

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

Abstract:

We propose a Round 9 repeat of the majority of the "Timing of life" module originally included in ESS Round 3 (2006). The first wave of measurement occurred just prior to the Great Recession, which abruptly and unexpectedly changed options, resources, and plans for people in every period of life, and in every European country. The second wave of measurement, ten years after the onset of Great Recession, is located at an ideal interval for gathering detailed data on changes induced by the economic recession and other social, political and economic changes (such as the upsurge of right-wing parties across Europe, migration, globalization and digital life), and for gauging the long-lasting effects of these changes on the timing of life in different societies. The repeat module, inspired by a multinational life course perspective, will allow 1) to study changes in the way the life courses of Europeans have unfolded over this period characterised by crucial macro-level changes; 2) to study changes in views that Europeans in different societies hold about the organisation of the life course during the same period. The module covers 1) the actual experience of life course events (through a retrospective reconstruction); 2) the segmentation of the life course into stages of life; 3) social norms concerning life course events; 4) life planning. Gender interacts with all these dimensions and data collection will follow the 'split ballot' design already successfully implemented in 2006.

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