
LIVES THEMATIC WORKSHOPS

THURSDAY 6 NOVEMBER (9:00-16:00)

Workshop 6: Family dynamics within the life course in the 21st Century

Géopolis

Organized by Laura Bernardi, Benjamin Moles, Clémentine Rossier, Myriam Girardin, Giulia Spagnulo, Max Reichert, Magdalena Spasic, Julia Sauter, Thierry Rossier (LIVES Family Dynamics Working Group)

Program

9:00 – 10:30 | Session 1 – Opening on Post-separation families

- 9.00-9.05 **Welcoming and opening words** – Prof. Laura Bernardi, Coordinator of the LIVES Family Dynamics Working Group
- 9.05-9.45 **External speaker – Rianne van Dijk, Utrecht University**
- 9.45-10.30 **Presentation of the preliminary findings *FamyCH* project**
Flash presentations
- Psychological perspective
 - Sociological perspective
 - Law perspective

10.30 – 11.00 | Coffee break

11:00 – 12:30 | Session 2 – Personal and institutional resources

- 11.00-11.40 **External speaker - Madhavan, Sangeetha, University of Maryland, USA**
- 11.40-12.30 **Flash presentations**
- Clementine Rossier and Philip Abughul, UNIGE**
Presentation of preliminary findings: “FamilEA: The Remaking of Families in East Africa” project
- Eric Widmer, Marlène Sapin and Gil Viry UNIGE & UNIL**
Presentation of preliminary findings: CHX project
- Javier Fernandez-Garcia, (UniGe)**
Between the family, the market, and the state: exploring how Swiss young adults achieve welfare under different institutional and network configurations

12:30 – 13:30 | Lunch Break



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13:30 – 15:00 | Session 3 – Personal networks

13.30-14.10 **External speaker - Vera de Bel, University of Groningen (RUG)**

14.10-15.00 **Flash presentations**

Myriam Girardin, CIGEV, UNIGE

Grandparents caring for grandchildren: support, conflict and ambivalence within family networks

Maximilian Reichert, Erasmus University Rotterdam

Transmission of childcare attitudes and behaviour through personal networks

Benjamin Moles, UNIL

The dynamics of personal networks in lone motherhood: A mixed-method longitudinal perspective

15.15 – 16.00 | Closure keynote - Kelly Musick, Cornell University

Workshop focus

In the 21st century, rapid social, economic, and demographic shifts have profoundly transformed family structures and relationships, making the study of family dynamics more important than ever. Individuals now navigate increasingly complex life courses—shaped by evolving work patterns, changing gender roles, and diverse family forms.

At the same time, families must continually adapt: redistributing resources, responding to institutional pressures, and negotiating new social realities. These dynamics can either cushion individuals from, or intensify, broader social inequalities, economic uncertainty, and changing welfare systems. As such, families play a central role in understanding both resilience and disadvantage in contemporary societies.

A particularly pressing question today—given declining fertility, rising union instability, increased migration, and longer life expectancy—is to what extent non-family ties can complement or even substitute for traditional family bonds (by blood or alliance), and how they contribute to the quality of support networks. By exploring how families respond to change—especially through the use of non-family ties—we can better understand the mechanisms that foster long-term stability or deepen individual vulnerabilities across the life course.

