

**Call for Papers to Special Collection at *Demographic Research***

Title: Kinship Demography: Structures, Dynamics, and Inequalities

Deadline: 15 December 2026

Special Collection Guest Editors (alphabetical, by first name):

- Ashton Verdery, Pennsylvania State University
- Bussarawan Puk Teerawichitchainan, National University of Singapore
- Diego Alburez-Gutierrez, Max Planck Institute for Demographic Research
- Elena Maria Pojman, Max Planck Institute for Demographic Research

Kinship is a fundamental and universal form of social structure that has experienced profound changes around the globe in recent decades due to sociodemographic change (Alburez-Gutierrez et al., 2023; Bengtson, 2001; Jiang et al. 2025; Verdery, 2015). In particular, the degree to which individuals have living kin and benefit from kinship networks varies greatly across subgroups, age, time, and context, with implications for health, wellbeing, and intergenerational support (Caswell & De Vries, 2025; Margolis & Wright, 2017; Sohn, 2023, 2024; Song & Mare, 2019).

The *demography of kinship* is a subfield that applies demographic methods to the analysis of the structure and functioning of families, with particular emphasis on extended kin ties and multigenerational processes. This includes work that moves beyond the household and the nuclear family to examine interactions with extended kin, how kinship networks are formed, maintained, and transformed over time, and how demographic forces shape the availability, composition, and dynamics of kin across the life course and generations. In particular, kinship scholars have called for an increased focus on understudied family forms which include extended kin, adoptees, step- and blended families, cohabitation, and sexual and gender minority families, among others (Furstenberg, 2020; Furstenberg et al., 2020; Mare, 2011; Reczek, 2020).

The kinship demography literature has also highlighted the determinants and implications of the absence of kin, including kin loss and bereavement, kinlessness, and orphanhood. This literature emphasizes how exposure to kin death is a fundamental dimension of inequality that varies across populations and over the life course (Hillis et al., 2021; Smith-Greenaway et al., 2025; Umberson et al., 2017), with different implications for the health and wellbeing of kinless adults (Teerawichitchainan et al., 2015). A particular concern is that the rising number of older adults aging without kin may compound existing sociodemographic inequalities, particularly among the oldest old (Brown et al., 2022; Verdery & Margolis, 2017).

## **Aims and Scope of the Special Collection**

This Special Collection aims to gather innovative scholarship in demography that emphasizes the role of kinship as a basic unit of societal organization. As such, it seeks to call attention to heterogeneities in kinship structures and dynamics and their implications for broader inequalities and social policies.

The Special Collection will welcome work on kinship demography, broadly defined. **We encourage contributions that advance empirical, methodological, and theoretical innovation in the demographic study of kinship, including new data sources, modelling strategies, and conceptual frameworks that extend beyond household-based approaches. We encourage submissions with a strong quantitative component, including relevant mixed-methods work.** We are particularly interested in work that foregrounds variation in kin availability, structure, and inequality across social groups, time periods, and geographies, such as studies that explicitly link kinship configurations to life-course processes, including caregiving, resource exchange, health, and resilience. Submissions that examine how kinship networks shape—and are shaped by—redistributive arrangements, demographic change, and institutional contexts, as well as those that focus on underrepresented and non-traditional forms of kinship, including non-biological, fictive, and LGBTQ+ family forms, or from understudied world regions, are especially welcome.

### **Contributions may answer the following (non-exhaustive) list of questions:**

1. How do fertility, mortality, union formation, migration, and population aging shape and reshape kinship structures across cohorts, generations, and societies?
2. How are kinship networks formed, maintained, transformed, and dissolved over the life course?
3. How do kinship structures vary across social groups and institutional contexts, and what implications does this variation have for social inequality?
4. How do extended, step, adoptive, non-biological, chosen, or otherwise underrecognized kin ties shape social and demographic behavior (e.g., intergenerational exchanges, caregiving, health, mobility)?
5. What does sociodemographic change imply for the experience of aging with limited kin in different world regions?
6. How is family bereavement—the experience of losing kin—distributed within subpopulations and over the life course?
7. What new data sources, measures, and demographic methods can better capture kinship beyond the household and across multiple generations?

Submissions can be made from **15 June 2026 to 15 December 2026** via the [journal's online submission portal](#) as a part of the Special Collection on “Kinship Demography: Structures, Dynamics, and Inequalities.” Submissions must adhere to the [submission guidelines](#).

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