boom the population in age group 16–26 (i.e., youth in the later stages of education or training and those just entering the labour market) increased more than twice as much (18.6%); and if present low fertility

* Author's address: Institut für Arbeitsmarkt- und Berufsforschung der Bundesanstalt für Arbeit, Regensburgerstrasse 104, D-8500 Nürnberg 1, Federal Republic of Germany

rates continue, this age group will drop back to about 8% by the year 2030. The implications of demographic developments will be discussed in this paper, as well as some results of projections for the labour-force potential, for the supply of highly qualified manpower and for manpower demand by levels of qualification.

2. The demographic background

The decline of birth rates is a secular trend observed in nearly all industrial countries since the last century. The sudden decline since 1965/66 in the FRG has both demographic and behavioural origins. Demographic reasons, such as the age structure of the population, were responsible for about one-third of the decline between 1966 and 1975 [Schwarz (1977)]. Two-thirds must be ascribed to changes in reproductive behaviour.

Fig. 1 shows recent and projected developments in the number of births in the form of an index (with total births in 1950 set to 100). For the turning points, the absolute numbers of births (in 1000s) are indicated. The first turning point (1964/66) is the peak of the baby boom, when births totalled more than 1 million. The number of births then declined to 580,000 in 1978, and this was followed by a very slight increase (to 624,000 in 1986).

The numbers of births projected for the period 1987–2010 in fig. 1 are taken from the current population projection of the Statistisches Bundesamt (Federal Bureau of Statistics) published in January 1987. This projection assumes generally constant fertility rates at the level of 1984. According to this projection the number of births will decline after 1990: only 474,000 babies will be born in the year 2000, and in 2010 the number of births (400,000) will be only half as high as in 1950 or 1970.

Fig. 1 also compares the figures for German and foreign births (with 1960 births set to 100). For German births, the baby boom in the sixties was rather modest whereas the decline in the following years was rather sharp. The baby boom of foreigners occurred later (1960–1972) and was more marked, because the main immigration wave occurred between the mid-sixties and the late seventies and most of the immigrants were of reproductive age. The subsequent decline in foreign births is not expected to continue (the Statistisches Bundesamt assumes...