

Editor: Dr Melanie Channon

The British Society for Population Studies Newsletter



Merry Christmas



We've finally reached the end of 2015, which means that another year has gone by and Christmas is upon us. However, having spent most of December so far in Nepal I can't say I'm feeling particularly festive.

If you are a regular reader of the newsletter, then you will know that I visited Nepal just before the April 25th Earthquake earlier this year. This time I was visiting with [Dr Stuart Gietel-Basten](#) to disseminate a project we have been working on concerning [sex-selective abortion](#).

During our time in Nepal we visited the three Durbar Squares in the Kathmandu Valley (Kathmandu, Bhaktapur and Patan). We were particularly interested in Bhaktapur as the 2011 Census indicates that the total fertility rate (TFR) in Bhaktapur is a mere 1.26. This is the lowest figure in Nepal. It is also extremely low given the level of development in Bhaktapur (it has an HDI similar to Ghana). Unfortunately, what we discovered in Bhaktapur was a large amount of devastation remaining from the earthquake. The picture you see was once all houses: homes and shops. These people mainly live in temporary metal shelters now.



While the richer people have been able to rebuild (though they still bear the psychological scars), for those without private means aid has not been forthcoming. Concerningly, Bhaktapur is one of the richest areas to be hit by the quake and yet, many have been unable to rebuild. Christmas day marks 8 months exactly since the first earthquake, though Nepal is a predominantly Hindu country so this is not a significant date there. However, perhaps it is time for the international aid community to reflect on the effectiveness of long term aid efforts.

This will be my last newsletter until this time next year as I'll be on maternity leave for the May and September 2016 editions. My very able replacement is [Dr James Robards](#) from the

University of Southampton.

It only remains for me to wish you a Merry Christmas, and I hope to see many of you in 2016!

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Contents

Page 1: Introduction

Page 2: Postgraduate student rep, BSPS Prize and council members

Pages 3-5: BSPS Conference Report

Page 5: BSPS 2016 Call for sessions

Page 6-7: Travel Report, by Rebecca Sear

Page 7: Di Greaves

Page 8: Spotlight on Research: Ashira Menashe-Oren

Postgraduate Student Representative: Ridhi Kashyap

The 2015 BSPS Annual Conference in Leeds was a roaring success on all counts – with engaging plenaries on a very topical issue, migration, stimulating sessions covering a broad range of themes, a fantastic poster session, and importantly, good food to accompany the good company. This year's BSPS conference also saw a record total of 59 students present their research in presentation or poster sessions. Given a total of 49 sessions including the poster session at the conference, this averages to about 1.2 student presentations per session. Student presenters covered topics across the demographic spectrum with research spanning diverse themes and geographies. Not only was their research wide-ranging, but also were their affiliations with several participants from outside the UK. The conference saw student presenters from universities in Austria, the Netherlands, Belgium, France, Poland, Estonia, and Israel. All in all, it was excellent to see this active participation in a high quality conference and I hope that the BSPS can continue to strengthen its reputation as a friendly yet constructive space for young researchers to present their work.

This edition's student spotlight features Ashira Menashe-

Oren, who was a first-time BSPS participant and presenter from the Hebrew University of Jerusalem in Israel. Ashira's research covers rural-urban differentials in demographic processes in Africa. In addition to her doctoral research, Ashira is a part of a team of young demographers from across Europe who edit a blog on population – <https://demotrends.wordpress.com> -- that provides a platform for researchers, at different stages in their career, to discuss population-related topics.

I encourage you to contact me at ridhi.kashyap@nuffield.ox.ac.uk if you would like to write a piece for the student spotlight section. I also am keen to hear your ideas on how the BSPS can better engage with student concerns, events you'd like to see organised at the BSPS conferences or suggestions for BSPS day meetings. For the social media savvy, join our Facebook group at: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/300124886760445/>.

As the year draws to a close, I wish you all a restful and enjoyable festive season. Merry Christmas and a happy new year!

BSPS Prize 2015

The 2015 BSPS Prize for the best submitted Master's dissertation on a demographic topic been awarded to Sophie Hedges, from the LSHTM. Of her dissertation, *Ethnicity and child education in Northern Tanzania: Do Maasai girls face a 'double disadvantage'?*, the judges commented:

the only dissertation that could be published without a lot more analysis. Very clearly written with an engaging style, a clear statement of the hypotheses and a good literature review (although we would have liked more on the general sub-Saharan context). Good critical analysis and discussion (although we would have liked more on the practical implications of pastoralism for school attendance).

Congratulations to Sophie, who received a cheque for £300. She is continuing her studies at LSHTM as part of the Evolutionary Demography research group in the Department of Population Health.

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BSPS Conference 2015, Leeds

This year, BSPS went north, to the University of Leeds city-centre campus, where the excellent on-site accommodation was an undoubted hit with participants. Over the course of the three days, 270 attended, with international presenters from both Europe and more widely again on the rise. Over the course of the Conference, 178 submitted papers were presented in 47 strand sessions, with 6 sessions running simultaneously in each time slot. With a very large central hall for posters, also used for breaks and refreshments so posters were effectively on display for the entire Conference, over 50 posters were again on display. Additionally, there were well-attended training sessions on *Using GIS for population research*; *Systematic approaches to reviewing the literature*, aimed at graduate students; and *An Introduction to the UK Longitudinal Studies using the national Synthetic LS data spine*. Thanks are due to Nik Lomax, GJ Melendez-Torres, Stuart Basten and Adam Dennett for organising and running these training sessions. On the final morning, there was an innovative panel session on *Measuring ethnicity: the challenges using census and survey data* organised by Stephanie Condon and with a panel of invited speakers.

Two plenary sessions were well-attended. Professor John Stillwell from the University of Leeds spoke on *Monitoring internal migration in the United Kingdom*, and Professor Helga de Valk, from NIDI and Vrije Universiteit Brussel spoke on *European migrants: new demographic questions and challenges*. Reports of these plenary sessions appear below.

The BSPS website at www.bsps.org.uk has the full Conference programme (including all the paper abstracts) available to download as a PDF.

Plenary 1: Monitoring internal migration in the United Kingdom – John Stillwell

In the maiden plenary of BSPS 2015, Professor John Stillwell, well-known member of the University Of Leeds School Of Geography Stat Pack, treated the conference attendees to an engaging talk on Monitoring Internal Migration in the United Kingdom. Having dimmed the lights and gained our undivided attention, Professor Stillwell began by relating his research to us through the experience of moving house, something which many of us have done and found a very stressful experience. That said, any self-sympathy we may have been feeling was short-lived when we were exposed to images of individuals literally moving their house, be it on the back of vans or even on the shoulders of some (what could only be) very good friends. Professor Stillwell went on to outline that while recent research has focused on international migration, internal migration underpins the process of rural and urban change and has defined the UK pattern of settlement over time.

The plenary was anchored around four main research ques-

tions (i) How has migration changed in the United Kingdom over the decade between 2000-2001 and 2010-2011? (ii) What distance did internal migrant actually travel within England in the mid-2000s? (iii) How does the migration intensity and distance of migration compared with other countries, and (iv) How important is scale in the analysis of migration indicators? To address these questions, Professor Stillwell outlined four key dimensions of internal migration: intensity, impact, distance and scale and identified three key data sets: Census data, PRDS/NHSCR administrative data and Acxiom Research Opinion Poll survey data. Before getting into the crux of his presentation, he took the time to acknowledge several contributors, including (but not limited to) the ESRC for the UK Data Service-Census Support grant and the contributions of Martin Bell for the IMAGE project.

So, how has migration changed in the UK between 2000-2001 and 2010-2011? Internal migration levels rose by 12.3%. However, at the beginning of the decade, there were 458,000 migrants with an unknown usual residence. It was demonstrated that, when these individuals were allocated proportionately, the percent increase for internal migration declined to just 4.8%. When adjusting for migration intensity (propensity to change one's place of usual residence within a country) this initial increase reversed to a decline. This decline was driven by decreases in intensity at very young (<14 years) and older (>60 years) ages. We were then introduced to a series of maps showing a spatial pattern of waning counter-urbanisation and increasing re-urbanisation between 2001 and 2011. More specifically, maps presented showed intensification of student moves from parental home to the HI between censuses, counter-urbanisation of people aged 45-59 and relocation of older people aged 60-74 from urban to coastal areas.

To study internal migration distance in England, Professor Stillwell used Acxiom Research Opinion Poll data which asked, "When did you move and where was your previous residence?" The key benefit of this data is the availability of the origin and destination postcodes. To the surprise of the audience, the median move distance was just 2.9km and the mean distance 25.8km. The sub-group analysis further observed that men move further than women, Asian people move a shorter distance than Black, White or Other groups, and that distance increased with income, qualifications and age. Home owners also moved further than council renters. However, when interacted with age, an inverse relationship emerged for renters i.e. while distance moved increased for home owners with age, distance moved for those who rent privately or through the council decreased. It was also shown that inter-district migration distance is decreasing.

For the cross-national comparison, use was made of IMAGE, an international collaborative program, which aims to provide a robust basis for comparing internal migration between countries. IMAGE tries to address the major problems such as

BSPS Conference 2015, Leeds

the different shapes and size of the spatial units that are used for counting migration flows and the Modifiable Areal Unit Problem (MAUP). The results showed that, compared to other countries for which one-year data are available, the UK has average aggregate intensity. Scandinavian countries and Australia, Canada and the US had higher relative intensities, while Switzerland, Belgium, the Netherlands and Germany had similar intensity to the UK and most Eastern European countries had low aggregate intensities. IMAGE software was also used to demonstrate a convergence of migration impact by age group at lower levels, but an increasing impact of 15-19 year olds (students) who, it was argued, were having a considerable impact upon the UK migration system.

Bringing the plenary to a close, Professor Stillwell concluded that census and administrative data suggest modest declines in internal migration intensities in the UK, driven by older people. Secondly, changes in net migration in the UK suggest a spatial pattern of waning counter-urbanisation and increasing re-urbanisation. Thirdly, the inter-district migration distance is decreasing but can vary depending on individual demographic and socio-economic characteristics. Fourth, there has been convergence of migration impact by age group at lower levels, but the impact of students is increasing. Finally, using IMAGE studio shows that UK has average aggregate intensity compared with other countries. So what should we glean from this plenary? The under-exploited origin-destination migration datasets, available from the 2011 census, provide very rich information from which to study internal migration. That said, we should also seek to utilise less-conventional data sources for migration analysis, especially in light of continued uncertainty around the census. We should attempt more cross-national comparisons of internal migration and give more consideration to the issues of scale and zonation when conducting migration research.

Plenary 2: European migrants: new demographic questions and challenges – Helga de Valk

After another day of insightful discussion across the parallel sessions at the BSPS, the delegates were treated to a second plenary session given by Professor Helga de Valk- an expert in migration, families and the life-course. Most of the Conference delegates crowded into the imposing Rupert Beckett Lecture Theatre at the University of Leeds where Professor de Valk's plenary focussed on *European migrants: new demographic questions and challenges?*

Professor de Valk asked the audience to consider international migration in a European context and, whilst acknowledging the recent plight of migratingrefugee and asylum seekers, she turned the listeners' attention to the migration of European citizens and third country nationals around the whole of Europe. She considered three counts: firstly, the

patterns of European inter-country migration; secondly, describing the characteristics of European movers; and thirdly, the consequences that the migration has had on different partnership combinations in terms of their European identity and language use. To emphasise the dynamics and flows of European migrants, de Valk captivated the audience with the innovative migration visuals provided by circular plots, courtesy of the work by Nikola Sander and colleagues at the Wittgenstein Centre of Demography and Global Human Capital. Clearly, European citizens have moved around Europe extensively, but these flows have been unevenly distributed with the circular plots exposing national migration disparities. Ideas of different national flows between countries provided de Valk with the bedrock of her talk on European movement within the wider narrative on international migration.

Given the furore in the media and political circles about international migration, de Valk questioned the audience and asked them to speculate on the percentage of European citizens they believed migrated between countries. She provided evidence that suggested the percentage was between 4 and 9 percent and pointed to the largest migration flows being between Germany and Poland. However, she argued, it was not enough simply to look at country flows but to tease apart these larger migration flows by demographic features, such as family composition, age and sex, to reveal a more nuanced understanding of long-term and transient migration patterns and who moved where and when.

The outcome of a mobile Europe and the movement of people between countries has been many bi-national couples. De Valk questioned the impact these unions had on national identity and language transmission. She then considered family formation and its linkages to identity, in addition to the use of language, as divisors for integration. Looking at the consequences of European bi-national couples from Belgium, the Netherlands and Spain, de Valk looked at where the couple's first met. Using a typology, she pointed to differences in the meeting places of bi-national couples across the three countries. Those in Spain and Belgium predominantly met at Home-Home and Home-Work, whilst bi-national couples in the Netherlands often met in Home-Holiday and Third country places. Arguably, there were differences in the place where bi-national couples met in different countries across Europe, pointing to the different dynamics of couple formation in the European context. Ideas of bi-national couple formation led onto ideas about horizontal and vertical language transmission across the three groups of bi-national couples. Using binary logistic regression on Dutch data, de Valk suggested that couple composition had a substantial influence on the way bi-national couples use language and further how language was transmitted to their children.

Professor de Valk concluded by highlighting the importance of migration within the European Union and how future re-

BSPS Conference 2014, Winchester

search should not focus exclusively on the migration of low-skilled and low-paid migrants, but also explore additional forms of migration such as the movement of the elite as well as skilled migrants. The focus would allow for a more complete understanding of the dynamics of European international migration that could include details of family life and family composition that are vital to shaping an individual/families migration decisions and their trajectories. Furthermore, de Valk postulated that researchers should move beyond solely using Origin-Destination tables and consider more innovative and alternative data sources. These would reveal the multiple moves migrants made throughout the life-course that were often obscured in current data analyses but vital to our understanding of migrant lives and their socio-economic and health outcomes.

*Thanks for plenary reports to: Matthew Wallace
(University of Liverpool) – John Stillwell
William Shankley (University of Manchester) – Helga de Valk*

BSPS Conference poster prize 2015

From the large array of posters on display at this year's Conference, the judges selected two joint winners, both of whom received £50 in book tokens. The posters were:

Childbearing choices of Polish female migrants in Norway – Anna Lobodzinska (Jagiellonian University in Krakow, Institute of Geography & Spatial Management)

and

Fertility and changing patterns of childbearing timing in Colombia – Ewa Batyra (London School of Economics)

BSPS Conference 2016 University of Winchester, 12-14 September CALL FOR INNOVATIVE STRAND, SESSION & GENERAL PROPOSALS

BSPS Council invites members & non-members to suggest ideas for innovative strands & Conference sessions. BSPS is keen to encourage innovative formats, such as panels, forums, training sessions, sessions with discussant, discussions or workshops. Proposals for organisers or offers to organise or lead training sessions would be very welcome. Please be as specific as possible when filling in information on the proposal form attached.

An individual contributed session would allow a co-ordinated consideration of a single topic and would be allocated 90 minutes to include 3-4 presentations & time for questions. Strands would include multiple sessions. Strand or session themes might be focussed on a methodological or substantive topic or a specific data set. Organisers would be able to solicit offers of presentations, or may have these in mind already. All submissions would be made via the Conference online submission form, either individually or as a set. When the call for papers has closed, organisers of strands would take responsibility for selecting suitable submissions for oral presentation & for organising chairs for individual sessions. They would liaise with session organisers as necessary: sessions may be integrated into existing strands if appropriate, by agreement.

If you would like to contribute your ideas, [please complete this form](#) and return to pic@lse.ac.uk by **Friday 8 January 2016**.

Conference attendance is at the presenter's expense, although student members presenting a paper or poster may be eligible to apply for a bursary.

Provisional timetable:

- ⇒ Closing date for proposals: Friday 8 January 2016
- ⇒ Call for papers & posters issued: Mid-January 2016
- ⇒ Closing date for paper & poster submissions: Tuesday 12 April 2016
- ⇒ Early-bird registration rate ends: Friday 29 July 2016
- ⇒ Conference booking closes: Friday 2 September 2016

Travel Report: 3rd Evolutionary Demography Society Conference, October 2015

Rebecca Sear, London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine

The Evolutionary Demography Society (EvoDemoS: <http://www.evodemos.org/>) is a new(ish) society which defines evolutionary demography as the “interdisciplinary science at the intersection of demography and evolutionary biology”. Its first meeting was in 2013 in Odense, Denmark, at (one of) the home institutions of Jim Vaupel, who has perhaps done most to establish and promote the new sub-discipline. I attended its 3rd meeting, held in October in the middle of a forest in the Netherlands, at a convention centre near Lunteren, thanks to an international travel grant provided by BSPS. The meeting alternates between Europe and the US, hosted by the society’s presidents or vice-presidents. This year’s local host was Vice-President Hal Caswell.

EvoDemoS does not restrict itself to human demography, so that the conference was an appealing mix of evolutionary demographers working on a range of species, across the plant and animal kingdoms, and using a range of methods both empirical and theoretical. As is common in evolutionary demography, the conference was strong on comparative papers – comparing demographic patterns across multiple species, including humans. It was also particularly strong on formal demography, leading one other delegate to comment in the bar that EvoDemoS may be one of the last refuges of formal demography, as other (human) demography conferences are gradually taken over by empirical, statistical studies.

EvoDemoS is a small and friendly conference. Their single session format allows all delegates to appreciate the full range of evolutionary demography. My own talk, for example, on the influence of early life environment on human fertility, immediately followed one on early life environments in pike. This talk included an amazing short film of one juvenile pike sibling cannibalising another sibling by swallowing it whole. This was quite remarkable to see, especially given that the two fish appeared to be almost identical in size, and certainly makes human sibling competition look somewhat tame in comparison.



Keynote address by Annette Baudisch

The first EvoDemoS was the first time I came across ‘lightning talks’, a tradition continued at this 3rd meeting, where some presenters are given a mere 8 minutes to present. The idea is to give podium time to as many delegates as possible, but those given speed talks are also invited to bring along a poster, to allow more indepth explanation and discussion of their work over wine. A speed talk is effectively then an advertisement for the poster. While writing a speed talk is certainly challenging, it’s a good way to give exposure to a much larger number of delegates than would be possible under the more usual system of 15-20 minute talks. The mixing up of lightning with longer keynote talks also prevents the audience from becoming completely overwhelmed by the sheer volume of information thrown at them during lightning talks. Some lightning talks did suffer from

the tendency of the speaker to forget they were talking to an interdisciplinary audience, and to concentrate on the methodological details of their research at the expense of its wider significance. But overall lightning talks are a good way of giving audiences a taster of a wide array of new and exciting research in their discipline.



Travel Report: 3rd Evolutionary Demography Society Conference, October 2015

The presentations – both short and long – were all high quality. The keynotes which would have particularly interested BSPS were those by James Holland Jones, of Stanford University on ‘the marginal value of fertility’. Jamie talked about his recent work on the importance of the tempo of fertility for understanding reproductive decisions in rapidly changing populations, illustrated with data from the Utah Population database. Oskar Burger, of the University of Canterbury, Kent, spoke ‘on the pressing need for more evolutionary demography of human fertility and population growth’, and asked ‘what if fertility decline isn’t permanent?’. Annette Baudisch, of the Max Planck Institute of Demographic Research, Rostock, gave a very engaging and historical overview of ‘modelling of evolutionary theories of aging’ (not that I mean to suggest the other talks weren’t engaging, it’s just that my own biases lead me to consider that Annette may have had a harder job of entertaining her audience, given that her subject matter consisted largely of mathematical formulae).

A sample of the lightning talks BSPS members would have been particularly interested in were: Marjolijn Das (of Statistics Netherlands) speaking about ‘the attraction of the city: female rural-urban migration in the Netherlands’; Ilona Nenko (of Jagellonian University, Krakow) presenting data from rural Poland to test whether there is a trade-off between reproductive history and cognitive function in post-menopausal women; Masahito Morita (from SOKENDAI – the Graduate University for Advanced Studies, Japan) discussing the effects of socioeconomic status and sexual conflict on fertility decline in Japan; and Samuel Pavard (from the Ecological Anthropology and Ethnobiology lab in Paris) on how human demographic traits have been shaped by the coevolution between biology, cognition and sociality. Of UK demography, Oxford was well represented – with talks by Felix Tropf and Lin Chen, both of whom spoke about different aspects of the genetics of fertility.

If EvoDemoS could improve in any way, then perhaps it would be by including more social science, which would make it a truly interdisciplinary conference spanning the natural and social sciences. Perhaps this report may go some way towards making this happen, by raising the profile of EvoDemoS among BSPS members.

Di Greaves



Di Greaves, Local Government demographer, gardener, knitter, mapper, locavore and a much valued member of BSPS, passed away on Tuesday 24th November 2015. Di worked as a researcher for Powys County Council for 22 years and was an active member of the Wales Statistical Liaison Committee and its forerunners. She was part of the back bone of local government research in Wales and the wider UK stats and analysis community. Her work was filled with compassion, comprehension and a love of knowing, and was always tempered with a proper dedication to using what we researchers learn to make a positive difference for the people and communities we serve and live amongst.

Di had been diagnosed with cancer in 2013, had been in remission and had retired in 2014.

With thanks to information from Janine Edwards and Alison Vaughan.

Spotlight on Research:

Ashira Menashe-Oren, Hebrew University of Jerusalem

I am a demography PhD student, supervised by Professor Guy Stecklov at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem (Israel). I hold a BA in Sociology and Anthropology and an MA in Demography from the Hebrew University. My MA thesis examined health care professionals and their impact on health outcomes in Sub-Saharan Africa.

My research broadly focuses on population differences between rural and urban sectors in Africa and their consequences. One question of my doctoral thesis aims in particular to gauge the gap in age structures between rural and urban populations over the course of the demographic transition and urbanisation. The differential pace of declines in mortality and fertility rates across urban and rural populations leads to spatial divergence in age structures. This divergence is further reinforced by the age selectivity of rural-to-urban migration which occurs disproportionately amongst the young and particularly amongst males.

I use two measures to summarise age structure patterns, the median age of the population and the dependency ratio (that is, the number of children aged 0-14 and adults over 60 years old dependent on the working adult population). I draw on data from the United Nations on rural and urban populations by sex and age for 50 African countries between 1980 and 2015. My findings show that over the course of the demographic transition (which for these years entails primarily declining fertility) the gap in age structures increases as the transition progresses. At later stages of transition the gap closes. Using the census survival ratio method I also use the UN data to estimate rural-to-urban migration rates and I find that migration contributes to curbing the rural/urban age structure gap. This research factors in a dimension of demographic variation that is often neglected in country

level analyses, yet serves an important foundation for understanding the contemporary experience of urban growth in developing countries. Fundamental implications of the age structure gap include the hindering of development, and particularly the inability to achieve a robust demographic dividend.

Another question I address in my thesis is the difference between rural and urban adult mortality in Sub-Saharan Africa. Previous research has shown that rural mortality is much higher than urban, based on infant mortality and occasionally maternal mortality. However there is little empirical evidence on how mortality compares for adults across rural and urban sectors. Results using an indirect method of estimating adult mortality (the orphanhood method) and drawing upon data from the Demographic and Health Surveys, indicate that the rural/urban mortality differential is more complex. Some countries, particularly those affected by HIV/AIDS have higher urban mortality rates than in rural populations. Furthermore, the rural/urban differences are found to be greater amongst men.



A final question of my research will focus on young male rural-to-urban migration as a factor contributing to the urban youth bulge over the course of the demographic transition and consequently the potential for intra-state conflict in Sub-Saharan Africa.

You can learn more about my research on Demotrends, a blog I help run with other young demographers -- <https://demotrends.wordpress.com/2015/02/09/examining-the-urban-and-the-rural/>. If you would like to contribute a post for the blog about your research, please be in touch.

For more information on my research, or if you want to share ideas, please feel free to contact me at: ashira.menashe@mail.huji.ac.il