



The 38th World
Congress of the
International Institute
of Sociology
Budapest, Hungary

JUNE 26-30, 2008

www.iisoc.org/iis2008

REGULAR SESSION

Title of Session: Agent-Based Social Simulation

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Comments:

Abstract (up to 250 words): Social simulation is the exploration and understanding of social phenomena by means of computer simulation, most often by using agent-based models. Since the 1990s, it has become a well recognised field of research in most of the social sciences, including sociology. The basic idea is that elaborating formal models that simulate aspects of social behaviour can contribute to the analytical understanding of social processes.

In the last ten years, these models have been applied to the understanding of the emergence of cooperation, the diffusion of norms, innovation, voting behaviour, social stratification, mobility, labour market and social networks, to name just a few fields. This session aims at bringing together empirical and theoretical contributions that explicitly deal with social simulation, presenting innovative agent-based computational applications both for sociological theory and empirical research. A preference will be given to papers that: a) contain the presentation of an agent-based model of a relevant social phenomenon, for both theoretical and empirical purposes; b) present and discuss an empirical example or application; c) advance theoretical knowledge in relevant sociological fields; d) satisfy serious methodological practices, such as the close description of the simulation settings, the replicability of the simulations described in the paper and the availability of the simulation codes to the reader (through a link to a web page and detailed information on the languages and platforms used), and the running of a set of serious statistical tests on the simulation parameters.