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Session Poster

Convergence / divergence in subnational mortality levels in selected Latin American countries 1970-2010

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this study is to analyze trends of Latin American mortality at the subnational level, in order to consider whether mortality tend to converge between the internal areas of the countries. Latin America and the Caribbean have experienced a sharp fall in mortality since the 1950s: life expectancy at birth increased by 22.5 years on average, but differences between the more and less advanced countries and vary from 8 years (Central America) to 15 years (South America). Haiti, Bolivia and Dominican Republic show the largest delays in the region. Infant mortality declined by 85% in the continent, but declines are small in the most backward countries (Haiti, Bolivia and Paraguay) and inequalities between countries are widening (ECLAC, 2013: 21,24, 2016: 196).

We ask whether the declining trend in mortality is accompanied by a decrease of differences within countries. Based on the mortality data collected in the "s-ALyC" project (demographic database of 1970-2010 from Latin American vital statistics offices), countries that present information for several decades are selected. Infant mortality rates of Chile, Mexico and Cuba are analyzed for the period 1970-2010; also life expectancies at birth of Argentina, Brazil and Mexico for the period 1980-2010. By calculating the convergence indicators (coefficient of variation, beta coefficient) it is observed that there are divergences between the levels of mortality in the countries with greater presence of the rural, indigenous population and poverty.