

**Abstract**

This study assesses long term evolution in mortality in East and West Germany before and after political transition. It examines mortality in the period from 1960 to 2005. Almost identical demographic composition and behaviour until 1945 were followed by 45 years of life under different political and socio-economic structures resulting in completely different demographic characteristics. With Reunification in 1990, the population in Eastern Germany returned again to the western social and economic system, that caused sudden changes in mortality development. Using the decomposition of life expectancy by sex, age and cause of death, standardized age of death due to different causes, standardized crude death rate or multiple statistical methods, we found some factors responsible for different rates of mortality between East and West Germany.