

# RC41 NEWSLETTER 2015\_1

Research Committee on Sociology of Population

International Sociological Association

Editor: Walter Bartl

RC41 Newsletter is published semi-annually by the Research Committee on Sociology of Population (RC41) of the International Sociological Association (ISA), and mailed electronically to all RC41 members. Send contributions to [walter.bartl@soziologie.uni-halle.de](mailto:walter.bartl@soziologie.uni-halle.de).

Article submissions are limited to 1,000 words, will be reviewed by the RC41 officers for possible publication, and may be edited for clarity or space.

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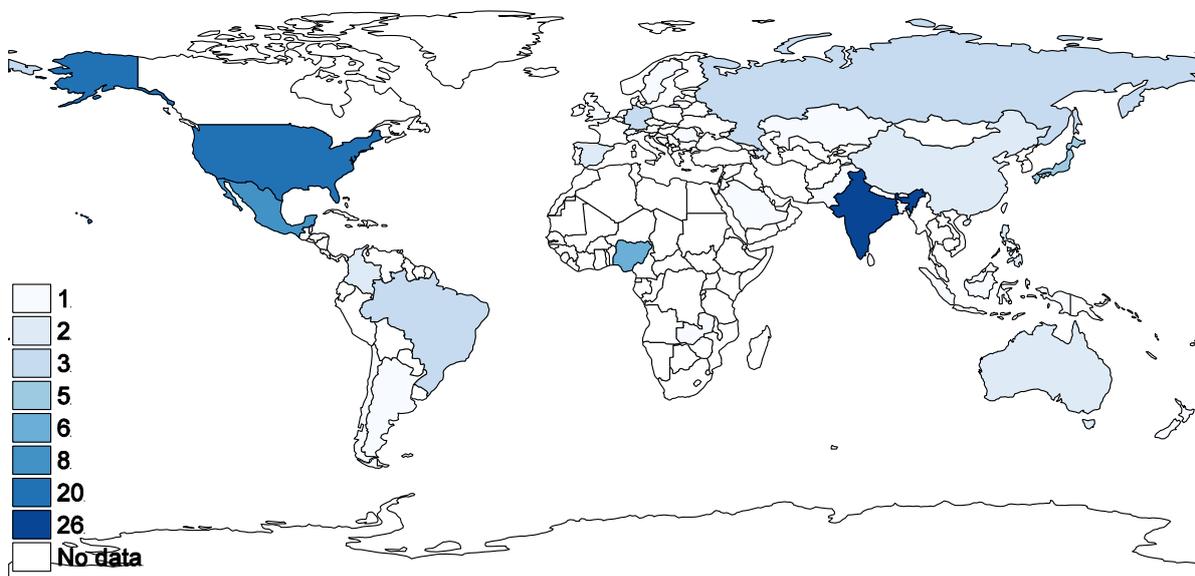
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## NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

The obvious purpose of a newsletter is to keep its addressees informed about particular topics. In the case of RC41 these topics will typically be about population structures, population dynamics, their causes and consequences as well as related announcements. Apart from that, in order to function well as a community of practice, we would also like to establish the newsletter as a forum to get to know each other's work and our common history better. From a demographic point of view, what lies closer at hand than to start shaping our imagination of our membership by describing it in statistical terms?

Founded in 1988 RC41 has grown remarkably since then. By the end of 2014 it had acquired 104 members. Among them are 14 members who are life-members of ISA and who have acquired also life-membership in RC41 as a consequence of the latest change in our statutes which we approved after the ISA World Congress in Japan. RC41 members come from a total of 31 states representing 16 % of the 193 nation states that are members of the United Nations. While 16 states are represented by single RC41 members (Argentina, Bangladesh, Chile, Indonesia, Kazakhstan, Malaysia, New Zealand, Pakistan, Romania, Saudi Arabia, Sweden, Switzerland, Taiwan, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, Zambia), 7 states count 2 members each (Australia, Azerbaijan, China, Colombia, Israel, Philippines, Spain), 3 states count 3 members each (Brazil, Germany, Russia), Japan counts 5, Nigeria counts 6, Mexico counts 8, United States of America count 20 and India counts 26 RC41 members! Even though depicting our membership on a world map has obvious limitations (such as small countries being visually diminished), Figure 1 makes such an attempt. It does seem to confirm the impression gained from the exploration of the frequencies that Asia and America are the world regions where most RC41 members live and work.

Figure 1: RC41 membership 2014 by country



Since demographic conditions are still quite diverse among the world regions this diversity certainly contributes to the rich spectrum of topics that we discussed at the ISA World Congress in Yokohama and we are expecting will be treated at the Third ISA Forum in Vienna. However, despite this empirical diversity of demographic conditions we suspect that our scientific community may be much more homogeneous in terms of the academic knowledge which is fundamental to our work. Science is often portrayed as a project producing cumulative knowledge and from this point of view we might assume that there are some publications that most of us regard to be crucial to practicing sociology of population. On the other hand,

sociology is known to be a discipline characterized by quite different schools of thought, which would make for a diversity of publications.

In order to explore empirically how canonical or diverse the literature is which we think of as being central to our work, **we would like to ask you, to select *one book, journal article or book chapter that you think is indispensable for our field of knowledge.* Please submit the title of this publication per e-mail to [walter.bartl@soziologie.uni-halle.de](mailto:walter.bartl@soziologie.uni-halle.de) by June 28, 2015.** If you wish, you are also welcome to comment briefly why you selected this particular book, article or book chapter. The results of this short survey will be presented as part of the next RC41 Newsletter. Furthermore the reference list to be obtained could be published on a future website of RC41 as an orientation for possible new members. Thank you for your cooperation.

Walter Bartl

## A BRIEF HISTORY OF RC41

I joined the ISA in early 1977 and attended the 9<sup>th</sup> World Congress of Sociology (Uppsala 1978). There were many distinguished sociologists, other social scientists and even a few demographers. Some of us felt that although ISA had research committees dealing with aging (RC11) and migration (RC31) there was a need for a group to deal specifically with the broad range of population issues. On contacting the ISA administration (that was before Izabela Barlinska's time) we were told that a request to establish a new group has to be supported by a sufficient number of ISA members. In those days there were two stages prior to being established as a full-fledged research committee. First, an ad-hoc group was set up if at least 20 (not sure of the exact number) ISA members supported the request. In the second stage the ad-hoc group was upgraded to a working group if the 50 or more ISA members supported this move and there was an appropriate research agenda.

The idea of an ad-hoc group was revived during an informal meeting during the 10<sup>th</sup> World Congress of Sociology (Mexico City 1982). A group of 40 or so people participated in discussions to determine the objectives and plans for future action. Three people were assigned specific tasks. William Stinner (USA) was asked to draft a preliminary constitution, Frans Leeuw (Netherlands) was to liaise with ISA (their secretariat was then located in Amsterdam), and I was given the task of identifying and recruiting ISA members.

Next few months were spent in manually matching the published list of ISA and IUSSP members. Initially about 100 persons were identified as members of both organizations. They were contacted by mail (remember it was before the e-mail era). Sufficient number of people expressed support and a formal application to establish the Ad-hoc Group on Sociology of Population was lodged with ISA secretariat. Our application was successful and planning to mount 8 sessions at the 11<sup>th</sup> World Congress of Sociology (New Delhi 1986) was started. I was asked to coordinate the sessions. The ad-hoc groups were given the late evening time slots (8.30 pm to 10 pm); despite this our sessions were very well attended. Subsequently, we were given the status of a working group and finally in 1988 the Research Committee on Sociology of Population (RC41) was established. The three of us (William Stinner, Frans Leeuw and I) were asked by the ISA to continue managing the affairs of RC41 till the formal elections at the time of the 12<sup>th</sup> World Congress of Sociology (Madrid 1990). Given below is the link to the past boards (the current board can be found at the end of this newsletter):

Past Boards: [http://www.isa-sociology.org/rcs/rc41\\_ht.html](http://www.isa-sociology.org/rcs/rc41_ht.html)

Subsequent activities:

- Sessions at the World Congresses of Sociology: Bielefeld 1994, Montreal 1998; Brisbane 2002, Durban 2006, Gothenburg 2010, Yokohama 2014.
- Sessions at the ISA Forums: Barcelona 2008, Buenos Aires 2012.
- Special events of RC41: Tel Aviv 1999, Madrid 2000, Malta 2005.
- Special events at IUSSP conferences: Beijing 1997, 2001, Busan 2013.

Farhat Yusuf

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### CONFERENCES

#### **3<sup>rd</sup> ISA Forum of Sociology, Vienna, Austria, July 10-14, 2016**

Program coordinator for RC41: Jon Anson. **The call for session proposals will be open from 2 February, 2015 – 15 March, 2015 24:00 GMT.** Session proposers must submit session's description on-line via the Confex platform. Session proposals must be submitted in English, French or Spanish. If you wish to propose a session please contact Jon directly at [anson@bgu.ac.il](mailto:anson@bgu.ac.il)

#### **Is inequality increasing again? What population science can tell us, Paris, France, 2-3 July 2015. International conference organized by the iPOPs laboratory of excellence. Deadline for submissions: 27 February 2014**

The French iPOPs (Individuals, Population, Societies) project is organizing its international conference on 2nd and 3rd July 2015 at Université Paris Ouest, Nanterre La Défense, on the resurgence of inequality. If you are a population scientist working on this topic and if you wish to present a paper at the conference, please follow the instructions in the call for papers and send your proposal to [ipops@ined.fr](mailto:ipops@ined.fr) by 27th February 2015 at the latest. Further details at <http://www.ipops.fr/en/recherche/seminaires/>

#### **International Seminar on Spatial Analysis in Historical Demography: Micro and macro approaches, Quebec City, Canada, 17-18 September 2015. Organized by the IUSSP Scientific Panel on Historical Demography and hosted by the Université du Québec à Chicoutimi. Deadline for submission of abstracts: 1 March 2015.**

In recent years many new data sources have become available to historical demographers, which often include detailed geographical information allowing for sophisticated spatial analysis. Full-count data from national censuses with geographical identifiers at low levels of aggregation, even at the scale of the individual, as well as detailed historical maps of cities and countrysides are two examples of such developments. The linkage of contextual information to micro-level socioeconomic and demographic data further enrich these data sources and opens up a whole new range of possibilities for greatly improving our understanding of demographic patterns in the past. Spatial modeling of fertility and mortality change in the past, or of the diffusion of new behavior in family formation and partner selection could make major contributions for our understanding of

the first demographic transition. The analytical possibilities afforded by utilizing a historical GIS offers a completely new perspective and knowledge about the interaction between climatic, environmental, socioeconomic and demographic processes relating to health, mortality, migration, and families in the past. The aim of this seminar is to stimulate original research in historical demography making use of these new data resources and infrastructures to address the major themes of the discipline and to bring together researchers from various backgrounds interested in spatial analysis in historical demography. Issues of interest include, but are not limited to: 1) Macro-level analysis such as cluster analysis, spatial modelling of aggregate data, multilevel models of spatial structures using GIS. 2) Micro-level analysis such as spatial analysis of life trajectories (marriage, fertility, mortality and migration), interactions between life courses and mobility, environment and social mobility. 3) Macro-micro interactions such as contextual effects on individual life courses. Although most papers are expected to make empirical contributions, more theoretical or methodological papers are also welcome, as long as they deal with the main topic of the seminar. We encourage submissions covering a variety of geographical scales, from small areas to entire countries or group of countries. Please read the full announcement for this seminar at <http://iussp.org/en/international-seminar-spatial-analysis-historical-demography>

**Changing patterns of mortality and morbidity: age-, time-, cause- and cohort perspectives. 16-18 September 2015, University of Economics, Prague, organised by the EAPS working group on Health, Morbidity and Mortality. Deadline for abstracts: March 31st 2015.**

Throughout the 20th century, and particularly since the Second World War, there have been rapid and profound changes in morbidity and mortality in both the developed and the developing countries. These changes are clearly demonstrated in the values of many indicators commonly used for a general description of both these processes, such as life expectancy, infant mortality rates and cause-specific prevalence and incidence rates. However, if we wish to go beyond description, and understand the reasons for these changes, unique in human history, we need to undertake a more detailed analysis, looking at the effects of age, of time and of particular causes of death, as well as the way different cohorts have responded to the social changes which lie behind these developments. Mortality and morbidity declines are ongoing and ever evolving processes, but there are also setbacks as new causes appear, known causes transform, and inter- and intra-societal violence becomes ever more destructive. Understanding the way in which morbidity and mortality patterns develop is thus crucial, precisely because we have seen that they are amenable to change. If we wish to see this change continue in a positive direction, we need to understand the roots of these developments, as well as the reasons for reversals and their uneven distribution within and between different societies. This workshop seeks to bring together demographers and other scientists dealing with these important topics, to present and discuss new results and ideas, as well as methods of analysis, and thus contribute to our understanding of the changing patterns of mortality and morbidity and the factors standing behind these changes. We look forward to a fruitful discussion of these important issues in one of the most beautiful cities in the very heart of Europe.

For more details see [HMMWG2015.VSE.CZ](http://HMMWG2015.VSE.CZ)

Contact: [hmmwg2015@gmail.com](mailto:hmmwg2015@gmail.com)

## PEOPLE

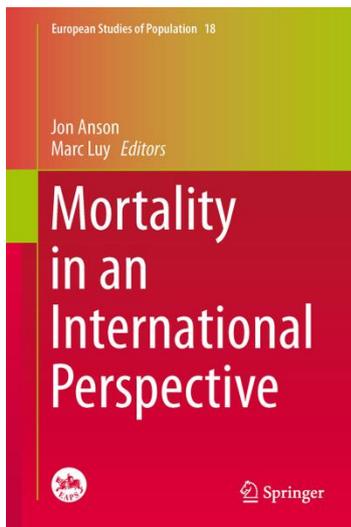
### Poston Elected as AAAS Fellow

Dudley Poston, Texas A&M University, was among the scientists elected recently as Fellows of the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS). He was elected for his “distinguished contributions to the field of social demography, particularly for work enhancing the understanding of population growth and change in the U.S. and China.” The 401 new AAAS Fellows elected this year were awarded this honor because of “their scientifically or socially distinguished efforts to advance science or its applications.” Fellows are nominated by their peers for election into the organization by the AAAS Council, the association’s policymaking body. The official announcement of their election appeared in the “AAAS News & Notes” section of the journal *Science* on Nov. 28, 2014. Poston and the other new Fellows will be formally recognized on Feb. 14, 2015, at the AAAS annual meeting in San Jose, CA.

For more information, see the news releases from Texas A&M University on Poston’s election at this link: <http://liberalarts.tamu.edu/html/news--sociology-professor-elected-to-prestigious-association.html>

## RECENT PUBLICATIONS BY MEMBERS

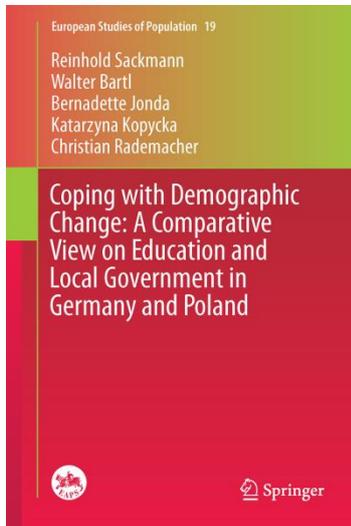
### **Anson, Jon; Luy, Marc (Eds.) (2014): *Mortality in an international perspective*. Dordrecht: Springer (European studies of population, 18).**



This volume presents a state of the art coverage of the measurement and evolution of mortality over time. It describes in great detail the changes in the cause patterns of mortality, the changes in mortality patterns at different ages, and specific analyses of mortality in particular countries. Derived from a meeting of the European Working Group on Health, Morbidity and Mortality held at the Vienna Institute of Demography, September 2011, it presents a cross-section of the work and concerns of mortality researchers across Europe, ranging from London and Madrid in the west to Moscow in the east, with a few additions from further afield. Although most of the papers focus on a particular population, the range of the papers is broad; taken together they present an inter-disciplinary cross-section of this multi-faceted field. Coverage includes estimating life expectancy in small areas, with an application to recent changes in US counties; socioeconomic determinants of mortality in Europe using the latest available data and short-term forecasts; predicting mortality from profiles of

biological risk and performance measures of functioning; infant mortality measurement and rate of progress on international commitment using evidence from Argentina; avoidable factors contributing to maternal deaths in Turkey; changes in mortality at older ages: the case of Spain (1975- 2006); variable scales of avoidable mortality within the Russian population; long-term mortality decline in East Asia, and much more. Perspectives in Mortality Research will serve as a valuable resource for professionals and students in sociology, demography, public health and personal finance.

**Sackmann, Reinhold; Bartl, Walter; Jonda, Bernadette; Kopycka, Katarzyna; Rademacher, Christian (2015): Coping with demographic change. A comparative view on education and local government in Germany and Poland. Dordrecht: Springer (European studies of population, 19).**



With many OECD countries experiencing a decline in their populations, this book offers a theoretical model of coping with demographic change and examines different strategies that societies have used to come to terms with demographic change. In particular, it details the different ways that Germany and Poland have tried to cope with this challenge and reveals three conflicting strategies: expansion, reduction, and phasing out.

Coping with Demographic Change conceptualizes the challenges a society faces as a result of demographic change and focuses on the processes by which actors, organizations and nation-states try to cope with this new situation.

## BOARD 2014-2018

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