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**Session:** Gender relevant mortality research

**Title:** Evolution of Sex Differentials in Mortality Among Israeli Jews

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This study explores patterns of sex differentials in mortality exhibited by the Jewish population in Israel in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century in relation to other countries in the world. The sex differentials among Israeli Jews have been significantly lower than in countries of Europe and North America. They are currently widening over time at a very slow pace, whereas in Europe and North America, the differentials have been narrowing since around 1980.

To study these patterns, multiple data sources are used. The main sources of information come from the Israeli Central Bureau of Statistics and the *Human Mortality Database* provided by the University of California at Berkeley in the United States and Max Planck Institute for Demographic Research in Rostock, Germany.

These data allow the relative positioning of Israeli Jews in the world context using cross-sectional and longitudinal analyses of age-specific sex differentials in mortality. The study attempts to establish whether or to what degree sex differentials among Israeli Jews has been exceptional and also identify major sex and age -specific features of Israeli Jewish mortality responsible for Israeli Jews' positioning. The paper ends with a discussion on different socio-cultural backgrounds among Israeli Jews to identify compositional factors.

It is found that, at least since the 1950s, Israeli Jews presented distinct pattern of age-specific sex differentials in mortality, indicative of distinct distribution of life-time risk factors. Additionally, findings are suggestive of the presence of cohort effects, among females in particular. There are signs of erosion of the pattern towards the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Both females and males are responsible for the distinct pattern of sex differentials: mortality of Israeli Jewish females is relatively high and mortality of Israeli Jewish males is relatively low in comparison to mortality of their Western counterparts. Great similarity in features of sex differentials is detected among Israeli Jews of different socio-cultural backgrounds.

