



**Mortality in countries of the former USSR  
Fifteen years after break-up: change or continuity?  
INTERNATIONAL SEMINAR  
Ukraine, Kyiv, 12-14 October, 2006**

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*Call for papers*

**Mortality in countries of the former USSR  
Fifteen years after break-up: change or continuity?**

**International seminar**

In 1991, following the break-up of the USSR, most of the newly independent states replaced the former Communist regime with new political and economic systems based to a varying extent on free initiative and a market economy. Have these dramatic changes been accompanied by radically new or even diverging demographic trends among the different populations of the new states? The main purpose of this seminar is to examine this question in relation to mortality.

From the mid sixties, the USSR experienced a slow deterioration of its health situation which, despite appearances, was not fundamentally questioned by the very temporary effects of Gorbachev's anti-alcohol campaign. Are there any grounds for believing that, beyond this epiphenomenon, the political and economic changes of the early nineties might finally lead to a turnaround in trends that gives hope for health improvement? Is such an expectation more realistic for some of the former USSR countries than for others? And, if so, to what factors can supposed or observed differences be attributed?

The aim of this seminar, which will bring together researchers from countries of the former USSR and specialists from outside the area, will be to shed light on age-specific mortality and life expectancy trends by taking account of dynamics specific to the main causes of death and by assessing the role played by social inequalities, cultural differences and geographic heterogeneities. The extent to which large regions of the former USSR share specific patterns of change with countries in neighbouring regions with similar historical, geographical or cultural traits, will be also discussed. The overview of health trends in countries of the former USSR will also include comparisons with Central European countries that were also ruled by Communist regimes for several decades, and with western countries. Finally, possible future changes will be debated, specially mortality assumptions, in the light of recent observed trends.

## **Main themes**

### 1. Data collection

- Death registration and mortality estimates
- Collecting and coding causes of death, and quality assessment

### 2. Mortality trends

- Age-specific mortality profiles
- Infant and child mortality
- Adult mortality
- Old-age mortality

### 3. Medical causes of death

- General overviews. Age and cause-of-death components of life expectancy changes or differences
- Cardiovascular diseases
- Infectious diseases
- Cancers
- External causes
- New health threats
- Etc.

### 4. Differential mortality

- Sex
- Social categories
- Education
- Urban/rural
- Geography
- Ethnicity
- Central European experiences
- Etc.

### 5. Elements of explanation

- The role of risk factors (alcohol, tobacco, environment, etc.)
- Changes in health systems and health policies
- Social systems and the welfare state
- Biological and social aspects of Russian excess mortality
- Economic changes and mortality
- Culture and health
- Causes of adult excess mortality

### 6. Forecasting mortality

- What hypotheses can be used as a basis for forecasting mortality?
- Can modelling past trends help to make projections?
- To what extent do past forecasts fit with recent trends?
- Case studies

## **International Organizing Committee (IOC)**

Serhii Pyrozhev (IDSS, Kiev, president) and Natalia Foygt (IDSS, Kiev, organiser), Anatoli Vishnevsky (CDHE, Moscow), Vladimir Shkolnikov and Evgeni Andreev (MPIDR, Rostock), France Meslé and Jacques Vallin (INED, Paris)

## **Paper proposals**

Papers proposed for the seminar will try to focus on the comparison between different experiences, on long term historical trends, on the explanation of the observed facts. The core topic is the health situation in the countries of the former USSR, but enrichment by comparisons with experiences from Central European countries or Western countries are welcome.

A 1-2 page summary of proposed paper must be sent, in English or in Russian **before March 1, 2006** to Natalia Foygt ([n\\_foygt@mail.ru](mailto:n_foygt@mail.ru)). The summary must include clearly: the paper title, the full name(s) of each author, their affiliation (full name of organization and department), their professional position/title, and their e-mail address(es) (if not possible: fax number or postal address).

If selected by the IOC, full papers must be received by the organiser (same address) before September 1, 2006.

## **Place and date of the seminar**

The seminar will take place in Kiev, Ukraine, on October 12-14, 2006.

## **Working languages**

Written papers and oral presentations will be done in English or in Russian.

## **Financial support**

It will not be possible to support travel expenses for all participants. Priority will be given to participants from countries of the former USSR whose paper will have been selected. Financial support of other participants will depend on the success of fund raising efforts done by the IOC. The individual efforts of candidates in seeking for alternative sources of funding are highly encouraged.