Background
- Fertility in Britain has diverged between countries over time, with a growing gap in recent decades (Figure 1)
- Limited standardized administrative data on contraception and abortion
- No cross national studies of abortion and contraception to date

Research Questions
- What are the roles of abortion & contraception in cross national fertility differences?
- Are there differences in contraceptive use and abortion across England, Wales and Scotland?

Data and Methods
Abortion
- Administrative data collected by Department of Health in England and Wales and Public Health Scotland
Contraception
- National Survey of Sexual Attitudes and Lifestyles
- Collects data on different contraceptive methods
- Collects data on men and women
- Three waves - 1990, 2000, 2010
- Used multinomial logistic regression to model contraceptive use, with baseline category “not using any method”

Descriptive Results
- Abortion rate lower in Scotland
- Abortion does not account for lower fertility in Scotland

Figure 2
- Contraceptive prevalence rate very similar across countries

Figure 3
- Method mix differs by country
  - England highest barrier and traditional method use
  - Scotland highest use of female sterilization
  - Wales highest use of male sterilization
  - England has less effective method mix

Figure 5
- Similar country patterns across parities
  - Regardless of parity, female sterilization is most common in Scotland, barrier/traditional most common in England, male sterilization most common in Wales

Figure 6
- Model includes control variables shown, as well as control variables typically associated with contraceptive use- parity, sex, partnership status, highest educational level, religion and ethnicity
- Likelihood of female sterilization in Scotland 53 percent higher versus England
- Likelihood of using a barrier/traditional method is 25 percent lower in Scotland versus England.

Contribution
- First cross national study of abortion and contraception within Britain of past few decades
- Abortion does not explain lower fertility in Scotland
- Female sterilization is markedly more common in Scotland
- Barrier/traditional method more common in England
- Despite universal healthcare within the UK, contraceptive method use differs by geography

Future Questions
- Why does method use differ across countries?
- Do differences reflect preferences or prescribing patterns or both?