Healthy Ageing in the 21st Century: A Cross-Generational Life Course Perspective

A seminar by George Ploubidis

University College London

Thursday 29 May 2025 | 14:30-15:30

Room BENVENUTI

Department of Statistical Sciences

The twentieth century witnessed remarkable improvements in population health, including significant increases in life expectancy and survival into older age. In this talk, George will argue that understanding and addressing the challenges — and seizing the opportunities — of an ageing population requires robust evidence spanning the entire life course and multiple generations. Drawing on the UK's unique series of nationally representative birth cohort studies, which track individuals from birth through to later life, he will highlight key insights into the social, economic, and biological factors that shape health trajectories over time. He will demonstrate how data from these cohorts can inform strategies to promote healthy ageing in the 21st century. To ensure the robustness of such findings, George will also outline the Centre for Longitudinal Studies (CLS) Missing Data Strategy. Acknowledging that certain groups may be more likely to drop out of longitudinal studies over time, this strategy employs methods — including multiple imputation, inverse probability weighting, and full information maximum likelihood — to address both selective attrition and item non-response. A key element of the approach is the systematic identification and use of auxiliary variables — information related to both the likelihood of missingness and the outcomes of interest — to improve missing data estimation. He will present findings from the series of CLS papers that demonstrate how the rich information collected in the British birth cohorts can be used to restore sample representativeness, reduce bias, and enhance the validity of research conclusions.

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