

62nd International Conference
International Commission on Couple and Family Relations (ICCFR)
„CHANGING TIMES: IMPACTS OF TIME ON FAMILY LIFE“

June 22 – 24, 2015 in Berlin

Report

Abstract:

The 62nd annual conference of ICCFR, which was organised by in cooperation of ICCFR, AGF and WZB Berlin Social Science Centre has come to an end. About 120 international experts from several countries have discussed the main topic from the different approaches and views of policy, social work, therapy and law. The conference was opened on an opening reception on behalf of the German Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth. Caren Marks, the Parliamentary State Secretary to the Federal Minister for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth gave the introduction speech.

The conference was composed of keynotes, discussion groups and workshops. The keynotes were held by Prof. Dr. Jean-Pierre Vanhee, Belgium, as a Counterpart Discussion by Lloyd Godson and Grant Howell, USA and Great Britain on June 23 and 24 and by Prof. Jutta Allmendinger Ph.D. from the German WZB on June 24.

The keynotes and workshop presentations as well as some photo impressions are available on the websites of AGF and ICCFR.

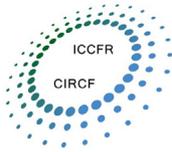
Zusammenfassung:

Die 62. internationale ICCFR-Konferenz, durchgeführt in einer Kooperation von ICCFR, AGF und dem Wissenschaftszentrum Berlin fand vom 22. - 24. Juni 2015 in Berlin statt. Etwa 120 Expertinnen und Experten aus zahlreichen Staaten diskutierten die Rolle von Zeit für Familien aus den verschiedenen Perspektiven von Politik, Wissenschaft, Beratung und Recht.

Die Konferenz wurde mit einem Empfang beim Bundesministerium für Familie, Senioren, Frauen und Jugend eröffnet. Die parlamentarische Staatssekretärin Caren Marks hieß die Teilnehmenden willkommen und hielt die Eröffnungsrede.

Die Veranstaltung setzte sich aus Vorträgen, Arbeitsgruppen und sogenannten Diskussionsgruppen, in denen die Teilnehmenden über ein selbstgewähltes Thema diskutieren, zusammen. Die Keynote-Vorträge hielten Prof. Dr. Jean-Pierre Vanhee aus Belgien, als "Counterpart Discussion" von Lloyd Godson und Grant Howell aus den USA bzw. Großbritannien sowie Prof. Jutta Allmendinger Ph.D. vom Wissenschaftszentrum Berlin.

Die Vorträge, einige Workshoppräsentationen sowie Fotos der Veranstaltung sind auf den Websites der AGF und der ICCFR einsehbar.



Programme

Venue Main Conference: WZB Berlin Social Science Center, Reichpietschufer 50, 10785 Berlin

Opening reception: Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth, Glinkastr. 24, 10117 Berlin

Monday, June 22, 2015

05.00pm Conference Check-In at German Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth

06.00pm Opening reception on behalf of the German Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth

Welcome by Caren Marks, Parliamentary State Secretary of the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth

Tuesday, June 23, 2015

08.30am - 09.00am Check-In

09.00am - 10.00am Keynote: "Tempus fugit - Adults have watches, children have time"
Prof. Dr. Jean-Pierre Vanhee, Belgium

10.00am - 10.30am Coffee break

10.30am - 12.00pm Discussion Group

12.00pm - 13.00pm Lunch

01.00pm - 02.30pm Parallel Workshops:

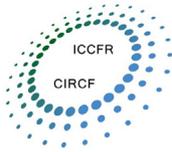
1. "The Benefits of Time - The Importance of the Post-War Boomers to Families"
Convenor & Input: Claire Barnes, USA
2. "24/7 Economy and Challenges for Family Life"
Convenors: Jianghong Li, Ph.D./PD Dr. Matthias Pollmann-Schult, Germany
3. "Changes of Immigrant Family Lives in Germany"
Convenor & Input: Asligül Aysel, Ph.D., Germany
4. "Putting children and families at the centre by acting earlier"
Convenor & Input: Anne Hollonds, Australia

02.30pm - 03.00pm Coffee break

03.00pm - 04.00pm Counterpoint discussion: "Changing legal process for changing time"
Lloyd Godson and Grant Howell, USA/ Great Britain

04.00pm - 05.30pm Discussion Group

06.30pm - 09.30pm Evening reception incl. buffet and boat trip



Wednesday, June 24, 2015

08.30am - 09.00am	Check-In
09.00am - 10.00am	Keynote: "Cut the old pigtails: Towards a new distribution of paid and unpaid time over the life course" Prof. Jutta Allmendinger Ph.D., Germany
10.00am - 10.30am	Coffee break
10.30am - 12.00pm	Discussion Group
12.00pm - 01.00pm	Lunch
01.00pm - 02.30pm	Parallel Workshops: <ol style="list-style-type: none">5. "How do major socio-economic changes such as recession impact on people's relationships, and how can policy respond?" Convenors & Inputs: Dr. Christopher Sherwood/ David Marjoribanks, Great Britain6. "Work hours, work arrangements, and well-being" Convenors: Dr. Matthias Pollmann-Schult/ Jianghong Li Ph.D., Germany7. "Family friendly policies and fathers' work-family balance" Convenor & Input: Dr. Janine Bernhardt/ Mareike Bünning/ Dietmar Hobler/ Svenja Pfahl/ Stefan Reuyß, Germany8. "Childcare and the right to contact and access" Convenor & Input: Melindi van Rooyen, South Africa9. "German family law on the way to a child focused one - a lawyer's experience" Convenor & Input: Birte Goetz, Germany
02.30pm - 03.00pm	Coffee break
03.00pm - 04.00pm	Project Presentations <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Anneli Miettinen, Finland: "Integrating service development with research"2. Juulia Ukkonen, Finland: "E-Health - Challenges and opportunities for families"3. Charlotte Giese, Germany: "Talking about family: a dialogue through social media"4. Melike Çınar, Germany: "Providing Accompaniment Instead of Guidance – Elternchance ist Kinderchance"
04.00pm - 04.30pm	Recap and end of main conference
Followed by	Berlin Wall tour

Following the main conference as follow-up events on June 25:

- AGF European Expert Meeting on "Quality Child Care"
- Visit of "tam. Interkulturelles Familienzentrum", an intercultural family centre in Berlin, Kreuzberg

Layout of the 62nd ICCFR conference in Berlin

The conference was composed of different formats chosen in order to focus on dialogue and intensive interaction. Therefore its basic components were keynote speeches, discussion groups and workshops. An opening reception as well as an evening reception with buffet and boat trip on the river Spree and a visit to the Berlin Wall Memorial rounded up the programme of the main conference.

Opening reception on Monday, June 22, 2015

The conference commenced with an opening reception on behalf of the German Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth. Caren Marks, Parliamentary State Secretary to the Federal Minister for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth welcomed the conference participants and held the opening speech. To the international audience she gave an overview over current priorities in German family policies, which the Ministry is implementing under the key word „partnership“, such as the newly implemented Parental Allowance Plus. She also introduced further activities of the Ministry concerning the topic of family and time.



Sven Iversen, executive director of AGF, Anne Berger and Dr. Insa Schöningh, chairperson and vice-chairperson of ICCFR welcomed the participants and opened the conference. They introduced the programme for the next few days and then, in the evening, the participants gathered for a first get-together and an informal exchange of ideas.



Main Conference on Tuesday, June 23. and Wednesday, June 24. 2015

Keynotes



Prof. Dr. Jean-Pierre Vanhee from Belgium delivered the topical start of the conference. His keynote: “Tempus fugit - Adults have watches, children have time” was at the same time a philosophical as well as a practical approximation towards the concept of time in the history of mankind and also towards the different time perception in children and in grownups. Combining philosophy with families’ experiences of daily life lead him to interesting ideas such as his thought experiment of introducing an entitlement for eleven „Gregorian days of absence” for parents. The lecture showed that time, too, even though it seems to be exactly and objectively measurable, has been interpreted and defined anew again and again and that it therefore can be influenced by humans, if not completely freely so at least to some extent. Accentuated by numerable short film clips and enriched by vivid anecdotes the lecture was an entertaining introduction and sharpened the listener’s attention for many aspects of the topic.

Lloyd Godson and **Grant Howell** are both two renowned lawyers from the USA and the UK, respectively. They held their keynotes titled “Changing legal process for changing time” as a so-called “Counterpart Discussion”, in which they played a ball back and forth to one another in regards to differing viewpoints of their respective judicial systems on family law matters. Drawing from their personal experiences working as lawyers for many years they especially touched upon the following questions: 1. What possibilities are there within the judicial process to support families before a divorce happens? 2. What possibilities do the systems offer to support families during divorce proceedings to avoid unnecessary costs and time expenditure? 3. Is there systemic social inequality inherent in the divorce proceeding and if so, of what kind?



By means of these questions the audience gained deep insights into the developments and the directions of the judicial systems in regards to family law matters in the USA and in the UK, as well as into the current developments concerning marriage and divorce in both these states.



Prof. Jutta Allmendinger Ph.D. of the WZB Berlin Social Science Centre spoke in her keynote “Cut the old pigtaails: Towards a new distribution of paid and unpaid time over the life course” most of all about the effects on families posed by the demographic shift. She focused on how paid and unpaid work should be distributed over the life course in the future and also on consequential changes this would bring to the distribution of work between men and women. This should not prolong the overall duration of gainful employment, but instead paid work should be distributed

differently over the life course. This could mean a better reconciliation of family and work especially for persons aged between 20 and 40 years. But in order to achieve that more flexible transitions into retirement are needed – without everybody having to work longer and longer. She also underlined that currently the traditional division of work between men and women is reaching its limits and that new ways of how to distribute gainful employment and domestic work more equally between men and women have to be found. This division of working time too needs to be considered stretching over the whole life course.



Discussions in „Discussion Groups“

Getting together in so-called “discussion groups” is a speciality of ICCFR conferences. They form each time after a keynote lecture has been held, but they are not given any predetermined topics that have to be discussed. Instead, participants themselves choose the topic. Usually it is inspired by the lecture just heard, but this does not have to be the case – sometimes the group will further discuss a question that came up during a break. A moderator supports the participants and makes sure all participants get a chance to speak.



In order to diversify the discussions and to give them many perspectives the organisers arrange the discussion groups before the event. They try to get heterogenic groups made up of different nationalities and professions.

On Tuesday and on Wednesday, three times in total, five parallel discussion groups took place.

Work in Workshops

Workshops are the third component of thematic work in the main conference. They were designed based on the many proposals that were made in response to an Open Call issued before the event. The conference’s cooperation partners decided to offer all in all nine workshops. Four of them took place on Tuesday, and five on Wednesday.

Workshops on Tuesday:

1. “The Benefits of Time - The Importance of the Post-War Boomers to Families”

Convenor of the workshop was Claire Barnes from the USA. The workshop mainly dealt with the post-war “baby-boomers”. It identified the very role played by this now older generation and its importance for today’s society, and also the impact it has on its descendants’ family life. An important key word in this context was life-long learning to utilize people’s inherent potential for themselves and for their families. With her workshop Claire Barnes introduced and endorsed the ‘Osher Lifelong Learning Institute’ (OLLI) and its approaches.



2. “24/7 Economy and Challenges for Family Life”

Jianghong Li and Matthias Pollmann-Schult of WZB Berlin Social Science Centre had invited their workshop audience to discuss what it means for families that society increasingly lives in a 24/7 economy. The workshop discussed assumed effects on family life and on the well being of children and families. Further invited to present their input were other renowned social scientists from different countries:

- Anna Rönkä, University of Jyväskylä (Finland): Managing family diversity and unpredictable changes: the challenges of managers in a 24h economy
- Wen-Jui Han (New York University and NYU-ECNU Institute for Social Development at NYU Shanghai): Parental Work Schedules and Children’s Well-Being: The case in Shanghai, China
- Till Kaiser (WZB Berlin Social Science Centre): The impact of parental non-standard work schedules on children’s social and emotional wellbeing in Germany



3. “Changes of Immigrant Family Lives in Germany”

This workshop’s convenor was Asligül Aysel, Ruhr Museum. It dealt with the living environments of families of Turkish origin living in Duisburg and questions of educational upward mobility, intergenerational conflicts of values and (missing) societal recognition. After the first generation of Turkish immigrants into Germany, the so-called “Gastarbeiter” has experienced an economic improvement for their families (yet only with “working class environment” low incomes), they now often hope for their children to achieve social upward mobility through education. Hence the second generation feels a lot of pressure from their parents and often does finish a successful educational career – but because of discrimination they are often refused societal recognition in Germany. In the workshop the participants developed ideas of how societal recognition can be improved on the one hand and how conflicts of values and excessive expectations within families of Turkish origin can be tackled on the other.



4. "Putting children and families at the centre by acting earlier"

Anne Hollonds from Australia had invited her audience to a workshop focusing on prevention in family services. Here she talked about the Australian situation and approach on how to reach families and especially disadvantaged families and children. Currently the idea there is to adopt the Scandinavian model of prevention but the approach's political appeal is rather small. Therefore the plan is to integrate already existing services more effectively into the concept of a "one-stop-shop" child and family centre. Anne Hollonds underlined that also in Australia the gap between disadvantaged and advantaged children continues to grow as the kids grow older and that schools cannot balance it out. She underlined that it is important for her work to address the child as well as the parents. Parents need to be empowered not made to feel guilty. The aim is to develop mental and social skills within the children and the parents instead of "infusing" them with education. In her view an evaluation of the measures that have been applied up to now is needed, in regards to the personnel situation as well as to the implementation and integration of different services and professional fields. As a positive example she mentioned the concept of the "Welcoming Package" for babies, which for all families contains basic equipment and acts as a door opener into the families.



Workshops on Wednesday:

5. "How do major socio-economic changes such as recession impact on people's relationships, and how can policy respond?"

Christopher Sherwood and David Marjoribanks from the UK discussed with participants of their workshop how economic changes and recessions influence families and relationships. The discussion was based on the results of their institute "Relate's" recent research „Relationships, Recession and Recovery“. The results indicate a close connection between the last recession (characterized by the increase of low wages and unemployment) and the relationships in families. Secondly the participants discussed the impact of increasing self-employment and freelance work on relationships within families. While on the one hand self-employment may allow for more family-friendly working, it may also mean long and atypical working hours. Participants discussed political measures needed to strengthen familial relationships to develop a stronghold against economic pressure.



6. "Work hours, work arrangements, and well-being"

Matthias Pollmann-Schult and Jianghong Li of WZB Berlin Social Science Centre had invited four other international social scientists to investigate from different perspectives questions of how work arrangements and the well being of families are related with each other. The focus lay on recent research from Germany and Australia on the impact of long working hours on family life:

- Lyndall Strazdins from the Australian National University looked at the question of how children view their fathers' work. Because in Australia fathers tend to work long hours, the children spoke of the resulting conflicts in their family life. The results shown were taken from surveys of 10-12 year old children.
- Michael Feldhaus from the University of Oldenburg focused on work commutes and their impact on family life and parent-child-relations. He noted that while there is a negative impact it only affects women, particularly if there is more than one child in the household. The same is true for the relationship of the couple but this does not seem to increase conflicts or reduce bonds with the child.
- Michael Dockery from the Curtin University, Australia introduced the results of research that focused on the connection between family life and working from home.
- Garth Kendall, also from the Curtin University, investigated fly-in-fly-out workers and their mental health especially during the pregnancy of a partner.



7. "Family friendly policies and fathers' work-family balance"

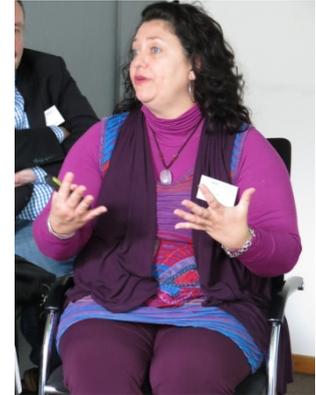
Participants of the workshop of Janine Bernhardt (WZB), Mareike Bünning (WZB), Dietmar Hobler (Sowitra Consulting), Svenja Pfahl (Sowitra Consulting) and Stefan Reuyß (Sowitra Consulting) discussed possible solutions for fathers to better reconcile family and work. For them reconciliation is an especially difficult matter because they find themselves in the dilemma of wanting to spend more time with their family and at the same time feeling responsible for the household income, which is why they would like to avoid any disadvantages in the job world. From the perspectives of social scientists and organizational consultants different measures were introduced and discussed in discussion groups with the participants in order to solve this dilemma.



8. “Childcare and the right to contact and access”

In her workshop the South African family and divorce mediator, Melindi van Rooyen, stressed the importance of childcare and children’s rights to have contact with their parents when they separate.

She spoke about the stress that a separation of the parents creates for children and underlined that this is precisely the moment when the child has the most emotional needs – and yet in this situation the parents themselves may be least equipped to meet them. With the help of case studies participants discussed ways and methods that can be used to support parents and children in such a situation.



9. “German family law on the way to a child focused one - a lawyer's experience”

Different developments within legal systems regarding children were compared and discussed during the workshop of lawyer Birte Goetz from Germany. Starting point for the discussion was her presentation about the German legal system, which could then be compared mostly with developments in the American legal system.

Birte Goetz underlined and her American colleagues confirmed a similar development in the USA, that over the last couple of years the legal systems as a whole have considerably turned towards the child. Now the aim is to make access for the child even more possible to both parents, also after a separation. This shows a stronger recognition of the child’s interests. With the help of case studies methods from different countries were discussed which try to represent the child’s interests in court.

Further Components of the Conference

At the end of the conference Challil Nivedita from India reported on the current situation of families in Nepal and shared her impressions she gained during the last months as a first-responder after the heavy earthquake from April and May 2015.



As part of „Project Presentation” “Good-Practice-Projects” from Finland and Germany were presented.

Anneli Miettinen and Juulia Ukkonen from Finland reported on how to integrate consulting services and research concerning e-health and its potentials for families:

Anneli Miettinen, Finland: "Integrating service development with research".

Juulia Ukkonen, Finland: "E-Health - Challenges and opportunities for families".



Dr. Charlotte Giese from the General Secretariat of the German Red Cross presented the Social Media Activities of the project „Wertebildung in Familien“ (“Building Values in Families”) as one example of how families can be reached through digital media: “Talking about family: a dialogue through social media”.



Melike Çınar of the German Workers’ Welfare Association (AWO) presented the project „Elternchance ist Kinderchance“ (“Parents’ Chance is Children’s Chance”) and gave an overview on how counselling parents confidently works in daily family life in regards to decision making on educational questions and to supporting children at an early stage: “Providing Accompaniment Instead of Guidance – Elternchance ist Kinderchance”.

Further photo impressions of the conference:

