

COMMISSION for SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

United Nations Headquarters, New York



United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs
Division for Inclusive Social Development



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62nd Session of the Commission for Social Development

High-level panel on the thirtieth anniversary of the International Year of the Family, 2024

Wednesday, 7 February 2024, 10 a.m. – 1 p.m., Conference room 4, UNHQ

Concept Note

1. Background

The global community recognized that the thirtieth anniversary of the International Year of the Family in 2024 (IYF+30) provides an opportunity to increase cooperation on family issues and to undertake concerted action to strengthen family-oriented policies and programmes. As part of the preparations for IYF+30, Member States and other stakeholders have been encouraged to support research and awareness-raising around the impact on families of new technologies, urbanization, migration, demographic trends and climate change, with the aim of developing and promoting better policies to support families.

New digital technologies help individuals and families to gain access to social services and to improve educational outcomes, personal productivity and work-family balance. At the same time, new technologies have been associated with some negative impacts on family well-being, in particular for children's and adolescents' physical and mental health. Moreover, since the growing digital divide disproportionately affects low-income families and those living in vulnerable situations, improving access to the internet and digital devices has become essential for ensuring that no family is left behind in a rapidly digitalizing world.

With some regional variation, family-based migration (encompassing family formation, accompanying family members, family reunification and international adoption) is a major component of contemporary migration. International movements have various impacts on families. Remittances sent by migrant workers to their families contribute to poverty reduction in countries of origin. In host countries, however, migrants face many challenges, including restrictions on family reunification, discrimination, and lack of access to decent work and quality education. Moreover, transnational families, with members residing in different countries, are often confronted with prolonged separation, marital abandonment, strained intergenerational relations and negative impacts on children's well-being. In this situation, policies to facilitate family reunification and social protection for migrants are increasingly seen as indispensable for their successful social and economic integration.

In today’s world, both internal and international migration are fueling rapid urbanization in many parts of the world. Sustainable urbanization can improve the lives of individuals and families, offer employment and educational opportunities, and help lift families out of poverty. Not all urban families, however, have access to the benefits that urbanization can provide, with low-income families lacking access to affordable housing, reliable and safe transportation, and social services, as well as green spaces where all generations can interact.

The demographic transition towards longer lives and smaller families has resulted in a rapid ageing of the global population, with impacts on intergenerational relations, care arrangements, work-family balance and other family dynamics. For today’s smaller families with more surviving older members, the increased demand for long-term care services places additional burdens on family caregivers, especially women.

Social and economic policies to address these trends and their interlinkages with climate change are indispensable for the achievement of several SDGs, especially those on poverty, hunger, education, gender equality and sustainable cities and communities.

The Commission for Social Development will convene its sixty-second session from 5 to 14 February 2024, with a priority theme of “Fostering social development and social justice through social policies to accelerate progress on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and to achieve the overarching goal of poverty eradication”. On 7 February 2024 from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., a high-level panel to commemorate IYF+30 will focus on *The Impact of Megatrends on Families: Challenges and Opportunities*.

2. Objective and structure

The panel’s main objective is to identify challenges and opportunities and to share best practices on how social policies, in particular family-oriented policies, can best support families in response to the megatrends mentioned above. Interlinkages among the megatrends and their connections to climate change will also be explored. Panellists will offer recommendations for effective policy responses to protect and empower families.

Panellists are invited to structure their 20-minute presentations around solutions and strategies for countries to design and implement effective and inclusive family-oriented policies and programmes. The outcome of the discussion will be reflected in the Chair’s summary as part of the inputs from the Commission for Social Development to ECOSOC’s high-level segment and the 2024 High-Level Political Forum.

Proposed time allocation for the panel discussion

Speaker	Suggested speaking time
Chair: Opening remarks	5 minutes
DESA: Opening statement	5 minutes
Moderator: Remarks and introduction	5 minutes
Panellists: Presentations	20 minutes per panellist
Q & A: From the floor	80 minutes
Panellists: Concluding remarks	5 minutes per panellist
Moderator: Summary and conclusion	5 minutes
Chair: Closing	5 minutes