

The Timing of Life: The Organisation of the Life Course in Europe

Abstract:

The module aims at furthering our understanding of the views of European citizens on the organisation of the life course and of their strategies to influence and plan their own lives. Three main research topics concerning the organisation of the life course are to be studied in the set of proposed questions: 1) to what extent do citizens perceive the life course as a structured sequence of life stages, and which events mark the transition from one stage to the other?; 2) do social norms concerning the life course exist, and if so, to what extent are these norms backed by sanctions?; 3) what are the expectations and capacities of citizens concerning life course planning? Based on life course theory, we expect that the three questions have heterogeneous answers between societies with different cultures and institutional settings, and that there is an important intra-societal variation too. Besides its primary scientific relevance, the proposed topics relate to recent public debates about the (re-)structuring of welfare states.

Team:

- Francesco Billari, Università Bocconi, Italy
- Gunhild Hagestad, Agder University College, Norway
- Aart Liefbroer, Netherlands Interdisciplinary Demographic Institute and Free University of Amsterdam, The Netherlands
- Zsolt Spéder, Hungarian Central Statistical Office, Hungary