

Peer Review

Review of: "The Mediterranean Islands: Demographic Convergences and Divergences, 1995–2021"

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The article presents a comprehensive longitudinal analysis of demographic trends in Mediterranean insular populations and benefits from the use of robust datasets (EUROSTAT) and multiple statistical approaches; however, several weaknesses limit its scientific impact and clarity. First, the research question and novelty are not sufficiently emphasized, as similar comparative demographic studies already exist, and the manuscript should better highlight its unique contribution or theoretical advancement. Second, the methodology section, although detailed, lacks clear justification for selecting specific statistical techniques (e.g., hierarchical clustering and discriminant analysis) over alternative modern time-series or spatial models, and reproducibility would improve by providing clearer parameter settings and software details. Third, migration is excluded despite being a major demographic driver in island populations, which significantly weakens the interpretation of fertility, mortality, and population structure findings; incorporating proxy indicators or sensitivity analysis would strengthen conclusions. Fourth, the results section is excessively descriptive and figure-dependent with limited analytical synthesis, and should include clearer statistical significance reporting and concise interpretation linking findings to socioeconomic or policy implications. Finally, the discussion tends to generalize causes (e.g., lifestyle or environmental explanations) without empirical evidence, so integrating multidisciplinary literature and presenting testable hypotheses would improve scientific rigor and enhance the article's contribution to demographic research.

Declarations

Potential competing interests: No potential competing interests to declare.