



THE ATHENS INSTITUTE FOR EDUCATION AND RESEARCH

Abstract Book

**10th Annual International Conference on
Anthropology & Ethnology
17-20 June 2024, Athens, Greece**

**Edited by
Barbara Zagaglia & Olga Gkounta**

2024

Abstracts
10th Annual International
Conference on Anthropology &
Ethnology
17-20 June 2024, Athens, Greece

Edited by
Barbara Zagaglia & Olga Gkounta

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Preface

This book includes the abstracts of all the papers presented at the 10th Annual International Conference on Anthropology & Ethnology (17-20 June 2024), organized by the Athens Institute for Education and Research (ATINER).

A full conference program can be found before the relevant abstracts. In accordance with ATINER's Publication Policy, the papers presented during this conference will be considered for inclusion in one of ATINER's many publications only after a blind peer review process.

The purpose of this abstract book is to provide members of ATINER and other academics around the world with a resource through which they can discover colleagues and additional research relevant to their own work. This purpose is in congruence with the overall mission of the association. ATINER was established in 1995 as an independent academic organization with the mission to become a forum where academics and researchers from all over the world can meet to exchange ideas on their research and consider the future developments of their fields of study.

To facilitate the communication, a new references section includes all the abstract books published as part of this conference (Table 1). I invite the readers to access these abstract books –these are available for free– and compare how the themes of the conference have evolved over the years. According to ATINER's mission, the presenters in these conferences are coming from many different countries, presenting various topics.

Table 1. *Publication of Books of Abstracts of Proceedings, 2015-2024*

Year	Papers	Countries	References
2024	23	14	Zagaglia and Gkounta (2024)
2023	42	21	Zagaglia and Gkounta (2023)
2022	28	14	Zagaglia and Gkounta (2022)
2021	16	11	Papanikos (2021)
2020	14	12	Papanikos (2020)
2019	24	18	Papanikos (2019)
2018	30	20	Papanikos (2018)
2017	33	19	Papanikos (2017)
2016	44	18	Papanikos (2016)
2015	44	23	Papanikos (2015)

It is our hope that through ATINER's conferences and publications, Athens will become a place where academics and researchers from all

over the world can regularly meet to discuss the developments of their disciplines and present their work. Since 1995, ATINER has organized more than 400 international conferences and has published over 200 books. Academically, the institute is organized into 6 divisions and 37 units. Each unit organizes at least one annual conference and undertakes various small and large research projects.

For each of these events, the involvement of multiple parties is crucial. I would like to thank all the participants, the members of the organizing and academic committees, and most importantly the administration staff of ATINER for putting this conference and its subsequent publications together.

Gregory T. Papanikos
President

Editors' Note

These abstracts provide a vital means to the dissemination of scholarly inquiry in the field of Anthropology & Ethnology. The breadth and depth of research approaches and topics represented in this book underscores the diversity of the conference.

ATINER's mission is to bring together academics from all corners of the world in order to engage with each other, brainstorm, exchange ideas, be inspired by one another, and once they are back in their institutions and countries to implement what they have acquired. The *10th Annual International Conference on Anthropology & Ethnology* accomplished this goal by bringing together academics and scholars from 14 different countries (Australia, Canada, China, Czech Republic, Denmark, India, Italy, Kenya, Lithuania, South Africa, Spain, UK, Uruguay, USA), which brought in the conference the perspectives of many different country approaches and realities in the field.

Publishing this book can help that spirit of engaged scholarship continue into the future. With our joint efforts, the next editions of this conference will be even better. We hope that this abstract book as a whole will be both of interest and of value to the reading audience. May it be a stimulus for further research and the progress of the discipline.

Barbara Zagaglia & Olga Gkounta
Editors

10th Annual International Conference on Anthropology & Ethnology, 17-20 June 2024, Athens, Greece

Organizing & Scientific Committee

All ATINER's conferences are organized by the Academic Council. This conference has been organized with the assistance of the following academic members of ATINER, who contributed by reviewing the submitted abstracts and papers.

1. Gregory T. Papanikos, President, ATINER & Honorary Professor, University of Stirling, U.K.
2. Barbara Zagaglia, Head, Anthropology & Demography Unit, ATINER & Associate Professor, Polytechnic University of Marche, Italy.
3. Elisa Cisotto, Researcher, Free University of Bozen-Bolzano, Italy.

FINAL CONFERENCE PROGRAM

10th Annual International Conference on Anthropology & Ethnology, 17-20
June 2024, Athens, Greece

PROGRAM

Monday 17 June 2024

08.30-09.15

Registration

09:15-10:00

Opening and Welcoming Remarks:

- o Gregory T. Papanikos, President, ATINER.

10:00-11:30 Session 1

Moderator: Jose Antonio Ortega, Associate Professor, University of Salamanca, Spain.

1. **Domenico Maddaloni**, Professor, University of Salerno, Italy & Jessica Maglio, Independent Researcher, Italy.
Title: Assistance to Migrants and Refugees in Italy in an Age of Crisis: Policy Contradictions and Solidarity Practices.
2. **Barbara Zagaglia**, Associate Professor, Polytechnic University of Marche, Italy.
Title: Demographic Transitions in Mediterranean Africa. Similarities or Differences?
3. **Valery Buinwi Ferim**, Senior Lecturer, University of Fort Hare, South Africa.
Title: The Politics of Exclusion in South Africa: A Dilemma for Permanent Immigrants.

11:30-13:30 Session 2

Moderator: Barbara Zagaglia, Head, Anthropology & Demography Unit, Athens Institute & Associate Professor, Polytechnic University of Marche, Italy.

1. **Robert Cox**, Professor, University of South Carolina, USA.
Adolfo Garcé, Professor, Universidad de la República, Uruguay.
Title: Political-Knowledge Regimes: Expertise and Politics in France and Uruguay in times of COVID-19.
2. **Sonia Salari**, Professor, University of Utah, USA.
Title: US Violent Death Mortality: Global Pandemic and Firearm Access.
3. **Tony Whiffen**, Higher Statistical Officer, Welsh Government, UK.
Title: Estimating Households Containing Those Most at Risk from COVID Using Linked Administrative Data and SQL Algorithms.
4. **Victoria San Juan**, Postdoc, University of Florence, Italy.
Herney Fernando Ruiz Vallejo, Associate Professor, Universidad Externado de Colombia, Colombia.
Title: The Behavior of Fertility in Colombia in the Context of the Covid-19 Pandemic. An Approach Based on Uncertainty.
5. **Patrizio Lodetti**, Postdoc Researcher, University of Florence, Italy.
Victoria San Juan Bernuy, Postdoc Researcher, University of Florence, Italy.
Title: COVID-19 and Uncertainty in Italy. Exposure to High Mortality and Fertility, the Case Study on the City of Bergamo.

13:30-15:00 Session 3 – A Round-Table Discussion on Demographics and Politics

Moderator: Moderator: Gregory T. Papanikos, President, The Athens Institute

1. **Domenico Maddaloni**, Professor, University of Salerno, Italy.
Title: Demographics and Politics in Italy.
2. **Renato Flores**, Director, FGV IIU International Intelligence Unit & Professor, FGV EPGE Graduate School of Economics, Brazil.
Title: Demographics and Global Governance: Something is Rotten in the State of Intergovernmental

Institutions and Fora.

3. **Sonia Salari**, Professor, University of Utah, USA.
Title: Demographics of Age, Aging and Politics in the U.S.
4. **Valery Buinwi Ferim**, Senior Lecturer, University of Fort Hare, South Africa.
Title: Demographics of Political Party Leadership in South Africa.
5. **Sriparna Dutta**, Associate Professor, Khudiram Bose Central College, University of Calcutta, India.
Title: Political Demography and Youth – Perspectives on West Bengal, India.
6. **Martina Rašticová**, Associate Professor and Head, Department of Management, Mendel University in Brno, Czech Republic.
Title: Digitalization and Demographic Shifts: Political Strategies for Integrating Older Workers.

15:00-16:00 Lunch

16:00-17:30 Session 4

Moderator: Edit Soos, Associate Professor, University of Szeged, Hungary.

1. **Sriparna Dutta**, Associate Professor, Khudiram Bose Central College, University of Calcutta, India.
Shilpa Nandy, Assistant Professor, Khudiram Bose Central College, University of Calcutta, India.
Title: Patriarchy, Taliban and Political Issues: Challenges Faced by the Afghan Women in Contemporary Times.
2. **Martina Rasticova**, Head, Department of Management, Mendel University in Brno, Czech Republic.
Štěpán Konečný, Researcher, Mendel University in Brno, Czech Republic.
Jakub Šácha, Researcher, Mendel University in Brno, Czech Republic.
Martin Lakomý, Researcher, Mendel University in Brno, Czech Republic.
Title: Redefining Age and Gender in Digital Recruitment Amidst Population Ageing: A Multifaceted Analysis of Stereotypes, Inequalities, and Perceptions in the Modern Workplace.
3. **Ilona Leitner**, PhD Student/Consultant, Mendel University in Brno, Czech Republic.
Title: Exploring the Impact of Demographics and Job Status on Technostress Dimensions in the Consulting Industry.
4. **Julia Meszaros**, Associate Professor, Texas A&M Commerce, USA.
Title: Intimate Industries and the Extraction of Women's Labor.

20:30-22:30

Athenian Early Evening Symposium (includes in order of appearance: continuous academic discussions, dinner, wine/water, music)

Tuesday 18 June 2024

09:00-10:30 Session 5

Moderator: Elisa Cisotto, Researcher, Free University of Bozen-Bolzano, Italy.

1. **Egle Kumpikaite**, Associate Professor, Kaunas University of Technology, Lithuania.
Title: Variety and Traditions of Lithuanian Women's Folk Headdresses.
2. **Daiva Milasiene**, Senior Researcher, Kaunas University of Technology, Lithuania.
Title: Traditions of Manufacturing Techniques of Lithuanian Folk Aprons.
3. **Nompumelelo Radebe**, Senior Lecturer and Chair, Department of Anthropology and Archaeology, University of South Africa, South Africa.
Title: Induku Enhle Igawulwa Ezizweni as a Premise for Curriculum Transformation.

10:30-12:00 Session 6

Moderator: Nompumelelo Radebe, Senior Lecturer and Chair, Department of Anthropology and Archaeology, University of South Africa, South Africa.

<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Brian Due, Associate Professor, University of Copenhagen, Denmark. <i>Title: A Video Ethnographic Study of Youth Football Matches.</i>2. Sylvia Thompson, PhD Candidate, RMIT University, Australia. <i>Title: Romani Resilience: Stories of Resilience of Romani Refugees from Ukraine.</i>
12:00-13:30 Session 7 Moderator: Amber Brittain-Hale , Co-Founder, BrainStates Inc., USA.
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Nancy Stiegler, Professor, University of the Western Cape, South Africa. Tomwa Fapohunda, PhD Student, University of the Western Cape, South Africa. <i>Title: Climate Change and Gender-Based Violence from a Demographic Point of View.</i>2. Jose Antonio Ortega, Associate Professor, University of Salamanca, Spain. <i>Title: Patterns and Age-Homogamy in Same-Sex and Different-Sex Marriages in Spain.</i>3. Elisa Cisotto, Researcher, Free University of Bozen-Bolzano, Italy. Eleonora Meli, Researcher, Italian National Institute of Statistics, Italy. Giulia Gavrini, Full Professor, Free University of Bozen-Bolzano, Italy. Cecilia Tomassini, Full Professor, University of Molise, Italy. <i>Title: Educational and Geographical Disparities in Intergenerational Care: Insights from Italy.</i>
13:30-14:30 Lunch
14:30-16:00 Session 8 Moderator: Adrian Szumowski , Assistant Professor, Maria Curie-Skłodowska University, Poland.
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Pietro Marzo, Assistant Professor, TELUQ University, Canada. <i>Title: International Democracy Promotion in an Era of Authoritarian Regression. The Case of German Political Foundations in North Africa.</i>2. Dionysios Stivas, Assistant Professor, Xi'an Jiaotong-Liverpool University, China. <i>Title: The Dragon in the Cradle of Democracy: A Tale of the post-2006 Sino-Greek Relations.</i>3. Yunus Emre Ozigci, Deputy Head of Mission, Deputy Permanent Representative to UNEP and to UN Habitat, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Turkey, Kenya. <i>Title: On the Intentionality of the State.</i>
17:00-20:00 Session 9 Old and New-An Educational Urban Walk
The urban walk ticket is not included as part of your registration fee. It includes transportation costs and the cost to enter the Parthenon and the other monuments on the Acropolis Hill. The urban walk tour includes the broader area of Athens. Among other sites, it includes: Zappion, Syntagma Square, Temple of Olympian Zeus, Ancient Roman Agora and on Acropolis Hill: the Propylaea, the Temple of Athena Nike, the Erechtheion, and the Parthenon. The program of the tour may be adjusted, if there is a need beyond our control. This is a private event organized by ATINER exclusively for the conference participants.
20:30-22:00 Dinner
<hr/> Wednesday 19 June 2024 An Educational Visit to Selected Islands or Mycenae Visit
<hr/> Thursday 20 June 2024 Visiting the Oracle of Delphi
<hr/> Friday 21 June May 2024 Visiting the Ancient Corinth and Cape Sounion

Elisa Cisotto

Researcher, Free University of Bozen-Bolzano, Italy

Eleonora Meli

Researcher, Italian National Institute of Statistics, Italy

Giulia Gavrini

Full Professor, Free University of Bozen-Bolzano, Italy

&

Cecilia Tomassini

Full Professor, University of Molise, Italy

Educational and Geographical Disparities in Intergenerational Care: Insights from Italy

Introduction and Background: In response to the growing importance of multigenerational family dynamics, research on aging families and grandparenthood has expanded in recent decades. Current studies have delved into the changing demography of grandparenthood, highlighting a notable knowledge gap concerning the influence of socioeconomic factors on the timing and time of this transition. This study aims to address this gap by examining educational gradients in the experience of grandparenthood in Italy from 1998 to 2016, with a focus on geographical disparities.

Data and Methods: Data from the Italian Families and Social Subjects Survey (FSS), a nationally representative cross-sectional survey conducted by the Italian National Institute of Statistics (Istat), were utilized. The analysis focused on survey waves from 1998 and 2016, categorizing participants aged 60 or older into high and low education levels, as well as distinguishing between those living in the North or South of Italy. Descriptive statistics and Kaplan-Meier estimates were employed to examine the likelihood and timing of individuals becoming grandparents at different ages, by education level and geographical residence.

Preliminary Results: In Southern Italy, 78% of women with lower levels of education become grandmothers by age 60, whereas only 46% of their higher-educated counterparts in the same area do so. While Northern Italy displays reduced disparities, distinctions still endure. Between 1998 and 2016, we observed a notable reduction in educational gaps, primarily influenced by flattened probability curves, particularly among highly educated individuals. Overall, the median age at which individuals become grandparents increases with higher levels of education and when residing in the Southern part of the country compared to the North. Over two decades, a prevailing pattern of

delayed grandparenthood emerges, with substantial educational and geographical differences persisting.

Conclusion: Despite an overall trend towards delayed grandparenthood, significant educational and geographical disparities persist in Italy. Further analysis will delve into statistical variations, connections with life expectancy, and geographical nuances to enhance comprehension of grandparenthood dynamics, educational impacts, and geographical inequalities in Italy.

Robert Cox

Professor, University of South Carolina, USA

&

Adolfo Garcé

Professor, Universidad de la República, Uruguay

Political-Knowledge Regimes: Expertise and Politics in France and Uruguay in Times of COVID-19

During the COVID-19 pandemic, countries varied in the degree to which they followed the advice of scientific experts. Existing scholarship argues that some countries more readily engage experts in the process of policy making, while others view scientific experts as partisan actors. This study finds that in France and Uruguay, the engagement of scientific experts during the pandemic marked significant departures from the reputation of each country as one that values and engages scientific advice (France), or where scientists are viewed suspiciously as partisan actors (Uruguay). In France, the government followed scientific advice until doing so led to concerns about the economy. In Uruguay, the government initially followed the advice of experts very carefully, but after a few months abandoned the advice of scientists and loosened measures to mitigate the spread of the virus.

To explain these departures from each country's normal policy style, we focus not only in whether experts have an institutionalized role in the policy process (known in the literature as a country's 'knowledge regime') but also on the degree to which politicians choose to make use of expert advice (a pattern we call a 'political knowledge regime'). We argue that a major motivation for politicians is to avoid uncertainty. In the face of great uncertainty, like a pandemic, politicians are confronted with two dilemmas. First, they want to maintain their ongoing policy commitments while balancing the need to respond to the crisis. Second, they seek certainty in managing the crisis, and are more likely to defer to experts when they are uncertain what the outcomes of different policy options will be. We argue that politicians will seek expert advice when the country has a tradition of expert involvement in politics because doing so can bolster confidence in the policy direction, but that they might depart from the advice of experts when they calculate that the advice would compromise their own policy commitments. By contrast, in countries where the public is traditionally skeptical of the impartiality of experts, politicians will

nonetheless follow the advice of experts if they are themselves unsure of the political risks of different courses of action. Or, seizing on the public suspicion of experts, politicians might use that skepticism as a reason to ignore the advice.

We find that in France, the government sought to balance expert advice with the President's electoral promise to promote economic growth. This balancing of competing commitments led to patterns of following the expert advice until signs of economic stress emerged. Then, when the relaxing of pandemic rules led to increases in COVID-19 infections, the government returned to follow expert advice. This pattern repeated several times.

In Uruguay, we find that while this country has a strong skepticism with respect to scientific advice, especially among the political right, a center-right government nonetheless created a special panel of public health experts to advise the government, then carefully followed the expert advice for several months until economic strain and public impatience led the government to reverse course.

Brian Due

Associate Professor, University of Copenhagen, Denmark

A Video Ethnographic Study of Youth Football Matches

How do young football players together with coaches, teammates, the layout of the field, and the emerging circumstances, distribute perception to make successful passes and runs? Interactive sports teams have been the focus of various scientific contributions focusing typically on team interdependence and the ability and skills to coordinate shared team efforts, often focusing on shared cognition (Cannon-Bowers & Bowers, 2006) or applying a wider ecological perspective (Araújo et al., 2006; McNeese et al., 2016). Video-based analysis of football matches is also commonly used, but mostly with a test setup and quantifiable measures to determine e.g. decision-making choices and skills (Farahani et al., 2020; Vaeyens et al., 2007). While many other studies have also focused on coordination and perception in fluid team sport (Steiner, 2018; Steiner et al., 2017), I aim in this presentation to contribute with insights from an ethnomethodological approach to real-world video recordings of youths playing football matches.

While ethnomethodologically informed ethnographies of sport typically have studied the role of coaching (Corsby et al., 2024; Corsby & Jones, 2020), demonstrations (Evans & Reynolds, 2016) or embodied instructions (Evans & Lindwall, 2020), I focus in this presentation on the role of distributed perception for the accomplishment of making runs and passings in live, naturally occurring matches. Whereas prior EMCA studies of perception have shown how perception is tied to action (Goodwin & Smith, 2020; Nishizaka, 2000; Smith, 2020) and may be distributed not only to other people but also to technologies (Due, 2021), this presentation contributes with new understandings of perception as inherently a property of an assemblage and an activity, rather than any particular agent (Due, 2023).

Data are from ethnographic studies of a Danish team in northern Zealand, Denmark, where an automated VEO camera recorded whole matches with an AI available that tracks the ball. In some matches, I served as the coach while in other matches I did not. In all instances the ethnographies are based on my immersion in this particular culture for seven years, thereby enabling “vulgar competence” (Garfinkel & Wieder, 1992) in these settings. For this presentation, I will show 2 to 3 excerpts and transcriptions from these matches focusing on how players are making successful passes without clear visual access, and

hence observably rely on distributed perception for their passing decisions.

Sriparna Dutta

Associate Professor, Khudiram Bose Central College, University of
Calcutta, India

&

Shilpa Nandy

Assistant Professor, Khudiram Bose Central College, University of
Calcutta, India

Patriarchy, Taliban and Political Issues: Challenges Faced by the Afghan Women in Contemporary Times

Afghanistan, even in the 21st century happens to be one of the poorest countries in the world. Torn by civil strife, harsh climatic conditions and poor adaptability to change this country has suffered years of poverty, discrimination against women and weak economic growth. The period of Taliban regime saw rampant destruction in almost all spheres of life. However, when a new dawn was ushered with the end of the Taliban rule in November 2001 the country is, with the help of foreign communities, trying to restructure itself and has prioritized its agenda of development. The elected democratic government is making best efforts to secure socio-economic progress and is also keen to make education the foundation of a progressive society. In spite of all efforts Afghanistan faces severe challenges that encompass all sectors of the country. Lives of people, especially in rural areas happens to be very tough. In such a situation the women in Afghanistan stand in double jeopardy – first they face hardships that are common to men and women; second these women are further in distress due to their gender. Gender bias plays a crucial role in Afghanistan and women face relentless marginalization. At times the discrimination is just an effect to a cause. Whatever be the reason the condition of women, in spite of some amends since the framing of the constitution, is quite deplorable. The paper aims to look at the fundamental issues that pose a barrier to the progress of women in Afghanistan. When it is the question of women in Afghanistan, the form of entrenched patriarchy, gender discrimination, brutal violence and violations of all democratic rights including their right to livelihood, right to education, right to participation in politics are some of the major issues where these women are deprived. This paper therefore aims to focus on the major issues which are becoming barriers in the progress of the women in Afghanistan in Post Taliban regime and will also discuss on how women are fighting for their rights in sustaining their livelihood in such structured patriarchal, talibani

regime and how political pressures are also impacting their overall development.

Valery Buinwi Ferim

Senior Lecturer, University of Fort Hare, South Africa

**The Politics of Exclusion in South Africa:
A Dilemma for Permanent Immigrants**

In spite of the fact that South Africa prides itself as a rainbow nation, the politics of exclusion remains endemic in the country. The paper examines how permanent immigrants in South Africa have been excluded from fully participating in the country's socio-political economy by being denied citizenship by birth for their children, politically scapegoated, institutionally discriminated and culturally side-lined. It argues that the South African government lacks both the capacity and the will to integrate permanent immigrants into the country. The exclusion of permanent immigrants debunks the official position that the country belongs to all who live in it. The paper recommends that the South African government should address inequality, unemployment and crime in the country in order to curb the negative stereotypes that some locals have towards immigrants. Awareness campaigns using a bottom-up approach should be held to educate citizens on the rights of permanent immigrants so as to foster integration and social cohesion. Efficiency in the processing of visas is imperative to counter institutional discrimination in the labour market.

Egle Kumpikaite

Associate Professor, Kaunas University of Technology, Lithuania

Variety and Traditions of Lithuanian Women's Folk Headdresses

The marital status of women in Lithuania can be predicted only according to their headdresses. Married women covered their head very carefully - going out of home without headdress was very reprehensible. However, the girls could go without headdress or their headdress was open.

The aim of the presentation is to highlight the variety of women's headdresses and analyze possibility to predict Lithuanian women marital status according to their headdress.

There are 5 ethnographic regions in Lithuania: Aukštaitija (North-Eastern part of Lithuania), Žemaitija (Western part of Lithuania), Suvalkija (South-Western part of Lithuania), Dzūkija (South-Eastern part of Lithuania) and Lithuania Minor (seaside of Lithuania).

Usually, girls' headdresses were more various. Some of them were similar in all ethnographic regions (crowns, gallons, etc.), but the others were characteristic to only one region, for example, *kalpokas* - to Aukštaitija, *rangė* - to Žemaitija, *karolinė* - to Suvalkija, *kykas* - to Lithuania Minor.

Married women wore different caps (sewn from cotton, linen or silk woven fabrics of one color or multi-colored printed, braided or crocheted) or kerchiefs (the most often white, embroidered with white cotton threads, checkered red and white or bought printed). However, a wimple was worn only in Aukštaitija ethnographic region, where this kind of headdress was worn even up to the middle of the 20th century. Also, women of Lithuania Minor had a huge variety of very specific headdresses which were characteristic only for this region. According to headdress of married woman, it could be established not only her marital status, but also, whether she give birth to a boy, is her son the first in her family, etc.

Kerchiefs were worn not only by married women, but also by girls. This kind of headdress was especially liked in Žemaitija ethnographic region. Kerchiefs were tied in very various ways in this Lithuanian region.

Sometimes, the front of kerchief was decorated with special ornate sash, which was called forehead sash or *antkaktis*. It was tied only in the front part of kerchief over the forehead. It could be the separate sash or

sewn on the bent kerchief. It was decorated with laces, ribbons, beads, etc.

In summary, the marital status of Lithuanian women could be predicted according to their headdress. Usually, married women wore close headdresses and girls' headdresses were more open. Some headdresses were characteristic to all ethnographic regions of Lithuania, but the others were worn only in one certain region.

Ilona Leitner

PhD Student/Consultant, Mendel University in Brno, Czech Republic

Exploring the Impact of Demographics and Job Status on Technostress Dimensions in the Consulting Industry

This paper addresses the pervasive issue of technostress (TS) within the consulting environment, emphasizing its impact on employee well-being and workplace productivity. Rather than examining TS solely based on its traditional definition, this study explores its relationship with key demographic variables, including gender, age, work level, and family status.

The research places a particular emphasis on the older segments of the workforce, revealing critical insights into how employees over 35 navigate the challenges posed by increasing technostress. It underscores the need for organizational interventions that support the unique circumstances of the aging employee demographic, which is essential for retaining their valuable expertise and ensuring their well-being in a technology-driven work environment.

The primary goal of this research is to shed light on the links between technostress and demographic factors within the consulting industry. By identifying these relationships, the study aims to inform the development of targeted workplace-stress prevention strategies tailored to the specific needs of different employee groups. A quantitative questionnaire was employed to collect data from a sample of 702 consulting employees, including 417 men and 275 women, aged 18-65. Data analysis involved the use of ANOVA and stepwise regression models to examine the impact of demographic variables on various dimensions of technostress. The findings indicate that female participants and employees above the age of 35 experience significantly higher levels of Techno-Complexity compared to other demographic groups. However, family status did not exhibit a significant effect on Techno-Complexity. Additionally, senior-ranking employees reported experiencing more Techno-Overload and Techno-Invasion compared to their junior counterparts. These results underline the importance of implementing workplace-stress prevention solutions tailored to address the specific needs of employees based on gender, age, and seniority level. Such targeted interventions are crucial for attenuating the risk of burnout, reducing individual stress levels, enhancing workplace focus, and ultimately improving overall productivity within the consulting industry.

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&

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**COVID-19 and Uncertainty in Italy -
Exposure to High Mortality and Fertility:
The Case Study on the City of Bergamo**

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on various aspects of daily life, including reproductive behavior. Women's fertility dynamics have been particularly affected, with many facing uncertainties and disruptions to their plans for having a child(ren).

However, it is important to note that the impact of the pandemic on fertility is multifaceted and varies between and within countries. In the academic debate, these variations in fertility dynamics can be attributed to several factors, including differences in government policies, cultural attitudes toward childbearing, and economic conditions. However few studies consider the role played by the perception of uncertainty (e.g., Guetto et al., 2022; Gatta et al., 2022). The goal of this paper is to fill this gap in the literature by studying the association between COVID-19, lockdowns, and exposure to death (two of the main sources of uncertainty) on the birth outcomes in Bergamo. We considered this city because it was one of the most impacted by the virus in the Western world. We used data from the national statistical agency to evaluate the relationship between the different components and birth outcomes, comparing the number of monthly births in the year before the pandemic and the second year of COVID-19. Preliminary results show that during the months of lockdown and high mortality, the number of conceptions decreases, and, conversely, during periods of re-opening and stabilization of deaths the number of conceptions increases. Our results seem to corroborate the argument that the perception of uncertainty has an important impact on the fertility dynamic, especially during a pandemic (and in general during catastrophic events).

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Assistance to Migrants and Refugees in Italy in an Age of Crisis: Policy Contradictions and Solidarity Practices

In recent years Italy has become a crossroads for many flows of international migration, including waves of migrants, refugees and asylum seekers from the Middle East, North Africa and Sub-Saharan Africa. This new status of Italy as a host country for international mobility flows has produced important consequences, both in domestic political debate and in immigration policy. In this context, what are the problems and prospects for the Italian system of assistance to migrants and refugees? Starting from an analysis of the recent evolution of Italian debates and State policies towards immigration, our paper aims to highlight the main features assumed by the response provided by public institutions and civil society organizations to recent waves of migration. Drawing mainly on in-depth interviews with managers and operators of migrant welfare services in the province of Salerno, we sought to highlight the emerging contradictions between the scarcity of resources made available by the State, the widespread securitarian impulses in parts of Italian society and politics, and the need to ensure a dignified welcome for those fleeing violence or hunger.

Pietro Marzo

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International Democracy Promotion in an Era of Authoritarian Regression: The Case of German Political Foundations in North Africa

After decades of democratic expansion, democracy around the world is regressing. Freedom House's 2023 report indicated that the number of countries living democratic backsliding has exceeded those where democracy is improving. Against this background, it is interesting to study how international democracy promoters are tailoring their strategies to the new political scenario. The academic debate has largely focused on the impact of international democracy promotion in authoritarian contexts and in countries living democratization processes, but less attention has been devoted to the agency of democracy promoters working in countries where authoritarian regression occurs.

What practices do international democracy promoters employ to keep impacting national politics in countries during the processes of democratic backsliding? To answer this question, this paper focuses on the activities of the German Political Foundations (one of the most effective democracy promoters worldwide) in three countries across in North African - Tunisia, Egypt, and Libya - which, after the fall of the dictators in 2011 and the beginning of a democratic transition, have experienced a return to authoritarianism. Relying on documentary analysis and semi-structured interviews with key informants this paper suggests that the German Foundations have adopted a "strategic posture" that allows them to remain active on the ground and to empower national partners without upsetting the regimes.

This research contributes to advance the academic knowledge on international democracy promotion. It conceptualizes the action and the impact of German political foundations, a democracy promoter possessing a status with unique characteristics, combining components of state actors, International NGOs and think tanks. In addition, the research findings will provide useful analytical elements to policy-makers working in national governments, international organizations and International NGOs to rethink their democracy promotion strategies, particularly in authoritarian contexts.

Julia Meszaros

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Intimate Industries and the Extraction of Women's Labor

Access to women's labor is an important component of determining hierarchies of heteromascularity. This paper examines the role of gender and race in the historical development of mail-order matchmaking within the United States. The history of mail-order marriages in the U.S. provides an important lens into how men extract women's labor in order to raise their value within the hierarchy of heteromascularity. The mail-order matchmaking industry is premised upon the extraction of women's labor in new locations and intimate frontiers, as women's aesthetic, sexual, intimate, and reproductive labors are largely invisible to society as recognized 'work'. The international dating industry, beyond profiting off the lure of a potentially 'hot' wife and increasing a heterosexual man's position within the hierarchy of men, is dependent upon extracting women's intimate, aesthetic, and emotional labor throughout the entire industry. Most of the local translators, office employees, managers, and local matchmakers on the ground in the Philippines, Colombia, and Ukraine are women. Many women who work within the industry as translators and managers also sign up on the websites as profiles in search of relationships and marriage, blurring the lines of various forms of labor they provide. Most of the small boutique matchmaking agency owners are in fact women, with the larger tour companies owned by men in the U.S. affiliating with local matchmakers to recruit women on the ground. Thus, this chapter examines the role of women's labor in the development of the matchmaking industry from the early colonies of Jamestown to the current online 'mail order bride' industry, examining the various forms of free and commodified labors that women provide to make the industry a multi-billion dollar business.

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Traditions of Manufacturing Techniques of Lithuanian Folk Aprons

The apron was the necessary clothing of both girls and married women in Lithuania in the 19th century – the beginning of the 20th century. Going out of home without apron was very indecent.

Everyday aprons were usually from home-spun linen fabrics, motley or of one darker color, without decor. They were similar in all ethnographic regions of Lithuania. However, the holiday aprons were very various in different Lithuanian districts.

Five ethnographic regions are in Lithuania: Aukštaitija (North-Eastern region), Žemaitija (Western region), Suvalkija (South-Western region), Dzūkija (South-Eastern region) and Lithuania Minor (coast of Baltic Sea).

People from Aukštaitija liked white linen aprons with red or red and blue interwoven strip in the bottom of the apron for décor. Red threads usually were from bought cotton of high quality and blue threads were from linen. These decorative strips were often woven in damask, overshoot or pick-up weaving techniques.

The vertically striped aprons were liked in Žemaitija. Aprons with white and red vertical strips were mostly used in this ethnographic region. The red strips often were woven in rib, overshoot or pick-up techniques, while the white strips often were of plain weave. The multi-colored vertically striped aprons were also liked in Žemaitija.

However, the most decorative and nicest aprons were in Suvalkija region. They were woven in overlaid weaving technique, where very compound and colorful patterns were overlaid in dark linen or cotton background. The most popular overlaid patterns were compound compositions of large and small lilies and tulips. A lot of different colors and often transitional colors were used for the pattern. Also vertically striped aprons with overshoot strips were used in this ethnographic region.

Dzūkija had very various aprons, but the motley aprons with small checks were mostly liked. They usually were of darker colors. Beetroot, purple and green colors were used the most often. Also, white aprons with embroidered in openwork stitch were worn during holidays. In the beginning of the 20th century, the embroidered aprons became very popular in Dzūkija. Usually, multi-colored stylized flower motives were embroidered in dark woolen, linen or cotton background.

The aprons of Lithuania Minor region were similar to Žemaitija's aprons, i.e., they were the most often linen or cotton, vertically striped, with red and white overshoot or pick-up strips. Only pattern of pick-up strips was usually more compound than that of Žemaitija. Sometimes, such kind of aprons had a strip of horizontal pattern of the same colors in the bottom.

In summary, it can be stated that holiday aprons are manufactured in different techniques and colors in different ethnographic regions of Lithuania. They were white with red and blue décor, vertically striped red and white or multi-colored, overlaid, finely checkered or embroidered. However, apron was mandatory women's clothing in Lithuania in the 19th century – the beginning of the 20th century.

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Patterns and Age-Homogamy in Same-Sex and Different-Sex Marriages in Spain

Despite that same-sex marriages have been legalized for some years in many countries, in Spain since 2005, there is a dearth of empirical studies comparing the characteristics of partners in same-sex versus opposite-sex marriages. This is in contrast with literature on the determinants of age-homogamy, initiated by Kalmijn (1998) and a more recent literature based on matching processes (Ciscato et al, 2020). They point to the possible roles of preference, search costs and partner availability. An essential problem in comparing age-homogamy in same-sex partners is that partners are non-distinguishable (Kroeger and Powers, 2019) so the usual procedure of modeling the male-female age-gap is not feasible. In this presentation new non-parametric and parametric alternatives are proposed to characterize the age-gap in all types of union based on the absolute age-gap and appropriate distribution regression for this measure based on the folded-normal distribution. They are applied to the estimation of age-differences in Spain by type of union and nationality of the partners over time.

First, the basic empirical problem is presented and the modeling strategy presented for a particular year together with the keys on how to interpret the regression models. Then, patterns of change are analyzed for the available period.

The results confirm that there are important differences in the age-gap in same-sex and different-sex marriages. In particular, while female-female marriages are relatively comparable to opposite-sex marriages, male-male marriages show a much larger age-discrepancy. There are also larger age-discrepancies in unions when the two partners have a different country of birth, and when at least one of them was born abroad.

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On the Intentionality of the State

The IR studies deal with entities and their interaction that are not part of the objective reality. Still these are not less real either, as they are integrated to causality that is lived, perceived and expected. As such they constitute the living/lived/anticipated reality together with and expanding the simple objectivity. Individuals and collectivities recognise no differently than objectivities, in a double faceted relationship with them: The first is genetic, as they constitute them, they “make” them as parts of the reality. The second is existential, in the sense that these constituted, “made” entities’ being parts of the reality completes the reality of the world as it is lived within. However, the IR theorising, including the post-structuralist approach despite its criticism, privileges, in different manners, the genetic aspect of the said relationship over the existential one. Furthermore, it does so on axiomatic grounds that are largely imported from social sciences, which follow a genetic approach with valid reasons stemming from the *different* nature of their matters. Whereas social sciences’ actors are true individuals and groups that are accessible within the simple objectivity, therefore the genetic theorising and ensuing narratives are anchored to objectivity and be assessed against it, the IR field’s actors as well as its phenomena and events are not. They present a purely intersubjective character. There, genetic theorising and narrating, in particular on grounds that are imported from a different environment, create serious ontological and temporal complications, often contradicting with or altering the existential aspect of the “relationship”. Here, the theoretical constructs and genetic narratives are imposed upon pre-theoretically, intersubjectively, post-genetically, immediately and singularly given phenomena and events, which the IR theorising mostly neglects.

The IR actor’s pre-reflective/ pre-theoretical, immediate, “lived” intersubjective givenness is of a subject. It is referred-to as such and this reference is altered only after a genetic narrative that is based on a theoretical ground which is itself imported from the field of social sciences. The nature of the living, immediate, existential facet of the relationship between the true subjects and their collectivities to the IR actor is that of a subject with another subject. When faced to IR

phenomena and events, this facet of relationship takes precedence and the genetic narratives impose themselves only *a posteriori*.

This presentation and the related paper shall debate the nature of the “referential subject” of the IR field as its immediacy of givenness is *inherent* to the immediacy of givenness of IR phenomena and events, making the latter possible as is, in its synthetic unity, before alterations brought by theoretical constructs and narratives. This equates to a debate on phenomenology’s notion of intentionality, together with the Heideggerian phenomenological ontology’s corresponding concept of being-toward, as fitting and adaptable to the study of the IR actor, phenomena and events as they are pre-theoretically, intersubjectively, immediately and authentically given.

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***Induku Enhle Igawulwa Ezizweni* as a Premise for
Curriculum Transformation**

The paper aims to illustrate the African way of producing knowledge as a foundation for curriculum transformation. This is an attempt to contribute to democratising knowledge production so that we achieve social justice. I use the isiZulu proverb, *Induku Enhle Igawulwa Azizweni* (a beautiful rod is found in faraway lands), to show a different conceptualisation of reality and knowledge by African people in general and AmaZulu in particular. This conceptualisation is used to show how curriculum transformation can be developed from an African perspective. I argue that this proverb showcases an African epistemology that is informed by the African worldview centred on co-existence. Bringing the African ways of knowing to the fore is critical in ensuring that the foundational values of the academy that aspired to democracy and liberty are realised. This changes the trajectory of knowledge production in the academy that is centred on Western epistemology. I conclude by arguing that taking knowledge production processes outside Western epistemology plays a pivotal role in curriculum transformation to such an extent that we transcend the Western canon and open it up for the canon of knowledges for the betterment of our society.

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Redefining Age and Gender in Digital Recruitment amidst Population Ageing: A Multifaceted Analysis of Stereotypes, Inequalities, and Perceptions in the Modern Workplace

This paper delves into the evolving landscape of recruitment practices in the era of digital transformation, with a particular focus on how age and gender biases are being reshaped amidst an ageing population. The advent of digital recruitment platforms promised a reduction in traditional biases by automating and anonymizing parts of the hiring process. However, the extent to which these technological advancements have mitigated age and gender prejudices remains a subject of debate. Through a detailed literature review, this study examines the potential of digital platforms to lessen the impact of such biases, drawing on existing research, including Lungu (2020), which posits that digital recruitment may indeed offer a pathway to more equitable hiring practices.

To empirically investigate these assertions, our experimental research engaged 608 HR managers in the evaluation of resumes from four fictitious candidates, representing both genders and two distinct age groups (32 and 56 years old). This methodology was designed to uncover latent biases and examine how digital recruitment tools influence the perception of candidates' competencies, particularly in relation to age and digital skills.

The findings reveal a multifaceted evaluation process where ageism, gender inequality, and stereotypes significantly sway the assessment of candidates. Despite the anonymized and digitized context, older candidates, especially women, faced stereotype threats that impacted perceptions of their digital capabilities. This suggests that while digital recruitment strategies may offer a veneer of objectivity, underlying biases persist, affecting the fairness of the recruitment process.

Moreover, the study highlights the interaction between candidate characteristics and evaluator biases, illustrating how subjective perceptions and stereotypes can undermine the objectivity promised by digital platforms. The complexity of these interactions suggests that merely adopting digital tools is insufficient to eradicate deep-seated biases.

In conclusion, the paper argues that while digitalization in recruitment holds the potential to reduce some forms of bias, significant challenges remain in fully addressing ageism, gender inequality, and stereotypes in the workplace. The persistence of these issues calls for targeted interventions and a deeper understanding of how digital tools can be effectively leveraged to promote a more inclusive and equitable recruitment landscape. The research underscores the need for ongoing investigation into the nuances of digital recruitment practices and the development of comprehensive strategies to combat workplace inequalities and prejudices.

Sonia Salari

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US Violent Death Mortality: Global Pandemic and Firearm Access

The 2020 pandemic led to disease related mortality increases internationally. The United States has the highest rate of firearm violent cause mortality in the developed world. Homicide, suicide and the combination of the two have had an impact on individuals and families. The pandemic made the problem worse, for a variety of reasons. We use a number of sources of data to report these trends, including Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) homicide, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) suicide and our intimate partner homicide-suicide IPHS data. Pre-pandemic years for comparison purposes are 2018 and 2019. The COVID-19 years of 2020, 2021 and 2022 were examined. FBI NICs Data for the years before and during the pandemic shows dramatic upswings in the requested background checks for firearm acquisitions, and there were additional deaths during that time as well. The first year of the pandemic 2020 was termed the year of the 'murder surge' and domestic violence increased by 8 percent. Lockdowns were accompanied by confusion about services available, and isolated some vulnerable families in homes with an abuser. In 2021, 45,000 Americans were killed by gunfire. There have also been increases in fatalities which include murder and the suicide of the perpetrator. In the most severe cases, familicides result in multiple family members affected by the lethal violence. Mass shootings with 4 or more victims are typically thought to be random, with strangers targeted in public places. However, the majority of these mass killings (68%), have a link to family violence. Victims may include relatives, and/or there had been cases of domestic violence, with the offender known to police. Despite the high rates of violent cause mortality, US policies have largely remained the same since 2018, with the exception of newly enacted federal funding for Centers for Disease Control & Prevention firearm research, reversing the 1996 Dickey Amendment 20-year ban. There has not been a ban on military style assault weapons in the hands of civilians, since the 1994 legislation was permitted to expire. Adding a public health emergency plus more guns in the hands of the public, to uniquely high violent cause mortality rate, resulted in increased lethality in the USA. This was particularly acute in the area of domestic violence. Implications are discussed, with an eye toward prevention.

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The Behavior of Fertility in Colombia in the Context of the COVID-19 Pandemic: An Approach Based on Uncertainty

Context: recent research in Latin America on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on fertility (Castro et al, 2022) is inconclusive. It differed according to country, and to pre-existing socio-economic differences between social groups. Despite these initial findings, we still need to understand the mechanisms behind fertility behaviour at different stages of the pandemic: early, confinement, opening and post-pandemic. Thanks to the recent availability of information sources, it is possible to approach the study of the uncertainty generated by COVID-19 in the behaviour of births.

Aim: describe and understand the effect of COVID-19 uncertainty on fertility in Colombia, in different periods of the pandemic: early, confinement, opening and post-pandemic times.

Sources:

- Great Integrated Household Survey (*Gran Encuesta Integrada de Hogares*) of quarters of the years 2020 and 2021 and 2022. This survey includes a module on fertility that records births month by month, which have national and local representativeness of the 13 main metropolitan areas of the country. It is an official source lead by the Statistical Office of the Country (DANE, for its acronym in Spanish)
- The birth registers of the Vital Statistics (BVS) generated by the DANE, corresponding to the official birth count of the country. Despite the coverage constrains of this source for particular areas (rural for instance), their quality for urban areas is acceptable, especially for the main 13 metropolitan areas of the country.
- Mass media and social media data: information from registers of national newspapers collected by Media Observatories of Colombian universities/institutions.

We propose two states for the analysis:

- State 1: joined analysis of the GEIH and BVS, in order to link the periods of uncertainty with its fertility outcome at different pandemic times.
 - Pre-pandemic: First quarter of the 2020. Linking births reported by GEIH and BVS from October to December 2020.
 - Confinement: from April to September 2020, (it could be split up into 2 types of confinement: the hardest one (April-June) and the flexible one (July to September). Linking births reported by GEIH and BVS from January to March 2021
 - Opening confinement: October -December 2020. Linking births from July to September 2021.
 - Post-pandemic: October-December 2021. Linking births from July to September 2022.

- State 2: create uncertainty measures using digital demography techniques, based on news, Facebook and Twitter publications, by the same periods of above classification.

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&

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Climate Change and Gender-Based Violence from a Demographic Point of View

NASA defines climate change as earth change or the change in the usual weather condition of an environment which can be in form of a decrease in rain or an increase in temperature [1]. Some of these effects are already happening such as the 2018 drought, storms and heatwaves in Germany, Madagascar common flood, cyclones and drought occurrences [2], South Africa flood in KwaZulu-Natal province in 2022 [3]etc. WHO defines GBV as the deliberate use of force, power and threats against a person or group of people which usually results in physical, economic, psychological, sexual or emotional harm [4].

Climate change may be a major aggravator of violence against women as women that are affected by the disasters caused by climate change are found to be at high risk of being victims of GBV [5]. Economic disruptions caused by disasters can also increase the risk of GBV in families. Climate change impacts are already affecting food security, economy, lifestyle, public health and environmental management and can lead to a surge of gender-based violence if not well managed [2]. The objective of this study is to investigate the impacts of climate change on sexual, physical, economic and psychological violence against women.

Research Questions

- What are the expected impacts of climate changes on sexual, economic, physical or emotional violence?
- What are the supports that can be preplanned to prevent the surge in GBV during disasters caused by climate change?

Methods

Document review is a process of gathering all empirical evidence that is sufficient in answering a research question. A document review information source includes all published articles, books, deliberations and information on a particular topic to conclude. A document review

will be conducted to gather information on how the census has been conducted right after the past epidemic, pandemic and national crisis

Expected Results

This review will provide a global perspective on the expected impacts of climate change on gender-based violence which will help governments and other stakeholders in policy planning and decision-making to combat these issues.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this study will provide information on the expected impacts of climate change on gender-based violence that will help governments and policymakers to plan on how to combat these effects in future.

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**The Dragon in the Cradle of Democracy:
A Tale of the post-2006 Sino-Greek Relations**

This paper explores the political relationship between Greece and China, focusing on the key developments and challenges that have shaped their interactions over the past 17 years. The paper begins by examining the historical background of the relationship between China and Greece including the establishment of diplomatic ties in 1972 and the deepening of economic and cultural exchanges after 2006. The paper then analyzes the key events that have shaped the Sino-Greek relations since 2006, including Greece's participation in China's Belt and Road Initiative, the acquisition of the Piraeus port by COSCO, and the COVID-19 pandemic. The paper's main focus is on the concerns of the European Union about China's expanding influence in Europe and Greece's role in EU-China relations. In particular, the paper examines the extent to which Greece, because of the increasing intensity of the economic ties with China, blocked or mitigated EU resolutions and statements towards China. The paper's main hypothesis is that the closer the Sino-Greece economic relations, the stronger Greece's determination to block EU resolutions or statements against China. To test the hypothesis, the paper examines in chronological and parallel order the intensity of Sino-Greek relations and the determination of Greece to block anti-China statements at the EU level.

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Romani Resilience: Stories of Resilience of Romani Refugees from Ukraine

In the aftermath of the Russian invasion of Ukraine on the 24th of February 2022, Poland has seen a rise in the number of refugees coming from the war-torn regions of Ukraine. Since the beginning of the war, Poland has received approximately 1.5 million refugees from Ukraine. Out of these, circa 80 thousand were of Romani ethnicity. Despite the efforts of the international community, Romani activists and Romani organizations, Romani refugees from Ukraine faced additional challenges upon arriving and settling into their long-term displacement in Poland. They have mainly faced discrimination across housing providers, leaving them with little options for safe and comfortable long-term housing. Additionally, their ethnic identity and its cultural aspects have been pushed aside during their displacement. Romani people are an ethnic minority experiencing major discrimination across many aspects of society, which is why it is more important than ever to present their stories of resilience.

The aim of this paper is to present stories of the resilience of Romani refugees, mothers, fathers, families, and elderly. This is to showcase how Romani people have dealt with displacement, coped with refugee life, and planned for their future in a completely new environment. Some of these people have never left their home village and found themselves in a foreign country, not knowing the language or how to traverse through the unknowns of displacement. This paper shows the findings of a multi-sited ethnographic research conducted for the doctoral research project '*Resilience, Community, and Displacement: A Study of Roma Refugees from Ukraine in Poland.*' This research is led by Prof Dr Hariz Halilovich and associate supervisors Dr Tuba Boz and Dr Nerkez Opacin at RMIT University. The author, Sylvia is a Romani woman as well and spent multiple months living with and around Romani refugees, participating in aid and volunteering. This research uses ethnographic methods with elements of participatory action research (PAR), observations and semi-structured interviews. The interviews provided a platform for refugees to tell their stories. The observations and PAR equipped the author with hands-on experience for understanding Romani displacement in Poland.

Tony Whiffen

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Estimating Households Containing those most at Risk from COVID-19 Using Linked Administrative Data and SQL Algorithms

Shielding was introduced as part of the UK government's response to the SARS-CoV-2 pandemic to protect Clinically Extremely Vulnerable (CEV) people from infection and serious illness. In the early stages of the pandemic various research questions emerged in relation to the characteristics of those shielding which could be addressed by utilising available health and administrative data. In Wales one of these research questions related to household structure and whether shielding persons were living with other shielding persons or non-shielding co-residents.

To address this question the Shielded Patient List (SPL) was linked with a Wales-level population spine created in response to the pandemic, which was then used to identify other people living at the same residence at the start of 2020. From the combined data it was possible to determine whether people who shared the same address were also shielding or co-resident with those who were asked to do so. By using moving-in dates and dates of birth it was possible to identify adults and children and determine household composition for the shielding subpopulation. Estimates of households and household populations were derived as at July 2020, which was one month before the shielding guidance was relaxed. Results were extracted broken down by local authority and household type.

Algorithms were also applied for the shielding group to determine other household characteristics, such as whether private outdoor space was available, using education and cartographic datasets. All work was carried out on the UK Secure Electronic Research Platform (UKSERP) – a virtual research environment created for the purposes of population-level health and demographic analyses, with some utilising anonymised datasets contained in the Secure Anonymised Information Linkage (SAIL) databank.

Results from the various strands of research related to shielding in Wales will be presented featuring household composition followed by other characteristics. The analyses will demonstrate how population-level data resources were leveraged quickly to answer newly-emerging policy questions as part of the UK response to the SARS-CoV-2 pandemic.

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Demographic Transitions in Mediterranean Africa: Similarities or Differences?

Mediterranean African countries have common ethnic, religious, historical, economic, and political characteristics that make them a group of countries unique and in its own right. As regards demographic characteristics, and particularly their transitions, they have so far been studied in a limited and disunited way. The aim of this article is to analyse the main characteristics of transitions - path, timing, and pace - in the five countries of this region (i.e., Algeria, Egypt, Libya, Morocco, and Tunisia) to verify if they are, and to what extent, homogeneous.

We introduce the Fertility Path Index (FPI) and the Life Expectancy Path Index (LEPI), which measure respectively the share of fertility and mortality transition undertaken up to a given calendar year, and we consider the peculiarities of the pre-transitional regimes. First, dissimilarities are measured; then in-depth comparisons of paths are conducted in terms of pace and regularity, stalls, and trend reversals. Data are drawn from the UN World Population Prospect, 2022 Revision; the period of analysis is 1950 to 2021.

Many common characteristics result, proving that the unfolding of the demographic transition has been similar in Mediterranean African countries. However, closer similarities appear between pairs or among trio of countries, differently for fertility and mortality.

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