



UNIVERSITY OF  
CAMBRIDGE

International Seminar on  
**Urban Health Transformations**

*Cambridge, UK, 11-12 July 2017*

*Seminar organized by the IUSSP Scientific Panel on Historical Demography  
&  
Cambridge University*

**CALL FOR PAPERS**

**Deadline for submissions: 30 September 2016**

Health in urban areas has played a major role in determining trajectories of demographic growth, economic success and individual and community well-being across time. However the relationship between health and urban space has not been constant over either time or place. Before the early twentieth century, towns and cities suffered a probably universal urban mortality penalty, and in some periods acted as 'demographic sinks', characterized by high death rates largely due to air and water-borne infections. The improvement of urban environments, together with the development of better preventive and curative medical services which tend to be based in cities, means that urban areas today have lower mortality than their surrounding areas. Although the decline of mortality in urban areas has been studied, there is little consensus about how urban spaces were transformed from unhealthy to healthy places. Such changes are unlikely to have happened at the same time or stage of industrial, economic or infrastructural development in every place, but it has not been established whether there are any key developments which are necessary or sufficient for such transformations to occur. Attempts have been made to link declines in mortality to the introduction of sanitation and water supply, but with mixed success. The roles of housing, street paving, air pollution, and animal keeping in fostering a hostile disease environment have been addressed less often. Municipal governance and institutions have been linked variously to poorer and to better health. How migration contributes to observed mortality rates is also poorly understood: migrants seeking work or a better life are often selected for better health, but may lack immunities to specific urban diseases. Chronic conditions such as tuberculosis may be linked to return or health-seeking migration, and such factors make it hard to disentangle the ways that migration, as other possible influences, might be linked to health outcomes.

We invite any paper which investigates the transformation of urban health or demographic regimes and we hope to gather a programme which will allow comparisons of a range of places which experienced urban growth of different speeds and characters, or with different disease environments. We welcome papers addressing a wide spectrum of historical eras from the earliest cities up to the present day, and from all continents. We invite contributions from a variety of aspects including: the demographic risks of mortality and ill-health for individuals, groups and places, and the development of institutions and infrastructure and the health environment. Studies focusing on particular components of mortality (e.g. by age or cause) are encouraged as well as those which investigate less easily measured aspects of health. We welcome those who can examine the spatial details of urban health using GIS, and those who aim to shed light on the role of migration.

## Online Submissions:

The IUSSP Panel on Historical Demography invites researchers to **submit online by 30 September 2016** a short 200-word abstract **AND** an extended abstract (2 to 4 pages, including tables) or a full unpublished paper for consideration. To submit an abstract please fill out the online submission form on the [IUSSP website](#).

Both short and detailed abstracts must be submitted in English. The working language of the meeting is English, and presentations and final papers must be in English.

The seminar will be limited to about 20 contributed papers. Submission should be made by the author who will attend the seminar. If the paper is co-authored, please include the names of your co-authors in your submission form (in the appropriate order).

- Applicants will be informed whether their paper is accepted by 1 November 2016.
- Participants must submit their complete paper by 31 May 2017.

In addition to dissemination through posting on the member-restricted portion of the IUSSP website, seminar organizers will explore possibilities for publishing the papers as an edited volume or a special issue of a journal. Papers submitted should be unpublished and, as for a journal or an edited book, authors, by submitting a paper, agree they will not propose it for publication to another editor until the committee makes a decision with regard to its possible publication.

Current funding for the seminar is very limited. All participants will need to cover their own travel costs. If available, funding would pay only for meals and accommodation, and would be restricted to IUSSP members in good standing with priority for participants from less wealthy nations. Funding would also be contingent upon submission of a complete paper of acceptable quality by the deadline for papers.

**For further information**, please contact Seminar Organizers: Alice Reid ([amr1001@cam.ac.uk](mailto:amr1001@cam.ac.uk)), Diego Ramiro ([diego.ramiro@cchs.csic.es](mailto:diego.ramiro@cchs.csic.es)), and Romola Davenport ([rjd23@cam.ac.uk](mailto:rjd23@cam.ac.uk)).

## IUSSP Scientific Panel on Historical Demography

*Chair:* Diego Ramiro Fariñas (Spanish National Research Council)

*Membership:* Martin Dribe (Lund University, Center for Economic Demography); Mamadou Fall (Cheikh Anta Diop University); Rokhaya Fall (Universite Cheikh Anta Diop de Dakar); Satomi Kurosu (Reitaku University); Lucia Pozzi (Università degli Studi Di Sassari); Alice Reid (University of Cambridge); Ana Silvia Scott (Universidade Estadual de Campinas (UNICAMP)); Hélène Vézina (Université du Québec à Chicoutimi).