

October 5, 2017

John D. Iceland  
Stephen A. Matthews  
Jennifer Van Hook  
Co- Editors,  
*Demography*

Dear Editorial Team,

We are pleased to submit our paper entitled **“Lifespan dispersion in times of life expectancy fluctuation: the case of Central and Eastern Europe”** for consideration as a research article in *Demography*.

In this manuscript, we analyze how lifespan variation has changed since the 1960 for 12 countries from Central and Eastern Europe. These countries experienced atypical periods of mortality upheaval and substantial life expectancy fluctuation. This region is particularly interesting because of the long-term failure to complete the epidemiologic transition by reducing cardiovascular diseases, along with short-term fluctuations in alcohol abuse and violence. In addition, its age pattern of mortality change was very different from that observed in western countries and the sharpest fluctuation in age-specific mortality occurred over working ages. The net effect of these patterns on lifespan variation is a priori unclear.

Our analyses revealed three important findings: (1) the acute mortality crises of the 1990s caused greater year-to-year fluctuation in lifespan variation than in life expectancy, (2) life expectancy and lifespan variation moved independently, particularly during periods of stagnation and uneven age-specific mortality change, and (3) mortality amenable to alcohol consumption occurred over ages that both increased and decreased lifespan variation, with different net effects depending on the country and time period.

We hope you will find our paper of interest to *Demography*’s readers and we hope you see our paper as fitting in *Demography*’s rich history of publishing serious explorations of lifespan variation, demographic analysis and international health. We look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

José Manuel Aburto  
Alyson van Raalte