



Center for Demography and Human Ecology (CDHE)
Institute for Demography and Social Studies (IDSS)
Institut National d'Etudes Démographiques (INED)
Max Planck Institute for Demographic research (MPIDR)
International Union for the Scientific Study of Population (IUSSP)

Call for papers

Mortality in countries of the former USSR Fifteen years after break-up: change or continuity?

International seminar

In 1991, following the break-up of the USSR, the former Communist regime was replaced in most of the newly independent states by political and economic systems based on democracy and a liberal market economy. Have these dramatic changes been accompanied by radically new demographic trends? Have diverging demographic trends appeared among different populations in the new states? The main purpose of this seminar is to examine these questions in relation to mortality.

From the mid sixties, the USSR experienced a slow deterioration of its health situation. Despite appearances, this deterioration was not fundamentally lessened by the very temporary effects of Gorbachev's anti-alcohol campaign. Beyond this epiphenomenon, are there any grounds for believing that the political and economic changes of the early nineties might finally lead to a reversal of trends that could signal an improvement in the health situation? Is such an expectation more realistic for some of the former USSR countries than for others? And, if so, to what factors can these supposed or observed differences be attributed?

This seminar will bring together researchers from countries of the former USSR and specialists from other countries. Its aim will be to shed light on age-specific mortality and life expectancy trends, by taking into account the dynamics of the main causes of death and by assessing the role played by social inequalities, cultural differences and geographic heterogeneity. The extent to which certain regions of the former USSR have specific trends in common with neighbouring countries that share similar historical, geographical or cultural traits will also be discussed. The overview of health trends in countries of the former USSR will also include comparisons with Central European countries that were also ruled by Communist regimes as well as with Western countries. Finally, in the light of recent observed trends, prospects for the future will be debated, particularly with respect to hypotheses for mortality projections.

Main themes

1. Data collection
 - Death registration and mortality estimates
 - Collecting and coding causes of death, and quality assessment
2. Mortality trends
 - Age-specific mortality profiles
 - Infant and child mortality
 - Adult mortality
 - Old-age mortality
3. Medical causes of death
 - General overviews. Age and cause-of-death components of life expectancy changes or differences
 - Cardiovascular diseases
 - Infectious diseases
 - Cancers
 - External causes
 - New health threats
 - Etc.
4. Differential mortality
 - Sex
 - Social categories
 - Education
 - Urban/rural
 - Geography
 - Ethnicity
 - Central European experiences
 - Etc.
5. Elements of explanation
 - The role of risk factors (alcohol, tobacco, environment, etc.)
 - Changes in health systems and health policies
 - Social systems and the welfare state
 - Biological and social aspects of Russian excess mortality
 - Economic changes and mortality
 - Culture and health
 - Causes of adult excess mortality
6. Forecasting mortality
 - What hypotheses can be used as a basis for forecasting mortality?
 - Can modelling of past trends help to make projections?
 - To what extent do past forecasts fit with recent trends?
 - Case studies

International Organizing Committee (IOC)

Serhii Pyrozhkov (IDSS, Kiev, president) and Natalia Foygt (IDSS, Kiev, organiser), Anatoli Vishnevsky (CDHE, Moscow), Vladimir Shkolnikov and Evgeni Andreev (MPIDR, Rostock), France Meslé and Jacques Vallin (INED, Paris)

Paper proposals

Papers proposed for the seminar will focus on the comparison between different experiences, on long term historical trends, and on the explanation of the observed facts. The main topic is the health situation in the countries of the former USSR, but comparisons with experiences from Central European countries or Western countries are welcome.

A 1-2 page summary of proposed paper must be sent, in English or in Russian, **before 1 March 2006**, to Natalia Foygt (n_foygt@mail.ru). The summary must include clearly: the title of the paper, the full name(s) of each author, their affiliation (full name of organization and department), their professional position/title, and their e-mail address(es) (if not possible: fax number or postal address).

If selected by the organizing committee, full papers must be received by the organizer (same address) before 1 September 2006.

Place and date of the seminar

The seminar will take place in Kiev, Ukraine, from 12 to 14 October 2006.

Working languages

Written papers and oral presentations will be in English or in Russian.

Financial support

It will not be possible to finance travel expenses for all participants. Priority will be given to participants from countries of the former USSR whose paper will have been selected. Financial support of other participants will depend on the success of fundraising efforts made by the IOC. Candidates are highly encouraged to seek alternative sources of funding.