

Abstract of Contribution 3172**ID: 3172****RN26 - Sociology of Social Policy and Social Welfare****Single-parenthood And The Welfare State - Towards Adaptive Universalism?****Martin Wagener**

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The Belgian welfare state was historically structured regarding socio-professional situations and family status, which also referred to different forms of solidarity and care inside the family. Based on a research regarding single-parenthood in Brussels, we will address how recent transformations struggle to better adapt to transformations regarding the way individuals live together with others and how they share parental responsibilities. Inspired by the founding works of Blumer (1971), we will retrace through a sociological perspective how different actors (public administrations, governments, unions, as well as the « civil society » and researchers) have participated at a long process of « collective definition » that constructed single-parenthood as a new category (Dubois, 2009) of regional work policy and federal social welfare policy. Based on a qualitative survey (observation and interviews), as well as longitudinal statistics, we analyse how the various situations of single-parenthood are approached through the tension between the will to assert and recognize the specificities of these situations (cf. targeting), and the choice to favour a universal approach. The notion of "adapted universalism" permits to explain, following our hypothesis, the connections that were carried out the last years with work and welfare policy.