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Congress of the  
International Institute  
of Sociology  
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[www.iisoc.org/iis2009](http://www.iisoc.org/iis2009)

## REGULAR SESSION INFORMATION

**Title of Session:** Transforming Institutions through Agency: Is Civil Society Possible?

**Name of Session Convener(s):** Dr. Timothy D. Levonyan Radloff

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**Session Abstract (up to 250 words):**

Some two hundred years after the birth of sociology, we find ourselves in another era of social crisis. Our community life is disrupted and governed by political and economic forces that seem out of our control. Governments seem blind to adopting meaningful solutions that will prevent the social and economic breakdown of our communities. World renowned sociologist Anthony Giddens asserted that market-based philosophies have taken center stage in settling most issues of our social lives, including social justice. However, like our predecessors, present-day sociologists must highlight and reclaim the power of agency in bringing about institutional change for the better. Furthermore, we need to identify those institutional forces that hinder individuals from making progress in our communities. Also, we need to identify those meaningful behaviors and ways of thinking that bring about meaningful changes in institutions. This session seeks papers that examine these dynamics of human agency and institutional forces in the context of societal change. Theoretical and/or empirical papers are welcome.

Possible topics include (but are not limited to): (a) How the unequal divide between the rich and the masses has ignited efforts to address inequalities; (b) how the disconnect between politicians and lay people disrupts the implementation of effective social and economic policies; (c) to examine the extent to which employment and governmental institutions ensure

quality of life, quality of education, and quality of jobs for its citizens; and (d) to examine the extent to which human agency impacts institutions to strengthen and build prosperous societies.

### **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.