

CAPS Seminar

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Time: 12:00 - 1:00 PM EST

Zoom: <https://syracuseuniversity.zoom.us/j/97581243515>



Projections of Human Kinship for All Countries

Abstract: Demographers have long attempted to project future changes in the size and composition of populations, but have ignored what these processes will mean for the size, composition, and age distribution of family networks. Kinship structures matter because family solidarity—a crucial source of informal care for millions of people around the world—is conditional on kin being alive. Here, we present innovative projections of biological kin for the 1950-2010 period, and discuss what they imply for the global supply of informal care. Overall, we project that kin availability for individuals will decline dramatically. While a 65 yo woman in 1950 could expect to have 41 living kin, a 65 yo woman in 2095 is projected to have just 25 [18.8-34.7] relatives (lower and upper 80% projection intervals). This represents a 38% [15-54] global decline. The composition of family networks is also expected to change, with the numbers of living grandparents and great-grandparents markedly increasing, and the numbers of cousins, nieces and nephews, and grandchildren declining. Family networks will age considerably, as we project a widening age gap between individuals and their kin due to lower and later fertility and longer lifespans. In Italy, for example, the average age of a grandparent of a newborn is expected to increase from 78 y in 1950 to 88 y [87-88.5] in 2095. The projected changes in kin availability will put pressure on the already stretched institutional systems of social support, as more individuals age with smaller networks of family support.

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