

Seminar on Unintended Pregnancy and Key Outcomes—Abortion and Unplanned Births: Improvements in Measurement and New Evidence

Funchal, Madeira, Portugal, 12-15 July 2022

Organized by the IUSSP Scientific Panel on Abortion Research, as part of the 3-Panel Mini-Conference of the International Union for the Scientific Study of Population (IUSSP)

Report

The seminar had three broad themes. First, to have a focused discussion of innovative approaches to conceptualize and measure pregnancy intention status and unintended pregnancy. Second, to discuss current evidence on the consequences of unintended pregnancy and birth on infant and child outcomes and on factors that underlie unintended pregnancy and birth. And third, to discuss recent research on abortion, a key component of unintended pregnancy.

Eighteen papers were accepted for presentation at the seminar and all papers were made available three weeks in advance of the seminar. 14 papers were presented in person and four by video. The 18 presenters included demographers, sociologists, economists, epidemiologists, anthropologists, and health service researchers and represented all career stages. They came from all regions: Latin America (1), Asia (5), Sub-Saharan Africa (5), North America (5), Europe (2). In addition to the presenting authors, four specialists on the topic were invited and served as discussants. Four of the five panel members were able to participate (2 in person and 2 virtually) and the panel's IUSSP Council liaison participated in person. Logistical issues (travel and visa difficulties) and COVID-19 accounted for those who could not participate in person.

The papers included some that focused on advances in conceptualization and measurement of pregnancy intention and unintended pregnancy. Another group of papers addressed the consequences of unintended pregnancy and birth and provided insights into the range of consequences for infants and children. A third group of papers focused on issues related to abortion and provided new and confirmatory findings on several aspects of poor access to safe abortion. In addition, the discussion highlighted research gaps and the need for more translation of the evidence for non-technical users. Panel members met with seminar participants and then separately to discuss ideas for the panel's future activities.