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**Session 04.09 Family and Personal Networks through the Life Course - Family and Personal
Networks through the Life Course: Support & resources from siblings/family members**

**pap04.09.02 Does geographical distance matter in resilience of family and personal network?
Case of Lithuania in the life course perspective**

[Vida Cesnūtytė](#), Assoc. prof., Mykolas Romeris University, & Researcher, Vilnius University,
Lithuania

In several last decades, family ties are less and less associated with blood and registered marriage ties. Morgan (1996; 2011) conceived an idea that, actually, familial relationships forged through family practices: personal networks' members involved in joint activities eventually create familial ties. That is, humans need to be with others and act together (Smart, 2004; Silva & Smart, 1999), and by acting together they create and make a family. On the other hand, last decades are marked with mass migration and lives of family members in different households. Thus, questions arise: Does geographical distance matter in resilience of family ties? How family ties and personal networks are maintained at a geographical distance? What family practices are possible when members of family and personal network live in particular distance? The research is based on quantitative data collected in Lithuania between November, 2011 – February, 2012. The research results revealed, that family practices like traditions, shared celebrations and even routine and leisure activities forge ties that lead to personal networks' members being identified as a family or "pushed" beyond the family boundaries, regardless of whether they are related by blood or marriage ties. Meanwhile, families with migrant members in some stages of the life course are forced into a state when they are required to perform daily practices with individuals other than those usually surrounded in everyday life. Eventually, such situation may create new ties to be involved into personal network, and even new family members. At the same time, families with migrant members ought to discover new ways of practicing routine activities and celebrating traditional and specific feasts in order to maintain the feeling of "we-ness" with distantly living family members, among which return to the country of origin time to time or reunion in some other country may be mentioned. That is, migratory processes create geographical distance among family members, though newly made up alter family practices may contribute to the resilience of family or even extension of personal network, and it may vary over the life course.