

Research Network 13: Sociology of Families and Intimate lives

Biennial report (2015-2017)

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Activities of the research network

RN13 Newsletter

The new board started a newsletter for RN13 members in December 2013 and has continued to publish this newsletter throughout the term 2015-2017 (and continues to do so). It is sent as a PDF by e-mail to all RN13 members quarterly (by the end of March, of June, of September, and of December). Its first aim is to provide relevant information for RN13 members. A second aim is to make RN13 more attractive and give an incentive for other family researchers to join. The contents of the newsletter are: news on RN13 activities, new publications on family issues in English language, current call for papers, one or two portraits of research projects, and a cartoon.

RN13 website

Through its representative for the website, Sara Mazzuchelli, RN13 has updated and enhanced its website within the ESA online presence, including photos of all board members. The plans for the further website development haven't been realised within the term 2015-2017 due to the technical problems and partially unavailability of the ESA online presence.

PhD student representation

ESA has established a PhD and early career forum in 2013 and has invited all Research Networks to nominate a PhD and early career representative for this forum. RN13 has nominated Pedro Romero Balsas who has continued to be the PhD student or early career representative also for the term 2015-2017.

RN13 Interim Meeting 2016 in Bristol, UK (7.-8.7.2016)

On July, 7th and 8th 2016, RN13 has held its Interim Meeting 2016 in Bristol (UK), at the University of Bristol (Merchant Venturer's Building), hosted by the local organisers Esther Dermott and Tina Miller. The conference theme was "Parenthood: Perspectives on Family Lives". RN13 received approximately 70 submissions and accepted 57 of these abstracts for presentation. In the end, 50 papers were presented in Bristol, among them about 12 presentations by PhD students. The overall quality of presentations was very satisfying. The best two PhD student paper presentations were chosen by the RN13 board during the conference and rewarded with a PhD prize of 250€ each.

There were two keynote speeches, by Mary Daly and by Lynn Jamieson. The meeting was organised into 12 sessions, which partly were plenary sessions and partly one of two parallel sessions. In total, around 50 scientists attended the Interim Meeting. Non-members of RN13 paid a conference fee of 25£ to give an incentive to join RN13.

ESA Conference 2017 in Athens with sessions organized by RN13

For the ESA Conference 2017 in Athens (August 29th to September 1st 2017, conference theme: “(Un)Making Europe: Capitalism, Solidarities, Subjectivities”), RN13 had published a Call for Papers asking for submissions on the following research themes:

- RN13_a*: Sociology of families and intimate lives (General Session)
- RN13_b*: Couple, cohabitations and family forms
- RN13_c*: Couple formation and marriage markets
- RN13_d*: Family planning and fertility
- RN13_e*: Infertility and reproductive technologies
- RN13_f*: Work-family balance and work-family conflicts
- RN13_g*: Gender differences and gender relations
- RN13_h*: Parenting and parent child relations
- RN13_i*: Motherhood and mothering practices
- RN13_j*: Fatherhood and fathering practices
- RN13_k*: Families from children’s perspectives
- RN13_l*: Family dissolution and post-divorce families
- RN13_m*: Intergenerational relationships and kinship networks
- RN13_n*: Older people and elder care
- RN13_o*: Families in the context of disability and ill-health
- RN13_p*: Families in the context of economic crisis and poverty
- RN13_q*: Domestic and gender violence in families
- RN13_r*: Family policies and interventions
- RN13_s*: Challenges in the legal regulation of family life
- RN13_t*: Cultural understandings of family
- RN13_u*: Migrant, multicultural and transnational families
- RN13_v*: Researching families and the intimate sphere: techniques and methodologies
- RN13_w*: Theorising contemporary families

RN13 received 235 submissions and accepted 195 of them. In the end, 136 papers have been presented during the conference in Athens. These were organised into 38 sessions. RN13 did not assign any submission as a distributed paper.

RN13 also initiated and participated in collaborations with other Research Networks. The following joint sessions were organised:

- RN01_RN13*: How do increasing childlessness and limited family support affect older adults? (Joint Session with RN01 Ageing in Europe)
- RN10_RN13*: Cyberbullying: Challenges and Future Possibilities in Schools and in Families (Joint Session with RN10 Sociology of Education)
- RN11_RN13*: Emotions in Families and Intimate Life (Joint Session with RN11 Sociology of Emotions)
- RN13_RN14*: Labour markets and welfare states in transition: Barriers and opportunities for work-family reconciliation and gender equality (Joint Session with RN14 Gender Relations in the Labour Market and the Welfare State)
- RN13_RN34*: Families, Gender Roles and Religions in Times of Neo-Liberalism: Different traditions and new challenges (Joint Session with RN34 Sociology of Religion)

For the joint session with RN01 there weren't any submissions to RN13, so that it was turned into a RN01 session. For the joint session with RN14 there weren't any submissions to RN14, so that it was turned into a RN13 session. For the joint sessions with RN10 there weren't enough submissions on both sides so that it couldn't take place. The joint session with RN34 was realised. For the joint session with RN11 there were too many submissions so that 3 parallel sessions were held. With all Research Networks it is intended to continue collaborations also in the future.

Post-conference publications

RN13 has been publishing a number of volumes and a special issue, based on papers presented at RN13 conferences. These projects have partly been realised and published during the term 2015-2017, partly they are still underway, however close to finalisation.

Based on papers presented at the Interim Meeting 2014 in Vilnius, a volume has been published with 12 contributions:

Česnūitytė, V.; Lück, D.; Widmer, E.D. (eds.) (2017): *Family Continuity and Change. Contemporary European Perspectives*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.

Based on the ESA conference 2015 in Prague, three publications are underway and all about to be published:

- a special issue of the ESA journal *European Societies* on "Subjective and Cultural Conceptions of the Family" with 5 contributions, edited by D. Lück and A.-M. Castrén
- one volume on "Making Multicultural Families in Europe. Gender and Intergenerational Relations" with 14 contributions, edited by I. Crespi, S. Giada Meda and L. Merla
- one volume on "Economic Crisis and Family" (working title) with 9 contributions, edited by V. Cesnūityte and G. Meil.

After the Interim Meeting 2016 in Bristol no further publication project was initiated. One reason was that many board members have been occupied with ongoing projects that had been started earlier on. Participants of the Interim Meeting have been invited to edit volumes or special issues, however without success.

Nevertheless, RN13 has maintained close contact with Palgrave MacMillan and Emerald Group Publishing who expressed interest in publishing papers from RN13 conferences.

Plans for future activities

- Currently RN13 is trying to initiate new publication projects, based on papers presented at the ESA conference 2017 in Athens.
- Also, RN13 is intensively discussing and considering the invitation by Palgrave MacMillan to publishing a Handbook on European sociology of the family.
- RN13 will continue to publish its newsletter and is considering adding a new section to it.
- RN13 is awaiting the technical ability to edit its website and is making plans for a significant expansion of contents there.
- For June 2018, RN13 is planning an Interim Meeting in Kuopio (Finland). The Interim Meeting will be free for RN13 members and cost 50€ conference fee for non-members, as an incentive to join RN13. The Call for Papers has meanwhile been published. RN13 is trying intensively to spread it, particularly in research networks in Eastern Europe where RN13 so far has few members.
- RN13 will continue to give out two PhD prizes of 250€ each at its Interim Meeting.