DOCTORAL STUDIES COURSE UNIT DESCRIPTION

Name of subject	Field of science, code	Faculty / Center	Institute / Department
Demographic Change and Population Policy	Sociology (S 005)	Faculty of Philosophy	Institute of Sociology and Social Work

Student's workload	Credits	Student's workload	Credits
Lectures		Consultations	1
Independent study	6	Seminars	

Course annotation

The course focuses on contemporary demographic change, its theoretical explanations, empirical research, and population policy. The aim of the course is to develop the ability to critically analyse and evaluate theories of demographic change and scientific research, independently analyse demographic data, and assess the impact of population policy measures. Particular attention is paid to the determinants and consequences of demographic change, as well as to the evaluation of evidence-based population policy interventions.

Main Topics

1. Theories of Demographic Change and Contemporary Demographic Trends. The first and second demographic transition theories, their development, critical evaluation, and application to the analysis of contemporary demographic processes. Interrelationships between demographic processes, patterns of demographic change, and their social and economic determinants.
2. Fertility and Family Policy. Theories, trends, and determinants of fertility change. Reproductive behaviour, childlessness, changes in family formation, and social inequalities in fertility. Family policy models and measures and their effects on reproductive behaviour and fertility. Comparative evaluation of family policy effectiveness.
3. Mortality and Public Health. Theories of epidemiological and health transitions and their critical evaluation. Trends and social inequalities in mortality and life expectancy, and population mental health. Avoidable mortality, population health risk factors, and the impact of public health policies on mortality.
4. Migration and Migration Policy. Contemporary migration theories and their critical analysis. Social, economic, and political determinants of migration and migration decision-making. Changes in migration flows and migrant population composition, migration policy measures, and the evaluation of their effectiveness.
5. Population Structure, Population Ageing, and Demographic Projections. Changes in population age structures, determinants and consequences of population ageing. Demographic projections and scenarios, their methodological assumptions, and uncertainty. Challenges posed by demographic change for social and economic policies.
6. Demographic Research Methodology and Data Analysis. Sources of demographic data, demographic indicators, and quantitative methods of analysis. Opportunities and limitations of using population registers, censuses, sample surveys, and digital data. Methodological challenges of international comparative research, data quality, and interpretation of research findings.
7. Population Policy and Impact Evaluation. Concepts, objectives, and instruments of population policy. Interactions between demographic processes and public policy. Methods for evaluating the effectiveness of policy interventions, challenges of causal inference, and opportunities for evidence-based population policy.

Assessment

During the course, students independently review scientific literature and critically evaluate theories of demographic change and empirical research. The topic of the individual research paper is agreed upon during consultations with the course instructor and should preferably be related to the student's

doctoral dissertation. At the end of the course, a research paper is submitted. The paper must clearly define the selected demographic problem and research questions, critically review relevant scientific literature and theoretical approaches, and discuss the determinants and consequences of the demographic problem under investigation. The paper must include an independent analysis of empirical data, a justification of the selected research methods, an interpretation of the findings, and a critical evaluation of relevant population policy measures. The paper must conclude with a summary of the main research findings. The reading materials are selected individually according to research interests, the chosen research topic, and the doctoral dissertation. The reading list may be revised and supplemented during consultations.

Assessment consists of two components: a research paper (70% of the final grade) and its oral presentation and discussion (30%). Students are encouraged to present a paper based on their research at a doctoral seminar or a scientific conference. The required length of the research paper is 3,000–7,000 words, excluding references. Assessment criteria include the comprehensiveness of the theoretical and empirical literature review, methodological rigour, quality of empirical analysis, accuracy and completeness of the findings, ability to critically interpret results in the context of previous research and population policy, and ability to present and defend research findings clearly and coherently, including an acknowledgement of the study's limitations.

Reading list

1. Czaika, M., Bijak, J., & Prike, T. (2021). Migration decision-making and its key dimensions. The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, 697(1), 15–31. https://doi.org/10.1177/00027162211052233
2. Gauthier, A. H. (2007). The impact of family policies on fertility in industrialized countries: A review of the literature. Population Research and Policy Review, 26, 323–346. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11113-007-9033-x
3. Gauthier, A. H., & Gietel-Basten, S. (2025). Family policies in low fertility countries: Evidence and reflections. Population and Development Review, 51(1), 125–161. https://doi.org/10.1111/padr.12691
4. GBD 2019 Diseases and Injuries Collaborators. (2020). Global burden of 369 diseases and injuries in 204 countries and territories, 1990–2019: A systematic analysis for the Global Burden of Disease Study 2019. The Lancet, 396(10258), 1204–1222. https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(20)30925-9
5. Guetto, R., Alderotti, G., & Vignoli, D. (2025). Can family policies enhance fertility? An ex ante evaluation through factorial survey experiments. Demography, 62(1), 311–334. https://doi.org/10.1215/00703370-11775048
6. de Haas, H., Czaika, M., Flahaux, M.-L., Mahendra, E., Natter, K., Vezzoli, S., & Villares-Varela, M. (2019). International migration: Trends, determinants, and policy effects. Population and Development Review, 45(4), 885–922. https://doi.org/10.1111/padr.12291
7. Jasilionis, D., Shkolnikov, V. M., Andreev, E. M., Jdanov, D. A., Ambrozaitienė, D., Stankūnienė, V., Meslé, F., & Vallin, J. (2007). Sociocultural mortality differentials in Lithuania: Results obtained by matching vital records with the 2001 census data. Population, 62(4), 597–646. https://doi.org/10.3917/popu.704.0707
8. Jasilionis, D., Stankūnienė, V., Maslauskaitė, A., & Stumbrys, D. (2015). Lietuvos demografinių procesų diferenciacija. Lietuvos socialinių tyrimų centras. https://www.lstc.lt/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/demografiniu_procesu_diferenciacija_visas.pdf
9. Jdanov, D., & Jasilionis, D. (2024). Optimistic versus pessimistic scenarios for future life expectancy. Nature Aging, 4, 1524–1526. https://doi.org/10.1038/s43587-024-00722-z
10. Kirk, D. (1996). Demographic transition theory. Population Studies, 50(3), 361–387. https://doi.org/10.1080/0032472031000149536
11. Klüsener, S., Stankūnienė, V., Grigoriev, P., & Jasilionis, D. (2015). The mass emigration context of Lithuania: Patterns and policy options. International Migration, 53(5), 179–193. https://doi.org/10.1111/imig.12196
12. Luci-Greulich, A., & Thévenon, O. (2013). The impact of family policies on fertility trends in developed countries. European Journal of Population, 29(4), 387–416. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10680-013-9295-4
13. Mackenbach, J. P. (2021). The rise and fall of diseases: Reflections on the history of population health in Europe since ca. 1700. European Journal of Epidemiology, 36, 1199–1205. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10654-021-00719-7
14. Mackenbach, J. P. (2022). Omran's 'Epidemiologic Transition' 50 years on. International Journal of

Epidemiology, 51(4), 1054–1057. https://doi.org/10.1093/ije/dyac020
15. Maslauskaitė, A. (Sud.). (2023). Lietuvos gyventojų demografinių struktūrų ir procesų kaita. Lietuvos socialinių mokslų centro Sociologijos institutas. https://lstc.lt/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/Leidinys_175x245cm-skaitmena.pdf
16. Piché, V. (2013). Contemporary migration theories as reflected in their founding texts. Population, 68(1), 141–164. https://doi.org/10.3917/popu.1301.0153
17. Preston, S. H., Heuveline, P., & Guillot, M. (2001). Demography: Measuring and modeling population processes. Blackwell Publishers.
18. Rampazzo, F., Bijak, J., Vitali, A., Weber, I., & Zagheni, E. (2021). A framework for estimating migrant stocks using digital traces and survey data: An application in the United Kingdom. Demography, 58(6), 2193–2218. https://doi.org/10.1215/00703370-9578562
19. Room, R., Babor, T., & Rehm, J. (2005). Alcohol and public health. The Lancet, 365(9458), 519–530. https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(05)17870-2
20. Stumbrys, D., Telksnys, T., Jasilionis, D., Liutkutė Gumarov, V., Galkus, L., Goštautaitė Midttun, N., & Štelemėkas, M. (2020). Alcohol-related male mortality in the context of changing alcohol control policy in Lithuania 2000–2017. Drug and Alcohol Review, 39(7), 818–826. https://doi.org/10.1111/dar.13059
21. United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division. (2024). World population prospects 2024: Summary of results. United Nations. https://population.un.org/wpp/
22. Vollset, S. E., Goren, E., Yuan, C.-W., Cao, J., Smith, A. E., Hsiao, T., Bisignano, C., Azhar, G. S., Castro, E., Chalek, J., Dolgert, A. J., Frank, T., Fukutaki, K., Hay, S. I., Lozano, R., Mokdad, A. H., Nandakumar, V., Pierce, M., Pletcher, M., ... Murray, C. J. L. (2020). Fertility, mortality, migration, and population scenarios for 195 countries and territories from 2017 to 2100: A forecasting analysis for the Global Burden of Disease Study. The Lancet, 396(10258), 1285–1306. https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(20)30677-2
23. Zaidi, B., & Morgan, S. P. (2017). The second demographic transition theory: A review and appraisal. Annual Review of Sociology, 43, 473–492. https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-soc-060116-053442

The names of consulting teachers	Science degree	Main scientific works published in a scientific field in last 5 year period
Daumantas Stumbrys	Dr.	**Stumbrys**, D., & Pūras, D. (2026). Negotiating mental health in the Lithuanian parliament: Human rights, social control, and moral regulation. Health and Human Rights Journal. https://www.hhrjournal.org/2026/10/23/negotiating-mental-health-in-the-lithuanian-parliament-human-rights-social-control-and-moral-regulation/
		Tamutienė, I., & **Stumbrys**, D. (2026). Alcohol-related domestic violence in households with children: Analysis of protection order records in Lithuania. *International Journal of Alcohol and Drug Research*, *14*(2), 129-138. https://doi.org/10.7895/ijadr.657
		Stumbrys, D., Rapolienė, G., Gedvilaitė-Kordušienė, M., & Tretjakova, V. (2024). Bevaikystė ir požiūris į rūpinimąsi vyresnio amžiaus tėvais Lietuvoje. Socialinė teorija, empirija, politika ir praktika, 29, 72–88. https://doi.org/10.15388/STEPP.2024.29.5
		Černevičiūtė, S., Dobryninas, A., & **Stumbrys**, D. (2024). Intentional homicides and alcohol abuse in Lithuania. Journal of Contemporary Criminal Justice, 40(3), 467–492. https://doi.org/10.1177/10439862241251624
		Stumbrys, D., & Jasilionis, D. (2023). Mirtingumo kaita ir sociodemografinė diferenciacija. In A. Maslauskaitė (red.), Lietuvos gyventojų demografinių struktūrų ir procesų kaita (p. 277–288). Lietuvos socialinių mokslų centras. https://lstc.lt/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/Leidinys_175x245cm-skaitmena.pdf
		Stumbrys, D., Štelemėkas, M., Jasilionis, D., & Rehm, J. (2024). Weekly pattern of alcohol-attributable male mortality before and after imposing limits on hours of alcohol sale in Lithuania in 2018. Scandinavian Journal of Public Health, 52(6), 698–703. https://doi.org/10.1177/14034948231184288

		Stumbrys, D., Jasilionis, D., & Pūras, D. (2022). The burden of mental health-related mortality in the Baltic States in 2007–2018. BMC Public Health, 22, 1776. https://doi.org/10.1186/s12889-022-14175-9

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Committee Chairman prof. Zenonas Norkus