

Drivers and challenges of social policies: Global, regional, national, and local perspectives

International Sociological Association

Research Committee (RC) 19 on Poverty, Social Welfare and Social Policy

Annual conference 25-27 August 2021

University of Fribourg (Switzerland)

Call for papers

The current COVID-19 crisis demonstrates once more how social problems and policy responses are shaped by a complex interplay of global, regional, national, and local factors. Some global actors were key drivers shaping the definition of and the response to this highly unequal medical and social problem. Others, not least in the humanitarian sector, had problems in continuing their routine work. Regional actors such as the African Union or the European Union struggled to coordinate policy responses as national policy responses prevailed. However, countries reacted with a broad variety of public health and social policy responses. Many countries introduced or adapted social policies to cushion at least a part of the (vulnerable) populations. In some federal countries, there was competition and cooperation on the sub-national level. Finally, many social problems became most visible at the local level, often triggering strong engagement by non-state actors. On all levels, the COVID-19 crisis impacted productive activities and is reconfiguring different care and support relationships. Many of these changes, as well as the successes and flaws of policy responses, are becoming increasingly apparent. The theme of the RC19 annual conference is the drivers of, and the challenges to, social policies in a post-pandemic world.

The organizers of the 2021 annual conference invite papers that discuss drivers and challenges of social policies, including but not restricted to social policies related to the COVID-19 crisis. Papers can have a global, world regional, national, subnational, and/or local perspective. Especially welcome are theoretically-grounded empirical papers. As usual, the annual conference will bring together an active and lively community of scholars from different fields of social policy studies, ranging from PhD students and early-career researchers to established scholars. Beyond the broad theme outlined above, we also invite RC19 members to present their recent work, even if they are not closely connected to that theme.

Abstracts from non-RC19 members are most welcome, but all presenters must be members of RC19 by the time of the conference. To join, please contact our treasurer, Timo Fleckenstein at t.fleckenstein@lse.ac.uk. You are invited to submit an abstract of about 350 words, including information on the name(s) and affiliation(s) of the author(s) and the email address of the corresponding author to rc19@unifr.ch. The organizers encourage authors to include information about the empirical basis of their paper in the abstract. The deadline for abstract submission is 27 March 2021. Please bear in mind that, to facilitate constructive and in-depth discussions, RC19 strongly encourages authors to circulate full papers before the start of the conference.

Conference organizers:

Monica Budowski, University of Fribourg

Andreas Hadjar, University of Fribourg

Daniel Künzler, University of Fribourg

Magdalena Solska, University of Fribourg

The organizers prefer to host a conference with in-person attendance at the University of Fribourg. However, in the current context, the conference delivery mode is contingent to the evolution of the pandemic and related travel and public health restrictions. Furthermore, details about the venue can be found at www.unifr.ch/go/rc19. More information about the conference program and registration will be announced on this website in due time. For any questions regarding the conference and the call for papers, please send an email to rc19@unifr.ch. For more information on the Research Committee (RC) 19 on Poverty, Social Welfare and Social Policy of the International Sociological Association (ISA), please visit this website: www.rc19.org.