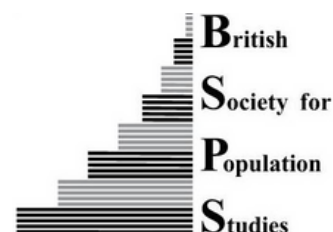


British Society for Population Studies

Est. 1973



“Furthering the scientific study of biological, economic, historical, medical, social and other disciplines connected with human populations”

Welcome back!

We hope you have been enjoying the return of the BSPS newsletter! This will be our last newsletter as your postgraduate reps. We have really enjoyed producing the newsletters and look forward to it continuing with the new postgraduate reps.

This issue will primarily dive into research impact. We also share some reports from BSPS members who have recently received travel grants from the Society and highlight a selection of exciting upcoming events and opportunities that might be of interest to members.

As always, if you have anything that you think is suitable for the newsletter, including upcoming events and opportunities, or if you have any feedback for us, please email us! We would love to hear from you.

We look forward to seeing you at BSPS 2025 in Swansea where new postgraduate reps will be elected (please nominate or self-nominate)! If you have any suggestions for postgraduate sessions or development for the 2025 conference please send them our way.

Enjoy this month's newsletter!

Izzi and Parth,, your BSPS Postgraduate Representatives

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British Society for Population Studies (BSPS) statement on the removal of scientific and demographic data from US Government websites

The British Society for Population Studies (BSPS) joins the Population Association of America (PAA), International Union for the Scientific Study of Population (IUSSP), and other demographic societies in expressing deep concern over the removal of key public health and demographic data by US Federal Agencies. The restriction of access to these datasets threatens the integrity of evidence-based policymaking and future of demographic research.

This is of global concern, as we additionally face the closure of the Demographic and Health Survey (DHS) Program which has run thousands of nationally representative household surveys in over 90 low- and middle-income countries since the 1980s. For many of these countries, DHS surveys are the most reliable, continuous, comparative source of demographic and health data and they are crucial for monitoring progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals, understanding public health challenges, and shaping evidence-based policy.

Demographic and health data are fundamental to understanding population change, monitoring inequalities, and informing policies that improve societal well-being and reduce public health threats. Without access to high-quality data researchers and policymakers are essentially operating in the dark. The consequences of these data restrictions will be far-reaching, limiting our ability to respond to emerging challenges and potentially undermining decades of progress. Restricting access to existing data further represents an ethical disservice to the thousands of individuals who have given their time to complete surveys for the sake of improving knowledge about population health.

We wish to thank the US administration for the data they have previously made available and acknowledge its crucial role in global research efforts. We request that the administration continue to provide access to these globally important datasets and reconsider decisions that limit their funding and availability. BSPS urges the current US administration to restore and protect access to all publicly funded demographic and health data.

This BSPS Council statement is also available [online here](#).

If you use US and DHS data, you are strongly encouraged to make sure you have securely stored all datasets to which you have access, and to do what you can to ensure colleagues do the same.

ONS questionnaire: Understanding population health data requirements in relation to the Health Survey for England from 2027 onwards

Please see a message below sent to attendees at the Health Studies User Conference 2025 from the ONS/DHSC.

NHS England announced in 2024 that they are not prioritising population health surveys in their long-term strategic work plan, and that the Health Survey for England 2025 will be the last HSE they would resource.

ONS are exploring current requirements for population health data, including the impact of any changes and it is important that all users of population health surveys are aware of this questionnaire.

The short exercise is available to complete until midday on Friday 25 July 2025. To participate, please click on the following link: https://studies.ons.gov.uk/s/Future_HSE/

New blogs: UK census 2031

UK Data Service, Data Impact blog: 2025 recommendation for the future of population and migration statistics

<https://blog.ukdataservice.ac.uk/future-of-2031-census/>

In this blog from the UK Data Service, Oliver Duke-Williams introduces the UK Statistics Authority's recommendation on the future of the 2031 UK censuses.

Royal Statistical Society, UK Census 2031: A win for user engagement

<https://rss.org.uk/news-publication/news-publications/2025/statistics-news/uk-census-2031-a-win-for-user/>

In this blog from the Royal Statistical Society, RSS CEO Sarah Cumbers discusses RSS engagement with the 2023 ONS consultation exercise on the future of the census.

Call for BSPS postgraduate rep(s)!

Are you a first- or second-year postgraduate student in demography/population studies? Or can you pass this on to people who are?

A vacancy will arise at this year's BSPS AGM for a postgraduate student rep. Our current postgraduate members' reps are graduating imminently and the new rep will be invited to take over this observer spot on Council.

The postgraduate rep role is a chance to be involved in Council, contributing postgraduate students' voices to decisions around conferences and the direction of BSPS. As well as a chance to be involved in BSPS day events and the newsletter, the PG rep organises an ECR event at each conference, and assists with recruiting new student members and communications.

Recent PG reps have said:

"When I was a PG rep, I really enjoyed making contact with other student members and organising ECR events. Organising ECR events also allowed me to contact and invite prominent academics, leading to additional networking opportunities. Sitting on the BSPS Council as a PG rep allowed me insights into the workings of learned societies and enabled me to network with senior academics as well as non-academic Council members. A few years later, I now sit on the panel as a regular, elected Council member."

"Working with the BSPS council as the PG rep from 2018-2021 was a hugely rewarding experience for me. I took on organising the postgrad PopFest conference, organised ECR sessions at the annual conference and even learnt how to build an app! Most importantly the BSPS secretariat and council are such lovely, supportive and professional people: They opened up so many opportunities for me and always treated my opinion as important and equal to theirs. I was the rep during the covid lockdowns and working with the council to ensure ECRs continued to have opportunities to disseminate work and connect with others is a testament to the values of the society. I really had a lot of fun in the role, and highly recommend it to anyone looking to connect with like-minded colleagues and build their CV."

"Being PG Rep allowed me to develop my skills in ways that would normally otherwise be difficult for a PhD student. I helped to organise and revived the postgraduate conference, revived the BSPS newsletter, organised ECR sessions at BSPS conference, and learned from senior academics on the key issues and conversations at Council. While this may seem like a lot, I received a lot of help from such a warm and welcoming community which is the main reason I really enjoyed this role. Being PG rep allowed me to network extensively which has been vital for my development. From this positive experience, I really hope to continue my participation at BSPS events"

Please nominate yourself or a colleague by writing to pic@lse.ac.uk by **5th August 2025**.

PopFest 2025



PopFest 2025 Final Report

PopFest is a not-for-profit conference, organised by, and for, graduate, postgraduate and PhD students studying population. PopFest 2025, the 29th Annual Postgraduate Population Studies Conference was held on 7th - 8th July, at the University of Southampton.

PopFest 2025 was only able to take place due to generous donations from our sponsors. The Organising Committee would like to extend our sincere gratitude to:

The British Society for Population Studies (BSPS); the Centre for Population Change-Connecting Generations (CPC-CG); the Department of Social Statistics and Demography and the School of Economic, Political, and Social Science at the University of Southampton; the National Centre for Research Methods; the European Association for Population Studies; the Population Geography Research Group at the Royal Geographic Society; and the South Coast Doctoral Training Partnership.



The Organising Committee would also like to acknowledge the contribution of Teresa McGowan (Research Manager at CPC-CG and budget holder for PopFest 2025) and Rose Bloomfield (Event Coordinator at CPC-CG) who assisted with all aspects of the conference. Thanks also to Dr Jason Hilton (CPC-CG and BSPS Council member) who helped us conceive of PopFest at Southampton and authorised visa invitation letters at short notice. Finally, we wish to also acknowledge the warmth and assistance provided by all the staff at the University of Southampton including Hospitality, Finance, and Administrative staff.



Dr Antonino Polizzi, Teresa McGowan, Rose Bloomfield, and the Organising Committee

PopFest 2025



This was the first time PopFest had been organised since the COVID-19 pandemic which halted in-person meetings across the world. Despite lost institutional memory and knowledge in running PopFest, the Organising Committee successfully rebooted the UK version of PopFest after so many years. The primary goal of PopFest is to help population researchers in the early stages of their academic careers to develop their skills and ideas and to meet new people and network. PopFest 2025 brought together an international body of research students from a variety of disciplines with a common interest in demography, providing them with the opportunity to present their work in an encouraging and friendly environment.



(Most!) of the PopFest 2025 delegates!

We had the enormous pleasure of welcoming 30 delegates from across the globe. The conference featured over 20 presentations and a poster session with 10 posters. We had seven sessions which included presentations on the following themes:

1. Unions, Family, and Fertility
2. Global Health, Wellbeing, and Mortality

3. Ethnicity, Migration, and Migrant Populations
4. Spatial Issues, Environment, and Sustainability
5. Ageing and Intergenerational Relations
6. Critical Demography, Life Course Events, and Human Capital

In addition to the formal sessions, a number of events were organised to allow delegates to network informally including the EAPS PhD networking coffee break which included a fun (and incredibly competitive!) bingo game and the poster session which included a pizza buffet and drinks.

We would like to thank all our delegates for their enthusiasm and for making PopFest 2025 such a successful conference. The diversity and quality of the research presented reflects the dynamism and vibrancy of contemporary research into matters of demography. The engagement of delegates in sessions led to lively discussions and showcased the variety of expertise at the conference. Bringing together researchers from different backgrounds meant there were questions and feedback from a multitude of perspectives, highlighting the multidisciplinary nature of population studies.



Delegates playing networking bingo!

The Organising Committee were delighted to be able to welcome two excellent keynote speakers who each gave presentations on their unique perspectives and experience of population research. Our first keynote was delivered by Professor Jane Falkingham CBE and was entitled "Lessons from the life of a demographer". We asked Jane to do a non-traditional presentation and rather than discuss her work, we wanted Jane to inspire the next generation of demographers. Jane presented her life course, how she got to where she is now, and the impact she has made on the research community in a number of different ways. She reflected on her time in the newly formed post-Soviet Eurasian state with the World Bank, her impact, especially outside demography, such as sharing her research on menopause in the workplace, the gender dynamics in universities and her position on the University Executive Board. Jane acknowledged the team nature of all her research and the inspirational colleagues she has worked with throughout her career, as well as discussing challenges. She left the delegates with a simple message: take all the opportunities that come your way.



Professor Jane Falkingham delivering her keynote



Dr Antonino Polizzi delivering his keynote

Our second keynote was delivered by Dr Antonino Polizzi and was entitled "The Causes and the Consequences of Growing Life Expectancy Shortfalls". Antonino presented the work he received the Gunther Beyer Award for the best paper presented by an early career scholar at the European Population Conference 2024. Antonino presented on his journey through his PhD at the University of Oxford and, recently, his postdoctoral position at the Max Planck Institute for Demographic Research. He shared insights and advice on the PhD itself which the delegates appreciated with the main message being not to stress out too much! Antonino presented key findings from each of the four chapters of his PhD particularly on life expectancy gaps in the USA and England and Wales in comparison to other HIC/wealthy states, counterfactual analyses, the effect of the COVID-19 pandemic on lost American and missing babies due to the mortality changes within working age adults, and the implications on population projections. He also shared his views on the importance of the demographic community to learn from each other and how more research should be situated at the interconnection of fertility, mortality, and migration.



Finally, we wish to congratulate the winner of the PopFest 2025 Poster Prize, Lekshmi Prasannan Reeba who is studying at the London School of Economics and Political Science. Lekshmi wins a £50 Amazon Voucher donated by the Department of Social Statistics and Demography at the University of Southampton.

Lekshmi eloquently presented her poster on "Women's autonomy and fertility intentions in India: A study from NFHS 5" (top left panel). Lekshmi won the award due to clearly demonstrating of the importance of her work and the research gap within the literature (which is very important to fill!). The judging panel agreed that her poster was well organised, graphs were self-explanatory and showed very digestible patterns. The take home messages were very clear with the next steps and implications naturally following on. The presentation of the methodology and realisation of the work was very thoughtful. The judging panel were particularly interested in the North and South divides in female empowerment and how that affected fertility intentions, which was measured using an easy to understand index including attitudes towards different social issues,

PopFest 2025



technological usage, and so forth. We look forward to seeing how Lekshmi continues this important research.

The judging panel, which consisted of the organising committee, were thoroughly impressed with the quality of all the posters. When questioned, the answers given by all poster presenters were interesting and clear. Posters were very colourful and all clearly highlighted the motivation for their research. It was a tough decision to assess the winner!

We received feedback from 73% of the delegates at PopFest which was greatly appreciated so that future PopFests can improve on the good work that has been established. 50% of the delegates thought that PopFest 2025 exceeded expectations with the other 50% indicating that it met expectations. 96% of delegates indicated that they learnt something new and 95% of delegates indicated that they will do something different with their work as a result of attending PopFest. 100% of delegates said that PopFest was valuable for networking and building new connections. Delegates mainly commented that the organisation, planning, and 'vibes' were good, especially the international representation at the conference. For improvements, the main comments from delegates were for the conference to be longer and to have more social activities such as a walk or social event at the pub in the evening. Most bursary recipients commented that they would not have been able to attend or attend with great difficulty which supports the importance of bursaries at early career focused conferences.



We are looking for postgraduate students to help organise PopFest 2026 next year, which will be the 30th anniversary conference. If you are interested in helping to organise the conference please send an email to popfest2025@gmail.com or pic@lse.ac.uk.

PopFest 2025 Organising Committee
(left to right): Sai Joshi (Southampton), Izzi Carter (LSE), Clara Girault (Southampton), Parth Pandya (St Andrews).

New podcast episodes

Linking Our Lives podcast: Researching health and place: Championing the ONS Longitudinal Study

<https://linking-our-lives.transistor.fm/episodes/researching-health-and-place-championing-the-ons-longitudinal-study>

In this episode, we talk about how uniquely placed the ONS and Scottish Longitudinal Studies are to research questions about people's health and the links with where they live. We find out more about these unique data resources and their potential to forward our understanding of the changes to our society. Our Champions for this episode are geographers Paul Norman of the University of Leeds and Tom Clemens of the University of Edinburgh.

Is population growth the elephant in the room?

<https://open.spotify.com/episode/53Nz46d91HzMUGr8ceINbZ?si=AgGFbsZKSfyr67gkZ9nmoA&nd=1&dlsi=8dd345c576fb438a>

In this episode of E+T: Off the Page, the team delves into the often-overlooked topic of global population growth and its significant impact on sustainability and resource use. Regular contributors Tim Fryer, Jack Loughran and Tanya Weaver are joined by special guests Chris Edwards and Dr Joe Strong to explore how population trends affect energy, food production, and environmental pressures worldwide. The conversation opens with reflections on COP28's discussions around fossil fuel reduction and financial support for low-income countries, setting the stage for a debate on whether global population growth is the unspoken factor in climate change solutions. Together, they question whether humanity can balance family size preferences with sustainable resource consumption.

Stats in a wrap: Unlocking population statistics

<https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/products-eurostat-news/w/wdn-20250711-1>

In the latest episode of the Eurostat podcast Stats in a Wrap, we explore the world of population statistics, examining how they reflect our lives, contribute to policies and shape our societies.

Host Jonathan Elliot is joined by Hannah Kiiver, Eurostat's population projections expert, David Thorogood, specialist in population and housing census statistics in Eurostat and Andres Vikat from the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), who is in charge of developing and harmonising statistical methods for population censuses.

Travel Grant Reports

Report by Jiseon Baek, Research Committee 28 on Social Stratification (RC28) Spring Meeting in Milan, 25-27 March 2025.

I gave a presentation at the RC28 2025 Spring Meeting held in Milan, Italy. The conference focused on the themes of education, markets, and families, bringing together researchers from diverse backgrounds to share exciting work.

The session I participated in, Parenthood, Fertility, and Social Inequalities, was chaired by Stefani Scherer and included a range of fascinating topics. These included the socially stratified risk of pregnancy loss in the Netherlands, educational gradients in unrealized fertility in Spain, social gradients in the take-up and success rates of medically assisted reproduction in Denmark, and fertility amongst different migrant generations in the UK. The variety of topics and case studies from four different countries made the session especially insightful. The presentations demonstrated how social phenomena vary across contexts, depending on socio-economic background and immigrant status.

My presentation focused on fertility amongst different migrant generations in the UK. It showed that fertility levels differ between those who migrated to the UK as children, those born in the UK to two foreign-born parents, and those born to one foreign-born and one UK-born parent. The presentation also highlighted that the influence of sociocultural factors varies by both birth parity and migrant generation.

I received insightful feedback, which I look forward to incorporating into the development of this research and in future projects. Finally, the well-organised social events added great energy to the conference and created valuable opportunities for networking with fellow scholars.

Maria Gargiulo, The Latin American Population Association (Asociación Latinoamericana de Población; ALAP) 11th congress in Bogotá, Colombia between 9–13 December, 2024.

The Latin American Population Association (Asociación Latinoamericana de Población; ALAP) held their 11th congress in Bogotá, Colombia between 9–13 December, 2024. This year's theme was "'New' demographic scenarios: contributions from population studies in Latin America and the Caribbean." This year the congress also featured two days of workshops (December 9–10) on a variety of topics ranging from sexual and reproductive health and kinship demography to health and mortality and the demography of care. The main conference program (December 11–13) featured panels, posters, and presentations in Spanish, Portuguese, and English from scholars and practitioners from across Latin America and the Caribbean and around the world.

Travel Grant Reports (cont.)

One thread linking conversations together, both formally and informally, throughout the conference was discussion of the “newness” of the demographic scenarios—such as population aging, migration, and declines in fertility rates—facing Latin America and the Caribbean today. To examine questions related to the overarching conference theme in more detail, the conference program was comprised of sessions organized by the 15 different scholarly networks that make up ALAP. These networks cover a variety of topics: historical demography, LGBTQ+ demography, demography of indigenous and afro-descendent groups, teaching, and projections and the production of demographic data, among others.

I presented my work in a session organized by the network that focuses on population and rights. My session included presentations about human rights challenges in three different contexts—Colombia, Cuba, and Mexico—that utilized a variety of quantitative and qualitative methods, as well as research practices deeply rooted in community participation and featured both academics and human rights practitioners.

Many of the other sessions were also similarly diverse in terms of topics, methods, and research(er) perspectives, which made ALAP a particularly intellectually expanding and rewarding conference to attend. The next ALAP congress will take place in Costa Rica in 2026 and I highly recommend the conference to any demographic researchers whose work focuses on Latin America or the Caribbean.

I appreciate the generous financial support from BSPS that made my attendance at the conference possible this year.

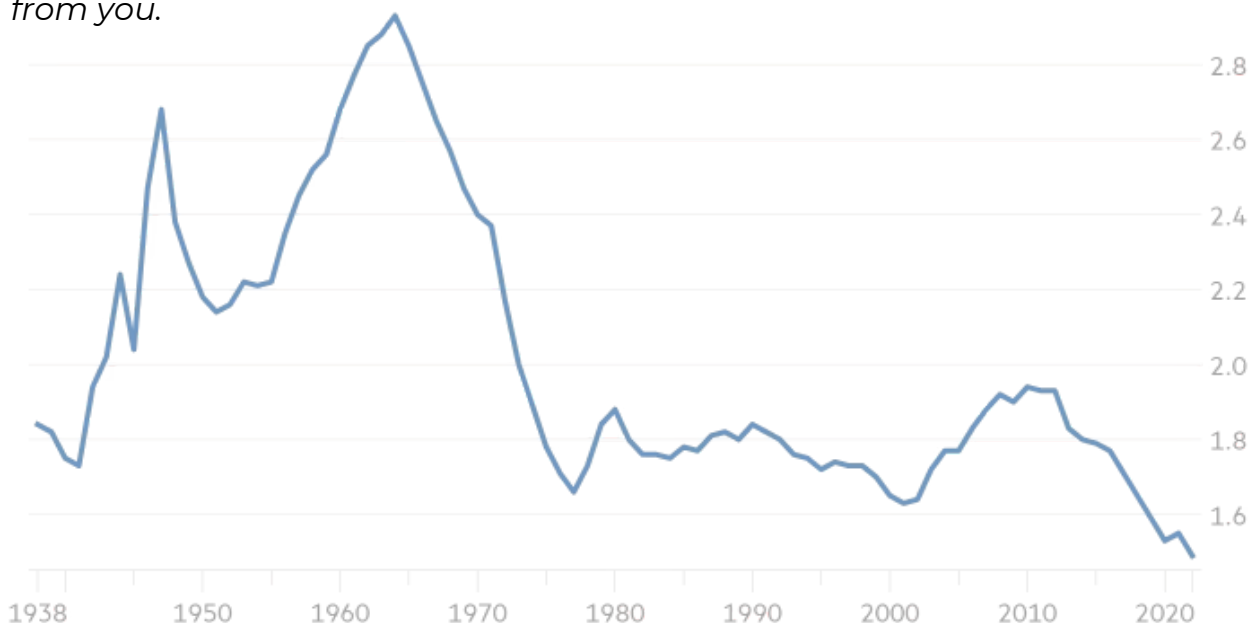
Information on the BSPS international travel grant, eligibility and how to apply can be found on the BSPS webpage [here](#)

Demography in the news

Last edition we reported on the news that the annual number of deaths have outnumbered the number of births. With the release of the state of the world population 2025 'the real fertility crisis' report this week we wished to dedicate our demography in the news section to fertility. The report highlighted that the real fertility crisis is the barriers that prevent women from realising their fertility intentions such as financial security, public services, family dynamics, future uncertainty, and so on. Alongside this report, greater media and political attention has been placed on low birth rates and the family unit in the UK especially due to the importance placed on family policies by voters and UK politicians. However, despite population experts rejecting the view that low birth rates are a 'problem', not just recently but over the last few decades, it has garnered mainstream attention. Discussing and implementing family policy is important as Europe tends to be more generous than the UK such as on tax exemptions for families and households. Indeed, these policies are crucial for family wellbeing and security such as child poverty.

However, experts point out how it would not increase the UK birth rate and this has been seen across several countries from across the world. Indeed, BSPS member Prof Melinda Mills notes that increasing birth rates cannot be done with one silver bullet - "throwing a lot of money at it doesn't work so you have to get to the root of people's lives. What are their work hours? Where do they live and work? Where's childcare?". Policies with family wellbeing in mind as its core purpose may then encourage childbearing such as subsidised childcare, parental leave and school support in tandem. However, security across several life course domains are important too such as employment security, secure and affordable housing market, and a feeling of certainty in one's life and their surroundings. These cannot be tackled by family policy directly however it shows the complex interconnections that affect family and household dynamics.

If you find any interesting articles that reference BSPS members or you yourself have generated any impact work please email us! We'd love to hear from you.



Upcoming Events and Opportunities

ONS Methodological Research Hub: call for participants for cognitive interviews to test potential census topic consultation questions.

The ONS Methodological Research Hub are looking for two groups of census data users:

- a) Analysts / academics – i.e. people who use ONS census data for statistical or analytical purposes;
- b) Non-analysts / less frequent users – i.e. people who use ONS census data less frequently, for non-analytical purposes such as grant applications, funding bids, planning e.g. in the charity sector or similar.

Anyone interested should contact: Ella.Williams.Davies@ons.gov.uk; Chelsea.Kilner@ons.gov.uk; Beth.Scales@ons.gov.uk; karina.williams@ons.gov.uk

Defence Meets Demography: The Future of Security and Emergency Response in Ageing Societies. Tuesday, 29 July 2025, 1-2 pm, CEST (Zoom).

Andreas Edel, Population Europe & MPIDR; Michael Gahler, Member of the European Parliament; Christian Leuprecht, Professor at the Royal Military College of Canada and Director of the Institute of Intergovernmental Relations in the School of Policy Studies at Queen's University, Kingston | Visiting Fellow at the Wilfried Martens Centre for European Studies; Jennifer D. Sciubba, President and CEO of the Population Reference Bureau | Hess Center for New Frontiers at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, Washington, D.C; Robert Sieger, Major General, President of the Federal Office for Personnel Management of the German Armed Forces, Cologne.

Register: <https://survey.demogr.mpg.de/index.php/115395?lang=en>

Funded PhD position - University of Salford

Funded University of Salford PhD opportunity, **deadline 1 August**. Living longer in worse health? Understanding the immigrant morbidity-mortality paradox in the U.K.

More information: <https://www.findaphd.com/phds/project/living-longer-in-worse-health-understanding-the-immigrant-morbidity-mortality-paradox-in-the-u-k/?p185731>

BSPS Conference 2025, Swansea University, 2-4 September 2025

The latest programme for BSPS 2025 is up at <https://www.lse.ac.uk/international-development/research/british-society-for-population-studies/annual-conference> and attached.

You are warmly invited to book your place and invite your colleagues, students, friends to do the same.

This year's conference will feature over 50 sessions over 2 days, on everything from assortative mating to residential segregation and spatial inequalities; queer demography to systems and nowcasting; official population statistics to health in conflict & crisis and far beyond, as well as a wide range of workshops.

Plenaries will come from Isabella Aboderin and Shereen Hussein in conversation, and Stuart Gietel-Basten on Responding to the new world of low fertility.

The conference is Tuesday 2 – Thursday 4 September at Swansea University.

Book your place now: https://forms.office.com/pages/responsepage.aspx?id=epnVXfnpUKRu5RA_UO4k-mBQ2loAtFOqeQY7etJAOhUODdZREc5TVpXUEMxNIIMVDNFTk5MUIZIU4u&route=shorturl

Final booking deadline: 12 August 2025

Please send any questions to: pic@lse.ac.uk

Don't forget to renew your membership!
[Click here to renew](#)

BSPS has recently joined BlueSky. Give us a follow and join a growing number of academics on BlueSky! <https://bsky.app/profile/bspsuk.bsky.social>



Thank you for reading!