

Workshop: **Contraceptive Transition Theories: A Review of Theories and Evidence**

Funchal, Madeira, Portugal, 13-15 July 2022

IUSSP Scientific Panel on Contraceptive Transition Theories

As part of the 3-Panel Mini-Conference of the International Union for the Scientific Study of Population (IUSSP).

Report

The Panel on Contraceptive Transitions Theories is in the midst of a three-year effort to consolidate and evaluate existing theory and evidence about the nature and causes of contraceptive transitions in Low- and Middle-Income Countries. The dramatic increase in contraception, especially use of modern methods, is one of the more striking features of the demography of these countries during the past six decades. How to explain this increase – and, further, identifying policies and programs that might accelerate this process – is an enormous scientific challenge. Scholars have been addressing this question from the 1960s to the present. The goal of this panel is to assemble a collection of papers that summarizes theory about contraceptive transition as developed in a variety of disciplines and attuned to a diverse set of demographic and societal settings.

To this end, the panel has designed a collection of nine essays and invited scholars to author each of the essays. As of July 2022, drafts were generated for seven of the essays, a detailed outline was available for one essay, and one essay is in an early stage of development. Including co-authors, across the nine essays there are nineteen authors in total. Their institutional home-bases are distributed across all major regions: Latin America (1), Asia (2), Sub-Saharan Africa (5), North America (9), Europe (2).

Apart from the essay at an early stage of development, the other seven essays were presented and critiqued over three days at the Madeira mini-conference. Fifty minutes was devoted to each essay: a presentation by the author(s), followed by comments by a designated discussant, and finally open discussion. Three of the authors participated remotely. The paper-by-paper sessions were consistently lively, aided by contributions from participants in the mini-conference who were not formally attached to the work of this panel (e.g. participants in the Seminar on Unintended Pregnancy, members of the IUSSP Council). All papers received constructive feedback that is likely to lead to substantial revision of the draft essays.

For the collection of papers that the panel is assembling, the panel plans on writing a “synthesis essay” that draws on the nine essays to construct a conceptual framework for contraceptive transition. On the final day of the mini-conference, the panel met to discuss the process for writing this synthesis essay. This was essential discussion that was facilitated by the opportunity for in-person discussion afforded by the mini-conference.