

A new work-life balance: gender and employment in young people's perceptions in Chile

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The paper explores perceptions regarding family and paid employment expressed by university students in Chile, based on the analysis of quantitative data from the Maule region (southern Chile). We argue that the increasing unpredictability of labor markets has eroded the role paid employment historically has had as the lynchpin of individual's—particularly men's—life project, altering the expectations about both work and family life. Likewise, changes in gender roles have shaped youngsters' ideals about family life. This seems to be the case especially for women, who strongly affirm their economic independence and personal projects, departing from traditional family views. We conclude that young people are demanding a new balance between life (understood mainly as personal and family time) and work. There is also a strong affirmation of the individual project, including a demand for greater gender equality. Although still at the level of projected visions of the future, these findings signal changes in the way the relation work-family is traditionally organized, bringing new challenges for public policy. © 2016 Informa UK Limited, trading as Taylor & Francis Group.

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