



The 39th World
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International Institute
of Sociology
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www.iisoc.org/iis2009

REGULAR SESSION INFORMATION

Title of Session: Social Trust

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Comments: -

Session Abstract (up to 250 words): Social trust is regarded as a major research theme in sociology. Even many years ago it was discussed by scholars such as Ferdinand Tonnies, Georg Simmel, Emile Durkheim and Talcott Parsons. Today, many scholars are taking yet another, closer look at trust. Many see trust as declining and thus deserving of greater attention and concern. Social isolation brought about by modernization is frequently cited as one of many reasons for re-examining social trust. Others include changes in demographics, politics, cultures, institutional structures and their influences. Many now focus on modern notions of cooperation, of which trust is considered to be an intrinsic component. Studies from comparative perspectives can no doubt illuminate empirically for us what is really happening with regard to trust in modern societies. But such work requires a certain grounding, including, at the simplest level, a definition of trust. For instance, is trust perceptual or attitudinal at the individual level, or is it an essential component of the social structure itself? If the latter is true, then social trust must be looked upon with reference to social norms and expectations. Hence, as Wuthnow (2004: 151) makes clear, trust must then be “understood sociologically, just as social institutions, social stratification, and social change must be.” Given this approach, we can analyze trust empirically and subsequently extend our results to theoretical modelling.

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.