



The 39th World
Congress of the
International Institute
of Sociology
Yerevan, Armenia

JUNE 11-14, 2009

www.iisoc.org/iis2009

REGULAR SESSION INFORMATION

Title of Session: The new urban miseries as obstacles to social cohesion and personal autonomy

Name of Session Convener(s): Carlo Donolo

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Comments: The proposed theme is transdisciplinary

Session Abstract (up to 250 words): By misery (as distinct from socioeconomic poverty as deprivation) we mean an human and social condition, experienced as deeply unsatisfying and as spring of suffering. Misery is a biographic accumulation of frustration, unhappiness, demoralization, finally incapacitation. That means a loss of autonomy, increasing dependency, subjugation by a bad destiny. The saliency of that blocking condition depends also by the fact that in our societies the pursuit of happiness is constitutive and constitutional guaranteed or promoted.

The social policies treat many socioeconomic aspects of poverty or structural deprivations (work, income, health, education...). Misery on the contrary poses a difficult test to the rationality of social policies. Its determinants are vague, multiple and difficult to seize. But misery is the core of the life of so many persons in urban areas, mainly in the peripheries or in degraded areas.

Misery is relevant for any active welfare state or more so for a welfare society, because it produces incapacitation, loss of autonomy, and of human skills.

Some hints concerning possible themes for the session:

1. Symptoms of malaise: behavior, signals, traces;
2. The quest for wellness and her aftermath;
3. How small and big miseries do converge and cumulate;
4. Antipolitical or

impolitical expressions and justifications for misery; 5. Care policies for malaise syndroms; 6. Individual deprivation or increasing capabilities; 7. Misery e common sense; 8. Functionings in lives when misery prevails; 9. Public rethorics about poverty and misery; 10. Integrated social policy facing misery; 11. How to evaluate states of misery.

General information

During each afternoon of the congress, there will be room for a large number of parallel regular sessions. Each session is 90 minutes long and consists of an oral presentation of 4 to 6 papers. Session conveners are expected to administer and chair their session at the 2009 IIS World Congress.

Starting in mid-December, calls for papers to participate in approved sessions will be posted on the website. Interested participants will contact the session convener (you) directly with an abstract no later than February 28, 2009. The session convener should take in all submissions and select the best 4 to 6 papers to be presented and forward this information, including e-mail addresses of accepted authors, to the IIS Secretariat no later than March 15, 2009.