

“The Futures We Want: Global Sociology and the Struggles for a Better World” (3rd ISA Forum of Sociology)

Session title:

Linear and non-linear modelling with aggregate or regional data for policy analysis and evidence based counselling

Session organizers:

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Session abstract:

In order to “struggle for a “better world”, policy implications and evidence based counselling should refer to scientific results based on state of the art theorizing and analysis. If—as is often the case for this specific kind of research—aggregated/regional data serve as the empirical basis, several methodological and statistical challenges occur.

The most common problems pertain e.g. the identification and assessment of causal effects derived from aggregated/regional data, violations of conventional model assumptions, sample inherent problems or challenges of adequately modelling specific phenomena such as inequality.

Consequently, this session welcomes papers presenting problem identifications and solutions to such complexities arising from the nature of aggregate data in the context of policy analysis and evidence based counselling. Each paper should refer to specific methodological or statistical aspects and may answer questions like the following:

- How can causal effects at different levels of analysis (including the individual level) be simultaneously identified when aggregate data are applied?
- How can multi-level designed studies contribute to comparative analysis aiming at the formulation of policy recommendations?
- How do we deal with sample inherent problems of aggregate/regional data, e.g. (extremely) small sample sizes or different contextual conditions?
- How can we measure complex social phenomena by indices and apply index-based results in ways that improvements in policy analysis can be achieved?
- How can we accurately account for specific characteristics of global social key phenomena such as inequality, corruption or democracy.