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DEM FAM THURSDAY TALKS

Rethinking Parenthood in Central and Eastern Europe: Historical and Contemporary Perspectives



Thursday, 4–5 PM (CET) online

Magdalena Żadkowska

Mother and Father in The "Empty Nest".

Mar
19
2026

The empty nest phase involves significant reconfigurations of family dynamics, relationships, roles, and emotions. While many psychological studies have investigated empty nest as a period of the family life cycle, sociological studies of this phenomenon are less common and focus on dichotomic questions, such as whether the empty nest brings the risk of marital dissolution or whether it is a chance to renew the relationship between the spouses.

Adult children are completing their education, finding a job, and leaving home at a later age on average in many countries. In many aspects changes in the dynamics of the transition to adulthood in Poland and France are similar to situations observed elsewhere in Europe and the USA. Becoming a parent in an empty nest is an individual process following considerable life changes. Despite its importance, it appears to be treated with less validity than the experiences of mothers and fathers who are navigating through the early stages of parenthood.

Speakers' bio

Magdalena Żadkowska (she/her), is an Associate Professor at the Sociology Institute at University of Gdansk focused on the sociology of couples, families' life-courses, women's and men's careers in STEM and interspecies families. She is a Fernand Braudel Fellow at European Union Institute and an associated member of Centre de Recherche sur les Liens Sociaux CERLIS), Université Paris Cité. Lately she co-edited the book: Żadkowska, M., Skowrońska, M., Giraud, C., & Schmidt, F. (2024). *Reconfiguring relations in the empty nest: those who leave and those who stay*. Palgrave Macmillan.

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