BSPS Conference Report

The 2010 Conference at the University of Exeter was again the highlight of the BSPS year, with over 180 participants over the three days of the Conference. For the first time, all attending received feedback forms in their Conference packs, and the consensus seemed to be that the meeting had been very successful, with particular plaudits for the two plenary sessions. As a result, this report concentrates on those plenary sessions. It is hoped to have podcasts of the plenaries on the BSPS website in the New Year, so watch this space.

Additionally, the Nothing new under the sun: a brief history of the Census in the UK special session, presented by Ian White from the Office for National Statistics, was reported to have been hugely entertaining. BSPS also added a couple of fringe meetings to the format in 2010, and suggestions for further innovations for 2011 and succeeding years would be very welcome.

BSPS thanks are also due to the strand organisers for their sterling work: Emily Freeman (ageing), Paul Norman (area measures), Ben Wilson (families & households), Stuart Basten (fertility & reproductive health), Sylvie Dubuc (gender inequality, mothers & children), Amos Channon (health & mortality), Violetta Hionidou (historical demography), Eileen Howes (local authority, census, planning), Emily Grundy & Jim Newman (longitudinal studies), Ludi Simpson (methods, models & projections), Cecilia Macintyre (posters), and Jonathan Swan and Ibrahim Sirkeci (migration). A special mention for the poster session, where huge efforts were made in 2010 to put on a much-enhanced session. Happily, the effort was successful and 27 posters were on display throughout the meeting, with presenters on hand to discuss during the poster session on the first evening.

All abstracts from the Conference can be found on the BSPS website at http://www2.lse.ac.uk/socialPolicy/BSPS/annualConference/2010/2010%20Exeter.aspx

Special thanks to Jonathan Swan for providing the plenary reports.

Ties started with a Macro level overview of recent developments in world health. He related his talk to Millennium Development Goals (MDG). He started with MDG 6 – reduce the prevalence and death rates associated with malaria. The burden of the disease, mostly in sub-Saharan Africa, is an estimated 243 million clinical episodes, and 800,000 deaths per year. He described a range of recent improvements to dealing with malaria, since about 2003, and noted in particular the large increase in funds to support, prevention, testing, and treatment. Ties presented a range of charts showing the dramatic reductions in malaria prevalence across a range of countries, before moving on to describe some of the measurement issues for malaria, such as the use of verbal autopsy.

Ties moved on to MDG 6 and the aim to reduce the prevalence and death rates due to TB. He described some recent developments: He noted that interventions were mainly around treatment with multiple drugs, and although there had been progress with case detection and treatment success, there was no evidence of a decline in prevalence at the moment. In 2008 there were an estimated 1.8 million deaths involving TB. Measurement issues were also discussed, especially with regard to the ability and success of population based surveys to assess prevalence.

The last of the diseases discussed was HIV, the biggest issue. The MDG is to halt and begin to reverse the spread of HIV by 2015. He noted that there were an estimated 33 million people living with AIDS, with 2 million deaths in 2008. Ties showed a chart tracking the huge increase in funding for HIV/AIDS; from $1.5 billion in 2000 to $13 billion in 2008. Charts showing the improvement in treatment, and the slow decline in new case rates were also shown, before issues with measurement were examined.

Ties then moved on to look at the new impetus in addressing MDG 4 & 5, to reduce child mortality by ⅔ and maternal mortality by ¾ between 1990 and 2015. In 2009 there were about 8 million child deaths, while there were 400,000 maternal deaths in 2008. Ties noted that 2010 is the WHO year of maternal, neonatal and child health. Ties highlighted the gradual decline in child mortality but a slower decline in maternal mortality. Although recent estimates for maternal mortality are more upbeat, they are still off the pace needed to meet the MDG. Ties showed a slide showing the dramatic difference between the (continued on page 3)
(continued from page 2) prevalence of health interventions in Nepal, with a dramatically higher rate for the richest quintile for some of the interventions. In terms of measurement he noted the importance of household surveys as there is very limited clinical data.

Ties moved on to discussing chronic diseases, for which there is no MDG, suggesting that this might be the next area for which goals will be set. He noted that the burden is increasing due to a range of factors and that interventions were mainly focused on prevention, such as targeting tobacco use. Ties noted that there was an important opportunity coming up in 2011 with a United Nations General Assembly Special Session on chronic and non-communicable diseases. Ties mentioned that there were major data gaps, for example lack of evidence on risk factors. Ties discussed using interview surveys to investigate heart problems and schizophrenia, looking at some international comparison results. There is a search for good summary measures, including the BigMac Index! Ties then looked at measurement issues, noting that clinical data were poor.

The last section of Ties’ talk looked at monitoring and evaluation and the role of Demography. Ties noted the need for regular monitoring of MDGs – especially to support performance based disbursement. Ties showed the ‘epidemic’ of indicators and targets, but noted that impact evaluation was a neglected topic. Two areas where there was a role for demography were stressed: these were data generation - through surveys, death registration and population based longitudinal surveys; and analysis and evaluation. In particular he noted that death registration was a priority topic, with very limited causes of death data. Some 40 million babies are born but not registered each year, and 40 million people die unregistered each year. Reliable cause of death statistics are missing for 77 countries, with two thirds of the world’s population. Ties did note that there was progress, particularly using IT innovations such as conducting verbal autopsies via mobile telephones.

Tomáš Sobotka from the Vienna Institute of Demography (VID) talked about key trends in fertility in the developed world. By way of introduction, Tomáš noted that in the literature there were notions about fertility being too low and looming population decline; with populist writings, in sections of the media, on immigrants ‘taking over’. Tomáš noted alarmist conclusions from 1906 on “Social suicide” in the UK as a result of declining fertility rates by Newsholm. Tomáš then compared this with recent quotes from demographers, showing ‘plus ça change, plus c’est le même chose’ (nothing changes), for example W. Lutz et al 2006, The “Low fertility trap” hypothesis.

(continued on Page 4)
Tomáš also noted the European Commission Green Paper (2005) that said low birth rate is a “challenge for the public authorities”; and that “return to demographic growth” is one out of “three essential priorities”. Tomáš, showed three book examples including “The Last Days of Europe: Epitaph for an Old Continent”, “Decline and Fall: Europe’s Slow Motion Suicide”, and “PeopleQuake”, and noted an alarmist video with bogus statistics on YouTube got 12.3 million views for the English version.

Tomáš moved from macro- to micro-level concerns, highlighting concerns that individual preferences are not fulfilled (but that this stands on “shaky ground”) and concerns that people may “miss out” if they don’t have a family they realise this too late (Kravdal 2010), though of course the argument can go the other way round, not realising the consequences of having children ...

Tomáš’s talk then went on to look at four main areas:
- upturns in period fertility and their explanations
- the likely stabilisation in completed cohort fertility (in some regions)
- the effects of the recent recession, and
- the evidence on convergence between ‘native’ and immigrant women.

Tomáš presented a chart, showing the increase in the number of countries with low fertility from 1970 to the early 2000’s. Particularly striking is the rapid increase, from the middle of the 1990’s, in the number of European countries with the lowest low fertility rates (of below 1.3). But since the early 2000’s the number of countries with low fertility rates has remained roughly static, though the number with lowest low rates has dropped very sharply, back to zero in 2009.

Tomáš illustrated the big differences between regions in fertility trends, in particular very large declines in fertility in Southern Europe and Central-eastern Europe. A common feature however was towards an upturn in fertility starting about 2000 in almost all areas, though the amount of upturn still differs across regions, being very strong in some countries.

This increase in fertility showed that areas can bounce back from lowest low fertility to more normal low levels of 1.4 to 1.6, but still below replacement level. This upturn in fertility is remarkable as it is the first concerted rise of fertility across the whole developed world.

Tomáš looked at whether this increase is “real”, with a large number of articles speculating that the lowest low rates are a period effect artefact, caused by delayed childbearing, and that cohort rates may not ultimately show such low rates. He illustrated this with both a hypothetical example and the example of \(\text{(continued on page 5)}\)
(continued from page 4) Denmark.

Tomáš then looked at other possible explanations, in particular policy effects – the return of pronatalism. Another possible effect is high levels of fertility of immigrants, but Tomáš presented evidence showing that in some countries this effect was actually negative, and only small where it did occur. He also looked briefly at the hypothesis that low unemployment depresses fertility.

Tomáš set out his hypothesis that fertility rates were stabilising in Western, Southern, and Eastern Europe together with the USA. He started by looking at cohort fertility rates, setting out the advantages of this method of measuring fertility, particularly in dealing with postponement issues. He noted that there was debate about whether it was period rather than cohort rates driving fertility. In looking at the long-term history he noted that some countries achieved low levels of cohort fertility 100 years ago. He showed several countries where he argued that the decline in younger age cohort fertility had stabilised, suggesting than this marked the end of increasing postponement of child-bearing.

Tomáš then moved onto the impacts of the recession, suggesting that theory would suggest that this might mean an increase in fertility. Tomáš showed that in the OECD there was evidence since 1980 of a correlation between decreased fertility being correlated with decreasing GDP (lagged by a year). He also quoted research looking at unemployment and fertility and pointed out studies that showed other factors were more important than the economic cycle. He concluded that some decline in fertility should be expected as a result of the recent recession, showing some recent evidence suggesting that the recession has slowed the increasing fertility rates in a number of countries – but not everywhere. However he concluded that the effects of the recession on changing fertility rates were likely to be small and short-lived.

Tomáš stated that there was evidence of converging fertility rates amongst immigrants and second generation immigrants with the 'native born' population, showing the example of the Netherlands.

Finally Tomáš looked at the issue of whether there should be a desired or optimal fertility rate, looking at the issues that might affect this discussion, such as environmental concerns and the impact of immigration.

Tomáš suggested that those that wanted to look further at this topic might like to look at the website www.humanfertility.org

Jonathan Swan, ONS
The 2011 BSPS Annual Conference will be held at the University of York from Wednesday 7 – Friday 9 September 2011. 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 are also welcome.

An individual session will allow a co-ordinated consideration of a single topic and will be allocated 90 minutes to include 3 longer or 4 shorter presentations with time for questions and discussions, 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. Suggestions for such would be very welcome. Fringe meetings to run in conjunction with Conference will need to have a comprehensive proposal in place by January 2011.

If you would like to contribute your ideas, please send in the details below and return to pic@lse.ac.uk by 15 January 2011.

NB: Conference attendance is at the presenter’s expense (although student members presenting a paper or poster are eligible to apply for a bursary).

Suggested format for proposals

Name:

Contact details (email preferred):

Suggested session theme – please provide outline description, continuing onto a further page if necessary:
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 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 (see later in the newsletter for a report of her visit).

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 2011 should be made by 15 January 2011, to pic@lse.ac.uk for consideration by the BSPS Council at their next meeting. Suggestions would be best supported by one side of A4 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.
The winner of the 2010 BSPS Prize was announced at the 2010 Conference at the University of Exeter.

The winner was Katie Keenan (CPS, LSHTM) for her dissertation *High sex ratio at birth & use of sex-selective abortion in the Caucasus region*.

One of the judges commented as follows:

‘There was a very strong field of theses for this year’s BSPS prize. All were well-written and all displayed a strong grasp of both the required methodology and the necessary scholarly apparatus. It was heartening to see the breadth of both regions and topics analysed and methods employed.

I felt, however, that one thesis - *High sex ratio at birth & use of sex-selective abortion in the Caucasus region* - stood out above the rest. It is hard to imagine many more sensitive topics than sex-selective abortion, but the importance of the topic both in a purely demographic sense and, indeed, in a policy/human rights framework is clear. The thesis set out the potential scale and impact of the issue in the Caucasus in a very clear, yet forceful manner.

However, it is in the innovative and imaginative way by which the author sought to circumvent some of the obvious difficulties in accessing data on abortion. By combining various different surveys regarding pre- and post-natal behaviour, as well as insinuating from birth records, the author was able to paint what was, to mind, a convincing picture of the scale of sex-selective abortion in the region. This was always done in a careful, methodical, clear and sensitive way.

This thesis was question-driven. As such, it required imagination and innovation - in other words, deep thinking - to find a way to answer it.’

Warmest congratulations to Katie on her dissertation and the call for submissions for the 2011 conference is listed on the following page!
Entries are invited for the 2011 BSPS Prize. This is awarded to the entry judged to be the best MSc. dissertation on a demographic topic during the year 2010 (which would normally be at or around distinction level). Applicants should supply four copies of their dissertation, which do not need to be bound – electronic submissions can also be accepted.

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 2011 at the BSPS Secretariat, PS201, London School of Economics, Houghton Street, London WC2A 2AE, or pic@lse.ac.uk

Consultation on ONS Website

There is a further consultation from ONS regarding the draft retention policy for the ONS website. This second consultation acknowledges that the information held on the ONS website needs to be positively managed, to ensure that it meets user requirements as well as identifying which information may have historical value and should be transferred to The National Archive (TNA). The closing date for this second consultation is 31 January 2011, and BSPS members are invited to complete the survey individually. The consultation document may be accessed at:

Background:
The General Register Office for Scotland (GROS) is seeking views to help determine the shape of its future Demography statistical work programme. The budget reductions announced as part of the Scottish Spending Review on 17 November mean that GROS has to consider where savings can be found. It is critically important that our statistical outputs reflect our users' priorities.

Topic and scope:
We are asking you to let us know
1. What GROS demography statistical outputs you use and how you use them.
2. The impact on you of possible reductions in various areas of GROS demography statistical work.

Who we are seeking views from:
We would particularly like to hear from regular users of our statistics. But anyone can respond and all views will be considered in full.

Duration:
This consultation will be open from 1 December 2010 to 9 February 2011. The consultation period is 10 weeks, rather than the usual 12 weeks and it is over the festive holiday period. This shorter period will enable us to take account of the responses in our business plans for the coming years.

To view the consultation document, which includes the response template, please go to:-

Enquiries:
Any enquiries should be made through GROS Customer Services:
Phone: 0131 314 4243
Email: customer@gro-scotland.gsi.gov.uk

How to respond:
We are happy to receive replies, using our response template at the end of the consultation document, by post or by e-mail. We are also happy to discuss with groups or individuals.

Please send responses to:
Post: GROS Demography Statistical Work Programme
Demography Division
Ladywell House, Ladywell Road
Edinburgh, EH12 7TF
Email: customer@gro-scotland.gsi.gov.uk

Next steps:
Responses will be analysed by GROS and our work programme will be published in our business plan in the spring. A summary of responses will be published on our website. The response template asks whether you are consent, or not, for your response to be made public.

Further information can be obtained from:
Telephone: 0131 314 4243
Email: customer@gro-scotland.gsi.gov.uk
Web: http://www.gro-scotland.gov.uk/
Joanna Kesten is a PhD Student at Loughborough University School of Sport, Exercise and Health Sciences. Her research aims to identify who influences pre-adolescent girls’ physical activity and healthy eating behaviours, their knowledge and awareness of the behavioural factors leading to the development of overweight and obesity, and their readiness to adopt changes to help improve healthy eating and physical activity practices. Childhood overweight and obesity is known as a significant public health problem worldwide and is associated with a clustering of disease risk factors and increased risk of adult mortality and morbidity. Population level intervention approaches might be the most effective as these may cause greater improvements in population disease levels than smaller numbers of individuals making large changes.

Her current research project aims to assess who influence pre-adolescent girls’ physical activity and healthy eating behaviours. Once identified, these key informants will be interviewed firstly to determine their level of knowledge and awareness of the behavioural factors leading to the development of overweight and obesity, and secondly to address their readiness to adopt changes to help improve healthy eating and physical activity in pre-adolescent girls.

Using focus groups to collect data from girls aged 7 to 11 years old, Jo identified a broad range of key informants. At the individual level, children discussed their own health behaviour control, which was mediated by family members’ and particularly maternal influences. The peer group were described as role models capable of encouraging the performance of positive and negative health behaviours. School health policies, encompassing school meals and physical activity lessons were highlighted as influential. Wider social influences (e.g. the media, government initiatives, such as Change4Life), and environmental factors including the proximity and availability of physical activity facilities and the perceived safety of these facilities, were also discussed.

From these interviews it has been decided to focus on key informants, who are knowledgeable people in a community, but who are not by definition representative of the community at large.

Jo’s research suggests that interventions should focus upon multi-level approaches, covering both the wider social environment and the individual level of behaviour. Jo is now at the beginning of her second year of PhD study and is preparing to interview the key informants.

Joanna can be contacted at J.m.kesten@lboro.ac.uk
It was a privilege to be awarded the BSPS LEDC visitor award for the year 2010. This award provided me an opportunity to present my paper titled "Caste, Gender, Poverty in a Changing Hill Economy: Implications for Dalit Women’s Health" at the BSPS Annual Conference, Exeter 2010. The Conference was an enriching experience. It provided me an opportunity to meet, listen and discuss ideas with numerous scholars from UK and other parts of the world. I am excited with the possibilities this has opened up for setting up networks of individuals and institutions, with potential of working together in areas of common academic interest. Personally speaking BSPS Conference was a refreshing change from the many large, hurried “mela” like Conferences I have usually attended. Panels were well-planned. Quality of papers presented was very high and all presentations were followed with in-depth, useful discussions. The environment was very egalitarian—work of both the young and senior scholars and academics was treated with equal seriousness. In brief, an interesting and high quality Conference.

I was also lucky to be housed for about a week at the Department of Social Policy, London School of Economics. Importantly, it allowed me access to library and to internet sources that I do not have in JNU. It was extremely important that I got time to interact with academics from LSE and to develop and further some research work that we are pursing together.

Anne Shepherd, Ernestina Coast and Eleri Jones from LSE were extraordinarily helpful in making my short visit most comfortable, useful and highly productive. Overall, from my point of view, a hugely satisfying experience.

**Abstract of BSPS Paper**

Over a hundred and fifty years of imperialist and post colonial rule, the hill society of the Pauri Garhwal of the Central Himalayan region saw the implementation of state economic policies that spelt a virtual destruction of the old subsistence-based agricultural economy. Large levels of male out-migration to near and distant towns left women bearing the brunt of farming degraded lands. For the Dalits (scheduled caste) of the region who worked both in artisan and agricultural production, the social release from caste-based client-patron relationships bought about by the economic breakdown, also meant the dire need to diversify work patterns. While they sought new livelihoods in farming, animal husbandry and petty trade, both men and women predominantly ended up as wage labour on upper caste farms, the new work relations not unconditioned by old caste practices. Dalit women additionally engaged in domestic labour, their own and also that of upper castes as also subsistence work which was essential to survival. Based on ethnographic research done in two villages of Garhwal district, Uttarakhand, India, this paper examines the relationship between work, poverty and health in the lives of Dalit women. The paper explores how Dalit women’s lives are shaped by the articulation of caste, class and patriarchy based labour patterns and reproductive ideologies. It examines women’s perceptions and experience of their general, reproductive, mental and emotional health and the nature of their access to health services. To bring the situation of Dalit women in sharp focus, the paper attempts a differential analysis of Dalit women’s health situation as distinct from that of upper caste women. We also make an effort to capture nuanced differences within the Dalits themselves.
University of Manchester, Friday 10 September 2010

This seminar, funded by the ESRC funded NCRM Network for Methodological Innovation and supported by BSPS addressed methods of collecting reliable information on new migrants and establishing ways of finding out the service needs of new migrant and other minority groups. Presentations from the day can be viewed at:

http://www.methods.manchester.ac.uk/events/2010-09-10/index.shtml

Estimates of long-term international migration and population estimates by ethnic group

The day began with Emma Wright and Fiona Aitchison, ONS Centre for Demography, who gave a very full and clear description of how ONS makes estimates of long-term international migration and population estimates by ethnic group. They explained the components of long-term international migration and the Migration Statistics Improvement Programme. Phase 1 of this programme has now been completed and includes: improved sub-national distribution of international migration – both immigration and emigration; improved estimation of internal migration of students using HESA data and improved mid-year population estimates for 2002 to 2008 revised in May 2010. Other improvements relate to estimates of short-term migration; migration indicators; reporting and timeliness of data; improvements to the sample design of the International Passenger Survey; data visualisation and work on accuracy of population estimates.

Phase 2 is just starting and includes use of administrative sources; the statistical benefits of e-Borders and further methodology developments.

Population estimates by ethnic group were first published in 2005 as experimental Statistics, at Local Authority level for England and Wales. They currently cover the period mid-2001 to mid-2007 and are published on the ONS website at http://www.statistics.gov.uk/StatBase/Product.asp?vlnk=14238

Details of the methodology for both sets of estimates, and the latest results, can be found on the overheads at the address listed at the beginning of this article.

The use of art-based methods in researching the lives of ethnic minority women

Bernadette Stiell, Sheffield Hallam University, described how she and colleagues had run arts-based workshops (collage, puppet making, video-making, poetry, art, and African drumming) to attract, engage and understand the lives of immigrant women from different ethnic minority groups. These activities often appealed to women who would not want to answer a questionnaire or take part in a focus group and who, in some (continued on page 14)
Research methods for new immigrant groups

David Voas, University of Manchester

(continued from page 13) cases, did not have the language skills to do so. Innovative methods like using a Gantt chart to map life-events against demands on time showed the complexity of the lives of many women. However, the analysis and interpretation of materials from the workshops needed to be approached with great care. Standard criteria for quality were hard to apply. Nonetheless, the methods were able to provide insights that were not available in other ways.

Studying Immigration with the New Immigrant Survey

In the afternoon Doug Massey from Princeton University gave a quick history of immigration in the US, emphasizing the importance of history, and the economic and legal barriers, in understanding patterns of immigration. He then described the New Immigrant Survey, which aims to answer fundamental questions about migration behaviour and the impacts of immigration. The survey draws a sample from batches of electronic records on new legal permanent residents, who are contacted as soon as possible after admission. About 11,000 US immigrants were interviewed in the language of their choice in 2003-4. Of these, two-thirds had previous immigrant experience, for example, having studied in the US. Because the NIS is a longitudinal study, it provides information on who migrates, the timing of migration and subsequent return. However, the second wave, in 2007/8, had a response rate of only 40% - in part because of high levels of anti-immigration feeling in the US that meant immigrants were very cautious about providing information about themselves. For this reason the survey will not be continued. The data can be freely downloaded from http://nis.princeton.edu/.

Respondent driven sampling of migrant populations

Peter Mühlau, Trinity College Dublin, talked about respondent-driven sampling, a form of snowball sampling that aims to allow researchers to make unbiased estimates for hard-to-reach and hidden populations. It has been widely adopted in HIV-related research in the US. The talk presented experiences with a recently completed survey of Polish migrants in the Dublin area. Bob Erens, as discussant, saw RDS as a method that attempts to sample minority groups in a cost-effective way, using non-probability methods, but in a way that attempts to minimize biases found with ordinary snowball samples. There are two essential requirements for using RDS successfully:

- the groups to be sampled MUST have a strong network
- network members MUST be willing to recruit peers into the sample.

Drawbacks of the methods include the fact that it is mainly applicable to small geographical areas where people can network and it is not possible to calculate a response rate.
Cyprus, Paphos, 13-15 October 2010

Set in a stunning beach front hotel in Paphos, the 5th Conference of Epidemiological and Longitudinal Studies in Europe (CELSE) attracted over 400 delegates from Europe, and beyond. The conference was not style over substance however, with a full programme from 9am to 7pm over three days consisting of a combination of keynote, symposia and thematic sessions, with up to 6 sessions running simultaneously.

Keynote speakers included Professor George Davey Smith, who spoke about environmental influences on health over the life course, and Professor John Ioannidis, who discussed false-positive to false-negative ratios in epidemiologic studies. A particularly interesting symposia session was presented by researchers from the University of Western Australia, concerning individual medical record linkage of population-level data. Such record linkage is initially an alarming concept, however the safeguards in place in the Western Australia Data Linkage System that minimise risks to privacy and confidentiality were explained and a range of studies utilising this rich data source were showcased. Thematic sessions made up the bulk of the conference: these provided a stage for epidemiologists from around the world to present their research. Themes were diverse, ranging from growth in early life to ageing and cognitive decline, and to methodological themes such as the issues and challenges of using longitudinal research methods. A fifteen minute time slot per presentation (including questions) ensured delegates remained concise and to the point, and allowed a large number delegates to present. The session chairs were thankfully strict! One of the more memorable presentations attended was an assessment of the ethical aspects of merging longitudinal datasets for epidemiologic research. This is a prime consideration in my own research, and the key issues were discussed in great detail, despite the time limitation. Due to the range of themes and the number of sessions running simultaneously I, like many others, was able to attend many sessions highly relevant to my research. I found the standard of the presentations to be mostly very high.

As a demographer specialising in population health inequalities I found attending and presenting at this conference highly useful, and would recommend CELSE to other demographers with an interest in population health. The audience was friendly and receptive, and provided excellent feedback despite presenting at the end of the last session of the conference!
Perth, Australia, 26 September – 1 October 2010

I was fortunate to attend this conference, hosted by the Centre for Evolutionary Biology at the University of Western Australia, Perth, one of the largest international zoological meetings. Behavioural ecology is the study of how behaviour allows organisms to adapt to their environments and just as demographers look for interactions between human mortality, fertility and migration so behavioural ecologists are often looking a similar process in non-human populations. My PhD research is applying theories generated by this discipline to the understanding of human demographic phenomena.

The main thing that struck me was the incredibly cross-species nature of the behavioural ecology work. The session reflected this, grouped around behavioural themes such as parental care, sex ratios, migration & dispersal, with sometimes huge leaps between taxa within the same session. In one session on cooperation the five presentations used goatfish, chimpanzees, parakeets, ants and then international leaders negotiating climate change treaties as examples of the capacity and limits of cooperative behaviour. An interesting theme was that cooperation is easier over smaller units, with the final presentation concluding that climate change negotiations should focus on short term goals.

The conference’s keynote Hamilton Lecture was delivered by Professor Nick Davies, one of the founders of modern behavioural ecology. His lecture was a fascinating discussion of the arms race that occurs between nest parasites (cuckoos) and their host species. On the final day of the conference I presented in one of the few sessions that focused on human behaviour entitled ‘Are Humans Cooperative Breeders?’. This line of work stems from the theory of inclusive fitness which predicts an individual will sometimes aid the reproduction of a relative to help the benefiting organism pass on shared genes ‘on their behalf’. Previous work has shown that the presence of kin in traditional high fertility societies correlates with improved reproductive success. I have analysed the British Household Panel Study (1992-2003) and found patterns of fertility in keeping with those predicted by inclusive fitness theory, where the presence in a social network of frequently contacted and emotionally close relatives seems to increase the progression to first and second births. I hope my presentation raised awareness within a predominately biological science audience of the relevance of demographic research being undertaken to their discipline.

I am very grateful to the British Society for Population Studies who provided £250 in funds to help with the costs of travel to the conference.
New Delhi, 16-20 November, 2010

As the Asian Population Association (APA) is a relatively new society, but one that has filled an important void, I was very excited to attend their first conference. Unfortunately, fate was against me and a bout of stomach flu meant I saw Delhi from inside my hotel room, meaning that I missed the majority of the conference.

The small number of sessions I attended were of an extremely high standard as was the excellent Plenary session entitled “Population Change: Challenged for Human Welfare and Rights.” Gita Sen and John Cleland provided a lively debate about the future of the human population on this earth. Gita Sen concentrated on the progress that has been made in terms of rights and also the challenges that still remain. John Cleland discussed the assumptions underlying the UN medium variant population projections arguing that the main challenge was to predict what will happen to fertility. He then went onto discuss ways to approach population ageing, calling the idea of propping up support ratios with international migration “a silly short term solution” and telling us that retirement is a very recent phenomenon that we may be obliged to give up again. He also lamented the fact that natural wealth (ecosystems etc.) cannot be substituted with other forms of wealth (such as human capital or human produce) and painted a rather gloomy picture of how natural wealth is fast declining in developing countries. He also argued that international migration from developing to developed world countries is economically beneficial but ecologically detrimental. This point was taken up by the audience, one of whom was not even convinced of the economic benefits given the common abuse of immigrant workers occurring; he questioned whether the large amounts of remittances sent would seem so worthwhile after such costs were accounted for. Gita Sen responded that she believes there is no danger in population growth and no warning bell needed because the issue is simply with modes of production.

Particularly interesting talks included Arland Thornton on developmental idealism. He presented findings on how people around the world rated the development of their own and other countries. The correlation between these and the UN’s Human Development Index (HDI) were incredibly high (>0.9). The import of this, he said, was that normal people saw development very similarly and also the UN’s definition matches that used by “normal” people in all of the 13 countries around the world studied.

Overall, the parts of the conference I was party to looked to be well organised and talks were of an impressively high standard. I only wish I had more to report.
PopFest is an annual Population Studies conference for postgraduate students organised by fellow postgraduates. It provides young researchers from population related disciplines a supportive environment to present and discuss their work. The organising committee invites postgraduates who are studying any aspect of population to present their ongoing research or finalised works. Representatives from various disciplines are welcome, such as Social Sciences, Demography, Human Geography, Social Anthropology, Social Statistics, Health, Development, Social Policy, and others.

PopFest has been organised by various British universities and the British Society for Population Studies (BSPS) for the last nineteen years. In 2011, PopFest will be held outside the United Kingdom for the first time in its history. The University of Groningen in Northern Netherlands has a longstanding tradition in demographic and population research and teaching.

Works-in-progress or finalised research projects are welcome for either oral or poster presentations. Renowned keynote speakers and panel members will address the most recent topics in the field of population studies and discuss the policy implications.

Theoretical and empirical papers are invited, but are not limited to, the following topics:
- Fertility and mortality
- Migration and integration
- Healthy ageing and the life course
- Sexual and reproductive behaviour and rights
- Household and family demography
- Population policies
- Innovative data and methods in population studies
- Historical perspectives on demography

Paper proposals should include a title and an abstract of maximum 400 words. The submission deadline is **March 31, 2011**.

You can find all the information about the conference, including submission guidelines, registration form and other logistical aspects at [http://www.rug.nl/prc/popfest2011](http://www.rug.nl/prc/popfest2011).

Should you have any questions regarding PopFest 2011, contact us at: [popfest2011@rug.nl](mailto:popfest2011@rug.nl)

Stay up-to-date with the latest news about the conference also via Facebook ([http://www.facebook.com/home.php?#!/pages/PopFest-2011/115541801844222](http://www.facebook.com/home.php?#!/pages/PopFest-2011/115541801844222)) and/or Twitter ([http://www.twitter.com/popfest_2011](http://www.twitter.com/popfest_2011))!
Forthcoming Events
AHRC Research Network
University of Birmingham: 6-7 January 2011

Post-Separation Families and Shared Residence: Setting the Interdisciplinary Research Agenda for the Future

Focusing primarily on the cross-cutting philosophical and ethical issues raised by post-separation family life and the content and procedures being adopted in family law within different jurisdictions, this AHRC funded Research Network will bring together academics from different disciplines and non-academic stakeholders from the UK, EU and beyond. Themed workshops will run between September 2010 and August 2012. A range of different theoretical, methodological and disciplinary approaches will be represented, encouraging the generation of an innovative research agenda.

Day 1: Shared residence and post-separation family life

Establishing working definitions of different models, means of measurement and implications for data collection on family living arrangements.

Day 2: Equitable distribution of parental responsibilities and family privileges

How the care of children ought to be distributed between separated parents; whether and how the obligations of separated and non-separated parents are different; the identification and potential resolution of conflicting responsibilities.

Speakers for this first meeting of the network include: Heather Draper, Lluis Flaquer, Laurent Toulemon, Charlie Lewis, Sonia Harris-Short, Jan Lyngstad, Alex Masardo, Christine Skinner and Ines Weyland. For more information, please contact F.A.Masardo@bham.ac.uk or visit: http://www.haps.bham.ac.uk/primarycare/cbme/AHRCNetwork.shtml

Network rationale

Fewer children in the UK are being raised by families consisting exclusively of two biologically related parents and their other off-spring. Post-separation family life raises important issues in both law and moral philosophy about how the care of children ought to be divided between parents and the extent to which certain types of family practices should be encouraged over others. The competing interests, rights and responsibilities on all sides must be addressed: for instance, how an equitable distribution of family responsibilities and privileges between parents can be achieved; how meaningful relationships, perhaps including wider kin networks, can be promoted within the context of this distribution; and how the interests and well-being of children should be defined, safeguarded and prioritised. This international research network will explore these issues from an interdisciplinary perspective and will receive contributions from non-academic stakeholders. It will concentrate on shared residence - where children alternate their family life across the two households of their separated parents, as a potential model for post-separation family life. The aim for the network is to develop a coherent, interdisciplinary research agenda for the ethical, legal and policy issues raised by post-separation family life in general, and shared residence in particular.
Forthcoming Events

Addressing the links between poverty and the off target health MDGs

Workshop and Policy Panel, 17th-18th January 2011
University of Aberdeen

Poverty reduction is a core target for international development. The survival of women, their babies and their children has always been intrinsically linked with poverty. High mortality is found in poor countries, and even in richer countries, poorer women face much higher risks in pregnancy and childbirth than their richer counterparts. The session will explore the nature of poverty as an obstacle to reaching MDGs 4 and 5 and share case studies detailing approaches that have been successful in breaking down the poverty barrier.

This two-day multi-disciplinary seminar will bring together public health experts, health professionals, social scientists and policy makers to discuss the links between MDGs 4 and 5 and poverty. The call for papers for this meeting was launched at the recent ‘Women Deliver’ conference in which our team’s session on ‘Reaching poor women and newborns - Delivering equitable solutions’ introduced the themes on which the Aberdeen seminar will be based:

- Exploring the links between poverty, maternal, newborn and child health at macro and micro levels:
  - Will failure to reach MDGs 4 and 5 increase the poverty of families, communities and nations?
  - Reducing poverty and strengthening health systems for mothers and children: how can both agendas be addressed?
- Overcoming poverty together with achieving the MDGs for mothers and children: how can we determine what works?

Day 2 will comprise a series of panels whose deliberations will feed into a briefing note for the United Nations Secretary General in response to his recent call to academics to help set research priorities in support of MDGs 4 and 5.

This workshop is open to all, and there is no charge. However, pre-registration is required. Email Rosemary Lawrence at rl@soton.ac.uk to register.

This is one in a series of four seminars on “Poverty and Sexual and Reproductive Health: Towards Unravelling the Vicious Circle” funded by the ESRC. The seminars bring together a mix of multidisciplinary expertise to synthesise evidence in the field and to identify gaps for further scientific research.

For information about the seminar series visit http://www.southampton.ac.uk/ghp3/events/seminar_series/index.html
Forthcoming Events
Radical Statistics Conference

Saturday, February 26th 2011, Leeds

The 2011 Annual Conference ‘Cuts and Corporations’ will be held at the Heart Centre, Headingly.

Full details can be found at:  http://www.radstats.org.uk/conf2011/index.htm

Speakers include:

- Alan Franco of Tameside Council, Jay Ginn and Howard Reed on statistics of the cuts and their impact.
- Stuart Parkinson of Scientists for Global Responsibility on corporate influence on science and technology
- Peter Wilmshurst on libel laws in science
- Victoria Johnson of the New Economics Foundation on redefining wealth and progress

Workshops will be held to discuss topics that can lead to activity after the conference. Current workshop subjects are on libel in science and producing better indicators of real progress and well being.

Social events include a quiz night, an evening meal and a Sunday morning walk.

The conference fee is minimal, to encourage all interested in the politics of statistics, whether professional or campaigning or from personal interest. £20 members / £30 non-members / £35 non-members including membership. £10 reduction student/unwaged


Please circulate to colleagues, friends, networks and lists. Please print the programme and booking form to display at work.
A major UCL and Leverhulme Trust symposium on human population growth and global carrying capacity is to be held in London on Wednesday 25 & Thursday 26 May 2011. The symposium will aim to provoke debate on themes often regarded as simply too controversial and difficult to be tackled through rational analysis, with sessions addressing:

- The likely causes and effects of both northern and southern population migration in the 21st century
- The most appropriate public policy responses to projected changes in population dynamics, and common ground for meaningful dialogue
- The most important determinants of population growth and how to prepare for it
- How paradigms of gender and sexual rights should be developed to meet the challenges
- The medium term implications of different global patterns in ageing
- The 'fair' and sustainable level of carbon emission for each person

The themes will be discussed by an impressive list of internationally renowned speakers from universities, NGOs and civil societies, multinational and government agencies. You are invited to register your interest through the website as soon as possible. If you know of networks or organisations to which this event would be of interest please do let us know, or pass on this email.

The deadline for the registration of interest is the **28th January 2011**, while the deadline for submission of abstracts for **posters** is **21st February**. We are offering three full scholarships (travel, accommodation and conference fee) to the best three poster submissions from the global south and three full scholarships from the UK. To ensure active involvement outside the UK, we will award at least two grants to local agencies in Africa and South Asia to host a meeting of local experts, advocates and researchers and the conference will be 'streamed' live, with a Twitter feed to encourage participation from outside the Hall. The live streaming will be available globally to anyone registering on the site at the time of the symposium, and the Twitter feed is available to all.

**To contact the UCL Institute for Global Health and the Symposium Organising Committee**

I CH Events, 30 Guilford Street, London
WC1N 1EH
Phone: 020 7905 2232
Email: claire@ichevents.com or www.ichevents.com
www.populationfootprints.org
The Department of International Development and the School of Anthropology at the University of Oxford launched a new 9-month interdisciplinary Masters degree in Migration Studies this year.

The Migration Studies degree combines the resources of Oxford's three world-leading migration research centres:

- ESRC Centre on Migration, Policy and Society (COMPAS)
- International Migration Institute (IMI)
- Refugee Studies Centre

Teaching on the degree combines lectures, seminars and small tutorial groups, and includes four components, plus an individually-supervised dissertation:

- International migration in the social sciences
- Key themes in international migration
- Thematic and regional options
- Quantitative and qualitative research methods

The degree offers a strategic pathway to doctoral studies or careers outside academia.

Several competitively awarded scholarships are available.

For further information see: [http://www.qeh.ox.ac.uk/courses/mscms](http://www.qeh.ox.ac.uk/courses/mscms)

E-mail: msc-migrationstudies@qeh.ox.ac.uk

Admission is competitive and prospective students should apply through the University of Oxford Graduate Admissions pages:

[http://www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/postgraduate_courses/index.html](http://www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/postgraduate_courses/index.html)
Applications are invited for places on two Summer Schools to be run in summer 2011, supported by the Quantitative Methods in the Social Sciences 2 programme of the European Science Foundation. These will provide opportunities for junior researchers to undertake high-level training in the latest developments in quantitative methods. The language of instruction will be English. The two Summer Schools in 2011 are as follows:

**Analysis methods for cross-national comparisons:** Second half of August 2011, Leuven, Belgium

**Network dynamics:** 29 August - 6 September 2011, Groningen, the Netherlands

Applications to participate in these events are invited from well-qualified junior scholars who are researching quantitative methods or using quantitative methods in research in the social sciences.

Accommodation and meal costs at the Summer Schools will be covered, but applicants must find their own travel costs. Successful applicants will be expected to attend for the entire duration of the Summer School.

**Eligibility:** Applicants should be doctoral students in a relevant field of study or have been awarded a PhD within the past five years. They should either be a citizen of, or working in, one of the European countries listed on the QMSS 2 web-site.

**Application Procedure:** Applications should consist of a short CV together with a covering letter of no more than 500 words in English. The letter should include an explanation of how the applicant’s research plans relate both to the QMSS 2 programme and, specifically, to any of the Summer Schools. The applicant should indicate their first choice of Summer Schools and whether they wish to be considered for the other school if this is not available. A recommendation letter by a PhD supervisor or other established scholar is also required.

Selection will be primarily on the basis of the strength of the candidate’s application and the letter of recommendation from their supervisor, subject to consideration of balance with respect to country and discipline.

For further guidance on what to include in the application, see [www.ccsr.ac.uk/qmss/summer/guide.shtml](http://www.ccsr.ac.uk/qmss/summer/guide.shtml)

Applications should be sent by e-mail to arrive no later than **31 January 2011** to [ruth.durrell@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:ruth.durrell@manchester.ac.uk). All applicants will be informed by email about the outcome no later than the end of April 2011.

Further information about the programme is available via the ESF website at [www.esf.org/index.php?id=4858](http://www.esf.org/index.php?id=4858) or the QMSS 2 website at [www.ccsr.ac.uk/qmss](http://www.ccsr.ac.uk/qmss).
In a new feature we will be asking BSPS members to answer some brief questions about their work and lives. The first to step up to the task is Ludi Simpson, BSPS Vice-President.

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

I had useless pure mathematics degree as a platform for a useful social and political undergraduate life, an intensive year’s preparation in social statistics, two enjoyable decades in local government, one enjoyable decade back in University. Locations: Warwick, Southampton, West Yorkshire, Manchester (I was Suffolk born and Essex bred). Currently I am self-employed, mostly for local and central government projects. I seem to have a foot in more camps than I have feet.

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

The relationship between scientific research and government action. I spent ten years understanding that most of the policy assumptions about ethnicity and population distribution in Britain were based on prejudice, devoid of evidence. I think something similar occurs with current debates on population and the environment. In both cases, demographers using the tools of demography can provide influential scientific evidence. That will both help people and develop demography.

What are you currently working on?

How can we agree on how many people have been missed by the very best census possible? The Census offices in the UK have got great new data sources and ways of supplementing the Census where that proves necessary. The rules for deciding when it 'proves necessary' are what all users want to be convinced by. I am privileged to be helping review those rules and am fairly confident that it is possible to get general support for them. I think the Census is wonderful for demography and democracy, and there is no replacement yet and perhaps ever.

What do you think your greatest achievement is in demography? In life in general?!

I am proud of my role in the Estimating with Confidence network and research, which I like to think encouraged really good methods for small area population estimates. Paradoxically it meant that the local authority network members who did the estimates at (continued on page 26)
(continued from page 25) that time in the 1990s no longer need to do that work because central government now does it so well. Life in general: growing extra feet and not falling over.

**Do you have a message or any advice for young demographers?**

Listen to messages and advice for young demographers, but don't believe any of it. Personally trial as much of it as you can. Learning what works well is the most enjoyable and effective activity that exists, and is what we are all here for.

**How are you feeling about being vice-president of BSPS? Are you enjoying it?**

I'd recommend it to anyone. It's the honeymoon period with very little responsibility, to lull you into tranquillity before becoming president.

**What's the future for BSPS?**

More services for members, more support to get members' work and their concerns recognised on the national and international stage, maintenance of BSPS' happy engagement between academic, local and central government, independent and business sectors. The current policies to cut back public service expenditure threaten our numbers, but make BSPS' usefulness to its members more rather than less important.

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

Book seller.

**Who is your academic hero?**

Eric Hobsbaum. And RJS Baker of Sheffield City Polytechnic, who wrote a booklet 'Planning, forecasting and frustration in the public services' which deserves republication.

**Who'd go to your fantasy Demographic dinner party?**

Brass, Glass, and Kuczynski. Keyfitz and the Siegels, and Nightingale. Brass and Glass because they were greats in the development of demography in Britain before most of our time. Kuczynksi was around for them and just before them, a German refugee who became the first labelled demographer at LSE; he was also my grandfather and died before I was born so I have a few things to ask him. Keyfitz and the Siegels because of their contributions which influenced me. And Florence Nightingale for her influential mortality analyses; would she be interested in the rest of them at all?

**What are you hoping to get for Christmas?**

Rock salt.
Welcome to the 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.

Hani Salem Altarhuni
Studies and Population Policy Office
Nat. Ec. Devt. Board, Libya

Dr. Melissa Martinson
Post-doctoral Researcher
Office of Population Research, Princeton University

Deborah Davies
Research Student
University of Southampton

Mahmoud Omar Mohamed
Studies and Population Policy Office
Nat. Ec. Devt. Board, Libya

Conrad Hackett
Demographer
Pew Forum on Religion & Public Life, Washington D.C.

Serena Pattaro
Researcher
University of Southampton

Dr. Hill Kulu
Senior Lecturer
University of Liverpool

Details of how to apply and the application form are on the website. Rates are:

- Full Member — £25
- Country (Live outside S. E. train region) and overseas — £20
- Corporate— £40
- Overseas (LEDCs only) — £7.50
- Retired (from work) — £7.50
- Full-time Student — £7.50