

BSPS Conference Report

The 2011 BSPS Conference at the University of York was exceptionally well-attended, with over 200 participants over the course of the three days. That was, perhaps, not surprising given the international representation this year, with speakers from the USA, Italy, Austria, Spain, Germany, Greece, Argentina, Israel, Russia, Australia, Singapore, England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. Not to forget the 2011 LEDC initiative representative, Dr. Gobopamang Letamo from the University of Botswana, who gave a paper on The prevalence and correlates of low body mass index in a country undergoing nutrition transition: the case of Botswana. An innovative feature of the Conference was a training session as an option for an afternoon session, developed and led by Piers Elias and Eileen Howes. Aimed at local authority demographers, the session covered LA-level population estimates, LA-level projections, small area estimates & projections, and data handling. Training session spreadsheet material can now be accessed at the BSPS website, where it is hoped to update the material periodically:

<http://www2.lse.ac.uk/socialPolicy/BSPS/annualConference/2011/Training%20session%20material.aspx>

One hundred and thirty-eight submitted papers were presented in parallel sessions. All the abstracts for these

presentations, plus some of the presentations themselves which were made available, can be accessed at the BSPS website :

www2.lse.ac.uk/socialPolicy/BSPS/annualConference/2011/2011%20Conference%20-%20York.aspx

The first evening saw a lively poster session, with over twenty posters presented. The winner of the poster competition was Emily Freeman (LSE), for her poster Sex that gives and takes away: sexuality in older age in rural Malawi. The competition was judged by the distinguished (*continued overleaf*)

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Suggestions for articles in future editions of BSPS News welcomed.

Report of the Conference and Plenaries

(continued from previous page) plenary speakers, Professors John Hobcraft and Ken Hill.

The result of the 2011 BSPS Prize, for the best Masters dissertation on a demographic topic from the previous academic year was also announced at the reception, held simultaneously with the poster session. The winner was Michelle Weinberger from LSE for her dissertation Making Sense of Tanzania's Fertility: The Role of Contraceptive Use.

The Conference also marked the last official duties as President for Professor Emily Grundy, who completed her two-year term of office during the event. BSPS thanks Emily for her efforts during her term, and sends all good wishes for her new appointment as Head of the Cambridge Group for Population and Social Structure from May 2012. The New President, Professor Ludi Simpson was welcomed at the AGM, as was the new Vice-President, Professor Tony Champion.

Recordings of the plenary sessions can also be accessed at the BSPS website, as can several of the submitted presentations.

<http://www2.lse.ac.uk/socialPolicy/BSPS/annualConference/2011/2011%20Conference%20-%20York.aspx>

Thanks are also due to the Galton Institute, who again gave BSPS a generous grant towards Conference expenses.

Report on Plenary 1: John Hobcraft

Those who attended the first plenary of this year's conference were treated to a warm, enthusiastic and inspiring talk. Professor Hobcraft began by introducing his central theme, demography and the life-course, and then reflected on his own life-course and broad-ranging career. After crediting his influences (including Coale, Ryder and Brass), he focused on the career of David Glass, the British demographer and professor of sociology who was fundamental in the establishment of BSPS.

Professor Hobcraft then discussed the application, availability, and benefits of longitudinal studies for demographic research. Although the methodological advantages were emphasised, a more holistic view was presented, placing emphasis on the legacy of longitudinal studies and how life-course studies have profited from the introduction and continuation of cohort studies since the Second World War. Professor Hobcraft reinforced his summary with a variety of examples, including a list of previous research projects that have successfully informed recent policy debates. Research using the 1958 and 1970 birth cohort studies has shown that childhood cognitive test outcomes are persistently associated with *(continued overleaf)*

Plenary 1: John Hobcraft

Ben Wilson and Alice Goisis, LSE

(continued from previous page) associated with adult outcomes, with the influence of many factors similar across cohorts and genders. Research using the Millennium Cohort Study was also highlighted, contributing to the body of life-course research on 'legacies of the past', which have been shown to be 'persistent and pervasive'. Examples include research on early years, poverty and extended unemployment.

Having established the lineage and strengths of longitudinal life-course research, the second half of the plenary began to look to the future. Professor Hobcraft's aim was to highlight developments in data collection, and to emphasize one of the key areas of research that will benefit from these developments, namely biosocial interplays and research on epigenetics. Admitting that this is a difficult area of research to summarise, Professor Hobcraft introduced the ABC of Alleles, Brains, and Contexts, and the three P's of Pathways, Processes, and Progressions. He then focussed on gene-environment interplays, arguing that understanding these processes might answer the question: 'what causes the persistence of intergenerational effects?' This linked strongly with the first half of the plenary, moving from remote to proximate causes. Encouraging a movement away from rudimentary social science theories of genes versus environment, Professor Hobcraft then discussed recent developments in theory and research, including work by Caspi

et al. (2003) on 5-HTT (a gene for susceptibility for depression), and the dandelion-orchid hypothesis (which suggests two different types of biological sensitivity to context – i.e. some children are like orchids, requiring specific conditions to develop fruitfully, and some are more like dandelions).

In the final section of his paper, Professor Hobcraft demonstrated how biosocial data is being currently used, and discussed how it might be

used in the future. For example, the US Fragile Families study (a longitudinal cohort study of close to 5,000 children) has already collected DNA from mothers and children when the children were aged 9. After emphasising that the amount of information stored in a genome is a treasure-trove of data and, importantly, even in very small samples (or subsamples), Professor Hobcraft closed with an outline of developments to ESRC-funded data, both for existing sources like Understanding Society and for upcoming sources like the new cohort study. With plenty of food for thought, we can look forward to these exciting opportunities.



Plenary 2: Kenneth Hill

Ben Wilson and Alice Goisis, LSE

Professor Kenneth Hill began his plenary with an introduction to the 2015 Millennium Development Goals (MDG) and, in particular, with a discussion of Goal 4 of the MDG, which concerns the improvement of child health. The target linked to this goal is to reduce the under-five mortality rate (U5MR), that is, the period probability of dying by exact age 5, by two-thirds between 1990 and 2015. In order to reach these quantitative targets, data availability and quality is crucial. Accurate knowledge of mortality levels and trends in the low-income countries is hampered by a widespread lack of complete vital registration systems. These countries must therefore rely on alternative data collection methods. Professor Hill compared three different available data sources to collect mortality data in low-income countries and discussed their strengths and weaknesses.

The first source of data discussed was sample vital registration. This system is in place in some developing countries (e.g. India) and it is based on a double recording system whereby vital events registration is continuous together with periodic household surveys to record recent events. However, doubts have been expressed about the quality of this recording system and it has been documented that mortality monitoring has been poor. The second was nationally representative data such as censuses and large sample surveys. Although this recording system is appealing, as it can collect

mortality data through a variety of mechanisms and the cost per unit is low, it is also characterized by long periodicity (around 10 years) and uncertainty about data quality. The third method was smaller household surveys, such as the DHS. Mortality data is collected through full birth histories (i.e. collecting dates of birth and ages of death for each child a woman has given birth to), siblings birth history and summary birth history (i.e. number of children ever born and children dead). The clear advantage of this collection method is that U5MR can be computed with standard life table methods and there is greater frequency relative to larger surveys. However, this collection method is also characterized by data quality issues, the costs per unit are huge and frequency of information is still quite low (e.g. every 5 years). The conclusion on existing data sources was therefore that it is not (yet) possible to produce annual estimates of U5MR and that nothing can be done at a reasonable cost.

This led Professor Hill to pose the question whether demographers and policy makers could make better use of existing data. Summary birth histories (SBH) is, for example, a prominent method of data collection on child mortality; it is a substitute of full birth histories (FBH) and is cheaper and/or allows a larger sample to be collected. Recent research that Professor Hill has carried out with Livia Montana has addressed the question(*continued overleaf*)

Plenary 2: Kenneth Hill

Ben Wilson and Alice Goisis, LSE

(continued from previous page) of whether it is possible to correctly impute FBH from SBH. The preliminary results show that the method works reasonably well and they set the ground for the possibility in the future to extract more informative estimates for U5MR from SBH rather than expensive and inaccurate FBH. Another promising method has been highlighted by Fengmin Zhao who has revealed a tight relationship between U5MR and the ratio of deaths over births. Professor Hill concluded his presentation by highlighting the fact that there isn't, at present, any method for real time mortality monitoring at a reasonable cost. The long-term solution lies in civil registration systems.

welcome.

An individual session will allow a co-ordinated consideration of a single topic and will be allocated 90 minutes to include 3 presentations, with up to half-an-hour for each presentation, to include time for questions at the end of each presentation and possibly comments from a discussant (optional). Session themes may be focussed on a methodological or substantive topic or a specific data set. The organiser would be able to solicit offers of presentations, or may have these already in mind, which could then be submitted via the conference online submissions form, either individually or as a set. After the close of the call, the organiser would be responsible for advising which papers should be included in the session, and organising a chair for the session (which may be themselves, if they are not presenting in the session). Alternatively, BSPS is keen to encourage innovative formats, such as panels, forums, training sessions, discussions or workshops. If you would like to contribute your ideas, please complete the form below and return to pic@lse.ac.uk by 10 January 2012.

BSPS Conference 2012— call for proposals

The 2012 BSPS Annual Conference will be held at the University of Nottingham (Jubilee campus) from Monday 10 – Wednesday 12 September 2012. The call for papers for the Conference will be issued in January when electronic submissions will be invited.

BSPS Council invites members (including new members) to suggest ideas for individual Conference sessions, and to propose session organisers. Suggestions for fringe meetings & other innovative events are also

Name:

Contact details (email preferred):

Suggested session theme – please provide outline description, continuing onto a further page if necessary:

A Local Authority Viewpoint of the Conference

The annual conference this year was held in York with over 200 participants, 137 presentations, 2 plenaries and 1 training session. Numbers of Local Authority demographers and planners coming to the conference have fallen in the last few years due to the financial situation but BSPS is looking at ways to encourage more to attend. The idea of the Training session for Local Authorities was a direct result of feedback from the conference in 2010. Each year there is a strand on Local Authority demography covering planning, census, population modelling and getting updates from ONS and other Government Departments on developments on topics such as population estimates, migration, fertility and this year work on the Beyond 2011 project - which is looking at improving detailed demographic information in the intercensal period by linking administrative data sources and possibly replacing the 2021 Census.

This year also trialled a 90 minute training session on making population estimates and projections. The training covered a lot of ground including

1. Making Local Authority Estimates – what to look out for – understanding migration.
2. Making Local Authority projections – PopGroup/DFM, Bespoke methods
3. Small Area Estimates – how do you do them - different methods

4. Small Area Projections – does anyone do them and if so, how?
5. Data Sources – where to find data on the new ONS web-site, what to use locally – links, tips, favourites and contacts.
6. Advanced Techniques – Using Sex ratios, & Population pyramids to better understand your population structure.
7. Census QA & Beyond 2011 – what new information is emerging?

The topics are summarised in two spreadsheets available from the BSPS web-site.

The idea is build up experience from as many Local Authorities, County Councils, Joint Units etc as possible and to have this as an up to date reference document.

<http://www2.lse.ac.uk/socialPolicy/BSPS/annualConference/2011/Training%20session%20material.aspx>

It is hoped to continue the idea of training at future BSPS Annual Conferences and any ideas for training *at* future BSPS Annual Conferences and any ideas for training should be sent to pic@lse.ac.uk

Abstracts on all the papers presented are available on the BSPS web-site and those relating to Local Government can be found on Abstracts 2 at <http://www2.lse.ac.uk/socialPolicy/BSPS/annualConference/2011/Local%20government%20planning%20and%20census%20issues%20abstracts.aspx>

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BSPS Conference Report

A Local Authority Viewpoint of the Conference

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Next year's conference will be held in Nottingham on 10th-12th September, 2012 where the first results of the 2011 Census will be beginning to emerge.

Here are 10 good reasons why Local Authorities demographers and Planners should join BSPS and come to the Annual Conference.

1. Find out what other Local Authority Demographers are working on.
2. Meet the people from ONS at the sharp end of development and methodology.
3. Sound out your ideas on a range of experts – Local Govt, Central Govt, Academics
4. Learn about new techniques, uses and sources of data.
5. Take the time to immerse yourself in demographic issues
6. Discover the faces behind ONS – it is not as scary as you might think!
7. Huge range of topics covered – plenty of relevance
8. Ask those awkward questions to the experts
9. It is very good value.
10. It is hoped to repeat some form of training for Local Government Demographers, Planners, Information Analysts involved in using demographic information for local service provision.

**Piers Elias, Tees Valley Unlimited
&BSPS Council Member**

Bob Woods

In memory of Bob Woods (1949-2011) a display at the conference celebrated his life and work. A number of his publications were on show, highlighting the important and interesting work that Bob undertook. The conference was a time for friends and colleagues from BSPS to remember Bob.

A memorial meeting for Professor Woods will be held in March 2012—full details are given within this newsletter.

BSPS thanks everyone who was involved in the display at the conference.



BSPS Prize Winner, 2011

Michelle Weinberger

The standard of the applications for the BSPS Prize was again very high, but the judges agreed that this year's BSPS Prize should be awarded to Michelle Weinberger from LSE for her dissertation *Making Sense of Tanzania's Fertility: The Role of Contraceptive Use*.

The two judges reported similar opinions regarding the dissertation. The first commented that 'this was impressive work and a very enjoyable read. The paper addresses an important demographic phenomenon – the stall in fertility decline – which is applicable to a number of developing countries, besides Tanzania. Good publication potential.'

The second judge stated that the dissertation was an 'elegant and effective exploration of the proximate determinants of fertility in Tanzania using hypothetical models to explore the contribution of contraceptive use (both prevalence and mix) to levels and trends in fertility, and prospects for future fertility decline. Very enjoyable to read. Quite possibly publishable.'

Warmest congratulations to Michelle on her dissertation and the call for submissions for the 2012 conference is listed on the following page!

ABSTRACT

Despite a large increase in contraceptive use in Tanzania since the early 1990s,

fertility has remained high. Fertility estimates from the latest demographic surveys suggest that fertility decline may be stalling in Tanzania. However, this national trend may mask very different patterns of fertility decline between urban and rural areas. This study assesses the presence and impact of fertility stalls both at the national level, and across urban and rural areas. Findings from sampling error analysis and Bongaart's proximate determinants framework suggest that the national rate masks an important finding: although fertility has continued to decline in urban areas, rural areas are experiencing a fertility stall. In addition, the model reveals that contraceptive use, although not the largest inhibiting factor, is responsible for the differential patterns of fertility decline between urban and rural areas. An attempt to account for role of contraceptive method mix in determining the fertility inhibiting impact of contraceptive use produced inconclusive results. Further analysis suggests that current measures of use effectiveness may overestimate the fertility inhibiting impact of method mix. The potential impact of future contraceptive use is also considered, and shows that meeting the current unmet need for contraception could reduce the total fertility rate to 3.5. Implications for future reproductive health and population policies in Tanzania are described.



BSPS Announcement

BSPS Prize, 2012

Entries are invited for the 2012 BSPS Prize. This is awarded to the entry judged to be the best MSc. dissertation on a demographic topic during the year 2011 (which would normally be at or around distinction level). Applicants should supply four copies of their dissertation, which do not need to be bound – hard copies are required.

Please note that all entries should be **submitted by the institution** awarding the degree, or by the supervising academic, and not by the authors themselves. A maximum of two entries per institution will be accepted. A word limit of 12,000 words per entry is encouraged on the basis that it is very difficult to judge and compare entries of vastly differing lengths. However, longer dissertations may also be entered, **with a section not exceeding the given word limit being nominated for judging.**

A cash prize of £300 is offered, which will be increased to £400 if there is a tie for first place and the Prize is split between two winners. The winner(s) will be announced at the BSPS Conference in September.

For the purposes of this prize, demography is defined as

1. the scientific study of human populations, especially with reference to their size, structure and distribution
2. the scientific study of the determining processes, such as fertility, mortality and migration, and
3. the relationship of these with the social, economic and cultural context within which they exist.

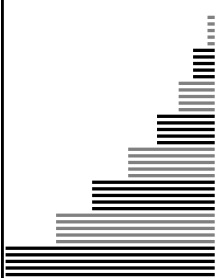
Entries should be received by 30 April 2012 at the BSPS Secretariat, PS201, London School of Economics, Houghton Street, London WC2A 2AE, or pic@lse.ac.uk

ESRC eNews

The ESRC newsletter eNews is released monthly (the December edition has just been released). The newsletter includes funding opportunities, corporate news and other relevant information for social scientists, with embedded links in the headings for more information. Further information and previous issues of eNews are available at <http://www.esrc.ac.uk/enews>.



E · S · R · C
ECONOMIC
& SOCIAL
RESEARCH
COUNCIL



BSPS Council

New BSPS Council

As of the 2011 BSPS AGM, the composition of the BSPS Council has changed, with several members having completed their terms of office, to be replaced by new Council members confirmed at the AGM. Council also has a new President, Vice-President and Hon. Secretary.

Hon. Officers:

President: Professor Ludi Simpson - ludi.simpson@manchester.ac.uk

Vice-President: Professor Tony Champion - tony.champion@ncl.ac.uk

Hon. Treasurer: Roy Lewis - roy.lewis@essexcc.gov.uk

Hon. Secretary: Dr. Wendy Sigle-Rushton - W.Sigle-Rushton@lse.ac.uk

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BSPS Less Economically Developed Countries Initiative: Call for Proposals

The BSPS Developing Countries Initiative has reserved £1,500 per annum for activities that encourage collaboration between population demographers in the UK and developing countries. This initiative sponsors an annual visit by a demographer from a LEDC, who gives a presentation at the BSPS Conference where they get the opportunity to meet and develop contacts with UK demographers. The overall aim is to encourage long-term collaboration and joint projects, and it is anticipated that contacts will already exist between the person to be funded, and a UK institution or UK demographers.

Previous awards have been made to visitors from Cuba, Brazil, Botswana and India. In 2005, Sonia Catasus Cervera, from the University of Havana visited, and in 2006, Consuelo Martin, also from Cuba, received the award. In both instances, they were also supported by the University of Manchester to visit that institution. In September 2007, a visit by Andre Caetano from the University of Minas Gerais (Belo Horizonte Brazil) was funded, to further work with colleagues at the London School of Economics and the University of Southampton. Seminars were held at the London School of Economics and the University of Southampton during the visit. The 2008 LEDC visitor was Niveen Abu R'Meileh from Birzeit University, and in

2009 Dr. Dilip visited from India. The 2010 visitor was Dr. Ramila Bisht from Jawaharlal Nehru University and the 2011 visitor was Dr. Gobopamang Letamo from the University of Botswana .

These visits are of great benefit to the recipients and the supporting institution. Two of the BSPS LEDCI fellows (Professor Andre Caetano and Dr. TR Dilip) were successful as co-Investigators to an ESRC Pathfinder Collaborative Microdata Resources project led by Dr. Sabu Padmadas from the University of Southampton. The project is the result of the LEDCI opportunity which culminated in this joint research proposal.

Suggestions for the use of part or all of this fund for the year 2012 should be made by 10 January 2012, to pic@lse.ac.uk for consideration by the BSPS Council at their next meeting. Suggestions would be best supported by a single typed sheet describing how the money might be budgeted and spent and in what ways this would encourage collaboration. Bids should also include a detailed timetable of the proposed activities, and should come from the UK-based sponsoring individual or institution only.



BSPS Less Economically Developed Countries Initiative: Report

Prof. Gobopamang Letamo, University of Botswana

I was very happy to be awarded the 2011 BSPS LEDC visitor award due to the opportunities that it gave me to present my work and to discuss opportunities and collaborations with a range of academics.

At the conference held in York I presented my paper entitled “The prevalence and predictors of low body mass index in a country undergoing nutritional transition” (abstract below). I found the standard of the conference presentations very high and listening to the speakers was inspiring—a number of ideas for new papers relating to Botswana have been conceived. Botswana has recently set up a Population Association and we hope to be in the position to emulate the success of BSPS in the future.

Aside from the conference I also spent some time at the University of Southampton to discuss collaborations on papers and future bids, to strengthen capacity in population sciences in Botswana and in the whole of the Southern African region.

I would have dearly liked to spend more time in the UK to discuss ideas with other institutions too, although teaching commitments at home meant that I could not have stayed any longer. However I am very thankful to BSPS for giving me this opportunity and I look forward to coming to another conference in the future.

G. Letamo

Objective: The aim of this study was to estimate the prevalence and predictors of low body mass index (BMI) in a country undergoing nutrition transition.

Design: A cross-sectional survey was conducted in 2007 using a multistage sampling method.

Subjects: A nationally representative sample of 4,107 men and 4,916 women aged 20 to 49 years was used for the analysis.

Main Outcome Measure: Low BMI was defined as $<18.5 \text{ kg/m}^2$

Results: Of the total sample, 19.5% of males and 10.1% of females were underweight (BMI $< 18.5 \text{ kg/m}^2$). Most of the underweight adult population was moderately thin. Most of the underweight adults were mildly thin, 13.7% and 6.2% men and women, respectively. 4.1% of men and 2.3% of women were moderately thin. The proportion of men and women who were severely thin were 1.7% and 1.6% respectively. Results from logistic regression analysis indicated that both adult men and women who were young, lived in rural areas, had never married, had no or little education, had no children, did not listen to a radio at least once a week and did not watch TV at least once a week were associated with high prevalence of underweight.

Conclusions: The problem of low BMI is predominantly more pronounced among men than women. Low socio-economic status appears to explain much of underweight as more of this phenomenon was more prevalent among the young, the rural area dwellers, the never married, those with no education or those who had not listened or watched television.

Bob Woods Memorial Meeting

Professor Bob Woods, FBA, John Rankin Professor of Geography in the University of Liverpool and a Past President of BSPS, died in February 2011 (see a full obituary in the BSPS Newsletter of March 2011). Throughout his University career, as a student in both Cambridge and Oxford, and as a university teacher in Kent, Sheffield and Liverpool, Bob contributed significantly in his publication, his personal contacts and in his teaching, to many aspects of Population Studies.

As a Memorial to Bob's work, just after the first anniversary of his death, BSPS is sponsoring a Memorial Symposium. This will be held in the Foresight Centre of the University of Liverpool, from 2.30 pm on Friday 8th till 4 pm on Saturday 10th March, 2012.

The programme will comprise five two-hour sessions focusing on the following key aspects of Bob's contribution:

- Global Demography (key speaker: Tim Dyson)
- Population modelling (key speaker: Phil Rees)
- Historical Demography (key speaker: Tony Wrigley)
- Fetal, infant and childhood mortality (key speaker: tba)
- Demography and medical history (key speaker: Frans van Poppel)



It is hoped that the overviews of the keynote speakers will then be supplemented by contributions in each session by colleagues, friends and former students reviewing and developing Bob's ideas and findings.

Offers of contributions of about 15/20 minutes to any of these sessions are now welcome. Please be in touch in the first instance with Bill Gould (wts@liv.ac.uk) with a title and a 100 word abstract.

In addition, on the Friday evening there will be an informal dinner, to be attended by Alison Woods.

Please also indicate on the proforma (available on the website) to Bill Gould if you would wish to attend this symposium. Full details of programme details, accommodation, available financial support, etc., are still being arranged. Final details will be circulated to those indicating their participation.



BSPS Announcement

Science and Technology Committee Inquiry into the Census and Social Science

On November 9th 2011 the House of Commons Select Committee on Science and Technology announced that it is conducting a 'short inquiry' looking at the impact of ending the Census on social science research. This follows the Government's announcement in July 2010 that the Population Census would be axed after 2011 and the ONS's setting up of the Beyond 2011 Programme to investigate and assess alternative options for producing the population and socio-demographic data required in England and Wales. The inquiry's findings will be fed into the ONS's work.

The Committee sought written submissions of up to 3,000 words by 30th November on the following matters:

1.How do social scientists use Census data?

2.What impact will the ending of the Census have on social science research?

3.What alternatives to the Census would provide population and socio-demographic data of equivalent or higher quality?

What other existing sources of population and socio-demographic data could be improved upon?

BSPS's submission was assembled by the Society's Officers drawing on responses to a call for information and views put out to its membership. They are extremely grateful to those who were able to feed into this process despite the short timescale.

For a local authority perspective on this please see the next

Academy of Social Sciences

A reminder that BSPS has rejoined the Academy of Social Sciences (www.acss.org.uk). They are conducting a high profile campaign for the Social Sciences to highlight the benefits to the country of a strong social science sector. For more information about this campaign please go to:

www.campaignforsocialscience.org.uk/

The campaign is closely following the recent changes to higher education funding

and the expected impact this will have on social science departments.

The Academy also comments on the role of departmental chief scientific advisors and the REF proposals.

Please contact the Academy direct for more information.

ACADEMY
of **SOCIAL SCIENCES**

Beyond 2011—A Local Authority Perspective

Piers Elias, Tees Valley Unlimited

Introduction

ONS have launched a consultation on User requirements Beyond 2011 looking at possible alternatives to the traditional census. It runs until 20th January, 2012 and I would urge all Local Authorities to respond to this consultation after carefully considering what impact it might have on the ability of Local Authorities to provide and plan for the needs of their populations.

<http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/about-ons/what-we-do/programmes---projects/beyond-2011/contribute-to-beyond-2011--consultation/index.html>

This article considers the use Local Authorities make of the census and other demographic data and what the implications of the Beyond 2011 project are.

We are assured that ONS have an open mind and that if this project concludes that we can't manage without at least some form of census then there will be sufficient time to organise one for 2021.

Clearly, the Census on its own is no use – the huge impact of free movement of European workers from April 2004 being a case in point - other data sources are needed.

Local Authority Information Needs and Uses

- Financial Settlements – Population Estimates are key. The population base needs to be updated periodically to i)

correct the errors of the previous estimates and ii) provide fresh information on age and sex profiles for survey data.

- Resource allocation - the Census provides a nationally consistent and unbiased set of small area socio-economic data that allows service users to target particular areas to achieve policy goals and this consistency over time and geography allows us to check the effectiveness or otherwise of previous policy decisions
- Information to calculate rates for social & health indicators.
- Consistent trend data across time. Travel to work and migration flow data are used for long term transport and housing strategies and these will be particularly difficult to replace without a census.
- Data for Statutory Returns to comply with the Equality Act 2010 , Single Data List.

Potential Benefits of Beyond 2011

Regular updates on census type information would be a key benefit of this project. With an ageing population and Joint working on Health issues, more information on health and disability would be useful.

- It opens up the potential for data not collected by the Census such as data on Income and taxation, second jobs, broadband take-up. *(continued overleaf)*

Beyond 2011—A Local Authority Perspective

Piers Elias, Tees Valley Unlimited

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- More use of administrative data should improve our knowledge and help address the Localism agenda.

Challenges for Beyond 2011

- Administrative Datasets
 - Definitional differences – can a “resident” be identified?
 - Coverage : List inflation in the GP Patients registers and huge undercounts in the Electoral Registers. How are ONS going to adjust these registers to off-set the biases?
 - Regional/Local differences in procedure and quality. National consistency important
- Better information on International Migrants for Population estimates – but will e-borders deliver?
- How can ONS run this project in such a way that compliance and coverage of future censuses aren't undermined?
- If we are going to rely more on Survey data, do we need new legislation to make taking part compulsory to address the issue of poor response rates to surveys?
- Functionality of output - will we able to Cross-tabulate as with Census data
- Cost of data - will it be free at the point of use as with Census data – what reassurances ONS can give on this?

Without a Census in 2021 how are we going to:

- Establish Household formation rates and tie them back to earlier trends? The recent change in Household Typology was only possible because we had historic data from 1991 & 2001 censuses.
- No Census could mean an end to SARS and Longitudinal studies - these give depth to ONS Assumptions, enable Cohort analysis such as work done by ONS on the Golden Generation, help highlight Health Inequalities and trends in family and household formation.
- We'll have nothing to rebase all the socio-demographic information that we try to estimate through surveys in the intercensal period.
- And for Ethnic Group data below Local Authority level – we still use the 2001 Census Table - nothing else is available. Most survey data won't produce useable results below Local Authority level anyway.

Conclusion

Cost - a pound or two per person per year sounds quite reasonable but ultimately it is a political decision. The UK government doesn't have a good track record of completing IT projects to budget and on time. E-borders has failed to meet its targets – the original *(continued overleaf)*



Beyond 2011—A Local Authority Perspective

Piers Elias, Tees Valley Unlimited

(continued from previous page)

contractors were taken off the project are now suing the government for the amount it cost to run the 2011 Census (£½ bn); the cost of not re-organising the Fire Service was £½ bn and if the Trident replacement is cancelled we could have a census every three weeks for the next 10 years.

- It is too soon to abandon the Census, we will need to validate any new methodology with some form of National Census in order for the users to have confidence in the results. The Scandinavian countries took 30 years before abandoning traditional censuses.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200708/cmselect/cmtreasy/1032/1032.pdf> (See Page 11)



- We still need information at small geographic areas with some cross-tabulation functionality to identify pockets of deprivation.
- ONS and Local authorities can continue to build on the Quality Assurance work.
- Improvements needed in administrative datasets for national consistency and to better reflect demographic definitions.
- Engagement important – continued use of CLIP and Local Insight Panels, set up a Communities of Practice and make sure you respond to the Consultation.

Piers Elias

Demography & Modelling Officer, Tees Valley Unlimited

Local Authority representative on CLIP Population & CLIP Census Advisory Group

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Tees Valley Unlimited is a Local Authority organisation based in the North East – jointly funded by Darlington, Hartlepool, Middlesbrough, Redcar & Cleveland and Stockton-on-Tees Unitary Authorities. It promotes business investment and provides strategic support on housing, transport, employment & skills and demographics for the sub-region and the Local Enterprise Partnership.

www.teesvalleyunlimited.gov.uk

An Open Letter to the European Commissioner for Research and Innovation, Maire Geoghegan-Quinn

A sustained and substantial European investment in cutting-edge Socio-economic Sciences and the Humanities (SSH) can unlock new knowledge and insights that are necessary for Europe

- to overcome inequality, exclusion and poverty and to adapt to demographic change (migration, ageing, gender relations etc.);

- to develop resilient institutions that can strengthen sustainable growth, innovation processes, and social and political participation;

- to exploit cultural diversity as a source for creativity, adaptive capabilities and social innovation;

- to advance our understanding of cognitive processes and create educational opportunities in inclusive and democratic societies;

- to understand the complexity of value systems, worldviews and behavioural patterns, and address issues of openness or resistance to change and

- to move towards successful intercultural dialogue and global diplomacy.

If you agree with the need for SSH to produce policy-oriented research for Europe, and if you wish to see a strong SSH-programme under the new European Framework Programme Horizon 2020 (2014-2020) the please read the Open Letter to the Commissioner and sign it! It can be found at:

<http://www.eash.eu/openletter2011/>

The voice of SSH researchers must be heard in the design of the new framework programme. Join your name to the list of colleagues from across Europe and beyond!

Have a look at background information about the origin of this letter and comments on the European Commission's plans for the new framework programme.

"Understanding Europe in a global context - transitions towards innovative and inclusive societies"

describes a policy-oriented, SSH-centered European research programme that harnesses societally relevant SSH research for "Horizon 2020".

This letter does therefore **not** address the need to further strengthen the European Research Council for basic research; such an argument has been developed elsewhere.



Spotlight on Research

Kate Jowett

PhD Student at Southampton University

Kate Jowett is in the second year of her PhD in Social Statistics at the University of Southampton, supervised by Dr Claire Bailey, Dr Angela Baschieri and Professor Zoe Matthews.

Kate has been at Southampton since 2004 – after completing her BSc in Population Science in 2007, she spent a year working in student politics and 3 months teaching in Tanzania, before returning to the department to undertake her MSc (Demography) and PhD. Her MSc dissertation modelled the effect of fee removal on the use of maternal health services in Ghana, showing that the policy had a positive effect, improving the rates of health facility births in the poorest regions and amongst the poorest women. Kate became interested in examining the role that poverty and poor environments have on women's health, and has taken this research theme into her PhD.

Using Demographic and Health Survey data from 26 countries in sub-Saharan Africa, Kate is examining patterns of poverty across urban environments within the region, analysing the effect that household poverty and the type of urban environment have on maternal health care utilization. Her work is challenging the ideas of a clear 'urban advantage' in health service accessibility, and that urban poverty is solely synonymous with 'megacity slums', by examining the scale of inequity in access and the magnitude of urban poverty across different



Kate conducting fieldwork in Tanzania

sizes of urban settlement. Kate is currently exploring changes over time within countries and across urban settlement size, to highlight where future intervention and policy focus should be directed. The next step is to analyse slum-level data to explore the specific dynamics of service use amongst poor women living in very poor neighbourhoods - areas which are often not covered by standard sampling frames in national household surveys.

In addition to her PhD, Kate has also worked on the UNFPA 'State of the Worlds Midwifery' project and has recently completed an internship at Options UK, providing research support to teams working on maternal and child health care initiatives in Ethiopia and Nigeria. Outside of work, she is a keen long distance runner and also studies Russian part-time. Kate is happy to discuss the details of her research (and/or practice her Russian!) and can be contacted at Kate.Jowett@soton.ac.uk



Book Review

Bankrupt Britain by Danny Dorling and Bethan Thomas

Ben Wilson, LSE

How would you describe Britain if you had only one word? Would you agree that it's bankrupt? I'd be interested to hear your thoughts at the conference this year, but before then, perhaps you'd like to explore some evidence before making up your mind. If one thing is certain, there's plenty of evidence in *Bankrupt Britain: An atlas of social change*.

In case there is any doubt, Daniel Dorling and Bethan Thomas are not just trying to describe Britain with one word. Nevertheless, the title indicates the book's two main ingredients: an atlas of cartograms and a discussion of Britain's social 'bank balance'. Of course, the ingredients aren't separate. Maps and interpretation are mixed together, filled with a thin layer of charts, and sprinkled with tables. All this is served in a modest portion, easy to read on the train and about the size of a graphic novel (but please note that, unless your name is Google, this book should not be confused with the adventures of Captain Britain).

Dedication

Bankrupt Britain is not a comic. The authors take their subject seriously. It's clear from the start that the authors care about data – not only description and dissemination, but also the impact of cuts to data collection. It's also clear from the start that this book has a political edge. It begins with a dedication to David Cameron and Nick Clegg, but before you applaud, or spit out

you sandwich in disgust, please read the acknowledgements two pages later. The sentiment of this dedication is similar to that of Aneurin Bevan when he said that "This island is almost made of coal and surrounded by fish. Only an organising genius could produce a shortage of coal and fish in Great Britain at the same time."

Why bankrupt?

Not so long ago I worked for the Office for National Statistics. To preserve independence, we tried to keep statistics separate from politics. Along these lines, this book may be liberating for some, or a challenge for others, depending on your current point of view. You may disagree that: "The British state is currently bankrupt in how it treats those who are more vulnerable, especially the poor, the young and the sick." But even if you do, there is plenty of food for thought here, and a wide array of statistics. Have you ever seen a map of malicious fire alarm calls made across the UK?

As the above quote indicates, the authors are not defining bankruptcy narrowly. The book has six chapters, each focused on a different type: financial, residential, political, moral, emotional, and environmental. For each, a range of sources have been used. Before the first chapter, is a section on How to use this atlas, which introduces the different geographies. For those unfamiliar with cartograms, it may be best to start here. At the *(continued overleaf)*



Book Review

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Ben Wilson, LSE

(continued from previous page) other end of the scale, some of you may know the algorithm by Gastner and Newman used to create the maps, (the same algorithm used to create the cartograms on worldmapper.org). Perhaps you can answer a question. I know the cartogram isn't new, with the general approach being much older than the personal computer, but when were they invented? A quick internet search suggests 1868 (by Émile Levasseur), but perhaps some members have an earlier example. Either way, I'm not sure I'd fancy drawing these maps by hand.

At this point, I should point out that the maps in Bankrupt Britain are all population cartograms. Each map is consistently distorted so that a region's size (on the map) is proportional to the size of its resident population. What changes is the statistics that are used to colour each map (and the level of detail at which they are available), but the outline of countries, regions, cities and towns is the same throughout. Since the shape of the maps doesn't vary, they quickly become familiar. Compared with books that use different types of cartogram, this makes it much easier to compare maps. There's even a helpful comparison of the population cartogram and the 'normal' map on the inside cover (front and back). One word of warning though; if you read this book for long enough, you will begin to question what is 'normal' (as well as wondering

whether Scotland looks more like a sea-horse or a dog).

Chapter contents

Since it concerns finance, the first chapter is closest to traditional discussions of bankruptcy. In fact, the first map shows adults declared insolvent. The chapter then explores statistics on children living in poverty, pension income, unemployment benefit claims, full-time weekly earnings, public sector employment, and several different measures of income. The visual highlight of the chapter is page 16, which includes 28 maps. This might sound like a nightmare, but the use of small multiples is an excellent way of showing changes in regional unemployment statistics between 1983 and 2010.

The second chapter, on residential bankruptcy, opens by showing where you could afford to live (i.e. a map of house prices). This geographical inequality is further explored using statistics on rents, evictions, and homelessness. It's hard not to feel sorry for the family in South Shropshire who may have to wait 500 years for a local authority home. Chapter three, political bankruptcy, opens with another excellent multiple map series, this time showing general election results from 1918 to 2010. Equally fascinating are the maps of who came second in each constituency election. Legitimacy, turnout, and local elections are also explored, as well the emotive topic of MPs expenses.

(continued overleaf)





Book Review

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It may be difficult to measure moral bankruptcy, but chapter four provides various candidates, including child protection, bullying, malicious fire alarm calls, and RIPA surveillance (Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act - e.g. local authorities 'spying' on residents). This chapter links with the next, on emotional bankruptcy, which seems (in part at least) to be the author's response to recent proposals for measuring wellbeing. The most surprising result in this chapter (for me at least) was the relatively low level of antidepressant prescriptions in London.

If I was forced to choose the weakest chapter, it would be the last one on environmental bankruptcy. This chapter seems less coherent than the others, in particular when discussing youth mortality. Also, the use of pie-charts is a little disappointing because they fail to communicate as effectively as the rest of the maps and charts. Despite this, there are more interesting cartograms (including energy consumption and recycling) before the book draws to a close with its four page conclusion. Although a little brief, this proposes an index of local environmental conditions using a combination of previously mentioned statistics, and includes a twist in the tail...

Final thoughts

"There's something for everyone in Britain", or so says the British Tourist Authority. Not perhaps a surprising statement from people who ensure that "Britain is marketed in an inspirational and effective way around the world". Maybe this is true for tourists, but does it apply to residents, or does this 'something' vary depending upon who you are and where you live? Bankrupt Britain provides many examples that it does. No doubt it would be interesting to test more of the associations between variables to explore this further, but it's difficult to argue against the existence of geographical inequality in the UK. Does this mean that Britain is bankrupt? As the authors themselves suggest, here you have a chance to make up your own mind. Do this, and then consider how you would describe Britain if you only had one word...

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5 minutes with...

Jane Falkingham

Director of the ESRC Centre for Population Change

Can you introduce yourself and your background in 2-3 sentences?

I'm a Professor of Demography and International Social Policy at the University of Southampton and also Director of the ESRC Centre for Population Change. My first degree was in Economics at LSE and as part of that degree I did an outside option course called 'Third World Demography' taught by Professor Tim Dyson and fell in love with Demography. After doing a Masters in Demography I got a job at LSE and worked there for 15 years before moving to Southampton in 2002.

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

At the moment there is so much exciting stuff in both developed and developing world. In the Centre for Population Change I am currently working on the changes in living arrangements across the life course alongside Maria Evandrou and Ann Berrington with some fantastic researchers—Dieter Demey, Jo Sage and Juliet Stone. We are conducting some interesting work in midlife, which I feel is a neglected part of the lifecourse.

I'm also working on an ESRC Pathfinder project in South Africa and China which looks at the impact of migration on the wellbeing of children and older adults left behind—intergenerational relations and the



role that migration plays in that. This is one of the areas that is most interesting in Demography at the moment—the interaction between the basic demographic processes. So the interaction between migration and fertility or migration and ageing, alongside how these effect wellbeing at the individual level.

We have just run an event to highlight the 7 billionth birth and to me this to me back to the basic. Just looking at the huge increase in population during the 19th and 20th centuries shows that we are probably three-quarters of the way through the biggest change the world will ever see with respect to population. We live in an age where we know this is happening. We can measure it and monitor it. In previous revolutions such as the agricultural and industrial most *(continued on next page)*



5 minutes with...

Jane Falkingham

Director of the ESRC Centre for Population Change

(continued from previous page) people didn't know that they were in a revolution, and if you did you wouldn't have been able to measure it. As demographers right now it is just amazing that we can be reflective about what these changes means and where we are going to go.

What do you think your greatest achievement is in demography?

My greatest honour is to be the Director of the Centre for Population Change—the first nationally funded UK Research Centre in Demography. One of the really exciting things is that we are now part of Population Europe, which has the Max Planck Institute, INED, NIDI and Vienna and the CPC, so we are playing with the big European boys!

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

Gosh...! Just to do research on things that excite you. We have never lived in an age where there has been so much data available to us with so many research questions that we can answer.

Another lesson for young demographers is to take every opportunity that comes along



because you don't know what it may turn into.

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

When I was growing up I certainly didn't want to be a Demographer because I didn't know what it was! During my PhD I felt insecure about the nature of short term research jobs so I went off and did a law degree in the evenings. I was applying for internships after this degree and then a one-year temporary lectureship came up at LSE to replace Tim Dyson, who was writing his book on food. I got the lectureship and this turned into something permanent. So, if not a demography I might have been a lawyer.

Who is your academic hero?

Tim Dyson!

Who'd go to your fantasy Demographic dinner party?

This is a difficult one! It would be quite interesting to get Malthus and Julian Simon in a room together round a table.

What are you hoping to get for Christmas?

A day off...

Tell us a fact about you that we might not know...

My great-great-grandfather designed the clock in Big Ben.



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.

New members since the last newsletter seem to be mainly from Southampton!

Dr. Joanna Sage, Research Fellow,
Southampton

Dr. Vicky Hosegood, Demographer,
Southampton

Dieter Demey, Senior research assistant,
Southampton

Dr. Eva Beaujouan, Research Fellow,
Southampton

Arkadiusz Wisniowski, Postdoctoral re-
search fellow, Southampton

Mrs. Teresa McGowan, ESRC Centre
manager, Southampton

Dr. Athina Vlachantoni, Centre for Re-
search on Ageing, Southampton

Dr. Pia Wohland, UPTAP researcher,
Newcastle

Dr. Brienna Perelli-Harris, Lecturer,
Southampton

Nitzan Peri-Totem, DPhil in Sociology,
Nuffield College, Oxford

Sarah Wo, PhD Social Statistics & De-
mography, Southampton



Merry Christmas from BSPS