



MAX PLANCK INSTITUTE
FOR DEMOGRAPHIC RESEARCH

Kinship Structures, Dynamics, and Inequalities

8–9 June, 2026

Max Planck Institute for Demographic Research (MPIDR), Rostock, Germany 

Program last updated: May 18, 2026

This two-day symposium features global scholars from a variety of disciplines, including demography, anthropology, sociology, and statistics. Learn about research investigating how large-scale sociodemographic shifts reshape family systems within and beyond the household and how these changes contribute to, reproduce, or mitigate social and economic inequality. Contribute to the dialogue!

For more information: [Symposium Site](#) or kinship@demogr.mpg.de

Program At-A-Glance

Monday, 8 June 2026	
9:00–9:45 am	Registration
9:45–10:00 am	Welcome and opening remarks
10:00–11:00 am	Keynote Address – <i>Kath Weston</i>
11:00–11:30 am	Coffee Break
11:30 am–1:00 pm	Session 1 – Beyond the nuclear family
1:00–1:10 pm	Group picture
1:10–2:00 pm	Lunch Break
2:00–3:30 pm	Session 2 – Kinship structure, availability, and inequality
3:30–4:00 pm	Coffee Break
4:00–5:00 pm	Poster Session
7:00–8:30 pm	Dinner at BLAUER ESEL Am Hafen
8:30–9:00 pm	Networking Session
Tuesday, 9 June 2026	
9:00–10:00 am	Session 3 – Data and methods (<i>flash</i>)
10:00–10:30 am	Coffee Break
10:30 am–12:00 pm	Session 4 – Kin loss and bereavement
12:00–1:00 pm	Lunch Break
1:00–2:30 pm	Session 5 – Intergenerational relationships and caregiving
2:30–3:00 pm	Coffee Break
3:00–4:00 pm	Keynote Address – <i>Sangeetha Madhavan</i>
4:00–4:30 pm	Concluding Remarks

Keynote Speakers

Kath Weston, Professor Emerita of Anthropology, University of Virginia, Honorary Professoriate Fellow, College of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences, University of Edinburgh.

Chair: *Elena Maria Pojman, MPIDR.*

Sangeetha Madhavan, Professor of African American Studies and Sociology, University of Maryland.

Chair: *Amanda Martins de Almeida, MPIDR.*

Oral Presentation Sessions

Session 1: Beyond the nuclear family

Session Chair: *Luca Maria Pesando, New York University Abu Dhabi.*

- “Kinship in midlife: Evidence from a new survey on nuclear and extended kin solidarity in Italy.” *Marco Tosi, University of Padova.*
- “Mapping affinal kin: Relationships to parents- and siblings-in law.” *Lisa Jessee, University of Cologne.*
- “Out of sight, out of mind? Lineage and inter-generational family ties in Ghana.” *Jan Graef, European University Institute.*
- “Kinship networks, kinlessness, and supportive friendships across the adult life course: Evidence from Italy, 1998-2016.” *Bruno Arpino, University of Padova.*

Session 2: Kinship structure, availability, and inequality

Session Chair: *Amilcar Matos-Moreno, Pennsylvania State University.*

- “Demographic impact of violence on children’s kinship structures in Mexico, 2000-2024.” *Mary Carolina Sosa Bonilla, El Colegio de México.*
- “Cousinhood in the US kinship system: Evidence from New York City.” *Megan Reed, Emory University.*
- “Nativity-based differences in kin availability for U.S. older adults: Evidence from a population-based survey.” *Renzo Fernandez Escobar, Pennsylvania State University.*
- “Parental health and the changing ‘Sandwich Generation’: Evidence from the PSID.” *Meghann Norden-Bright, University of Wisconsin-Madison.*

Session 3: Data and methods (flash)

Session Chair: *Biyang Yang, National University of Singapore.*

- “Kin-number distributions in a two-sex time-variant demography.” *Joe Butterick, University of Southampton.*
- “Old and new sources for the study of Chinese kinship.” *Cameron Campbell, The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology.*

- “Connecting the Danish population in a new register on relatives.” *Lisbeth Harbo, Statistics Denmark.*
- “Towards the Human Kinship Database: Synthetic populations for global kinship research.” *Tom Theile, MPIDR.*
- “Coresidence with siblings of the household head in Malawi: Data on household structure and siblings of adults in DHS surveys.” *Jesman Chintsanya, University of Malawi.*

Session 4: Kin loss and bereavement

Session Chair: *Ashton Verdery, Pennsylvania State University.*

- “Global trends in the demographics of widowhood, 1980-2020.” *Elder Lara Castaneda, Sciences Po.*
- “From birth to bereavement: Wealth inequality in the life-course experience of kin loss in India.” *Amrit Jose John, International Institute for Population Sciences.*
- “The unequal burden of child loss: Evidence from sub-Saharan Africa and Latin America.” *Maria Laura Miranda, MPIDR.*
- “Maternal bereavement in the context of the HIV/AIDS epidemic in rural South Africa.” *Tabitha Scott, Australian National University.*

Session 5: Intergenerational relationships and caregiving

Session Chair: *Bettina Hünteler, German Institute for Economic Research.*

- “Educational expansion and kinship networks in China: A multi-state demographic analysis.” *Liuqing Yang, Hunan University.*
- “The role of kinship networks in the care system in three Latin American countries.” *Diego Alburez-Gutierrez, MPIDR.*
- “Families, households, networks: Rethinking the relational structure of families through large-scale network data.” *Nicolás Soler, Erasmus University Rotterdam.*
- “Reconfiguring motherhood at the margins: Symbolic and peripheral motherhood in Chinese gay fathers’ surrogacy families.” *Congwei Zheng, University of Glasgow.*

Poster Session

- “Birth cohort differences in family care availability among u.s. older adults.” *Zoey (Xueqing) Wang, University of Michigan.*
- “Who will remember COVID-19? Kinship memory after a global pandemic.” *Mallika Snyder, MPIDR.*
- “Disability in the kinship network: measuring lifetime exposure to kin with disability in European countries.” *Margherita Moretti, Bocconi University.*
- “When are grandparents good for schooling? Disentangling support from disadvantage in multigenerational households.” *Maria Carolina Tomas, Pontifícia Universidade Católica de Minas Gerais.*

- “The demography of grandparenthood in China: Findings from eight social surveys.” *Jiawei Wu, Shanghai University.*
- “Socioeconomic inequalities in kinship and influenza transmission over the lifecourse in England.” *Lucy Goodfellow, London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine.*
- “Modelling kinship dynamics: Present and future kinship trends from analytical and microsimulation models.” *Liliana P. Calderón-Bernal, MPIDR.*
- “Casting a wide net(work): how extended kinship ties support caregiving for older adults in rural South Africa.” *Guy Harling, University College London.*
- “Structural attraction? Can in-laws substitute separated biological parents?” *Fatema Mahmuda Khan, University of Cologne.*
- “How do limited familial ties and community relationships shape health-seeking in older adulthood? Evidence from Indonesia.” *Timothy Qing Low, National University of Singapore.*
- “The formal demography of grandparenthood: Prevalence, length and number of grandchildren.” *Tabitha Scott, Australian National University.*
- “Outliving parents: Inequalities in lifespan progress over time.” *Ingrid van Dijk, Lund University.*
- “Can a panel study be intergenerationally representative? Family size over three generations in the US Panel Study of Income Dynamics.” *Paula Fomby, University of Pennsylvania.*

Note: Only presenting authors are listed. Presentations are listed in no particular order.

Organizing Committee

The organizing committee includes the following individuals from the MPIDR: Saroja Adhikari, Diego Alburez-Gutierrez, Andrea Colasurdo, Sha Jiang, Amanda Martins de Almeida, and Elena Pojman. Organizers also include the following members of the steering committee of the IUSSP Panel on Kinship Structures, Dynamics and Inequalities: Bettina Hünteler (German Institute for Economic Research, DIW Berlin), Luca Maria Pesando (NYU Abu Dhabi), Bussarawan Teerawichitchainan (National University of Singapore), and Ashton Verdery (Pennsylvania State University).

