By addressing *Childhood in (Climate) Change*, this 5th mid-term symposium builds on the former mid-term events of the ESA Research Network 04 (Sociology of Children and Childhood) that took place in Jyväskylä (Finland), Modena (Italy), Ghent (Belgium) and Lisbon (Portugal), as well as the exchanges within this network during the bi-annual conferences of the European Sociological Association. It will confront a major issue underpinning these discussions, namely how social theories can account for continuities and change in childhood.

Researching childhood requires not only addressing biological, developmental, cultural, and legal perspectives in critical ways, but mainly analysing their intersectionalities in the constitution of the social ordering of children’s experiences. Hence, childhood cannot be reduced to one of these perspectives: it cannot be understood solely in terms of bodily characteristics, nor in terms of cognitive developments, nor in terms of cultural or legal treatment in specific contexts. It is, rather, an outcome of the encounters of all these factors: childhood encompasses sets of experiences that stem from and engender configurations of biological, psychological, social, cultural, legal and economic contexts.

Theoretically, childhood studies have strong roots in the « social construction of childhood » (Alanen 2015) and (still) rest on foundational critiques that led to a logic of replacing perspectives rather than integrating them in a broader framework. Sociologists of childhood have subsequently, however, contributed further insights by learning from « forms of experience » they observe in, with and within children and extending into wider areas of social theory. These highlight how and why childhood encompasses specific forms of experience in different contexts but also how different childhoods can be constructed and experienced in similar contexts. There is a need for stronger theoretically grounding to our understanding of forms of experience, contexts and interactions and how they contribute to shape and are shaped by life courses.

We know that not only do social configurations constrain and enable specific trajectories, they also induce major changes in the overall environment. Climate change (becoming a climate emergency) is a visible and sensitive outcome of human institutions including their social constructions of childhood. The climate crisis also puts forward new forms of relation between human/non-human animal, materials and emotions. Children are co-constructors of these
interactions, which can challenge established categories (adults/children, nature/culture) and also frontiers between them". How children make sense of the challenges of global warming, how they react to this worldwide threat or how their everyday life is affected by it, is of course also enabled and constrained by the structures of power in human institutions. But climates are not only meteorological, the word climate can also refer to the prevailing trends of public opinion or economic (in)equalities, and any another ongoing aspect of social life.

With the aim of not only understanding but also transforming prevailing trends, the topic *Childhood in (Climate) Change* is of pressing current relevance. We anticipate that it may enable contributors and participants to identify and understand how theoretical accounts of continuity and change in childhood might be communicated to and by our academic peers and the children we work with and for. The potential political impact of such an integration is a crucial question in the face of the many casualties of social, cultural, economic and environmental inequalities.

The 5th Mid-Term Symposium of Research Network 04 (Sociology of Children and Childhood) of the European Sociological Association, will be organised in September 9-11th 2020 at the Centre for Children’s Rights Studies of the University of Geneva, located in Sion (Switzerland), at 2-hours train distance from Geneva airport. It will address the issue of *Childhood in (Climate) Change* by inviting scholars to submit theoretically and empirically informed papers on the following sub-topics (the same topic from different angles):

Children and...
- Changing climates
- Changing childhoods
- Changing identities
- Changing societies
- Changing economies

The number of delegates will be restricted to 30 to enable discussion. The mid-term symposium will be organised around short papers or provocations, with extensive space for open discussion.

**Presentation formats**

There are two formats authors can choose from (both within 90 minutes sessions):

a) a standard presentation of 20 minutes (4 papers-session with 10 minutes at the end for discussion of the 4 papers)

b) a presentation of specific points to be discussed (3 papers-session whereby each author introduces his/her paper in 10 minutes, provided the draft paper is distributed in advance (1st August 2020); each author would exchange with the audience about the specific points within 20 minutes).

The papers will be selected according to quality and relevance to the areas of the mid-term symposium.
Instructions

Abstracts must be written in English in no more than 400 words, include 3-5 keywords, and specify the presentation format you choose (if you choose format b, you engage to deliver your draft paper by 1st August 2020). Please submit your abstract and full contact details as electronic files no later than 31st March 2020.

Send your abstract to RN04SION2020@unige.ch

The notification of the evaluation of abstracts will be communicated by 30th April.

Registration

Registration to the mid-term symposium will be open from 1st May to 30th June. Registration fee: free for ESA Members and non-ESA members. Participation is open to paper presenters as well as to anyone wishing to listen to presentations (places are limited). All participants must self-fund their attendance (transportation, accommodation, food, and if required visa fees, expect for lunches and coffee breaks that are offered to paper authors only).

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24 February 2020