

Occupation of Mothers of Illegitimate Children Born in Berlin (1891)

Abstract

In 1870–1871, 10–12% of all births in Germany were illegitimate; five years later this figure stood at about 8–10%, roughly where it remained until 1914. As was the case for centuries, illegitimate births occurred more frequently in garrison towns and seaports. Other differences are more difficult to explain, including those based on religious confession or the degree of urbanization. The following table shows that mothers of illegitimate children born in Berlin were most likely to be workers, although occupational data are missing for many other mothers. Although such statistics provide one gauge of sexual behavior among different classes, they say more about the economic situation of social groups than about their individual or collective moral behavior.

Source

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-	Per thousand
Workers (without additional specifications)	46.5
No information on occupation	42.0
Catering trade	37.1
Personal service	26.1
Clothing, cleaning	25.8
Trade	10.2
Arts and sciences	9.5
Health care services	6.8

Source: *Statistisches Jahrbuch* 1891, p. 44, quoted in H. Neumann, “Die unehelichen Kinder in Berlin,” *Jahrbücher für Nationalökonomie und Statistik*, 3rd series, vol. 7 (1894), pp. 516–20; original German data reprinted in Gerhard A. Ritter and Jürgen Kocka, eds., *Deutsche Sozialgeschichte 1870–1914. Dokumente und Skizzen*, 3rd ed. Munich: C. H. Beck, 1982, p. 251.

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