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FamiliesAndSocieties



Vulnerability and the future of families with children in Europe

Thursday, 1 February 2018
10.00-11.30 am – Conference Room D
United Nations Headquarters · New York, NY

www.familyperspective.org/FaS

Organized by
The International Federation for Family Development (IFFD),
in partnership with
The United Nations Division for Social Policy and Development,
The Wittgenstein Centre (IIASA, VID/ÖAW, WU) Vienna Institute of Demography / Austrian Academy of Sciences
and The European Large Families Confederation (ELFAC)

Programme

Opening remarks

Mario Armella

World President of the International Federation for Family Development (IFFD)

The dynamic entity and growing complexity of families

Ignacio Socias

Director of International Relations, International Federation for Family Development (IFFD)
Partner of FamiliesAndSocieties Consortium

A survey on the living conditions of large families

László Márki

President of the European Large Families Confederation (ELFAC)
Partner of FamiliesAndSocieties Consortium

What causes vulnerability and its reproduction?

Bernhard Riederer

Wittgenstein Centre (IIASA, VID/ÖAW, WU) Vienna Institute of Demography / Austrian Academy of Sciences
Co-leader of FamiliesAndSocieties Work Package 10

Questions & Answers

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Background Note

To understand the everyday realities of modern societies, we need to recognize that family is a dynamic entity, characterized by growing complexity with respect to decision-making regarding transitions over the family life course and the organization of family life. The family can no longer be described simply as a set of well-defined roles; they are negotiated on a daily basis, constructed by interactions between partners at the micro-level, and influenced by macro structures within the political and economic spheres. Work and family lives increasingly influence each other as both women and men engage in earning as well as caring activities, often reinforced by increasing employment instability and precariousness.

Gender relations and related values and attitudes have become more fluid, changing dynamically over the life course in the context of blurring boundaries of family and work life. In this sea of change, those families identified as vulnerable are exposed to greater risks that can be alleviated by well-designed policy. As such, the key policy recommendations that will be presented at the event are based on main findings of the large-scale European Union Seventh Framework project, 'Changing families and sustainable societies: Policy contexts and diversity over the life course and across generations' (FamiliesAndSocieties). The objectives of the project included the investigation of the diversity of family forms, relationships, and life courses in Europe, an assessment of the compatibility of existing policies to ongoing family changes, and contributions to evidence-based future policy-making.

Within the project research was organised in 12 interrelated work packages that focused on different topics. The issues addressed comprise new family configurations and life goals, new gender roles, new meanings of children, the development and spread of artificial reproductive technologies, implications of the changes in the family life course for sustainable societies, inequalities in children's life chances, childcare arrangements and their consequences, intergenerational links, migrants and social inclusion/exclusion, and analyses of crucial family-policy issues in Europe.

One of the twelve work packages addressed possible futures of the families in Europe. Its main objective was to inform policy-makers about possible developments and their potential impact on family needs and family well-being in the long run. In order to meet this objective, several closely interrelated foresight activities were conducted. The research scheme included qualitative as well as quantitative methods.

Cfr. <http://www.familiesandsocieties.eu>.

Expected Outcomes

1. What will be the most important topics for the future of families in Europe?
2. What is vulnerability and why is it so important for the future of families?
3. Which family types are particularly in danger of living in vulnerable situations?
4. How will vulnerability of families with children develop in the future?
5. Which factors might drive the vulnerability of families with children and their well-being?
6. What policies will be relevant to stop intergenerational vulnerability reproduction?
7. What are the implications of increasing union dissolution and re-partnering?
8. How will current and future refugee flows affect future vulnerability of families?
9. What may be future consequences of the ongoing "gender revolution"?

Speakers

Mario Armella

Architect from the University Nacional Autónoma de México. He has worked in different architectural firms before the creation of his own company. In 2016 he was elected World President of IFFD. The International Federation for Family Development is a nongovernmental, independent, and non-profit federation. Its primary mission is to support families through training. Thanks to the extensive collaboration with numerous entities and more than 7,000 volunteers around the world, IFFD programs are currently offered in 66 countries worldwide.

Ignacio Socías

Dr. Socías is Director of International Relations of the International Federation for Family Development, an umbrella organization for more than 200 Family Enrichment Centers that operates in 66 countries, benefits over 90,000 people annually and has been granted reclassification of the consultative status at ECOSOC from special to general. As part of his work for international bodies on family issues, he has promoted different expert group meetings around the world and has been a speaker in nearly one hundred conferences in 32 countries. He has promoted and organized the Global Project 'SDGs and Families' and the Global Project on 'Inclusive Cities for Sustainable Families', and has also represented IFFD in the FamiliesAndSocieties 7FP European Commission Project (2013-2017), the biggest European research on families.

László Márki

Dr. Márki has been leading ELFAC since 2014 and represented the Confederation in the consortium of Families and Societies European Project. From 2000 until 2004, he was president of the National Association of Large Families (NOE), where he has been a member since 1989 organizing the biannual family congresses of NOE. In 2007 he organised a common action of 12 European level family related federations towards the European Commission and the European Parliament in order to allow lower VAT rates for items and services necessary in raising children. He is a mathematician, research professor of the Alfréd Rényi Institute of Mathematics, Hungarian Academy of Sciences. He has held various functions in the Hungarian and the international mathematical community, 1992–96 he was Vice-President of the European Mathematical Society, and since 1 January 2018 he is a research professor emeritus at the Renyi Institute.

Bernhard Riederer

Dr. Riederer received a doctorate in social and economic sciences, a master's degree in sociology, and a bachelor's degree in economics at the University of Graz, Austria. He completed his PhD with a dissertation on the effects of children upon parental well-being. His major interests cover family research and quality of life research (including social inequality). In the past, he was tutor at the Institute of European Law, research associate at the Institute of Psychology, and lecturer at the Institute of Sociology of the University of Graz. In recent years, he was research associate at the Institute of Sociology of the University of Vienna and lecturer at the University of Applied Sciences of the BFI in Vienna. In August 2014, he joined the Vienna Institute of Demography of the Austrian Academy of Sciences. He has participated in different research projects. At present, he is working on the realization of family plans in Vienna and other selected European cities using data of the Gender and Generations Programme. In the FamiliesAndSocieties EU project, he has been co-leader of Work package 10 on Foresight activities and has coordinated the publication of 'Vulnerability and the future of families with children in Europe: Nine questions and corresponding answers'.

