

Mid-term Conference ESA RN09 Economic Sociology

3-5 September 2025, Weizenbaum Institute, Berlin (Germany)

Call for Proposals

Submission Deadline: 1 May 2025

Exploring Solutions to the Challenges of Our Time: A Positive Turn in Economic Sociology?

In an era defined by profound economic, social, and environmental upheavals, economic sociology stands at a pivotal juncture. The world is grappling with multifaceted challenges such as escalating inequality, climate change, rapid technological change, and global health crises. These issues are deeply intertwined, reflecting the intricate relationships between economic systems and social structures, and they demand careful analysis to reveal both vulnerabilities and opportunities for resilience and potential solutions.

Traditionally, economic sociology has excelled in critiquing and deconstructing economic systems, offering profound insights into how economic activities are embedded within social relations and institutions. Scholars have illuminated the complexities of market dynamics, revealing how factors like power structures, cultural norms, and social networks influence economic behavior and outcomes. This perspective has been instrumental in understanding phenomena such as the social foundations of markets, the role of trust and cooperation in economic transactions, and the ways in which economic policies can produce unintended social consequences. By dissecting the underlying social mechanisms of economic processes, economic sociologists have shed light on issues such as systemic inequality, labor exploitation, and the commodification of various aspects of social life.

However, while sociologists have significantly contributed to practical solutions over the past decades—informing policies, guiding organizational practices, and inspiring social innovations—there is a growing call to further broaden and intensify this role. This involves leveraging analytical tools and theoretical insights to actively engage in crafting solutions. By adopting a more action-oriented approach, the discipline can enhance its impact in shaping economies and societies that are not only efficient but also equitable and sustainable.

This conference seeks to explore and amplify this “positive turn” in economic sociology, encouraging scholars to harness their expertise to propose even more actionable pathways forward. The aim is to provide a platform where critical analysis seamlessly intersects with creative problem-solving, fostering interdisciplinary collaborations that further bridge the gap

between theory and practice. Through this approach, economic sociology can find new and enriched ways to engage with and address the pressing complexities of contemporary challenges.

We invite participants to explore how economic sociology can:

- / **Inform Policy Development:** Utilize sociological insights to explain how policies influence economic justice, sustainability in its various dimensions, and societal resilience at local, national, and international levels.
- / **Promote Social Innovation:** Identify and analyze grassroots movements, alternative economic models, and collaborative networks that offer new paradigms for economic and social organization, while recognizing the evolving role of existing economic and political institutions in shaping these developments.
- / **Foster Interdisciplinary Collaboration:** Work alongside economists, political scientists, environmentalists, anthropologists, technologists, cultural studies, and other disciplines to tackle complex challenges through integrated approaches.
- / **Enhance Public Engagement:** Communicate research findings effectively to broader audiences, influencing public discourse and empowering communities to participate in shaping their economic futures.

While these challenges are global, Europe offers a unique context with its diverse cultures, economies, and social policies. European societies face common issues such as transitioning to sustainable energy sources and addressing regional economic disparities. By examining these issues through a European lens, we can gain valuable insights into how economic sociology can contribute to solutions that are both locally relevant and globally applicable.

Key topics for discussion include, but are not limited to:

- / **Redefining Economic Success:** Exploring and explaining different criteria to value welfare, such as GDP, well-being, human development, equity, and environmental health.
- / **Digital Economies and Society:** Navigating the social and economic implications of digitalization, AI, automation, and platform economies.
- / **Resilience and Recovery:** Understanding social dimensions of economic recovery in post-crisis contexts.
- / **Globalization Revisited:** Balancing global interconnectivity with local empowerment and sustainability.
- / **Ethics in Economics:** Examining how moral and ethical considerations are integrated into economic practices and policies.

Moreover, we also value and welcome presentations and sessions that engage with the traditional themes of economic sociology. Critical analyses, theoretical advancements, and empirical studies that deepen our understanding of established areas of sociology—such as

market behavior, labor relations, financial systems, and the sociology of organizations—remain essential. These contributions provide the foundational insights that underpin the discipline and continue to inform its evolution toward addressing contemporary challenges.

Keynote Speakers:

- / **Jens Beckert** | Max Planck Institute for the Study of Societies (Cologne)
- / **Mark Davis** | University of Leeds
- / **Andrea Maurer** | Trier University

Conference Sessions and Submission Guidelines:

1. **Individual Papers:** Submit an abstract of approximately 500 words detailing the research motivation, research questions, theoretical framework, methodology (for empirical papers), and findings or expected results, along with keywords, your name, affiliation, email, and title.
2. **Sessions:** Proposals should include a session title, a brief description of up to 500 words, and details of up to four contributors. These details should include the names, institutional affiliations, paper titles, and abstracts for each contributor.
3. **Early Career Workshop:** The conference will feature dedicated sessions for early-career researchers, including doctoral candidates and postdoctoral fellows. These workshops provide a supportive platform for presenting research proposals and receiving feedback from an assigned discussant. The aim is to help refine and strengthen research projects at various stages of development, including those still in the early implementation phase. Early-career researchers with research they believe are well-developed and suitable for standard sessions are encouraged to submit their work as individual papers. To participate in the Early Career Workshop, an extended abstract of approximately 500 words is required. This abstract should outline the research motivation, research questions, theoretical framework, methodology, and expected results.

Please send your proposals to esa2025berlin@gmail.com by **1 May 2025**.

Interdisciplinary contributions and submissions from early career scholars are highly encouraged. We aim to create an inclusive and stimulating environment for sharing ideas and fostering collaborations.

Publications

As part of the conference outcomes, we are planning the following publication opportunities:

1. Special Issue in the [Weizenbaum Journal of the Digital Society](#) – This issue will focus on digitalization and will include a selection of papers presented at the conference.

2. **Collective Book** – A volume featuring a selection of papers from the conference, expanding on key themes discussed.

Proposals for these publications will be selected based on the quality of the extended abstracts and conference presentations. Authors of the selected papers will be notified after the conference and invited to submit their full papers for either the special issue or the collective book. Both publications will follow a peer-review process.

When submitting your abstract, please indicate whether you would like your paper to be considered for the special issue, the collective book, or both.

Important Dates:

- / **Call for Papers Begins:** 07.02.2025
- / **Submission Deadline:** 01.05.2025
- / **Notification of Acceptance:** 15.05.2025
- / **Registration Deadline:** 08.06.2025
- / **Preliminary Program Published:** 30.06.2025
- / **Conference Dates:** September 3-5 2025, Weizenbaum Institute, Berlin (Germany)

No Conference Fees:

There will be no conference fees for this year's Mid-Term Conference. We hope that this will make it easier for more researchers to attend. We ask for your understanding and cooperation in confirming or cancelling your attendance in advance, which will help us to manage our resources effectively.

Networking Events:

- / **Get together & Drinks:** 2.9.2025 [One Lounge](#) (Motel One Bar), Kantstr. 163, 10623 Berlin
- / **Social Dinner:** 3.9.2025 [Schleusenkrug](#) Müller-Breslau-Straße 14b, 10623 Berlin
- / **Weekend Social Event:** 6.9.2025 [English guided tour](#) through former Tempelhof Airport

Venue:

[Weizenbaum Institute](#), Berlin, Germany: Hardenbergstrasse 32, 10623 Berlin, Germany

The Weizenbaum Institute is a research institute for interdisciplinary digitalisation research. It is a joint project of research institutions from Berlin and Brandenburg, funded by the Federal Ministry of Education and Research. The institute conducts independent, interdisciplinary and fundamental research on digitalisation and provides policy-makers, business and civil society with findings and value-based recommendations for action, helping to ensure that digitalisation and networking are not only better understood, but can also be shaped in a sustainable, self-determined and responsible manner.

Hotel Recommendations:

- / [Motel One Upper West](#): Kantstraße 163-165, 10623 Berlin
Recommend accommodation at discounted rates. If you choose this hotel, please contact Alexandra Keiner (Weizenbaum Institute) to make a reservation.
- / [B&B Hotel Berlin-Tiergarten](#): Englische Str. 1-4, 10587 Berlin

Organizers:

- **European Sociological Association, Research Network 09 Economic Sociology**
 - *Coordinators*: Giacomo Bazzani (University of Florence), Alberto Veira-Ramos (UC3M)
 - *Board*: Matilde Massó Lago (University of Leeds), Ella Lillqvist (University of Vaasa), Fatih Karakaya (Istanbul University), Daniel Maman (Ben Gurion University), Marlena Rycombel (University of Warsaw), Meropi Tzanetakis (University of Manchester), Mihai Varga (FU Berlin)
- **Weizenbaum Institute, Berlin**

Local Host: Alexandra Keiner : alexandra.keiner@weizenbaum-institut.de

Conference Language: English

Information:

ESA RN09 website

For any inquiries, please contact esa2025berlin@gmail.com

We look forward to your contributions and to welcoming you in Berlin!