



**Sustainability@Leave**  
CA21150



## **Final Conference and MC meeting of the COST Action CA21150**

### **Parental Leave Policies & Social Sustainability**

**26 and 27 May 2026**

**Faculty of Science, Charles University, Prague**

**Albertov 6, room Velká geologická**

**Format:** Hybrid event (ca. 90 on-site participants + online attendance)

The final conference of COST Action CA21150 “Parental Leave Policies and Social Sustainability” will bring together leading researchers, policymakers, and key stakeholders to critically assess the effectiveness and sustainability of parental leave policies in the context of rapid social, demographic, and labour market change across Europe. The event will showcase the main scientific and policy-relevant outputs of the Action, foster dialogue between research and practice, and provide a platform for high-level exchange on how leave policies can better support gender equality, work-family reconciliation, child well-being, and long-term social sustainability. By connecting comparative evidence with policy implementation experiences at national and European levels, the conference aims to strengthen evidence-informed policymaking and stimulate future international research and cooperation in the field of family policy.



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# Programme 26 May 2026

## 09:00–10:15 | Opening session & keynote address

*Opening and Welcome Addresses:*

**Prof. Jiřina Kocourková**, Action Chair, Faculty of Science, *Charles University, Prague*

**Assoc. Prof. Karel Kouba**, Vice-Rector for Accreditations and Quality of Education, *Charles University, Prague*

**Assoc. Prof. Vladimír Krylov**, Dean of the Faculty of Science, *Charles University, Prague*

**Assoc. Prof. Luděk Šídlo**, Vice-Dean for Geography Departments, *Faculty of Science, Charles University, Prague*

*Keynotes:*

- **Dr. Tomáš Sobotka** (*Vienna Institute of Demography*): “Birth squeeze? Fertility decline in Europe in the context of crises and changing preferences”
- **Prof. Anne Lise Ellingsæter** (*University of Oslo*): “Work-family policy in a time of declining fertility”

## 10:15–10:45 | Coffee break

## 10:45–11:45 | Key results and policy-relevant outputs of the COST Action

Presentation of the main outputs and practical implications by the **Action Chairs and five Working Group leaders**, with a focus on findings relevant for policymakers and stakeholders.

- **Action Chair Prof. Jiřina Kocourková** (*Charles University, Prague*) & **Vice-Chair Prof. Margaret O’Brien** (*University College London*) Vice-Chair
- **WG1 Theory: Prof. Alison Koslowski** (*University College London*), “Caring for the Future: Parental leave and pathways to sustainability” COST Action book
- **WG2 Inequalities: Dr. Johanna Lammi-Taskula** (*Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare*), “Mapping the Unknown: Research Gaps in Parenting Leave Inequality Research in Europe” COST Action report
- **WG3 Children: Prof. Guðný Björk Eydal** (*University of Iceland*) & **Prof. Margaret O’Brien** (*University College London*), “Paid parenting leave from a child perspective: a pillar of sustainable development” COST Action white Paper
- **WG4 Terminology: Dr. Pedro Romero-Balsas** (*Autonomous University of Madrid*), “Towards a comprehensive terminology on paid parental leave” COST Action report
- **WG5 Data: Dr. Cassandra Engeman** (*Stockholm University*), “Parenting leave data gaps: What do we need and how are we collecting it?” COST Action report



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## 11:45–13:15 | Stakeholder panel: Parental leave policies in practice – effectiveness and sustainability

**Objective:** To deepen dialogue between research and policy communities on the implementation of parental leave policies, their effectiveness, and long-term sustainability in the context of changing social and demographic conditions.

**Moderator:** Dr. Fred Deven (*Population & Family Research Centre, Brussels*), Honorary Scientific Director

*Panellists:*

- **Dr. Andreas Edel** (*Population Europe*), Executive Secretary
- **Sven Iversen** (*AGF Berlin; COFACE Families Europe; COST Action TRaFaDy*), Director, Association of German Family Organisations; Vice-President, COFACE Families Europe; Vice Chair, COST Action TraFaDy
- **Michaela Marksová Tominová**, Former Czech Minister of Labour and Social Affairs
- **Raúl Sánchez** (*ELFAC – European Large Families Confederation*), Secretary General
- **Majlinda Nesturi** (*UN Women, Albania*), Former Director of Social Statistics, *INSTAT*
- **Dr. Jolanta Reingarde** (*EIGE – European Institute for Gender Equality*)
- **Dr. Visare Mujko-Nimani** (*UNFPA – United Nations Population Fund, Kosovo*), Head of Office

## 13:15–14:15 | Lunch break

## 14:15–15:00 | Book launch & data release

- **Prof. Andrea Doucet** (*Brock University, Canada*) & **Prof. Peter Moss** (*University College London*), **Book presentation:** *Care Leaves and Care Time for All: Towards Caring Democracies, Economies, and Worlds*
- **Prof. Martin Kreidl** (*Masaryk University, Brno*) & **Prof. Solveig Cunningham** (*Netherlands Interdisciplinary Demographic Institute*): **Official release of Czech GGS data for research on work–care balance**



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## 15:00–16:15 | Panel discussion: Future research agendas and international cooperation

**Objective:** This panel will reflect on the key insights emerging from the COST Action and discuss priorities for future research on parental leave and care policies in Europe, particularly in the context of demographic change, fertility trends and evolving family dynamics.

**Moderator:** Prof. Peter Moss (*University College London*)

*Panellists:*

- Prof. Rense Nieuwenhuis (*Stockholm University*)
- Dr. Andreas Edel (*Population Europe*)
- Dr. Thordis Reimer (*Hamburg University of Technology*)
- Prof. Ivana Dobrotic (*University of Zagreb*)
- Prof. Ann-Zofie Duvander (*Stockholm University*)

## 16:15 | Closing

18:00 | **Gala Dinner** in Dancing House restaurant Ginger & Fred, Jiráskovo náměstí 1981/6

<https://maps.app.goo.gl/Vj5AgmeikfmdLRei8>



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# Programme 27 May 2026

## 09:00–09:15 | Welcome and opening remarks

**Prof. Jiřina Kocourková**, Action Chair (*Faculty of Science, Charles University, Prague*)

**Prof. Michal Vrablík**, Vice-Rector for International Affairs (*Charles University, Prague*)

## 09:15–10:30 | Management Committee meeting

- **Prof. Jiřina Kocourková**, *Chair*
- **Prof. Margaret O'Brien**, *Vice-Chair*
- **Dr. Věra Slováková**, *Grant Holder Manager*
- **Dr. Tatjana Zorcec**, *Grant Awarding Coordinator*
- **Dr. Alžběta Bartová**, *Science Communication Coordinator*

## 10:30–11:00 | Coffee break

## 11:00–12:00 | Working Group meetings

- WG1 – room G2
- WG2 – room Z2
- WG3 – room meeting room
- WG4 – room Mineralogická
- WG5 – room Velká geologická

## 12:00–13:00 | Core Group meeting



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