

BSPS Conference 2012—Nottingham

The 2012 BSPS Conference, held at the University of Nottingham from 10-12 September, was the best-attended annual conference for many years, with over 250 participating and with 128 submitted papers presented. Additionally, 2012 saw some innovative formats for sessions, which BSPS is keen to repeat and expand on in future years.

A training session for local authority demographers was again led by Piers Elias, who tackled sex ratios, population pyramids, and where to find ONS data. Pia Wohland contributed on how to calculate healthy life expectancies for local authorities. The session on qualitative methods organized by Jo Sage and Elspeth Graham was supplemented by a qualitative panel session, intended to encourage rigorous qualitative and mixed-methods research by identifying and discussing the challenges and opportunities that these methodologies present for population researchers. Ben Wilson and Valeria Cetorelli suggested and organized a session on event history analysis (aka survival analysis), which included four short presentations and gave those participating the opportunity to take part in a detailed discussion, with the aim of sharing

knowledge and experience of the method and techniques. A fringe meeting was held on the Monday evening on social media and population studies, rather later than planned due to a very late-running dinner, but much appreciated by those who attended.

Reports on the two plenary sessions follow. The full Conference programme and all abstracts can be viewed at the BSPS website at:

<http://www2.lse.ac.uk/socialPolicy/BSPS/annualConference/2012/Home.aspx>

BSPS would like to take this opportunity to again thank the Galton Institute for their generous financial support towards Conference costs, particularly student bursaries.

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Seasons greetings from BSPS! I trust that you have had a fruitful year and are looking forward to a break.

The year has been a fruitful one for BSPS, with an extremely well-attended conference and a thriving membership. I hope that everyone has already organised their dues for the new year in order to remain a member!

Obviously Population Studies has been in the news throughout 2012, with the release of the data from the Census. This infused the themes of the conference (see the plenary reports) and, on certain days, dominated the newspapers. The lack of basic understanding by many journalists about

population issues never ceased to amaze—although this is probably an indictment on the state of quantitative methods in the country as a whole, which feeds through to understanding the Census results. The ONS and the GROS have done an admirable job in trying to convey the results clearly and meaningfully. However, work is still needed in order to clearly communicate the results of all our work to the general public.

Comments are welcome or suggestions for future articles for inclusion in BSPS news to myself, the Editor, Amos Channon (arc102@soton.ac.uk). I hope you have an excellent 2013.



New Postgraduate Representative

Julia Mikolai is the new Postgraduate Student Representative of BSPS as of 1 September 2012. Julia studied sociology in Budapest, Hungary and in Utrecht, the Netherlands. She also did a demography degree in Lund, Sweden. Currently, she is a second year PhD student in Social Statistics and Demography at the University of Southampton. Her PhD research examines the effect of partnership histories (i.e. being single, experiencing cohabitation, marriage, or separation) on later family life transitions in a contemporary European context using multistate event history models.



As a Postgraduate Student Representative, Julia sits on BSPS

Council meetings, so she has the opportunity to raise any student concerns as they arise. Her goal is to initiate more lively discussions between student members, to provide a possibility to engage in more informal regular communication as well as to provide a forum for student members to bring issues forward. Therefore, she is responsible for the new BSPS Student Members' Facebook group. Have you already joined the group?! If not, click on the link below and send a request to join the group.

<http://www.facebook.com/groups/300124886760445/>

In her (research-)free time, Julia enjoys playing recreational volleyball, reading fiction, learning languages and travelling. If you have any enquiries, Julia can be contacted at the following e-mail address: jm1e11@soton.ac.uk

Plenary 1: Peter McDonald

A century of population studies, society and Population Studies'
Societies

In the first plenary of this year's conference, Professor McDonald provided us with plenty of food for thought. The backbone of his talk provided the audience with a comprehensive history of the International Union for the Scientific Study of Population (IUSSP) and the Population Association of America (PAA). However, the body of this lecture touched upon a wide range of issues that remain highly relevant for contemporary demography.

Professor McDonald began his story in the 1920s, examining the influence of notable characters in laying the foundations for the first population associations. In addition to esteemed demographers like Frank Lorimer, there were surprise benefactors like Edward Willis Scripps, a media mogul in the mould of William Randolph Hearst (or Citizen Kane). The list of names, and fascinating details, are too many to be listed here. However, an important point made was the tension between advocacy and science in the history of population associations. The topic that most exemplified this tension, and raised the greatest controversy, was birth control.

Professor McDonald then highlighted three historical paradigms, each related to birth control, which show the thinking of many advocates and academics at the time. Although far from novel, the ideas of the Neo-Malthusians saw population growth as a potential threat to capitalism and economic growth. Eugenicists on the other

hand, were primarily concerned with population "quality", and spent much time considering fertility differentials. More controversial than either of these, at the time, was the issue of access to contraception, which was the primary concern of many feminists and those supporting women's rights, including Margaret Sanger. As the main organiser of the first international population conference (held in Geneva in 1927), Sanger set the ball rolling, which led to the formation of the first international population association, the Assembly of the International Union for the Scientific Investigation of Population Problems (IUSIPP), in 1928. She received little credit for this at the time, and despite the will of advocates, this first association refused to make a statement on population policy. This international association continued to operate as a consortium of national committees, with various degrees of success, and after a gap during the Second World War, it was restarted in 1947 and became the IUSSP.

Not long after the Geneva conference in 1927, the IUSIPP's committee in America (imaginatively named the American National Committee), organised the first meeting of The Population Association of America (PAA). As with the IUSSP, the PAA's dilemma from its inception was the extent to which it should 'follow the money' or 'maintain the purity of scientific endeavour'.

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BSPS Conference Plenary Report

Peter McDonald, Danny Dorling and Glen Watson

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The first President of the PAA, Henry Pratt Fairchild, and several subsequent Presidents (Louis Dublin, Frederick Osborne, and Warren Thompson) met in 1931 at the Town Hall Club in New York City. Also at this meeting of 38 people, was Margaret Sanger. In this case, Osborne suggested that she should not be put forward as an officer of the organization because he felt the PAA should have a scientific focus, rather than an activist orientation.

In the final section of his lecture, Professor McDonald followed the birth of these two associations forward in time, and discussed their influence upon more recent events. These included the formation of the PIC (1936), UN population division (1946), INED (1946), and Population Council (1953), alongside other organisations that came to be firmly involved in population issues, such as USAID. He then finished the lecture with a brief summary of the current situation, the wide range of existing associations, and reforms that have led to more cooperation between associations. In his closing statement, Professor McDonald suggested that the discipline of population studies “has never been in a healthier state than we are now”. You may not agree absolutely, but after this thoroughly engaging talk, (and judging by the lack of eugenicists in the audience), I find it hard to disagree.


Ben Wilson

Plenary 2: Danny Dorling and Glen Watson: The 2011 Census

With the first UK census results still hot off the press, conference gave an extended plenary session to two excellent and knowledgeable speakers. Danny Dorling of Sheffield University focused on the headline results of population growth, and how sure we could be of them. Glen Watson, Director of the Census and soon to become ONS Director General, focused on taking the census. Their presentations are available on the BSPS conference website. All in all, the 2011 Census can be described as the best since 1981, and perhaps the best ever.

Danny Dorling kicked off, noting that the census estimate of 56.1m residents in England and Wales was half a million more than had previously been estimated. It was 3.7m more than in 2001, and 5.3m more than in 1991. The figures tell of an accelerating growth with largest increases in London Boroughs such as Newham and Tower Hamlets, but also elsewhere such as Manchester, and in the 18-29 age group. Can we believe it? The difference with the previous estimates is mainly an increase of women in their late twenties and thirties, perhaps uncounted immigrants from the ‘good’ times earlier in the 2000s.

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BSPS Conference Plenary Report

Danny Dorling and Glen Watson

The 2012 Census

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ONS's own final reconciliation report will not be delivered until December. Danny suggested that there are more people who are resident in more than one country, particularly other countries of Western Europe, which may increasingly lead to duplicate but correct counting.

While Danny was not critical of the numbers counted as residents, he does believe that the 95% confidence limits overestimate the certainty of the estimates for each area. The published 95% confidence estimates vary from 0.6% for some Districts including in Norfolk, to between 3% and 4% for Liverpool, Hammersmith & Fulham, Camden, Plymouth, and Kensington & Chelsea. He did not think that the models of non-response could be good enough to capture all the human reasons that might affect Census results in one direction or another.

England and Wales' accelerating population is unique in Europe. Danny speculated that this may be related to the way each government was dealing with the recession in the years before 2011, noting the stronger cuts in public expenditure in the UK.

He finally made a plea to consider the benefits of the census and the alternatives, since Francis Maude the Cabinet Office Minister had declared himself for change. Danny felt that the census could only be replaced by personal microchips, of which he

was not in favour. In discussion Danny was upbeat about the possibility of persuading politicians to change their minds, if their individual passions, ambitions and differences within the government were all considered.

Glen Watson gave a tour de force through the planning and execution of the census, and its subsequent processing and validation. Key features had changed to improve the fieldwork: an up-to-date address register with methodology to improve and validate it; online enumeration of substantial numbers of residents; and on-street collection focused on areas with lowest return rates, measured by a questionnaire tracking system. There were protests in particular over the use of arms manufacturer Lockheed Martin for the data processing, but none that significantly disrupted the collection.

70% of addresses had returned their forms by post before enumerators started on those who had not. The emphasis on areas with lowest return rates meant that some easier areas did not reach as high a response as they would have in earlier censuses, but no Local Authority had less than an 80% response rate in 2011, compared with 13 such areas in 2001. This reduced range of response rates helped to improve confidence in the results.

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Danny Dorling and Glen Watson

The 2012 Census

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The post-enumeration Census Coverage Survey estimates non-response in each Local Authority and provides the details required to 'fill up' the census database with records to represent missed residents. It achieved a minimum 70% response rate in every authority, equal to the 2001 experience, also a good achievement given that in 2011 it was more focused on the worst-to-enumerate areas, and social attitudes to door-to-door interviewers have not improved.

Forms were taken to Trafford, at its peak nearing 40 articulated lorries-full in a day, and after scanning there was the biggest paper shredding operation in UK history. And finally, as discussed in detail in other sessions of the conference, the age-sex structures of each local authority were subject to detailed validation through 'deep dives' in comparisons with other data sources and demographic analysis.

The results have been generally well-received. ONS provided graphical interfaces to the results at <http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/guide-method/census/2011/index.html>, highlighting both a time series approach over the past century, and a comparison facility of population pyramids for any two local authorities. These were also syndicated to media websites which were particularly successful: ONS hits were only 10% of all the hits on the 100 years anima-

tion, for example, most of them being on the BBC website. Glen finished with "Enjoy the results so far: and believe them – I know I do".

By the time of the next BSPS conference in 2013, we will know of challenges to census results if any materialise. But we will also hear of extensive analysis of the results which will be released with increasing detail of population characteristics during the intervening twelve months.

Ludi Simpson

BSPS Conference 2013 in Swansea

The 2013 BSPS Conference will be held at the University of Swansea between the 9th and the 11th September. The plenary speakers have been confirmed as Monica Das Gupta (The World Bank) and Mary Daly (University of Oxford). As you may surmise from the speakers, there will be a strong gender theme running throughout the conference!

More details about the conference including the call for papers will be given in the next edition of the newsletter, but please make sure your diaries are free and you have lots of good ideas for papers to present, both as presentations and as posters. Looking forward to seeing you there!



Announcements

National Records of Scotland Beyond 2011 Programme

The Beyond 2011 (B2011) programme was initiated by the National Records of Scotland in 2011 to propose viable alternative options to the traditional census. The census has long been the benchmark for capturing a comprehensive, consolidated and accurate snapshot of the population. However, various sources indicate that the current system of providing population and key socio-demographic statistics is no longer meeting all user needs.



The B2011 programme will produce an options paper for ministers, describing the work that has been completed in the research phase and detailing the options for the next phases.

As part of this research phase we need to determine what the user requirements are for producing small area population and socio-demographic statistics.

This is an opportunity to engage with the B2011 process and to ensure your/your organisations views and needs are heard.

We are planning a series of events in the New Year and would like to have a wide range of population and socio-demographic statistics users in attendance. These events will be held across Scotland.

Previous stakeholder discussions can be found within the Events Section on the National Records of Scotland website. If you or any of your colleagues are interested in attending one of these events please can you let the B2011 team know by 7th January 2013, if possible?

The B2011 team can be contacted through a dedicated e-mail: Beyond2011@gro-scotland.gsi.gov.uk. More information on the B2011 programme can be found on the National Records of Scotland website:

<http://www.gro-scotland.gov.uk/beyond-2011/index.html>

Scotland's 2011 Census Results

The first results from Scotland's 2011 Census 2011 were published on Monday 17 December. These consist of population estimates by five-year age bands and sex for Scotland as well as the total population estimate for each council area.

The results can be accessed from the Scotland's Census website:

<http://www.scotlandscensus.gov.uk/>





BSPS Competitions

BSPS Prizes 2012

BSPS Prize 2012

The result of the 2012 BSPS Prize for the best submitted Masters dissertation on a demographic topic from those completed in 2011 was announced at the 2012 Conference. The standard was again very high and the judges commented on this. However, it was unanimously agreed that the Prize be awarded to Valeria Cetorelli, London School of Economics, for her dissertation:

Is fertility decline stalling in Jordan?

The first judge noted that this was an impressive piece of work, clearly written and presented. The analysis was well-grounded in the published literature. While the analytical methods used are not novel, their application to fertility trends in Jordan is. The author shows that she has a very sound understanding of the issues raised. The use of a robust definition of fertility stall and attention to the data quality greatly strengthen the findings. The main finding of a long lasting fertility stall in a Middle Eastern country is of great interest and the analysis is of publishable quality.

The second judge reported that this was an extremely well structured analysis of a apparently simple question, with a good analysis and a clear answer to the question posed.

BSPS congratulations to Valeria, who is now studying for a PhD at LSE.

Poster Prize 2012

The 2012 conference saw a vibrant and very successful poster session with 40 posters on display. These remained on display throughout the Conference and attracted the attention of many visitors to the University who were not part of the Conference.

The Poster Prize was judged by Professor Peter McDonald and Professor Gu Baochang. The prize for the best student poster was awarded to Mafalda Moura Pereira, University of Cambridge, for:

Measuring the urban penalty: hospital mortality in Coimbra, Portugal, 1885-1910

The poster explores how measurement of the “urban penalty” in nineteenth-century Coimbra is potentially skewed by the deaths in the city of non-residents. Over the period Coimbra’s University Hospital offered free medical care, attracting admissions, including of sufferers of chronic disease and unmarried pregnant women, from Coimbra’s rural hinterland. These hospital deaths must be stripped out before the legitimate investigation of relationships between city environmental factors (including household- and individual-level features like access to piped water) and (disease-specific) mortality. The study behind my poster establishes the identities and places-of-residence of some 14,700 people buried in Coimbra’s cemeteries.

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BSPS Poster Prizes 2012

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Since about a third of these died in hospital (meaning the deceased might not be a resident), the study cross-referenced burial records with parish deaths and baptisms and with 60,500 hospital admissions (4,700 eventuating in death). Findings show a roughly 3:2 ratio of male to female admissions, a higher incidence of female hospital deaths (8.5% to 7.4%), and a relatively higher proportion of women (43.5% to 31.4%) checking in from urban parishes.

A prize was also awarded for the best non-student poster. This went to Simona Korenjak-Černe, University of Ljubljana, Faculty of Economics and colleagues for:

Symbolic data analysis approach to clustering population pyramids

In the poster we present an approach based on symbolic data analysis to clustering of population pyramids. A population pyramid is represented with two frequency distributions over age groups, one for each gender. Such a representation with discrete distributions enables us to preserve information about real distribution and the size of the population of each gender. It is a special kind of symbolic data. For clustering units with variables described with discrete distributions we adapted well-known k-means and Ward's hierarchical clustering methods such that the obtained optimal cluster's representative is again population

pyramid of all population in the regions, included in the cluster. Both methods are compatible (they are solving the same clustering optimization problem) and therefore can be used in combination. Properties and advantages of such an adaptation will be presented. The results of applications of the proposed approach on world countries and on US counties will be presented.

Congratulations to Mafalda and Simona.

IMPACT HIA Courses

IMPACT at the University of Liverpool have announced their Health Impact Assessment course dates for 2013.

The on-campus comprehensive course will run twice, weeks commencing 17th June and 11th November 2013 in the Foresight Centre, an award winning venue on the University campus. Early bird registration is available now and delegates are able to take advantage of a discounted hotel tariff, if they wish. Bursary places are not available.

Online, short, introductory courses are planned for 14 January, 15th April and 1st July.

In the first instance, please contact impact@liverpool.ac.uk or telephone +44(0) 151-794 5004 for further information and registration.



Book Review

Qualitative Research Methods by Monique Hennink, Inge Hutter and Ajay Bailey

Emily Freeman, University of Southampton

Qualitative Research Methods is a primer for social scientists covering the use of focus groups, individual interviewing and observational methodologies for the collection of qualitative data. As such it reflects demography's favoured qualitative approaches. It presents these methods alongside sections on the design of qualitative research and the analysis of qualitative data. The chapters are easy to follow and very well presented. The chapters on data analysis in particular succeed in demystifying the process by breaking down elements of grounded theory into manageable and easily-followed steps that will delight an inexperienced qualitative researcher. The book seems especially suited to the new qualitative researcher rather than new researcher, and examples are not drawn from student dissertations and projects as many of the book's rivals do, but are more often from the projects of the book's experienced authors and colleagues. Annotated reading lists at the end of each chapter guide the reader's development towards becoming a competent qualitative researcher.

One of the book's key strengths is its on-going focus on achieving and assessing quality in qualitative research. Although the debates about what constitutes high quality qualitative research are long standing in the social sciences more broadly, only recently have demographers begun to articulate strategies for critically assessing the quality of qualitative data and analyses. Qualitative Research Methods explicitly discusses how to produce and importantly, evaluate high quality in qualitative research. Every chapter ends with a section on 'evaluating quality', offering the reader a set of

appropriate questions to be used in their assessments. These sections are simple, insightful and necessary. They should be included in every lesson in qualitative methodologies.

However, the authors' most unique contribution comes from their presentation of qualitative research as three interlinked cycles: the design cycle, ethnographic cycle (data collection) and analytical cycle. This is not a general methods textbook, but the authors' own particular approach to doing qualitative research. Alternative approaches and methods are rarely discussed and occasionally not even acknowledged.

The authors suggest that their approach differs from other qualitative approaches in proposing research that is explicitly guided by a research design that includes fully-articulated research questions, theories and conceptual framework, whilst at the same time, involving non-linearity and considerable 'back and forth' between all three cycles of producing qualitative research (p.24). It's a bold approach, and potentially quite confusing. The authors acknowledge it is a strategy formed and influenced by their backgrounds in disciplines dominated by positivist research (p.24). Indeed, this is a book by demographers versed in quantitative methods, for demographers versed in quantitative methods: qualitative research for the quantitative mind, working within a quantitatively-oriented discipline. For me it certainly echoed Barney Glaser's original presentation of grounded theory as a qualitative approach that was palatable to his contemporaries.

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Book Review

Qualitative Research Methods by Monique Hennink, Inge Hutter and Ajay Bailey

Emily Freeman, University of Southampton

(continued from previous page) Whilst this ability to make qualitative methods accessible to a quantitative audience will be a clear strength of the book for some, it may also be considered a weakness by more advanced qualitative researchers. Such readers are likely to be frustrated by what could be described as the 'positivising' of qualitative research and grounded theory in particular.

To illustrate with one example, the authors recommend the use of both deductive and inductive codes for analysing collected data, the former being derived from initial themes identified at the research design stage. This explicit use of deductive codes differs from other conceptions of grounded theory and can be traced to the authors' suggestion that as issues arise in data collection, tools – such as a semi-structured interview guide – can be tweaked but not significantly changed (p.111). In that way, the initial research questions and topics for investigation are still present in the data at the time of the post-data collection coding, and so are coded for. In previous articulations of grounded theory, initial concepts, questions and general research focus may (and probably will) change as data are collected and analysed to reflect the issues within the area of interest that are most important to the population being studied. It doesn't make sense therefore to code for the now potentially irrelevant initial concepts in post-data collection analysis. Instead all codes are derived from reading the collected data. Here the authors recommend readers draw up a table of their codes that notes whether a code was deductively or inductively produced (p.226). This might be an im-

portant initial step in encouraging reflexivity. However, following this instruction, the authors offer no further use for this part of the table. The reader is left to decipher themselves what the consequences of deductively producing their codes are for their analysis, what the relevance of their deductive codes are for the population being studied, or, aside from being warned to validate deductive codes with the data, that these are tasks a qualitative researcher should concern themselves with.

A sizeable body of qualitative research methods training materials already exists, aimed at both social scientists more broadly and demographers in particular. Do population scientists need another qualitative research methods textbook, especially one offering a broad-brush approach aimed, as Hennink, Hutter and Bailey propose, at researchers from many different scientific disciplines (p.3)? Aside from the remarkable clarity of presentation that will appeal to demographers who are new qualitative research, I would suggest that the approach Qualitative Research Methods takes makes it an important contribution to demography. My reading suggests that the authors are used to explaining qualitative methods to quantitatively-oriented audiences. It forwards a qualitative approach that attempts to straddle inductive and positivist approaches to demography. Experienced qualitative demographers could derive great deal of benefit from this book by appreciating the way this is communicated. For qualitative approaches to gain ground in demography, they need to be accepted and more widely understood. The authors' provide a model for this in Qualitative Research Methods.



Spotlight on Research

Jonas Wood

PhD Student at the University of Antwerp

Jonas is a Ph.D. student in Social Sciences at the Research Centre for Longitudinal and Life Course Studies at the University of Antwerp. Working closely with Karel Neels and Jorik Vergauwen his research relates to the postponement of fertility and the emergence of sub-replacement fertility in recent decades across Europe. In particular, his research has been inspired by the fact that, although much research has been devoted to explaining changes in timing and quantum of fertility with contextual determinants, important population heterogeneity receives less attention and often higher order childbearing is ignored.

The predominant view in the literature approaches people as rational actors deciding whether or not to have children (yet) by evaluating the costs and benefits of this decision. Possible determinants of fertility choices are then to be found in both the individual and contextual characteristics which shape this balance between costs and benefits. On the individual level education is often used as a proxy for socio-economic position, with results indicating different labour market opportunities being relevant in childbearing decisions. On the contextual level, contributions have related economic downturns to postponement of childbearing and recuperation later on in the life course is increasingly associated with policy regimes aiming to ease 'mother-worker' conflicts. Although numerous publications have been made contributing further to the empirical evidence for this structural fertility theory originating from the 1960s, further research is needed in order to assess differential effects of childbearing contexts by socio-economic status and to complete the picture of childbearing behavior,

both theory and empirical evidence needs to be further developed in the direction of higher order births.

Jonas aims to study socio-economic differentials in European fertility in Europe between 1970 and the Mid-2000s. The research uses individual micro-level data allowing for cross-national comparisons. These data are combined with macro-level indicators. As macro-level data in many cases involve aggregate-time series of population based statistics, the validity of the analyses that combine longitudinal micro-level data with contextual data depends on the ability of the individual-level data to give a correct account of demographic trends in previous decades. Validity of the data receives particular attention in his research. First findings indicate changing educational gradients of fertility and an emergence of positive educational effects in certain countries which can be associated with varying policy regimes.

Jonas holds a BSc and MSc in Social Sciences from University of Antwerp and is currently enrolled in the Quantitative Analysis for Social Sciences (QASS) program at the University of Leuven. He is in the first stage of his Ph.D (supervised by Karel Neels). For more information on his research, please contact him at: Jonas.wood@ua.ac.be.





Travel Report

Population Association of America

Giorgio Di Gessa, King's College, London

Population Association of America (PAA) is a "non-profit, scientific, professional organization that promotes research on population issues". The 77th PAA Annual Meeting was held at Hilton Union Square hotel in San Francisco, California, on May 3-5 2012. Broad in coverage, global in scope, varied in its methodological approaches, the PAA annual meeting is a prestigious conference in the main areas of demography which presents high quality original research of scholars from universities and research institute around the world. Over 2,100 participants were attracted to this conference, which consisted of 216 paper symposium sessions and 7 poster sessions. The meeting covered a very wide range of topics: from sexual behaviour to migration; from ageing to data and methods among many more.

During the conference, I was able to attend numerous sessions. I focused on topics that directly relate to my current interests in methodology (life course analysis) as well as on topics with which I have less research experience and exposure but that stimulated my curiosity. A session on abortion, one on gender and race inequality as well as the one on LGBT health and same-sex partnerships were particularly interesting.

In addition to the conference sessions, the chance to network with other researchers was a very valuable experience. I was able to interact with scholars both with very similar and extremely diverse interests. I also managed to meet up with a few researchers

whom I had met in other conferences around Europe. Finding familiar faces made the conference even more enjoyable, giving me the opportunity to find fellow travellers to explore San Francisco with. I had never before visited San Francisco and took advantage of the conference's location to explore the city and to appreciate its cultural mix, cuisine, wines, museums, street markets and parks.

All in all I was very pleased with my conference attendance and felt it was well worth the registration fee and travel expenses. Clearly, I am very grateful to BSPS for helping me towards the cost of travel to the conference. I gained valuable feedback on the work which I presented in the poster session. In addition, I was intrigued by new methods that I learned about that may help my future research. Finally, the networking experience was very beneficial. The only drawback was that I found the programme too overwhelming. The conference was structured into two and one half days of session. Attendees had to choose from 16 concurrent sessions, which would partly or entirely also clash with the poster sessions. Moreover, attendees only had about 10 minutes to move from one session to another, trying to find their ways in the labyrinthine building. I seriously had the impression that this hindered opportunities to actually enjoy the conference and attend the sessions of interest to me. Perhaps, I simply had never been to such a massive conference before!

Papers online in advance of publication in an issue

Subscribers to Population Studies can access all the new papers below at the Journal's iFirst online site in advance of publication in an issue of the Journal:

<http://www.tandfonline.com/action/showAxaArticles?journalCode=rpst20>

- The effects of ambivalent fertility desires on pregnancy risk in young women in the USA - Warren B. Miller, Jennifer S. Barber & Heather H. Gatny
- The short-term and long-term effects of divorce on mortality risk in a large Finnish cohort, 1990–2003 - Niina Metsä-Simolaa & Pekka Martikainen
- Implications of China's future bride shortage for the geographical distribution and social protection needs of never-married men - Ethan Sharygin, Avraham Ebenstein & Monica Das Gupta
- A new method of projecting populations based on trends in life expectancy and survival - Les Mayhew & David Smith
- Multidimensional life-table analysis of the effect of child mortality on total fertility in India, 1992–93, 1998–99, 2005–06 - Hassan Eini-Zinab
- Trends, patterns, and determinants of regional mortality in Belarus, 1990–2007 - Pavel Grigoriev, Gabriele Doblhammer-Reitera & Vladimir Shkolnikov – OPEN ACCESS



- Explaining emigration intentions and behaviour in the Netherlands, 2005–10 - Hendrik P. van Dalena & Kène Henkens
- The impact of outmigration of men on fertility and marriage in the migrant-sending states of Mexico, 1995–2000 - Kari White & Joseph E. Potter
- A Poisson common factor model for projecting mortality and life expectancy jointly for females and males - Jackie Li

If you would like to be signed up for advance notification of new Population Studies papers as they become available online, please contact pic@lse.ac.uk, who will be happy to arrange this for you. New issue alerts can also be arranged.



House of Commons Public Administration Select Committee Inquiry into Migration Statistics

BSPS feels it would be appropriate for BSPS to submit evidence to the House of Commons Public Administration Select Committee's inquiry into (international) migration statistics.

If you have any views prompted by the questions that are raised below please contact Tony Champion (tony.champion@ncl.ac.uk) by Friday 4th January at the latest?

The PASC's call can be found at:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/committees/committees-a-z/commons-select/public-administration-select-committee/news/migration-statistics-iq/>.

Key paragraphs and points taken from the call are:

The Public Administration Select Committee (PASC) is examining the topic of migration statistics, as part of a programme of work on statistics and their use in government. Further information on the programme of work is below. If you have informed views on the issues raised in this paper, PASC would like to hear from you. The deadline for writing to us is noon on Tuesday 22 January 2013. Information on how to respond is at the end of this paper.

Questions

1. Do the published migration statistics – at the national, regional and local levels –

meet the full range of their users' needs, namely:

a. Are they easily discoverable and accessible to all users?

b. Are they easy to use and understand?

c. Do they provide an appropriate level of detail?

d. Are they effectively summarised?

2. How well have producers of migration statistics engaged with users? How responsive have they been to feedback from users of the statistics?

3. Do the migration statistics which are published enable members of the public to gain a better understanding of the issues?. Are the right migration statistics being collected?

4. Is the degree of uncertainty surrounding estimates of migration properly reported and widely understood?. Is the degree of uncertainty surrounding estimates of migration acceptable or should it be reduced? If so, how could it be reduced?

5. Are the migration statistics adequate for measuring the Government's progress against its net migration target?

6. What more could be done to improve the quality of migration statistics?. Should data from other sources, such as e-Borders, be incorporated?



PhD Studentships

Available Studentships

North West DTC

The North West Doctoral Training Centre (NWDTC) is one of 21 ESRC-funded doctoral training centres in social sciences in the UK. Liverpool, Manchester and Lancaster, the members of the NWDTC, are guaranteed a total of 63 new PhD studentships each year to support research and training at doctoral level. Studentships are available across the full range of social science disciplines including social statistics / demography. A minimum of ten annual studentships are allocated to PhD projects researching or applying advanced quantitative methods (AQM).

Students with a first class undergraduate or master's degree in social sciences or statistics / mathematics who are interested to pursue postgraduate research in any area of population studies / demography and willing to learn and apply advanced quantitative methods in their research are encouraged to send their CV and a brief outline of their research project (max four pages) to Dr. Hill Kulu (hill.kulu@liverpool.ac.uk) by **28th December 2012**.

The deadline for PhD studentship applications to the NWDTC is **4th February 2013**. For further details, please see:

<http://www.nwdtc.ac.uk/index.html>

Southampton DTC

The following opportunities are available at the University of Southampton:

ESRC-DTC studentships (up to 10):

- 1+3 studentships: these involve completing a 1 year MSc in Demography or Social Statistics followed by a 3 year PhD.
- +3 studentships: available for students who have or are expecting to complete an approved Masters programme with a merit (an average mark of 60%) or other equivalent, and are looking to undertake a 3 year PhD.
- Office for National Statistics (ONS) PhD studentships: up to two 3 year PhD studentships are available. Aimed at students who have or are expecting to complete an approved Masters programme with a merit (an average mark of 60%) or other equivalent. Research areas will be related to the ONS's current programmes and projects.
- Social Sciences Masters Scholarships: several one-year taught MSc scholarships are available in Demography or Social Statistics for the 2013 academic year.

Closing deadline for: 6 February 2013.

For more details visit: <http://www.southampton.ac.uk/demography>

Job Opportunities related to Population Studies

Professor of Statistical Demography at the Centre for Economic Demography, Lund University (Sweden).

Lund University announces a new position for a Professor in Statistical Demography. The position is for full time permanent employment and is placed at the Department of Statistics, Lund University School of Eco-

nomics and Management. Research within this position will be carried out at the Centre for Economic Demography. Deadline for applications: 8 January 2013. The full announcement is available on the following website:

<http://www3.lu.se/info/lediga/admin/document/PA2012-561eng.pdf>

Vrije Universiteit, Brussel

Vacancy – Junior Research Associate

Department of Sociology – Research group Interface Demography, Vrije Universiteit Brussel

Starting date: Springtime 2013

Contact: sylvie.gadeyne@vub.ac.be

Interface Demography seeks a full-time junior research associate with interest in quantitative social science research to work on a challenging research project, entitled ‘The social distribution of cancer in Belgium. Socioeconomic inequalities in cancer mortality around the turn of the century’

The post holder is expected to conduct quantitative research on socioeconomic inequalities in cancer mortality, under the supervision with the project coordinators. The aim of the project is to map social inequalities in cancer mortality (divided

into specific causes such as breast and lung cancer) in detail via statistical, demographic and epidemiologic analyses using a census-linked follow-up study. The findings should result in the submission of a doctoral dissertation in the social sciences and in publications in scientific journals.

The applicant should have a Master in Sociology, Master in Health Sciences or related, a passion for scientific research, sound knowledge of and/or experience with quantitative research methods and data analysis and the ability to learn new statistical techniques.

How to apply?

Mail and e-mail a motivational letter and curriculum vitae before 1 February 2013 to:

Professor Dr Sylvie Gadeyne, Vrije Universiteit Brussel. For further enquiries please contact Sylvie Gadeyne by e-mail

Current Policy Work of the Academy

The case for social sciences needs to be made strongly to Government in the run-up to the next Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR), which is likely to fall in the first half of 2013. We are looking to all of the Learned Societies to help make our submission to Government compelling, through showcasing the best examples of social science research with real-world impact. We will be meeting with Government officials in the coming months, and encourage all Societies to share examples of excellence in social research with us. The themes identified as priority areas for research by BIS in the current funding allocation: global uncertainties, digital economy, ageing, environmental change, energy, global food security; and the Science and Society key areas for action: science for all; science and media; science and learning; science for careers and science and trust, will guide our influencing strategy.

Building on our 'Making the Case for Social Sciences' series, we are collating a series of case studies which show how research has contributed to growth and innovation, and – crucially – how particular findings and studies have resulted in savings to the public purse and/or to investment in more effective policies than would otherwise have been possible. Research findings may sometimes work to prevent ineffective spending or reduce waste, as well as through 'positive' economic impact.

We are exploring the value and impact of research under three preliminary headings, which may be useful to bear in mind in sending examples to us:

1. research as producing counter-intuitive findings (i.e. producing results that contradict a 'common sense' view and which can only be gained through systematic research)
2. research which has a clear cost-benefit calculation attached, or which has led directly to a cost saving/prevention of ineffective spending
3. research which has had a direct impact on the formulation of legislation, or a change in the law

We will also draw attention to research that shows how social sciences help natural sciences and technological innovation in implementation.

We hope that you will be able to make a contribution to our evidence-gathering, and be represented in the case for social sciences we bring to Government. Please send your contribution to us by **Thursday 24th January, 2013**.

ACADEMY
of **SOCIAL SCIENCES**

5 minutes with...

Francesco Billari

Professor of Sociology & Demography, Nuffield College,
University of Oxford

Professor Francesco Billari joined Nuffield College at the University of Oxford this year. A quick festive chat was held with BPS News.

Can you introduce yourself and your background briefly?

I like to see myself as a scholar with interests broadly in the social sciences and more specifically in the comparative analysis of population and the life course. I was trained first as an economist and statistician, then as a demographer. My interest in the life course brought me to sociology.

What are you finding most interesting in demography at the moment?

When I started studying demography the idea was that inertia was very important, and demographers could predict with boldness what would happen, so that sometimes projections were taken for reality. Now, the most interesting thing is that everything is changing fast—in populations and in life courses much faster than we thought. I get more excited by studying demographic change than by saying that demographers know the answer.

What are you currently working on?

I am working on family change and life course transition, both on theories and on comparative analyses for advanced societies. I keep working on fertility trends



Francesco Billari—new Professor at the University of Oxford

and fertility decision-making, again in a comparative perspective, and on research methods.

What do you think your greatest achievement is in demography?

In terms of citations, certainly my work, with great colleagues, on fertility has been influential. I believe however my greatest achievement is to have had the opportunity to mentor some junior colleagues always challenging disciplinary borders and pushing them to think broadly.

Do you have a message/ any advice for young demographers?

Make sure that you have a double identity—do not be only a demographer. This is good for two reasons. First, for the job market, as demography-related jobs tend to be linked to other disciplines. Second, to get inspired by cross-disciplinary thinking when studying populations.

(Continued overleaf)



5 minutes with...

Francesco Billari

Professor of Sociology & Demography, Nuffield College,
University of Oxford

(continued from previous page)

How are you feeling about moving to Oxford? How does the university differ from Bocconi?

Oxford has an atmosphere that is inspiring and challenging at the same time. It is a global university, with excellence across all subjects, which I really appreciate. Bocconi is an elite Italian institution, which has been increasingly internationalised, but it is specialised in economics, management and law.

What are you hoping to achieve while you are at Oxford?

I hope to carry on research on population issues of course, to work with colleagues and to mentor scholars of the new generation. I am particularly keen on

developing an environment where population research has a strong root in the Department of Sociology, in a way that is similar to top US population centres but that emphasises the global nature of Oxford.

What would your plan B have been if you hadn't been a Demographer?

Maybe this is not really a plan B, as I hope in part being a demographer satisfies it, but I would have loved to work for an international organization trying to improve the levels of living in the world.

What are you hoping to get for Christmas?

Lots of snow and then sunshine. Then, I will really be able to enjoy a ski trip to the Italian Alps with my family.

BSPS Membership Renewal

The time has come to renew your membership to BSPS—the membership year ends in December.

Details of how to apply and the application form are on the website, but a simple way of doing this is through setting up a standing order. Bank details are available on request for payment by direct transfer.

The income from the membership dues go to support activities of the society while reduced rates to the conference and other benefits are available.

Membership rates:

- Full £25
- Country (outside SE England train region) £20
- Overseas—LEDC countries £7.50
- Retired from paid employment £7.50
- Full-time student £7.50



Welcome to New BSPS Members



We are delighted to welcome the following new members to BSPS. Membership of the society is growing all the time and further applications are always welcome.

Lenka Benova-PhD student-LSHTM

Dr Jakub Bijak-Lecturer-Southampton

Professor Francesco Billari-Professor of Sociology & Demography, Nuffield College-Oxford

Professor Stephen Bown-Professor of Laser Medicine & Surgery at UCL

Dr Gemma Catney-Research fellow-University of Liverpool

Valeria Cetorelli-PhD student -LSE

Aisha Dasgupta-PhD student-LSHTM

Adriana Duta-PhD student-Southampton

Diane Harper-PhD student-Loughborough

Eleri Jones-PhD student-LSE

Mamusu Kamanda-PhD student-Southampton

Dr Marwan Khawaja-Senior statistician-UN-ESCWA

Sarah Lubman-PhD student -Southampton

John P. McKeown- PhD on pronatalism & demographic & environmental consequences

Elena Mariani-Masters student-LSE

Julie Mills-Senior research officer-ONS

Julia Mikolai-PhD student-Southampton

Gill Newton-Research associate-Cambridge Group

Rebecca Pradeilles-PhD human biology-Loughborough

Ayham Rezk-PhD student in human geography-University of Newcastle

Susan Schaffnit-PhD student-LSHTM

Dr Ian Shuttleworth-Lecturer-Queens University Belfast

Sylvia Szabo-PhD student-Southampton

William Tonkiss-Census analyst/trainer-GLA

Vytautas Valatka-PhD student-Vilnius University

Milagros Vandemoortele-PhD student-LSE

Veronica Varela-Mato-PhD student-Loughborough

Heini Vasianen-PhD student-LSE

Jorik Vergauwen-PhD student-University of Antwerp

Sandra Virgo-PhD student-LSHTM

Jonas Wood-PhD student-University of Antwerp

