

University of St Andrews

POPFESt is a small-scale annual conference organised by post-graduate students for post-graduate students whose research interests fall within the broad realm of population-related research. The 18th Popfest conference was held this year at the University of St Andrews in association with the University of Dundee, and ran between 28th and 30th June. Our two keynote speakers, Dr. Tomas Sobotka and Dr. Catherine de Wenden, attracted a good and appreciative audience, and our post-graduate presenters, for whom the conference was designed, delivered a range of interesting and diverse papers, each session chaired ably by fellow post-graduates.

The event attracted an international complement of students, whose diverse range of research interests ensured a lively and stimulating conference. Perhaps the most valuable element of this year's Popfest was feedback from the floor and follow-up discussion that was stimulated by each presentation. The event also benefited from the presence of promotional stands from AQMeN and the Scottish Government who provided delegates with some valuable information regarding quantitative methods training and civil service careers respectively.

Day 1: Monday 28 June 2010

Session 1: The opening session dealt with Health issues in demography. Chaired by Ivana Kulhanova (*Charles University in Prague and Lund University*), the first speaker was Billie de Haas (*University of Groningen*) whose research discussed the teaching of comprehensive sexuality education programmes in Uganda and how Culture, society, and HIV/AIDS awareness affect teaching programmes. Sarah McGarrol (*University of St Andrews*) continued the theme with her presentation on the factors which influence patient management and attendance at cardiac rehabilitation programmes in NHS Fife. There was a link in topic between Sarah's presentation and that of Tina Hannemann (*University of Lund*), whose paper explored the impact of job constraints and social aspects of the working place on the incidence of cardiovascular disease

Keynote Speaker 1: Our first keynote speaker was Dr. Catherine De Wenden (*Centre for International Studies and Research, Sciences Po*). Her talk lasted for an hour and provided an absorbing, stimulating and colourful discussion on European migration. In particular, the talk focused on flows of migration, migration policies and citizenship in Europe with the talk illustrated throughout by a selection of interesting maps and diagrams.

Session 2: The second (and final) formal session of the day focused on Households and Neighbourhoods and was chaired by Michael Grayer (*Queen Mary, University of London*). Daniel James Lewis (*UCL Department of Geography*) explored the potential of patient registers in Southwark, London to define household structure. Daniel was followed by John McCarthy (*School of Geography, University of Leeds*), who discussed changes in small area populations and household characteristics across Scotland between 1991 and 2001, with a view to informing future resource allocation. Finally, Steven Jivraj (*Centre for Census and Survey Research (CCSR), University of Manchester*) spoke about the mechanisms of socioeconomic neighbourhood change through an analysis of School Census data in England.

The end of the first day was marked by a wine reception followed by a conference dinner in the grand setting of Lower College Hall at the University of St Andrews.

Day 2: Tuesday, 29th July, 2010

Session 3: The second day of the conference opened with the second Health session. Chaired by James Robards (*University of Southampton*) it began with a presentation by Tom Clemens (*University*

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of St Andrews) which looked at the relationship between unemployment and mortality in Scotland and explored the possibility of a causal link between the two. This was followed by a joint presentation given by Andrea Marcellusi and Patrizia Giannantoni (*University Tor Vergata, Rome*) on the identification of risk factors for cervical cancer in a multicentre case-control study in Italy. The third paper explored the effectiveness of health care systems in countries in transition (selected countries in eastern and central Europe). Ivana Kulhánová (*Charles University in Prague & Lund University*) explored this theme with reference to avoidable mortality.

Session 4: This session was chaired by Susan Pringle (*University of St Andrews*) and was titled “innovative methods in population studies”. The first paper, co-presented by Malcolm Campbell (*University of Sheffield*) and James Robards (*University of Southampton*) addressed the use of the Lexis diagram in understanding demographic differences and provided colourful examples of the potential for this approach as an illustrative tool. Next, Maarten Bijlsma and Jacob Moerman, (*University of Groningen*) spoke about their work on internet virtual memorials and their form, function and subscribers using a mixed method approach. Finally, Michael Grayer (*Queen Mary, University of London*) discussed the problem of estimating mortality rates within small geographic areas and explored and compared a number of potential models that might resolve this problem.

Session 5: The 3rd session of the day contained papers on the topic of Migrants and Migration and was chaired by Marta Styrk (*University of Lund*). Rory Coulter (*University of St Andrews*) spoke first about residential mobility and housing choices in the United Kingdom, exploring potential links between moving desires and subsequent move behaviours. Next, Elina Apsite (*University of Latvia*) shared her findings on social networks and transnational activities among different Latvian migrant groups in the UK. Catherine L. Thorkelson (*Umeå University, Sweden*) then explored the extent of underqualification amongst immigrants’ within the Swedish labour market, with a discussion of the implications of this for individuals.

Session 6: Session 6 was chaired by Daniel James Lewis (*UCL*) and turned to Fertility, families and the lifecourse. Deborah Davies (*University of Southampton*) discussed Divorce and economic activity among married women in England and Wales, through an exploration and critique of existing theories and a discourse on limitations of the type of available data. The theme of marriage was continued by the second speaker, Marta Styrk (*Lund University*), who discussed first marriages in Poland and the variables that might affect their stability.

Careers panel discussion: A Careers panel was the final formal event of the day. We were very fortunate to have Paul Bradshaw (The Scottish Centre for Social Research), Alison Platt, Graeme Beale, Franca Eirich (The Scottish Government) and Professor Paul Boyle (School of Geography and Geosciences, the University of St Andrews) come and discuss their experiences in their chosen careers. The panellists’ contributions sparked a lively, wide-ranging and informal discussion from the floor which offered plenty of advice for the delegates.

Day 2: Wednesday, 30th July, 2010

Session 7: The first session of the third and final day was chaired by Zhong Eric Chen (*University of Edinburgh*) and contained further papers exploring the topic of Migrants and Migration. The first presentation by Catalina Franco (*Departamento Nacional de Planeación, Colombia*) looked at Latin American immigration in the United States and the wage differentials between Latin American immigrants and U.S. nationals using 2000 census data. The second paper was a joint presentation by Angie Suárez and Orlando Salazar (*University of Madrid*) which discussed the transfer of funds from migrants to people who remain at home. This was then followed up with a comprehensive

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examination of the possibility for successful policies, integration, co-development and management of migrant flows.

Session 8: The final session of the conference was chaired by Tina Hannemann (*University of Lund*), and was a second look at Fertility, families and the lifecourse. Ines Wlosnewski (*University of Lund*) discussed the age difference between spouses and the impact on longevity in Utah in the US. Zhong Eric Chen (*University of Edinburgh*) looked at parenting motives and whether individuals account for parenthood or remain childfree. Finally Kevin Ralston (*University of Stirling*) discussed using data from the Scottish Longitudinal Study to understand key influences on childbearing and family formation.

Speaker: Our second keynote speaker, Dr. Tomas Sobotka, brought the conference to an elegant conclusion with his discussion of Fertility in Europe. The talk was well-attended and provided a fascinating overview of contemporary and likely future fertility trends in Europe.

The conference proved to be a very successful event with all of the evaluation forms indicating that all aspects of Popfest from content, through to accommodation and catering was all rated highly by all those attending.

Thanks and Acknowledgements

We gratefully acknowledge financial support from the British Society for Population Studies (BSPS), Centre for Population Change (CPC), Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC), GRADskills at the University of St. Andrews, The Scottish Government and the School of Geography and Geosciences at the University of St. Andrews. We also wish to thank the Advanced Quantitative Methods Network (AQMeN) for attending and advertising the conference. The following individuals also deserve special mention:

Tracey Dixon – University of Dundee

Graeme Sandeman – School of Geography and Geosciences, University of St Andrews

Alison Platt and Gil Clark – The Scottish Government

Pauline Brown – Conference Services, University of St Andrews

Colette Finlay – Finance department, University of St Andrews

Anne Shepherd – British Society for Population Studies

To conclude this report we are pleased to announce that next year's popfest will take place at the University of Groningen in the Netherlands.