

Women experience a significant drop in income from employment after marriage in Germany, with earnings decreasing by an average of 20%, according to a study by Munich's IFO Institute and the University of Oslo.

The research, titled "The Marriage Earnings Gap," attributes this decline to reduced working hours or complete withdrawal from the workforce because of increased responsibilities. In contrast, men's earnings remain unchanged after marriage.

Income gap widens after marriage

The study, based on pension insurance data, found that income differences between men and women grow significantly after marriage, regardless of whether they have children. "Our research shows that the income differences between men and women increase in marriage, regardless of the birth of children," said IFO researcher Elena Herold.

Though men's earnings remain stable, women's income declines steadily over several years. Herold explained that this drop is not solely due to marriage-related childbirth.

Even when that factor is removed, women's earnings still decrease by 20%, and when childbirth is included, the decline reaches nearly 50%.

The study also found that cohabitation does not produce the same financial impact. "For couples who lived together before marriage, we see no different effects than those who only move in together with the wedding," Herold said.

She suggested that the greater legal security provided by marriage likely encourages women to reduce their working hours.