



**Unemployment in the New States and its Impact on East  
German Women**

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The article examines current trends in unemployment in the New States and examines the impact of high unemployment on east German women. With reference to east German women's relationship to employment in the GDR it focuses on current attitudes to existing unemployment and the strategies they have implemented to resist it. It also reviews their attitudes towards the housewife role and towards combining work and family and summarises east German women's achievements in resisting adaptation to a more Western biography.

### **1. Introduction**

Unemployment rates in the New States have remained unforeseeably high since German unification in 1990. Furthermore, rather than showing signs of gradual reduction, there has been a general trend of increasing unemployment since 1997 which peaked in winter 2003 at 1.7 million. This figure represents approximately 20% of those available for work in east Germany but there is concern that 25% would be a more realistic quota if the statistics were to include those no longer registering themselves as unemployed (Dettmer 2002: 96). The hardest hit are foreign workers with an official quota of 38.6% in 2003 and there is also concern at the high proportion of young people between 20-24 who find themselves unemployed before even commencing their careers. The relatively low unemployment rate amongst the under 20s also masks a significant drop in employment levels of over 20% in the period 1991-2001 (Gender-Institute Sachsen-Anhalt 2002: 146) which is most likely due to longer periods spent in full-time education and training.

Unemployment rates have also generally been higher for women than for men, particularly in the first 6-7 years of unification when women comprised two thirds of the unemployed. (Alsop 1994: 30) Recent developments indicate, however, an increasing male unemployment quota which even currently exceeds that for women.<sup>1</sup> (see [Table 1](#)) At the same time, however, there has also been a

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www1.arbeitsamt.de/hst/services/statistik/200310/iii5/allgemein/r101o.xls>.

significant drop in the employment rate for younger women where, above all, the 20-25 age-group has suffered with a fall of 14% compared to 4.1% amongst young men. This reflects the significant problems young east German women are having in finding posts as apprentices and trainees. As a result young women under 25 represent only around 40% of the employed in that age-group (Gender-Institute Sachsen-Anhalt 2002: 146). High unemployment would be problematic for any nation but it has been felt particularly harshly by a people who had experienced almost full employment until 1989. East German women, in particular, had a very different experience of employment to West European women, given the exceptionally high level of female employment of over 90% (Süssmuth & Schubert 1992: 15), which was also significantly mostly full-time.

This paper intends to examine the effects of continued high unemployment on women in the new states, their attitudes towards it and the strategies used to protect themselves from the increasing levels of unemployment found amongst men. It draws extensively on empirical data from interviews undertaken by the author in Saxony-Anhalt in 1999 and 2000. Despite the dubious distinction of having one of the consistently highest unemployment rates among the new states, the trends traced in Saxony-Anhalt can be extrapolated to the other east German states. In order to understand east German women's attitudes to unemployment it is appropriate to examine factors which may have influenced women in the former GDR, both in terms of governing ideology and lifestyle.

## **2. Attitudes to female employment in the GDR**

The principles of Marxist feminism inevitably made a significant impact on GDR society as the Soviet-supported regime began to define a new communist state on German soil. Marx and Engels had claimed that the material base for patriarchy was to be found in capitalism, which had provided men with the means of earning income outside the home and, in turn, confirmed the traditional 'female role' within the home (Bryson 1992: 68). Female employment and female economic independence were, therefore, deemed to be progressive forces and essential to

women's emancipation.<sup>2</sup> Indeed Engels considered that "the first condition for the liberation of women was to bring the whole female sex back into public industry" (Engels 1978: 82-87). The SED took these principles and embedded them into its society and its legislation. East German women were expected to work full-time whether they had children or not. A considerable volume of legislation was passed, promoting the education and training of women to similar levels as men and providing a range of special systems and grants to enable them to pursue qualifications with small children.<sup>3</sup> Employers were also obliged to enter into contracts with women guaranteeing employment according to qualifications gained during training periods and quotas were set in all branches of industry (Shaffer 1981: 21). These policies were then backed up with an impressive range of laws to further support working mothers, such as highly subsidised, 24-hour, comprehensive child-care, shorter working hours and extensive leave to look after sick children.

The success of this multi-pronged approach was clearly visible in the statistics on female employment at the time of unification. Over 90% of East German women were employed or studying, with greater representation in a larger number of fields and at higher levels than in the West (Winkler 1990: 70). Furthermore, almost 90% of women had vocational qualifications (Süssmuth & Schubert 1992: 10) compared to just 60% in the West (Kolinsky 1989: 134). And, over 25% of women had qualifications in technical areas.<sup>4</sup> East German women also constituted 50% of employees in the chemical and electronics sectors (Winkler 1990: 83) and 40% of those holding the highest 'Master' level of vocational qualification compared to just 8% in the West (Mohrmann 1992: 38). Of particular significance was the relatively high number of women in management posts at 30%, compared to just 10% in the West (Shaffer 1981: 78). The SED's brand of Marxist feminism did then reflect the essential link between female employment and emancipation, based primarily on the need for economic independence. Furthermore East German women also had the experience of working full-time throughout the 40 years of the GDR. It is this combination of the Marxist feminist emphasis on the need for women to work and the actual

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<sup>2</sup> Engels further argued that there was a new equality developing in capitalist society as a result of increasing female labour in factory production, despite the appalling working conditions. (Bryson 1992: 67).

<sup>3</sup> An Ordinance granting working women 20 hours per week study time at full pay to upgrade to become engineers, (Winkler 1990: 68).

<sup>4</sup> Compare the figure of 15.8% in 1971. (Kolinsky 1989: 43)

experience of employment and financial independence which has inevitably influenced the current attitudes of east German women towards unemployment.

Attitudes to work have inevitably been different amongst West German women who had to learn to live with the strong patriarchal voice of a conservative Federal Government, which upheld traditional gender roles and a 'male-breadwinner philosophy' supported by tradition and the market economy.<sup>5</sup> In the Federal Republic minimal legislation on women's rights and a relatively slow increase in representation in the workplace led to policies which paid more attention to ascertaining a wage for housewives than to female quotas (Ostner 1993: 92). West German women therefore remained accustomed to being out of the workplace<sup>6</sup> with an average child-care break of 8 years. Certainly West German Radical Feminism refused to link employment to female emancipation and women were not to be required to imitate men. On the contrary, there was a call for the recognition of the moral superiority of the nurturing female role and the achievement of more sexual equality in relationships and in the family. The difference in focus between east and west German women has been confirmed by post-unification publications. Süßmuth & Schubert's *Bezahlen die Frauen die Wiedervereinigung* (1992), for example, records east German women's strong disappointment with the Federal Republic, above all, regarding the absence of the right to work and its effect on their position within society. Interviewees portray female unemployment in extreme terms as "the loss of their identity and their well-being" (Süßmuth & Schubert 1992: 38),<sup>7</sup> whilst others describe it as "isolating, limiting and even degrading" (Krätschell 1991: 5). Western opinion, on the other hand, denies the basis of this disappointment, interpreting the high female employment in the GDR as a simple economic necessity with little "emancipatory" basis<sup>8</sup> founded on the manipulation and exploitation of women by men. (Conrad, Lechner & Welf 1993: 3) East German women are also seen to have been exploited by the *Doppelbelastung* (dual burden of work and family) and the perpetuation of patriarchal power structures in the home. (Hoppe 1993; 35)

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<sup>5</sup> Thus men could prevent their wives from working until 1977, women were only given an equal say in decisions effecting the children in 1980, and equal pay was not prescribed until 1982.

<sup>6</sup> Female employment in the late 80s was 52% and this included a large proportion of part-time posts, some of which were relatively short hours. (Hellmich 2000: 11).

<sup>7</sup> This quotation and others originally in German have been translated into English by the author.

<sup>8</sup> 'Also the chronic labour shortage of an economy with a very low productivity rate made the participation of women more than a desirable goal. Their participation in the labor force was a necessity both for the economy and the family income.' (Conrad, Lechner & Welf 1993: 3)

East German women's unique relationship to work was also reflected in my own research in Saxony-Anhalt in the summers of 1999 and 2000 when I undertook over 100 oral history interviews with women taken from a wide sample area. The dual themes of employment and unemployment for east German women dominated the majority of interviews despite little direct questioning on the area. Yet their recollections were not simply based on a rosy picture of working compared to finding themselves unemployed. Their description of the relationship to work was relatively complex. Thus the majority of respondents referred to a certain pressure to work, based, above all, on the low rate of male pay, but also on an awareness that not working was socially unacceptable in the GDR. Yet respondents also rejected *duty* as too strong a description of the role of work in their life and preferred words such as *selbstverständlich* (natural, taken for granted), claiming that "it just didn't occur to us not to go to work". (A)<sup>9</sup> This allusion to a passive acceptance of an obligation potentially fits with a common Western assumption that east German women were forced to go out to work by the state. Yet respondents also remained positive in their descriptions of their working life. Thus a factory worker described her work as "great fun and [...] something we really wanted to do". (B) This was supported by the majority of respondents, who despite the *Doppelbelastung* and long hours, clearly did not view themselves as having been exploited or simply used as workhorses. Above all, they pointed to the fact that "being able to achieve everything enhanced [their] well-being". (C) Furthermore, they consider it important that they "were able to realise [their] identity in a profession and to fully develop [their] potential". (D) In a similar way to men, east German women thus show all the signs of having grown to need what was initially an obligation as they "needed [their] wages, not like in the West [...] but it also felt good". (E)

Particularly significant in east German women's relationship to work is the evidence that a real and positive experience of work was transferred to the theoretical belief that work is an essential part of a woman's life and, moreover, essential to her emancipation. This belief is also reflected in interview responses in the considerable consensus amongst respondents (over 90%) that emancipation meant "a right to work", "the same opportunities to get a job" (H) and even that it is "impossible, to have emancipation without work". (C) The principal link between emancipation and work made by east German women is that they "cannot envisage emancipation without

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<sup>9</sup> Letters refer to the list of respondents given in the key at the end and quotations from these interviews have been translated from German by the author.

financial independence and being able to shape their lives themselves". (D) In the GDR, they were, after all, able to "divorce their husbands and to raise their children alone" when the need arose. (I) Respondents thus noted their appreciation of being able "to achieve something and earn for the family" (G) and particularly of "not having to ask for handouts". (B) They were also frequently scornful of the material dependence of their western sisters. (J)

Respondents also pointed to other important beneficial effects their full-time employment had in terms of their emancipation. One of these is the claim that they gained a certain respect and status in society, above all from men who "saw that women were just as capable" and that this had an effect on their thinking so that "women were held in higher esteem". (K) The sense of an increase in status was also linked to the wider range of opportunities for women in the GDR and again the recognition given to this by the SED. Respondents thus speak proudly about the "normality" of women "driving cranes or welding" (L) and that "there were lots of women in senior positions". (J) They also state that they "gained better positions in middle management [...] were more confident and had more sense of self-worth". (K) As a result they were generally more involved in society so that "women would discuss political issues with one another, for example". (G) A very clear majority also describe an increase in status in the family and a more equal division of household duties in that it simply became necessary that the husband participated as "it just couldn't work any other way". (M) East German women have thus not only come to view work as the end but also as a means of gaining emancipation, in that they clearly link it to other improvements they experienced in status and self-esteem. This is indicative of a female work ethic which whilst it is linked to the SED's Marxist feminism also clearly relates strongly to a personal need to work.

The need to work has not been reflected in the West where equality legislation pursued instead the Radical Feminists' recognition of housework as an equivalent social contribution to paid employment. There was, therefore, an emphasis on the need for an equivalent financial compensation, whereby being a housewife was deemed to be "a professional activity that must be considered equal to that of a woman in business for herself".<sup>10</sup> Schaffer notes that West German courts thus placed relatively high monetary values on housework, attempting to circumvent the crucial issue of financial dependence without sending women out to work. There is then significant evidence of a unique relationship to paid employment amongst east German women

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<sup>10</sup> In 1977 it was valued at DM 2,300 per month. (Shaffer 1981: 31)

which is likely to be the source of their attitudes towards the immense wave of unemployment that they have suffered since unification.

### **3. The effects of post-unification unemployment on women**

The effects of the persistently high levels of unemployment on east German women are inevitably manifold. In addition to the financial implications, there is considerable pressure on their role in society which had begun to change in the GDR years, as well as a significant impact on their self-esteem. Although women now represent less of the total unemployed than immediately post-unification, they continue to represent 60.2% of the long-term unemployed. This has tended to make women less adventurous in their career choice so that east German women's representation in technical and more advanced areas of education and training has been falling sharply. This has meant greater polarisation in male and female career choice than pre-unification. (See [Table 2](#))<sup>11</sup> This has, in turn, undoubtedly had a negative impact on the acceptance of women competing in all fields amongst educators, employers and even the women themselves. Unemployment and the threat of unemployment has also naturally had an effect on east German women's ability to earn so that in 2001 only 33.6% of women in Saxony-Anhalt were earning their living compared to 44.8% of the men, leaving women more reliant on social security. This has been further exacerbated by the general tendency for lower pay in traditional women's professions. Thus when examining statistics on income significantly larger numbers of women are falling into the lowest income bracket. Thus for example in 2001 45.2% of women in Saxony-Anhalt were earning less than 920 Euros whereas the proportion of men with this income was only 25.6%. (Gender-Institute Sachsen-Anhalt 2002: 117)

For the majority of respondents, however, unemployment primarily represents a "psychological burden" rather than a "loss of financial benefits". (N) There is common reference to a sense of rejection and not belonging, that they no longer "feel that they are needed by society" (N) and "no longer feel of value" (R) and that they are simply "nothing". (L) This is particularly pertinent for older women, who find it impossible to maintain their self-respect when there is little hope for any reintegration into the job market. It includes, however, women as young as 45, who find it

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<sup>11</sup> Even early statistics have shown a shift in representation of women in these areas. (Magistrat Magdeburg, Amt für Gleichstellungsfragen 1992: 62)

“incomprehensible that they are not needed, just when their children are grown up and they have more time for work”. (O) There is also a stress on the loss of human dignity that comes with the continuous form-filling and the petitioning for benefits. (N) Furthermore, approximately 30% of the unemployed women interviewed (including women on ABM-contracts) volunteered the information that they had suffered from depression and other psychological problems since their unemployment and two stated that they had had psychiatric help. Another two were clearly drinking heavily “and sooner or later they fall over” (B), and there was a general awareness that “lots of women have had nervous breakdowns”. (P)

Of particular significance is that all of these effects have contributed to a significant sense of alienation amongst unemployed east German women from German society. There is a strong sense of feeling “pushed out” and “lonely” (N) as they find themselves without the automatic links into a range of groups that the workplace had provided in the GDR (M) and separated from those that have work by their inability to join in conversations about new cars, houses, travel etc. (Q) This alienation is also reflected in a high level of disillusion with the German political system that has refused to address their interests:

There’s a lot of talk and then you don’t hear anything and then it’s all come to nothing again. The main issue is unemployment and if that’s not going to be solved then there’s really no point in all their machinations. (B)

#### **4. Attitudes towards post-reunification unemployment and strategies against it**

Contrary to Western opinion which assumed that the “worn out East-mum” would surely welcome a break (Baureithel 1994: 153), east German women have rejected unemployment in the strongest of terms:

I just can’t be happy with this unemployment. It’s all I can think about. I want to provide for my child but I can’t get a job. There’s such a sense of helplessness, such a sense of bitterness’. I just cannot come to terms with it. (L)

Many disadvantages are listed:

Unemployment means worrying about the future,  
 Unemployment means no pension when you’re old,  
 Unemployment means being dependent on your husband or partner,  
 Unemployment means a constant decrease in your standard of living,  
 Unemployment means social decline and no recognition of achievements,

Unemployment means losing your self-respect. (Studie "Lebenschance-Lebensangst" des Landesfrauenrates Sachsen-Anhalt 1999: 263)

Respondents are also unhappy with the considerable drop in social contact they experience when unemployed, as work in the GDR was a significant part of belonging to society. Unemployment for these women is thus perceived as a vicious circle of "being poor, having no friends and no contacts and thus not being able to get work" (Studie "Lebenschance-Lebensangst" des Landesfrauenrates Sachsen-Anhalt 1999: 261) which, as indicated earlier, has also led to a significant level of political disillusion and withdrawal amongst east German women.

It is also noted that east German attitudes towards the "full-time mother role" as a potential alternative to employment have tended to be significantly more negative than in the West. Many unemployed women, in particular, describe this role as "second class to working in every way" using adjectives such as "isolating, limiting and even degrading". (Krätschell 1991: 5) Unemployed women attempting to adapt to a daily routine with their children describe intense difficulties and even despair at the changes it involves. An early survey indicated that only 3% would be happy to have simply a housewife role. (Bertram 1993: 29) and even by 2000 only 10% of the unemployed considered themselves to be housewives. (*Sozialreport 2000* 2001: 18) Not only do east German women speak very negatively about unemployment but they have also resisted it strongly earning themselves the title of the "arbeitsame Ostfrauen" as many have refused to bow to the common social expectation that they should return to the home and stop exacerbating the unemployment figures. (*Arbeitsame Frauen in Ostdeutschland* 1997: 3)

East German women's resistance to unemployment is to a great extent encapsulated by their desire to "beat unemployment by continuing to get up in the morning".(L) Thus simply maintaining their registration as unemployed has become a political act denying the attraction of the single-breadwinner ethos of the west. The strength of the statement is reflected above all in a comparison with the West, whereby just 20% of non-working women register as unemployed in the old states compared to 60% in the east. (E.) This has also been one of the reasons that many kindergartens have continued to have relatively high numbers as women registering as unemployed have been obliged to keep their children in childcare to prove their availability.<sup>12</sup> Significantly the proportion of women amongst the unemployed has also been falling since reunification as female unemployment has continued to rise but at a slower rate than the male

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<sup>12</sup> Interview with Katrin Esche, Head of Kindergarten Am Bruch, Oschersleben, Sachsen Anhalt, July 2000.

figure (see [Table 3](#)) (Gender-Institute Sachsen-Anhalt 2002: 143). It cannot be ignored, of course, that lower unemployment figures could also be as a result of fewer women registering as unemployed as more women adapt to being housewives, although the figures available do not seem to bear this out as officially the number of ‘non-working’ women has also fallen since 1991 (See [Table 4](#)) (Gender-Institute Sachsen-Anhalt 2002: 144).

Statistics also reveal a high level of re-training amongst women and indeed in some cases to a greater extent than men (Bertram 1993: 29). They are also more likely to accept a level of demotion, rather than not work (Kolinsky 1995: 177). This determination is also reflected in the higher participation in job creation schemes by women, although the gap is closing as the number of ABM posts is reduced (Gender-Institute Sachsen-Anhalt 2002: 171). Amongst respondents in Magdeburg over half those working had had another profession before their current one. To make this transition, the majority had retrained and some had undertaken extensive careers of training, retraining and work experience. Several respondents described “a regular rotation from unemployment to training or a new course and back to ABM”. (S) Many respondents previously had positions as teachers, engineers or agricultural workers and had had to swap these for desks jobs (Kolinsky 1993: 177).

Women have also demonstrated significant resourcefulness in the founding of an extensive set of women’s networks. In Saxony-Anhalt in 2000 there were approximately 70 *Frauenkommunikationszentren* (women’s communication centres) (*Frauenschungelbuch* 1999: 237-53), which provided a range of sporting and creative activities as well as discussion groups and advice on a range of issues relating to finding work and claiming unemployment benefits. Particularly impressive was that 24 such centres existed in just one region, Aschersleben, where the *Gleichstellungsbeauftragte* (Equal Opportunities Officer) had prioritised local women’s need for contact outside the home in an essentially rural area. More recently, there have been a number of closures as finances have been significantly reduced.

A particularly worrying reaction to unemployment has been the high level of emigration away from the new states. In Saxony-Anhalt the number of women leaving, particularly younger women, has been increasing since the late 90s and in some years more women have left than men (Gender-Institute Sachsen-Anhalt 2002: 104). In particular the deficit between emigration and immigration has been significantly higher (approximately double) for women. Recent research into the reasons given for considering emigration indicates that women appear to be primarily

motivated by the need to find work whereas there is evidence of more varied motivation amongst men. Ninety per cent of women stated, for example, that they would not leave Saxony-Anhalt whilst they had work and this figure increased with age. (See [Table 5](#)) (Gender-Institute Sachsen-Anhalt 2002: 20) A possible contributing factor for the high female figure is that women are also less likely to commute to another state in order to get work. (Gender-Institute Sachsen-Anhalt 2002: 167) Clearly the net loss of female citizens, primarily of child-bearing age, has significant implications for the already strong decline in the birth rate and there is growing concern in the new states as to how this can be addressed. Linked to this concern is the so-called *Gebärstreik*<sup>13</sup> of the early 1990s, which resulted in an unprecedented 60% drop in the birth-rate between 1989 and 1994, to the lowest ever figure in Germany, which has still not in any way recovered (Conrad et al 1995: 1). Both this trend and the increase in female sterilisation and abortions have also been linked to east German women's determination to remain employable (Conrad et al 1995: 9).

It is then a considerable testimony to east German women's determination to remain in employment that they can also demonstrate relative success in staying in work. Thus, there is still a difference of around 20% between the employment rates of east and west German women, with east German women also still likely to be working significantly longer hours. Furthermore, despite continued pressures to return to the home and look after their children, this rate has been rising again in the last few years (*Sozialreport 2000* 2001: 17). The statistics on working mothers show that more women with young children are also still managing to work in the East than in the West. It should also be noted, however, that there has been a significant drop in full-time work (over 40 hours) to just 57.1% whilst this figure is higher than in the West (Gender-Institute Sachsen-Anhalt 2002: 151). Moreover, there has also been progress in the number of women unemployed compared to men. The female percentage of the unemployed in Saxony-Anhalt, initially substantially higher than the percentage of men, has now dropped to just over half so that women comprised just 51.7% of the unemployed in 2001. (See Table 3)

It is notable that such statistics have also been achieved against a background of significant barriers to female employment. The constant cuts in child-care including the closing down of many kindergartens have significantly increased travel time and shortened the hours women are available for work (T), at a time when greater flexibility is required by the employer. Increases in

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<sup>13</sup> Many respondents commented on this term and were generally unhappy with the implication of deliberate action. They put forward an alternative motivation of fear and uncertainty for the future.

child-care fees and travel have then also had a negative impact on the costs that women now need to offset against their pay. Furthermore, recruitment policies have been overtly discriminatory since the collapse of east German industry, reverting back to a “single breadwinner per household” philosophy which favours the husband. Despite anti-discrimination laws, respondents have described how they are repeatedly asked about their children at interview or even whether their husband needs the car. In this climate it is a further tribute to east German mothers’ determination to work that child-care has been maintained at a significantly higher level in Saxony-Anhalt and in the other new states.<sup>14</sup>

## 5. Conclusion

Despite some expectations that east German women would by now have noticeably withdrawn from the job market and be taking up a more positive role in the home, there is still significant evidence to the contrary. Many east German women continue to express their rejection of unemployment in the strongest of terms and insist that they will remain on the job market. They are supported in this to a certain extent by general attitudes to female employment in the new states which have been characterised as “growing approval”, whilst in the West equivalent attitudes have been seen to be “stagnating or in decline”. Thus around 50% of West German men still feel that women’s role is in the home whereas this figure is just 25% amongst their east German peers (Statistisches Bundesamt 1997: 70). At the same time, however, the obstacles have increased as the demands of the workplace have grown and East German women have had to implement a range of strategies to stay in work from sterilisation to moving away from their home. In this many have demonstrated incredible resilience, in taking on ABM positions, retraining and starting new careers.

It could be that the determination of the individual to stay in employment could prove to be East German women’s most powerful tool. Certainly, East German women are still struggling to achieve a political voice. Hildegard Maria Nickel terms the phenomenon east German women’s “resistivity” and asks whether it is simply a “temporary aberrance” which will vanish with the new generation or whether the “eastern model” will, in fact, shape the future for western men and women (Nickel 2000: 111). Indeed there are already signs that the “east German model” has

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<sup>14</sup> Interview with Katrin Esche, July 2000.

influenced the Federal Republic's policies on women, such as the introduction in the old states of a guaranteed nursery place for all children over three. There are, however, also some indications that younger women with increasingly less memory of the GDR may have slightly different ideas. Compared to their elder sisters they are more likely to view their future as being in the West and not solely as a means of finding work. These women may start to adapt to a more Western profile where employment does not necessarily take centre stage. On the other hand, a certain flexibility of outcome is provided by the trend towards higher female employment in the old German states.

### **Key to women Interviewed**

- (A) Frau Bormeister and Frau Speckhahn, Equal Opportunities Officers for Salzwedel, 45 years and 41 years, politically active
- (B) Frau Staniul, Unemployed, 46 years, not politically active
- (C) Members of the ÖTV Unemployed Committee, politically active within this group but not specifically for women
- (D) Frau E. Rogee, State MP for the PDS, Women's Representative in the HBV Union, 52 years, politically active
- (E) Frau D. Heinrich, Building Engineer, 45 years, not politically active
- (F) Frau I. Wichert, Women's Representative for the Trade Union ÖTV, 47 years, politically active
- (G) Frau B. Köhler, Dentist's Technician, 45
- (H) Frau D. Mydla, Civil Servant, 46 years, no longer politically active
- (I) Frau G. Kuppe, Minister for Work, Women, Health and Social Security, 55 years, politically active but not directly for women
- (J) Frau W. Jänicke, Pensioner, 60 years, not politically active
- (K) Frau C. Radak, Accountant for the Green Party, 42 years, politically active.
- (L) Frau E. Weke, ABM-employee with ROSA (women's job agency), 43 years, not politically active.

- (M) Elke Plöger, former 'Staatssekretärin für Frauenpolitik' (State Secretary for Women's Policy) in Saxony-Anhalt, 54 years, politically active.
- (N) Heidi and Erika, Unemployed, 54 and 62 years, not politically active.
- (O) Frau Overheu, Unemployed factory worker, 50 years, not politically active.
- (P) Conny Schütze, Student, 19 years, not politically active.
- (Q) Dr B. Wömpner, Unemployed Chemist, 48 years, not politically active.
- (R) Frau Dohrendorf, Unemployed, 44 years, not politically active
- (S) Frau Brummer, Unemployed, 49 years, not politically active.
- (T) Katja, Librarian, 25 years, not politically active.

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## Biodata

Debbie Wagener has taught languages in Higher Education since 1987 firstly at Nene College, Northampton and since at University College Chester where she teaches politics and society, business German and translation. She has recently completed a thesis on east German women's feminist identity and their experiences since reunification which she is hoping to publish shortly and has also collated an archive of oral history interviews with east German women which is currently housed in the Chester College Library. Recent publications include a chapter on east German women's identity in *Trotzidentität oder Normalität? East German Distinctiveness in a Unified Germany* edited by J. Grix and P. Cooke for Birmingham University Press and a paper on 'Resilience and Unemployment, a case-study of east German women' with V. Beck and J. Grix for *German Politics*.

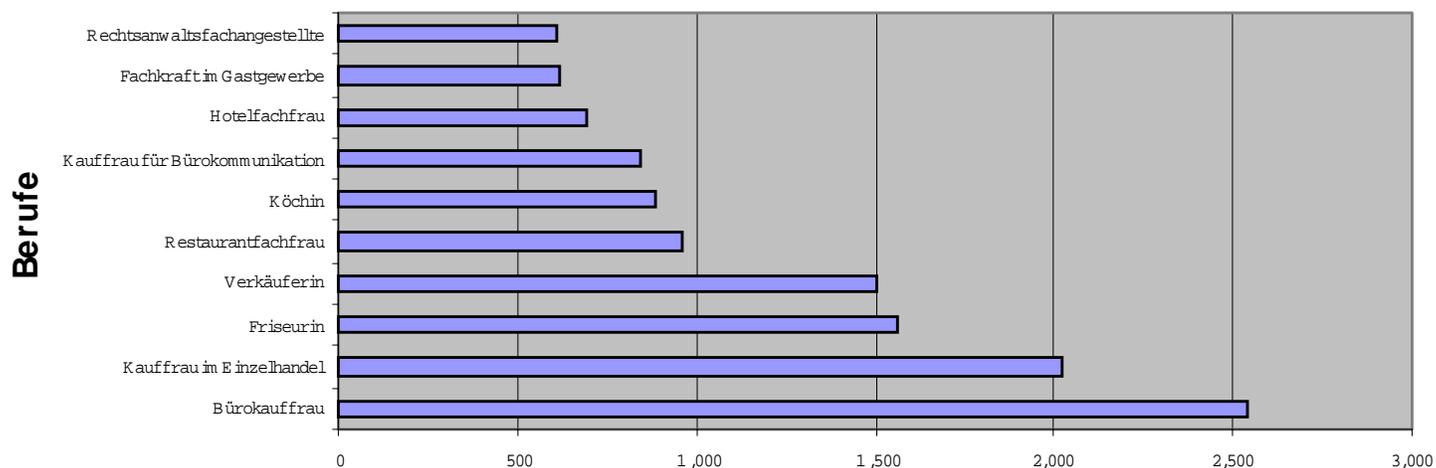
## Appendix

**Table 1**

ARBEITSLOSEN-QUOTEN	2002	2001	2000	1999	1998	1997	1996	1995	1994	1993	1992	1991
alle zivilen Erwerbspersonen insgesamt	17.7	17.3	17.1	17.3	17.8	17.7	15.5	13.9	14.8			
abhängige Erwerbspersonen	19.2	18.8	18.5	18.7	19.2	19.1	16.6	14.8	15.7	15.4	14.4	10.2
Männer	19.5	18.5	17.8	17.3	17.5	16.7	14.1	11.3	11.3	11.3	10.6	8.7
Frauen	18.9	19.0	19.3	20.2	21.0	21.6	19.2	18.5	20.4	19.9	18.5	11.9
Jugendliche unter 20 Jahren	8.9	9.4	10.5	10.6	11.4	11.4	9.6	8.0	7.2			
Jugendliche von 20 bis unter 25 Jahren	20.6	19.7	20.2	18.9	20.7	19.1	16.4	14.7	15.9			
Jüngere unter 25 Jahren	16.4	16.1	16.8	16.1	17.4	16.5	14.3	12.7	13.4			
Ausländer	38.6	36.8	34.8	35.1	33.8	35.7	39.9	34.4	31.4			

**Table 2**

Die 10 häufigsten Ausbildungsberufe von Frauen in Sachsen-Anhalt 2001/02

**Table 3**

Entwicklung der Erwerbslosen im Zeitraum 1991 bis 2001 <sup>15</sup>				
Jahr	Weiblich		Männlich	
	1.000	%	1.000	%
1991	95,0	58,5	67,4	41,5
1993	161,2	64,6	88,4	35,4
1995	162,9	62,7	97,1	37,3
1997	175,1	58,1	137,2	43,9
1999	166,9	54,1	141,4	45,9
2001	148,8	51,7	138,9	48,3

Quelle: Statistisches Landesamt Sachsen-Anhalt, eigene Berechnungen

<sup>15</sup> Gender-Institut Sachsen-Anhalt (2002) : 143

**Table 4**

Entwicklung der Nichtserwerbspersonen im Zeitraum 1991 bis 2001 <sup>16</sup>				
Jahr	Weiblich		Männlich	
	1.000	%	1.000	%
1991	757,8	57,6	556,8	42,4
1993	774,2	55,9	610,6	44,1
1995	739,9	56,3	575,3	43,7
1997	729,8	56,1	570,7	43,9
1999	722,2	56,8	548,3	43,2
2001	712,8	56,7	544,9	43,3

Quelle: Statistisches Landesamt Sachsen-Anhalt, eigene Berechnungen

**Table 5**

Statementbatterie zum Wegzug aus Sachsen-Anhalt (Angabe in %) <sup>17</sup>												
Statement	Weiblich						Männlich					
	<20	20-30	30-40	40-50	50-60	>60	<20	20-30	30-40	40-50	50-60	>60
auf keinem Fall Freunde durch Umzug verlieren	57,1	59,5	70,5	40,5	56,4	75,0	57,9	59,1	60,3	59,4	51,0	66,7
Wer was erreichen will, muss in den Westen gehen	75,9	38,0	47,7	33,8	58,2	43,2	60,0	46,6	46,4	60,9	50,0	42,9
Kann mir nicht vorstellen, nähere Heimat zu verlassen	14,3	44,98	61,4	67,1	67,3	74,4	30,0	39,8	52,2	55,1	54,9	65,7
Finde es spannend, in einer anderen Gegend zu leben	78,6	44,2	23,9	15,3	14,8	24,7	55,0	50,0	21,7	23,2	22,0	17,1
So lange ich Arbeit habe, würde ich SA nicht verlassen	88,9	84,6	90,8	91,7	96,5	90,8	70,0	77,3	86,8	95,7	92,2	88,9

Quelle: Erhebung zur Lebenssituation von Frauen und Männern in Sachsen-Anhalt, 2002

<sup>16</sup> Gender-Institut Sachsen-Anhalt (2002) : 144

<sup>17</sup> Gender-Institut Sachsen-Anhalt (2002): 20