Predicting Cognitive Decline: Evidence From Studies of Lifestyle, Neuroimaging, and Genetics

Thema:

Referent/-in: Stuart J. Ritchie (The University of Edinburgh)

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Ort: Hörsaal 39; Fliednerstraße 21, 48149 Münster

As Western populations age, it is becoming ever more important to find predictors of age-related cognitive decline. The Lothian Birth Cohort 1936, based near Edinburgh in Scotland, is a ongoing longitudinal study of ageing involving over 1,000 people who had their intelligence tested at age 11 in 1947, then returned to be tested again at ages 70, 73, and 76. The participants have also contributed a vast amount of social, biological, and medical information to the study. In this talk, I’ll report on several new results from analyses of the cohort. I’ll discuss comprehensive searches for biosocial predictors of cognitive decline, longitudinal neuroimaging work showing coupled changes in brain integrity and intelligence, and work using polygenic risk scores testing whether genetic liability to disorders such as schizophrenia might predict poorer cognitive health in later life.