

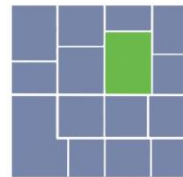


European  
Sociological  
Association

Research Network 03 “Biographical Perspectives  
on European Societies”

in association with

Biographical Narrative  
Interpretative Method (BNIM)  
Study group



Sociological  
Association of  
Ireland

ESA RN03 Coordinators and Board in collaboration with the BNIM study group of the Sociological Association of Ireland (SAI) invite you to participate in:

**A two-day interactive online event: “Biographical work in a time of social distancing: interview(s), analysis, interpretation”, 25-26 September 2020**

#### ***Call for participation***

The mid-term event will focus on methodological issues of biographical research in new societal circumstances. The ‘social architecture’ of teaching has changed, but how might empirical, biographical research respond to the new challenges? What can biographical methods offer in times of social distancing and isolation? Leading biographical researchers will be invited to speak to the RN03 network members and participants on the new evolving landscape of biographical research. At this difficult time the network will also address how to improve participation of the PhD students who are using or considering biographical methods in their research and publications.

Preliminary programme of the online event:

#### **Day one - Friday 25 September**

**Webinar one: A new turn in biographical research in a time of social distancing and isolation.**

**Host:** Lyudmila Nurse (UK)

The main objective of this session is to map challenges and explore opportunities of biographical research in social, educational and health sciences across Europe. It will set a theoretical and practical framework for discussion.

**Webinar two: Creative methods (e.g. walking biographies; visual methods, art-based methods).**

**Hosts:** Maggie O’Neill (Republic of Ireland/UK) and Jane Arnfield (UK)

This session reflects upon the creative and imaginative application of biographical methods building upon our long history of research using walking, mobile, performative and arts based methods and the importance of creating time and space for theoretical, experiential and imaginative work in the context of Covid -19.

**Webinar three: Ethic and reflexivity in the relationship between researcher and research participants in biographical interviewing in a (post) pandemic world.**

**Hosts:** Katarzyna Waniek and Agnieszka Golczyńska-Grondas (Poland)

Biographical interviewing often requires face-to-face contact with people. The current situation has not only blocked or severely restricted the possibility of accessing certain individuals (who are digitally excluded, have limited access to the Internet or suitable space to feel free in telling their life experiences), but also challenged our research techniques and methods. The question of building trust, responsibility for interviewees' welfare during and after interviewing, the reliability of the gathered data seems to be more and more important. The session carefully weighs the pros and cons of the online interviewing while also bearing in mind our "immersion" in the situation caused by Covid-19.

**Webinar four: Turning inwards when studying other people's lives: the effects of biographical research on researchers (PhD students' session).**

**Hosts:** Ana Caetano (Portugal), Baiba Bela (Latvia), Agnieszka Golczyńska-Grondas (Poland) and Lisa Moran (SAI, Republic of Ireland).

This session focuses upon the impact of doing biographical research upon the researcher. Acknowledging that researchers are not "faceless interviewers" is crucial to understand that, on the one hand, the way they deal, at an autobiographical level, with the research affects all stages of the study, and, on the other hand, the research can have a direct influence on their personal perspectives, emotions and actions, as well as on their scientific practice. We welcome contributions reflecting on how biographical research can impact researchers in the different stages of research.

**Day two: Saturday, 26 September 2020**

**Webinar five: The Digital Turn? Audio-visual Digital Data Collecting and Analysis as new Approaches in Biographical Research**

**Hosts:** Dr André Epp (Germany) and Dr Piotr Szenajch (Poland)

Technical developments have created new possibilities for biographical expression and self-portrayal, and have become an inextricable layer of experience for the younger generations. Today, audio-visual data such as photos, videos, online blogs, vlogs and social media entries are taken into account in biographical research projects in addition to oral sources, which still form the core dimension of the discipline. This digital change opens a wide area for discussion on methodological, analytical, legal, ethical and field practice issues. The triangulation of dissimilar research techniques and analytical methods or incorporating new data sources into longitudinal, large-scale, international, or intersectional projects are some of the examples from this new uncharted territory. Theoretical as well as research-practice oriented contributions are welcome, including fieldwork and work-in-progress reports.

**Webinar six: Application of biographical methods in health and social care disciplines. (RN03 and Carinthia University of Applied Sciences)**

Host: Kateřina Sidiropulu-Janků (Austria)

The biographical method was always closely related to the social sphere of caring. With its roots in Gestalt psychotherapeutic tradition, the interconnectedness between self-perception, linguistic grasp of life story, coping and healing is at the core of the research method. What are good practices of training social and health care professionals to be able to properly use the biographical method? How do they face contemporary challenges of the biographical method such as not sharing the native language with their clients or implementation of social distancing? Also, taking into consideration the psychological aspects of the biographical work, the question of how much “narrative work” needs to be done by the caretaker themselves in order to be able to provide efficient reflexive work to their patients and clients comes to mind.

**Webinar seven: The Multidimensionality of Vulnerability and Risk in Biographical Research: Ethics, Vulnerabilities and Trauma**

**Hosts:** Lisa Moran and Joan Cronin (BNIM study group, SAI, Republic of Ireland)

This session critically interrogates vulnerability and risk, exploring the multifarious ways that biographical methods are understood in research with people deemed as ‘at risk’ and/or ‘vulnerable’. Conceptualising risk and vulnerability as multidimensional, papers illuminate ethical and practical complexities of utilising biographical approaches with people in vulnerable groups, including women experiencing unplanned pregnancies and care leavers. Significantly, papers illuminate confluence and convergence in societal interpretations of vulnerability and risk, which do not strictly correspond to people’s momentary interactions and narratives. Importantly, papers demonstrate the contested nature of vulnerability, exploring ‘hidden vulnerabilities’ that are part of people’s everyday experiences. Subsequently, we show that more critical commentary is required around risks of re-traumatising participants during and after interviews through eliciting narratives of distressing life events.

**Webinar eight: Orientation session.**

Coordinators: ESA RN03 Board and SAI BNIM study group

Hosts: Agnieszka Golczyńska-Grondas and Aleksandra Sobańska (Poland)

The orientation session will create a virtual platform for PhD students and other beginners in their ‘journey’ with biographical methods, providing an opportunity to introduce themselves in person, to meet and to connect. During the first part of the session we will ask you to briefly present yourself and your research interests. Next, experienced biographical scholars will answer your questions which the coordinators of the session will gather in advance and engage in dialogue that both appreciate the benefits and challenges of doing biographical research.

***Application procedures and deadlines:***

All participants please register online by the 15th of September

If you are interested in session presentation, please download and submit an application form for speakers and an abstract (200 words maximum) to the mid-term webinars organisers: [ESARN03webinars@oxford-xxi.org](mailto:ESARN03webinars@oxford-xxi.org)

***Deadlines:***

Abstracts for presenters (speakers only):	15 August 2020
Acceptance:	25 August 2020
Registration for participation:	15 September 2020
Publication of the final programme:	20 September 2020