

Workshop

“Cognitive ageing: individuals, institutions, and inequalities”

University of Louvain (UCLouvain), Center for Demographic Research (DEMO)

(23-25 July 2025)

This workshop aims to advance interdisciplinary research on the interplay between social institutions – such as welfare states, labour markets, and families – and cognitive health in later life. Cognitive decline, a critical public health challenge, disproportionately affects women, individuals with lower socioeconomic status (SES), ethnic minorities, and migrants. Despite growing interest in understanding how these inequalities accumulate across the life course, the mechanisms remain unclear. This workshop seeks to address this gap by fostering collaboration among junior and senior researchers from demography, sociology, economics, health sciences, and related fields.

The short-term objectives of the workshop are twofold. First, it aims to advance international research collaboration by bringing together junior and senior researchers from different disciplines and institutions across Europe and beyond. Second, it seeks to provide a platform for in-depth discussions, peer feedback, and revisions of ongoing research projects supported by senior scholars and external experts. The long-term outcomes of the workshop are equally important. One key outcome is the establishment of an international network for the interdisciplinary study of cognitive ageing and inequalities. The workshop will serve as the foundation for a broader research network involving junior and senior scholars from diverse disciplines and institutions. This network aims to facilitate future collaborations, joint publications, and grant applications and serve as a lasting structure for scholarly exchange on cognitive health inequalities in later life.

Organizing committee: Dr. Damiano Uccheddu (University of Louvain, UCLouvain), Dr. Giulia Tattarini (University of Hamburg), Dr. Ariane Bertogg (University of Konstanz)

Program

First tier

- **Day 1 – 23 July 2025.** *Participants:* Open to junior and senior researchers, as well as interested students. Online participation is welcome ([link Microsoft Teams](#)).
 - **11:00-11:30** Arrival and opening
 - **11:30-12:30** Brunch and introduction (Dr. Damiano Uccheddu)
 - **12:30-13:15** Dr. Giulia Tattarini: *"Migration, gender and cognitive decline over the life-course: an intersectional perspective"* (discussant: Enrique Alonso Perez)
 - **13:15-13:30** Coffee Break
 - **13:30-15:00 – Keynote address – Prof. Megan Zuelsdorff**: *"Climate, context, and cognitive aging: Multilevel determinants of brain health and disparity"* (moderator: Dr. Giulia Tattarini)
 - **15:00-15:15** Coffee Break
 - **15:15-16:00** Donata Stonkute: *"Educational Disparities in Health: Hearing Loss, Cognitive Health, and their Comorbidity"* (discussant: Dr. Jure Mur)
 - **16:00-16:15** Coffee Break
 - **16:15-17:00** Dr. Damiano Uccheddu: *"Social network types and cognitive functioning in older age. Evidence from SHARE data, 2010–2022"*
 - **17:00-17:15** Closing remarks
 - **19:30** Social dinner
- **Day 2 – 24 July 2025.** *Participants:* Open to junior and senior researchers, as well as interested students. Online participation is welcome ([link Microsoft Teams](#)).
 - **09:00-09:45** Dr. Ariane Bertogg: *"Crises and cognitive aging: Covid, climate change and institutional change"*
 - **09:45-10:00** Coffee Break
 - **10:00-10:45** Karlene Cabaraban: *"Mind the gaps: The hidden role of work-family life histories in shaping unequal cognitive rewards of grandchild care in Europe"* (discussant: Dr. Ariane Bertogg)
 - **10:45-11:00** Coffee Break
 - **11:00-11:45** Enrique Alonso Perez: *"The effect of becoming an intense family caregiver on cognitive functioning: a matched longitudinal difference-in-differences analysis in Europe"* (discussant: Dr. Damiano Uccheddu)
 - **11:45-12:30** Lunch Break
 - **12:30-13:30** Group discussion / next steps
 - **13:30-13:45** Closing remarks



Second tier

- **Day 3 – 25 July 2025.** *Participants:* Open only to junior researchers (collaborators and organizers)
 - **09:00-17:00** Full day of joint work on the following points:
 - Revisions on collaborative manuscripts
 - Guest editors of Social Sciences & Medicine (SSM): Finalization of a special issue of SSM (i.e., editorial, dissemination strategy, outreach, etc.)
 - Preparation of a report for the F.R.S.-FNRS

Workshop location

The workshop will take place at the Center for Demographic Research (DEMO) of the University of Louvain (UCLouvain), located on the main Louvain-la-Neuve campus. The event will be hosted at the Collège Jacques Leclercq (Place Montesquieu 1), home to DEMO [\[map\]](#). Morning and afternoon sessions, including collaborative discussions, will be held in DEMO's seminar **room B190**, with all sessions also accessible online via Microsoft Teams ([link](#)). Lunches will be provided on-site.

University, faculty, institute

Founded in 1425, the University of Louvain (UCLouvain) is one of the oldest universities in Europe and among the most prominent research institutions in Belgium. The workshop is hosted by the Centre for Demographic Research (DEMO), part of the Institute for the Analysis of Change in Contemporary and Historical Societies (IACS), within the Faculty of Economic, Social, Political and Communication Sciences (ESPO). DEMO is a leading hub for population studies in Belgium, with expertise spanning family demography, health inequalities, ageing, and migration. DEMO plays a central role in shaping public and scientific debates on demographic change and social policy.

Acknowledgement

The workshop is supported financially by the F.R.S.-FNRS, Belgium's principal public agency for funding fundamental scientific research across disciplines, and by the Center for Demographic Research (DEMO), which also provides material and organizational support.

