

RN13 Newsletter

Sociology of Families and Intimate Lives

Research Network 13 of the European Sociological Association (ESA)

Invitation for Membership



European
Sociological
Association

To those of you who are researching on family issues, but are not RN13 members until now: *We want to invite you to join us!* This will cost you only 10 Euros for two years on top of your ESA membership fee. But it will make you part of a European network with regular conferences and own publications. Further, you will regularly receive this newsletter by e-mail.

Becoming an RN13 member is easy. If you are not an ESA member yet, you can sign up [here](#) for RN13 membership together with signing up of ESA membership. If you are an ESA member already you need to first log in into your ESA online account [here](#); then go to the “Become a Member” page [here](#); then go through the registration process by checking “RN13” on the 2nd page just clicking “next” otherwise.

If you have forgotten your ESA login data or if you need any other information about your ESA member status please ask to the ESA secretary Andreia Batista Dias: esa@europeansociology.org

— Inga Laß & Katarzyna Suwada

Sounds of the network ...

*What has happened in RN13 recently? What is happening in the close future?
In this section we want to keep you up-to-date.*

Upcoming Conferences / Call for Papers

**RC33 Methodological Conference in Nicosia (Cyprus),
8.-11.9.2020**

Detailed Submission information: [Submission website](#)
Full text of the Call: [Access call](#)

Members of RN13 - Sociology of Families and Intimate Lives are invited to submit the session proposals and the papers / abstracts for the conference The 10th International Conference on Social Science Methodology (RC33) to be held on 8-11 September 2020 in Nicosia, the capital of Cyprus. Thematic focus - Empirical Research and Society. The conference is organized by ISA RC33.

Deadline for the session proposals submission is Monday, 30 September 2019. Deadline for the papers / abstracts submission is 20 January 2020.

11th Demographic Conference of “Young Demographers” in Prague (Czech Republic), 5.-7.2.2020

The Young Demographers, Department of Demography and Geodemography, and the Geographical Institute (Charles University in Prague, Faculty of Science) announce the 11th Demographic Conference of Young Demographers titled “Actual Demographic Research of Young Demographers (not only) in Europe.” The con-

ference is planned for three days (5th and 7th February 2020) and will take place at the Faculty of Science, Charles University in Prague, Albertov 6, Prague 2, Czech Republic. All participants will have the possibility to present their actual research and discuss it with colleagues from other countries or fields of study. Although the conference is focused mostly on Ph.D. students of Demography, all young (or a bit older) researchers (not only demographers – a section for non-demographers is planned) will be welcomed! If you are interested in participating, please submit the title of your proposed presentation, a short abstract in English (maximum 250 words) and 3–5 keywords via the online registration form before the 22nd October 2019. You will be informed about the acceptance before the 15th December 2019. The working language of the conference is English. Unfortunately, we cannot provide any funding for travel or accommodation expenditures. For more information, please visit [our web page](#). Looking forward to meeting you in Prague!

Call for papers: Special Issue British Journal of Sociology 'Class, Education and Parenting: Cross-Cultural Perspectives'

This special issue brings together current scholarly research on class, parenting and education across cultural contexts. It will be published as the first issue of 2021.

A major line of inquiry in the sociology of education addresses the role of parents in the transmission of cultural capital and the reproduction of social advantage. Perceptions and practices of parenting - primarily through gendered work and responsibilities - are shaped in response to changing requirements and expectations of what parents can and should be doing in relation to children's education and the demands produced by educational institutions. Informed by Bourdieu's notion of cul-

tural capital, studies have developed a range of concepts to describe and discuss the links between parenting, education and class. These include, among others, concerted cultivation and accomplishment of natural growth, intensive and extensive mothering, and parental anxiety. Most such studies address parenting, education and class in the contexts of North America and Western Europe.

Against this background, the purpose of this special issue is to serve as a forum for the cross-cultural consideration of class, parenting and education as elaborated in a broad spectrum of contexts. In bringing together a range of studies, the special issue will seek to highlight commonalities and differences in parenting perspectives and practices, as these relate to children's education both inside and outside of school. We are particularly interested in studies that engage with the theoretical concepts mentioned above; we hope that the juxtaposition of studies from a wide range of contexts will enable theoretical elaboration of the links among parenting, class and education.

In this spirit, the special issue invites high quality theoretical and empirical papers from different methodological approaches that focus on parenting and education in different cultural and class contexts.

More information can be found [here](#).

Call for proposals: Book series 'Sociology of Children and Families', Bristol University Press

Bristol University Press publishes an international monograph series with a focus on childhood and family sociology, edited by Esther Dermott and Debbie Watson. The series covers major global issues affecting children and families. Proposals are welcome.

More information can be found [here](#).

New Publications on Family Issues

- Brandth, B. (2019): "Tough and tender?" Agricultural masculinities and fathering activities. *NORMA. International Journal of Masculinity Studies*. [Access here](#)
- Brandth, B. & Kvande, E. (2019): Fathers' sense of entitlement to ear-marked and shared parental leave. *The Sociological Review*, Vol. 67, No. 5, pp. 1154-1169. [Access here](#)
- Brandth, B. & Kvande, E. (2019): Workplace support of fathers' parental leave use in Norway. *Community, Work & Family*, Vol. 22, No. 1, pp. 43-57. [Access here](#)
- Bosoni, M.L. & Mazzucchelli, S. (2019): Generations comparison: Father role representations in the 1980s and the new millennium. *Genealogy*, Vol. 3 No. 2, 17. [Access here](#)
- Coulmont, B. & Simon, P. (2019): How do immigrants name their children in France? *Population and Societies*, No 565. [Access here](#)
- Kislev, E. (2019): Does marriage really improve sex-

ual satisfaction? Evidence from the Pairfam data set. *Journal of Sex Research*. [Access here](#)

- Kislev, E. (2019): *Happy Singlehood: The Rising Acceptance and Celebration of Solo Living*. Berkeley / Los Angeles: University of California Press. [Access here](#)
- Kislev, E. (2019): Social capital, happiness, and the unmarried: A multilevel analysis of 32 European countries. *Applied Research in Quality of Life*. [Access here](#)
- Mazzucchelli, S., Pesenti, L. & Bosoni, M.L. (2019): Care-work policies: conceptualising leave within a broader framework, in: Moss, P., Duvander, A. & Koslowski, A. (eds.): *Parental Leave and Beyond: Recent International Developments, Current Issues and Future Directions*. Bristol: Policy Press, pp. 241-260. [Access here](#)

- Moss, P., Duvander, A. & Koslowski, A. (eds.) (2019): *Parental Leave and Beyond: Recent International Developments, Current Issues and Future Directions*. Bristol: Policy Press. [Access here](#)
- Schmidt, E.-M., Rieder, I. & Zartler, U. (2019): Interrelated parenting practices: Conceptual foundations of involvement in care work at the transition to parenthood. *Families, Relationships and Societies*, Vol. 8, No. 2, pp. 321-340. [Access here](#)
- Schmidt E.-M., Zartler, U. & Vogl, S. (2019): Swimming against the tide? Austrian couples' non-normative work-care arrangements in a traditional environment. in: Grunow, D. & Evertsson, M. (eds.): *New Parents in Europe. Work-Care Practices, Gender Norms and Family Policies*. Cheltenham, Northampton: Edward Elgar Publishing, pp. 108-127. [Access here](#)

Job offer

Family Studies Research Position at the UIC Barcelona.

We are looking for a researcher to work with the IESF (Institute for Advanced Family Studies), whose one of research subjects is Intergenerational Solidarity within the Family.

Requirements

- Education: PhD in Sociology
- Essential knowledge and professional experience: A minimum of 2 years of postdoctoral experience; High level knowledge of quantitative and qualitative methods of research

Conditions

- This is a tenure-track (4-year) position with a mid-term evaluation
- The position will be based at Universitat Internacional de Catalunya, in the IESF
- Salary: we offer a competitive salary based on the qualifications and experience of the applicant.
- Start date: January 2020

How to apply

All applications must include:

- A cover letter with a statement of interest
- At least two reference letters
- A full CV including contact details

Please send applications to: iesf@uic.es

Application deadline

The deadline for applications is 1 November 2019.

Senior Lecturer / Lecturer in Sociology and Quantitative Methods at the School of Social and Political Science, University of Edinburgh.

Applications are invited for a Lecturer or Senior Lecturer in Sociology and Quantitative Methods, contributing to Sociology, Edinburgh's Q-Step Centre, and the development of a new Research Training Centre within the School of Social and Political Science. We seek a candidate with demonstrable expertise in, and capacity to teach, advanced quantitative research methods and to apply these methods to diverse social research questions and data. The post will be based in the Sociology subject area, and, while substantive specialisation is open, we welcome applications from candidates who complement existing strengths of the Sociology group.

Successful candidates will have a research record with publications of international significance appropriate to the stage of their careers and all candidates must have

a demonstrated commitment to excellence in teaching at a range of levels. With a profile at the cutting edge of sociological analysis, you will further the School's international reputation for research and its commitment to excellence in teaching.

This full time (35 hours per week) open-ended position is available from 6 January 2020. Consideration may

be given to this post being part-time, however the part-time nature of this post must not be less than 0.8fte (28 hours per week).

Closing date: Friday 4th October 2019, 5pm (GMT).

For more information, visit [the vacancies website](#) and enter the vacancy reference 049244.

Communication

Please note that this Newsletter is also available from the RN13 website under the tab 'Reports' [Access to ESA-RN 13 website here](#)

Letter on the chair on Childhood, well-being and parenting

The chair "childhood, well-being, parenting" which Claude Martin (CNRS, France) is the holder, is supported by the French School of Public Health and the family branch of the French Social Security (CNAF). The team is composed of two research engineers and a postdoctoral fellow.

This project aims to:

- Write and provide summaries (working papers) of international literature to understand what is involved in promoting the well-being of children and youth,
- Exploit data from major international surveys (HBSC, PISA, OECD data. . .) to formulate new hypotheses and offer a new analysis,
- Coordinate an international network through seminars.

Public policies for the family and childhood have undergone new developments in recent decades. The topics of subjective well-being or happiness but also parental responsibility have become increasingly important. Among these new programmes, a new sector of intervention known as "parenting support" has emerged in France, as in many other countries.

These programmes directed at parents and future parents raise several questions. These include:

- What changes do these policies bring about with regard to childhood and parents?
- What can we learn from international comparisons in this field?
- On what knowledge are these interventions, measures and programmes to support the well-being of children based on?

- Should we focus on a specific period of childhood?

The "childhood, well-being and parenting" Chair intends to synthesise the relationships between public policies and the promotion of children's well-being.

The Chair has already organized three research seminars in Rennes (France) which mobilized many foreign researchers: The 1st seminar, organized in November 2017, focused on determinants and indicators of well-being. The guest researchers who presented were: Frank Furstenberg (U. of Pennsylvanie, USA), Wolfgang Aschauer (U. of Salzburg, Austria), Michel Forsé (CNRS, France), Michèle Lamont (U. of Harvard, USA), Ellie Lee (U. of Kent, UK) and Jonathan Bradshaw (U. of York, UK).

The second seminar, devoted to the subjective well-being of children, took place in June 2018 and invited the following speakers: Jonathan Bradshaw (U. of York, UK), Michal Molcho (U. of Galway, Ireland), Olivier Thévenon (OECD, France), Laura Bernardi (U. of Lausanne, Swiss), Ilona Ostner (U. of Goettingen, Germany), Kathryn Ecclestone (U. of Sheffield, UK), Ingrid Schoon (U. College London, UK) and Lidia Panico (INED, France).

The 3rd seminar took place in November 2018 and the thematics were: parenting cultures, parenting determinism and child well-being. This seminar brought together: Asa Lundqvist (U. of Lund, Netherlands), Ella Siivonen (KELA, Finland), Jan Macvarish (U. of Kent, UK), Kathryn Ecclestone (U. of Sheffield, UK), Mara Yerkes (U. of Utrecht, Netherlands), Barbara Da Roit (U. of Venice, Italy), Michal Molcho (U. of Galway, Ireland), Ellie Lee (U. of Kent, UK) and Ashley Frawley (U. of Swansea, Wales).

Finally, the last seminar, devoted to child well-being, school and parental mediation, just took place on June 26 and 27, 2019 in Rennes. The following researchers presented their work: Muriel Darmon (CNRS, France), Jan Macvarish (U. of Kent, UK), Maia Cucchiara (U. of Temple, USA), Edgar Cabanas (U. Camilo Jose Cela, Spain), Jennie Bristow (U. of Canterbury, UK), Grant Duncan (Massey U. , New Zealand), Ashley Frawley (U. of Swansea, UK), Patrick Nigel Thomas (U. of Central Lancashire, UK), Michal Molcho (U. of Galway, Ireland),

Emmanuelle Godeau (EHESP, France), Ellie Lee (U. of Kent, UK), Dimitra Hartas (U. of Warwick, UK), Cecilia Von Otter (U. of Stockholm, Sweden), Wolfgang Aschauer (U. of Salzburg, Austria), Kathryn Ecclestone (U. of Sheffield, UK), Michel Vandenbroeck (U. of Gent, Belgium), Cath Larkins (U. of Central Lancashire, UK).

BOOK: Gender Mainstreaming and Gender Equality in Europe. Policies, Culture and Public Opinion - Now on discount 20 percent on Policy Press website

Vera Lomazzi, GESIS Leibniz Institute for Social Sciences and Isabella Crespi, University of Macerata

With gender equality so prominent in public debate, this timely book reviews the impacts of gender mainstreaming on political, social and cultural issues around Europe. It explores the origins and evolution of mainstreaming, the theory's contribution to gender equality legislation so far and its potential to drive change in the future. Drawing on extensive data, the book compares

and contrasts progress in various European countries, taking into account the multidimensionality of gender equality. Finally, the book considers the limits of gender mainstreaming amid economic, migration and political challenges. This important book is a welcome contribution to discussions about gender equality in European societies looking at the interplay of policies, culture and public opinion.

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 6. Current challenges to gender mainstreaming in Europe
- Conclusions

ESA Conference 2019 in Manchester

A report by Vida Česnuitytė & Detlev Lück



The 14th Conference of the European Sociological Association (ESA) took place between the 20th and the 23rd of August in Manchester (UK). Two universities located closely to each other – the Manchester Metropolitan University and the University of Manchester – hosted this largest event for Europe's sociologists. Around 3000 participants from all over the world attended the event. This way, coincidentally but nevertheless quite a meaningfully, a superb example of European collaboration was celebrated in the midst of a country trying to organise “Brexit” and its separation from Europe.

Aside from the political dimension, Manchester proved to be an excellent place for hosting an ESA conference. The two hosting universities have modern buildings and offer many well-equipped rooms. The city itself has a lively multi-ethnic cultural life, particularly in “Gay Village” and “Chinatown”. In the conference week Manchester prepared for the “Manchester Pride”, a large parade and festival celebrating LGBT life.

By selecting the theme “Europe and Beyond: Boundaries, Barriers and Belonging”, the conference organizers encouraged participants to think globally and addressed issues that couldn't appear more timely here and now. The theme was motivated by the fact that also the focus of sociology may still be too often nationally or restricted to Europe, while globalised inter-linkages call for wider perspectives. As boundaries, the conference did not only address those between nations or between Europe and the rest of the world, but also “distance and difference in social interaction, through the ways in which communities and groups are divided from each other by ethnicity, class, gender, sexual orientation and other dimensions of inequality”. Meanwhile, boundaries are reinforced by various intentionally or unintentionally created barriers which also need to be taken into account. Finally, belonging describes a complementary idea of including people

due to specific rationales, such as ethnicity or race, but also by locally and individually choices and understandings of home. These aspects were encouraged by ESA to be addressed and discussed during the conference.



The conference started with a plenary in Manchester's Bridgewater Hall with two quite different but both impressive keynote speeches: "Democracy, Populism and After" given by Michel Wieviorka (France) and "Europe Otherwise. On Decolonization, Creolization, and Inter-Imperiality" given by Manuela Boatcă (Germany). Participants especially were caught by the question on the notion of 'Europe' raised by the latter keynote. The debate of the conference theme continued in the next plenaries with keynotes given by Michèle Lamont (USA), Nasar Meer (UK), Françoise Vergès (France) and Sari Hanafi (Lebanon). Much of attention was given to migration, "refugee crisis" and their implications. Fourteen semi-plenaries addressed further key topics of European sociology. On top of that, the 37 Research Networks of ESA as well as 20 Research Streams held more than 700 sessions and other events (considering the number of research topics on the programme).

The Midday Specials offered useful insights from the perspective of practicing sociology as a discipline: "Funding Opportunities at the European Research Council (ERC)" (a session organised by Apostolos G. Papadopoulos), "Assessing and Evaluating Research and Impact" (organised by Sue Scott), "Meet the Editors: How to Write A Journal Article and Get It Published" (Lena Näre), "Making Sociology Matter Beyond the Academic Journal" (The Sociological Review), "An Alliance for Research, NOT a Research Alliance" (Marta Soler), "How Big Data Changes Sociology" (Kathrin Komp), "Plan S and Open Access: What Kind of Reality Will It Make for Sociological Publication?" (John Holmwood), "Author-meets-Critics: Refugees, Civil Society and the State – by Ludger Pries"

(Lena Näre), and "Disrupting Disciplinary Boundaries" (Apostolos G. Papadopoulos). The topics discussed by the experts in these sessions directly contributed to the competences and knowledge of sociologists in their roles as researchers, authors, project managers or teachers.

RN13 "Sociology of families and intimate lives", as always at ESA conferences, organized own events at the conference in Manchester. In total, that is, together with submissions for joint sessions in which RN13 participated, our network received 201 abstracts. After a careful review process with at least two reviewers per paper, 153 abstracts were selected for oral presentations (which makes an acceptance rate of 74%). In the end, 147 papers were presented at the conference in RN13-related sessions. RN13 organized and chaired 25 own sessions and was involved into organising and chairing another 14 joint sessions together with other research networks. These were: RN01 "Ageing in Europe", RN04 "Sociology of Children and Childhood", RN11 "Sociology of Emotions", RN21 "Quantitative Methods" as well as RN35 "Sociology of Migration". Compared to previous ESA conferences, in Manchester, RN13 had the highest number of collaborations with other research networks ever. Every single joint session was a big success. And also the sessions organised by RN13 alone were well attended, saw presentations at a high quality level and lively discussions.



In summary, the 14th ESA Conference 2019 in Manchester was very successful and an excellent space for sharing recent research results within an international community of sociologists. And, what is important to ESA as well as to RN13, it also offered a good opportunity for young researchers to present their work and receive high-level reflections on their on-going projects.

More information [here](#).

The RN13 Business Meeting at the ESA Conference 2019 in Manchester

A report by Detlev Lück & Vida Česnuitytė

Every two years, at the ESA Conferences, all research networks are obliged to hold a business meeting where they report to their members about past and future activities and where a new coordinator, vice-coordinator and board for the new two-years term is elected. Accordingly, RN13 has held a business meeting in Manchester at the ESA Conference 2019. Traditionally, the slot offered for the business meetings was an evening hour after a full conference day; therefore, also traditionally, RN13 decided to serve some wine and ginger cookies to make the attendance somewhat more rewarding. The agenda of the RN13 business meeting included four main topics: a biennial activity report 2017-2019, a report on the current RN situation, plans for future activities, and the elections of RN13's boards for the next term 2019-2021.



Within the biennial activity report 2017-2019, RN13's coordinator, Detlev Lück, and further board members in charge of the according tasks, reported on what RN13 has achieved during the last two years. This included, first of all, the RN13 events during the ESA Conferences in 2017 and 2019 as well as the Interim Meeting 2018 in Kuopio (cp. newsletter issue 19). In Athens in 2017, 235 abstracts for were submitted to RN13, and 136 papers were presented in 38 sessions. In Manchester similar numbers had to be organised (see the report in this issue). The number of submissions has declined over the course of the last three ESA conferences. However, the number of papers presented is remaining roughly stable. Neither in Athens nor in Manchester, RN13 succeeded with its proposals for semi-plenary events. However, the collaborations with other research networks for organising joint sessions are successful and growing over the years.

RN13's Interim Meeting 2018 "Families Known and Unknown" was organized in June 2018 in Kuopio (Fin-

land). The event took place at the University of Eastern Finland (UEF), hosted by the local organiser and board member Anna-Maija Castrén. For this event, 64 abstracts had been submitted, 52 participants attended, and 40 papers were presented (37 as oral presentations, 3 as posters). These numbers were only slightly lower than for the Interim Meeting 2016 in Bristol. Two keynote speakers presented in Kuopio: Petra Nordqvist and Ingrid Arnet Connidis. An extraordinary social programme was offered. And, as usual at RN13 Interim Meetings, there was a competition of papers presented by PhD students, with two papers being awarded with PhD prizes of 250€ each.

RN13 board members have been working on seven publications during the last term, including special issues of journals as well as edited volumes, in order to offer its members and conference attendees opportunities to publish their work. The largest publication project is an ongoing work of eight of co-editors from the RN13 board, coordinated by Anna-Maija Castrén, on a Palgrave-Handbook on Sociology of Families in Europe with many contributions and authors. RN13 also published a contribution in *The European Sociologist*, in issue 42 (www.europeansociologist.org), presenting RN13 itself and its work. RN13 has maintained and enhanced its website. And it has continuously published a quarterly newsletter for its members.



The current situation of RN13 is, in at least one aspect, very delightful: The network is continuing to grow. With currently 154 members it has become the second largest research network within ESA (after RN35, Sociology of Migration) – while it used to be number 4 or 5 in the ranking during the recent years. RN13's budget for the last term was 3,330 € and mainly spent on the Interim Meeting 2018 in Kuopio. Aside from 10€

per member, financed by the members' fees, all research networks receive a fix budget defined by ESA's Executive Committee. This amount had been reduced from 2.500€ in the term 2015-2017 to 2000€ in the last term. For RN13 the reduction was compensated by the Interim Meeting's local host Anna-Maija Castrén who found additional funding for the event in Kuopio.

Among RN13's plans for future activities the most certain and the most important one is the next Interim Meeting in 2020. It will take place in Olomouc, in the east of the Czech Republic, at Palacký University. The event will take place from June 15th to 17th 2020. The local organiser is Dana Sýkorová who had kindly offered to host the event. A call for papers will be published soon! Travelling to Olomouc may work via Prague or Vienna. RN13 is looking forward to this event and invites all members to submit papers and attend the conference.

The business meeting ended with the elections. These are the newly elected coordinator, vice-coordinator and boards for the term 2019-2021:

- Coordinator: Jacques-Antoine Gauthier, Université de Lausanne (*new – previously board member*)
- Vice-coordinator: Vida Česnuitytė, Mykolas Romeris University, Vilnius
- Executive Board: Katarzyna Suwada, Inga Laß (*new*), Sara Mazzucchelli, Ronny König, Eric Widmer (*returned, former coordinator*), Pedro Romero

Balsas, Rita Gouveia, Ulrike Zartler, Anna-Maija Castrén.

- Advisory Board: Julia Brannen, Isabella Crespi, Sig-tona Halrynjo, Lynn Jamieson, Elin Kvande, Detlev Lück (*new – previously coordinator*), Claude Martin, Gerardo Meil, Almudena Moreno, Giovanna Rossi, Karin Wall.
- Alice Zanchettin, who was RN13's PhD student and early career representative during the last term, was not able to continue her work on the board. We thank her very much for her engagement!!



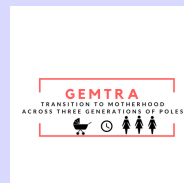
Save the Date!!!

The *Interim Meeting 2020* of RN13
will be held in **Olomouc, Czech Republic** at Palacký University
from 15th to 17th June 2020.

Please save the date!
We will publish a Call for Papers shortly.

A Glance into Current European Family Research

by PAULA PUSTUŁKA, SWPS UNIVERSITY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES AND HUMANITIES, YOUTH RESEARCH CENTER

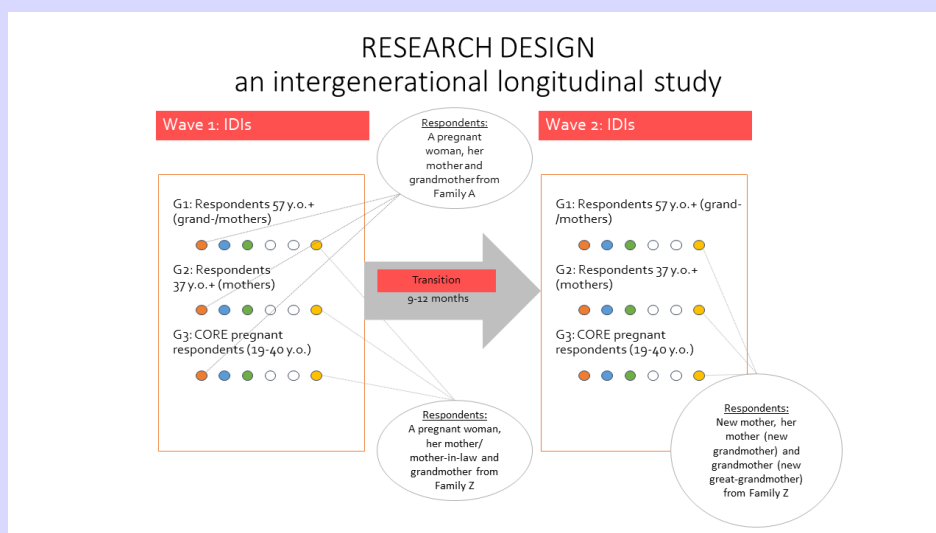


Transition to motherhood across three generations of Poles. Intergenerational longitudinal study [GEMTRA]

This project is financed by the National Science Center Poland, Sonata-13 program, project no. 2017/26/D/HS6/00605

Team members: Paula Pustułka [PI], Marta Buler [PhD student]

Institutional affiliation: SWPS University of Social Sciences and Humanities, Youth Research Center



About

The aim of the GEMTRA (GGenerations of Mothers in TRAnsition) project is to examine the experiences linked to becoming a mother in Poland, both presently and in the earlier socio-historical moments over the last half-century. Generally, it has been demonstrated that the so-called transition to motherhood – which means becoming a mother for the first time – constitutes a turning point in a woman's biography (Miller 2005). Entering parenthood remains deterministic for being an adult, while also impacting other life decisions related to, e.g. coupledness, kinship, mobility or employment. To date, research depicting how the transition process takes shape in Poland is scarce and little attention has been given to the fact that motherhood 'happens' in a specific biographic and historic moment and is part of what should be studied sociologically as (inter)generational experience (see Pilcher

2017). With GEMTRA, we want to showcase continuity and change within the experiences and challenges associated with becoming a mother by looking at three generations of Polish women.

Methodology

To answer our main research question, which is: What does the process of transition to motherhood look like across three generations of Polish women?, we employ a longitudinal design and conduct two waves of interviews. Within our Qualitative Longitudinal Study under the format developed by Neale (2019), during the first wave of the interviews (W1), we seek out women expecting their first child (noted as Generation 3, G3), as well as their mothers or mothers-in-law (both G2) and grandmothers (G1; if feasible).

The second wave of the interviews (W2) will take place after between 9 to 12 months since the first research encounters. At that point, we will be able to speak with the new mothers, new grandmothers and new great-grandmothers. With a variety in the transition patters – especially age at first motherhood - in Poland, we interview women of different ages, while also trying to account for diversity in socio-spatial and class backgrounds. All in all, ca. 100 biographic interviews will be conducted in the GEMTRA project.

The GEMTRA study looks at women in families in a prospective (pregnant women, future grandmothers) but also retrospective manner (women recounting their entire family biographies in families of origin and family of procreation. The QLS approach will allow us to see ‘social change’ and ‘family/intergenerational’ change ‘in the making’ (Neale 2019) thanks to an opportunity to contrast the expectations held by pregnant women and their families with the actual experiences after the child’s birth. Besides examining the transitions to motherhood and transitions to grandmotherhood, we will study whether the existing motherhood models found in previous generations are actually reproduced. One of the main objectives of GEMTRA is to see if new models of Polish motherhood emerge in the early 21st century. Further investigated is the strength of intergenerational solidarity, as we wish to verify whether young mothers ‘take advantage’ of their mothers by obtaining help or advice with respect to caring for children.

Temporality

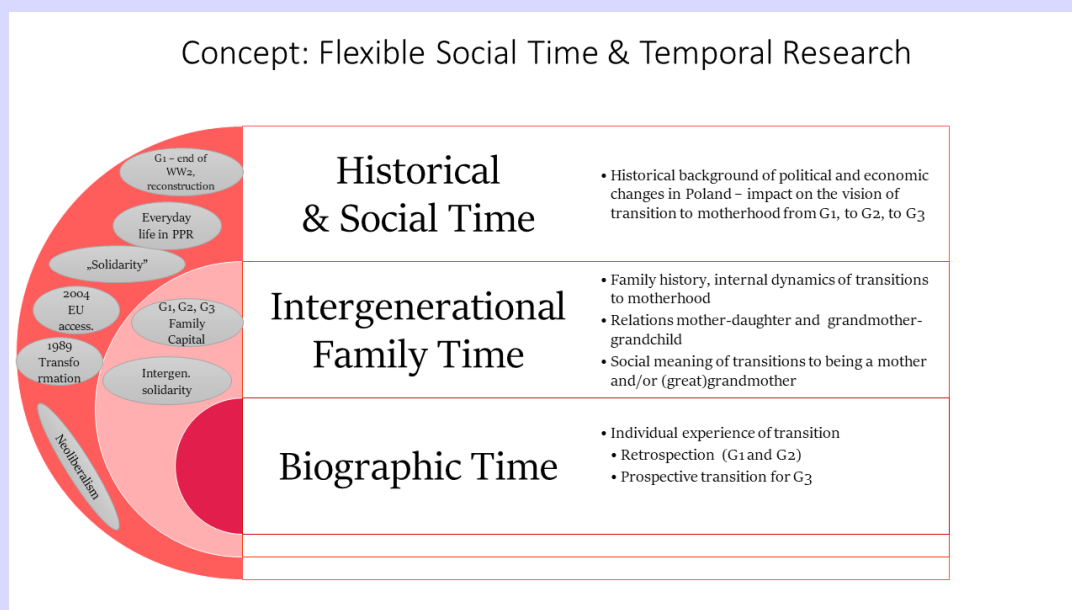
We see GEMTRA as a project that takes on a temporal and generational approach to Polish families over time.

In particular, we study how women are ‘doing family’ (Morgan 2011) and ‘doing motherhood’ on three planes of biographic, social (family) and historical time across three interconnected generations within families. This means we are first and foremost interested in individual biographies and personal stories, gauging how motherhood as an institution and through practices of mothering (Rich 1976) affects the lives of women. We are explicitly posing questions about expectations and views on coupledom, reproductive justice and broader femininity. In addition, as we speak with expecting women, their mothers and grandmothers, we are trying to navigate the ‘middle-ground’ or the meso-level of family relations, notably prompting for histories of the families of origin, intergenerational family solidarity, as well as discrepancies in the visions of transitions across different generations and the potentially resulting conflicts. Finally, the third block of our questions hinges upon broader socio-historical and institutional contexts. In this realm, we are looking at the influences of the political and economic models at the state level, as well as broad motherhood discourses, investigating them both in relation to transitions and ‘doing family’ more broadly.

The three-blocks approach will recur in Wave 1 and Wave 2, though the first round of interviews focuses on expectations and discourse (institution of motherhood), while the second explores actual practices.

Summary of where we are now

The project started in October 2018 and the Wave 1 of interviews is nearing completion, though a highly complex recruitment premise has been a challenge. You can follow the project’s progress at [our website](#)



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Contact: ppustulka@swps.edu.pl

Cartoon



by Detlev Lück

The floor is yours ...

- Do you have contents for the next RN13 Newsletter (December 20th 2019)?
- Do you have new English publications on family issues?
- Do you know about new English publications which you recommend reading?
- Do you know about upcoming conferences or other events?
- Do you have an open position or a job to offer - or are you looking for a position?
- Do you have a research projects which you would like to present in a short article?

Please contact: i.lass@unimelb.edu.au and k.suwada@umk.pl.

The next deadline will be December 10th 2019.