

Sociology of Children and Childhood RN 04
Biennial Report 2015-17

Outgoing Coordinators:

Nigel Thomas (University of Central Lancashire)
Griet Roets (Ghent University)

Incoming Coordinators:

Cath Larkins (University of Central Lancashire) – clarkins@uclan.ac.uk
Daniel Stoecklin (Université de Genève) – daniel.stoecklin@unige.ch
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Board Members: (names in bold are new members appointed in 2017)

Maarit Alasuutari (University of Jyväskylä, Finland)
Claudio Baraldi (University of Modena and Reggio Emilia, Italy)
Tom Cockburn (Edge Hill University, UK)
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Cath Larkins (University of Central Lancashire, UK)
Manon Lavaud (Roskilde University, Denmark)
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Yannis Pechtelidis (University of Thessaly, Greece)
Griet Roets (Ghent University, Belgium)
Maria Roth (Babes-Bolyai University, Romania)
Daniel Stoecklin (University of Geneva, Switzerland)
Nigel Thomas (University of Central Lancashire, UK)
Hanne Warming (Roskilde University, Denmark)

Activities

We took a full part in the biennial conferences in Prague 2015 and Athens 2017, with strong paper streams in a wide range of sub-fields (78 papers and 17 posters in Prague, 68 session papers plus a semi-plenary in Athens). In Athens we made a particular effort to connect with local researchers and practitioners, with a special focus on our semi-plenary theme of children as refugees as migrants. Dimitra Makrinioti of the University of Athens, and Spyros Koulocheris of the Greek Committee for Refugees, both attended the semi-plenary and other events in our programme.

We were pleased with the success of our semi-plenary (although we suspect that attendance might have been higher if it had been on at the same time as another session on migration) and we are keen to organise another for 2019 in Paris. We have already begun informal discussions with the coordinators of RN30 Youth and Generation about a possible joint event.

Following our successful mid-term symposia in 2012 in Jyväskylä and 2014 in Modena, we held a third mid-term symposium in May 2016 in Ghent, hosted by the University of Ghent in collaboration with the Flemish Children's Rights Commissioner. The theme was Childhood, Children's Rights and Citizenship. Once again there was an emphasis on theorising, reflecting the position of the sociology of childhood as an emergent field, and with a limited number of participants in order to maximise the opportunity for dialogue. A planning group, comprising the coordinators and local scholars, is currently organizing our fourth mid-term symposium in May 2018 in Lisbon in consultation with the Board Members.

Aspirations

We plan to suggest to the ESA Executive that it is time to consider inviting a plenary presentation in the next biennial conference that reflects work over recent decades in the sociology of childhood. The board and network members are asked to make concrete suggestions to the new coordinators.

The number of Board Members (22) is an indication of the strength of our research network. The inclusion of new representatives from Greece and Romania reflects our aspiration towards greater geographical coverage. Some countries are however still missing (notably The Netherlands, Sweden, Austria...)

We are considering introducing a new model (discussed in Athens): papers distributed prior to the symposium, presenters introduce their papers in a few minutes, leaving more time for discussion. This would respond to the crucial need for more discussion and debate, going beyond presentations. The main constraint in this new model is that attendees would be expected to have read all the papers before presentations. Although this model is not restricting attendance in the biennial conferences, but making it less attractive to people who are not part of the network (as they would only have had access to the abstracts and not to the papers), it is probably more appropriate for mid-term symposia. The new model would not alter the time frame: the members of the Board at the Business meeting in Athens voted for 4 papers (15') in 90 minutes.

Note to ESA Office:

The outgoing coordinators wish to place on record that we were very pleased with the support we received from the conference organisers, and appreciate the efforts made by Dagmar and colleagues at a difficult time for the organisation.

22 December 2017

Nigel Thomas Griet Roets Cath Larkins Daniel Stoecklin Lucia del Moral Espin