

News Letter: December 2018

Letter from the President

Greetings from ISA.

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We are very much looking forward to the forthcoming Fourth ISA Forum of Sociology, to be held in Porto Alegre, Brazil, July 14-18, 2020. It will be organized by Geoffrey Pleyers, current ISA Vice-President Research, in collaboration with the ISA Research Coordinating Committee and the Brazilian Local Organizing Committee, chaired by Hermilio Santos, from Pontifical Catholic University of Rio Grande do Sul. Duties and Deadlines can be found at <https://www.isa-sociology.org/en/conferences/forum/porto-alegre-2020>. Next News Letter, at the beginning of 2019, will have more information about the Forum and the deadlines for the organization of sessions for RC07 in Porto Alegre.

The intense activities of the RC in the Toronto World Congress of Sociology followed the tradition to debate cutting edge sociological issues, analysing present tendencies while prospecting the possible futures for contemporary societies. The new Board was elect amid a meeting in which members placed many suggestions to dynamize the debate in the period between events as well as to stimulate sociologists to participate in the RC.

Answering the demands of the colleagues, at least in part, I present a brief analysis of the region of the world presenters came from and of the type of themes we debate at the Vienna Third Forum of Sociology and at the Toronto XIX ISA World Congress of Sociology. Knowing where we stand, we can think about and project a desirable agenda of debates and of new initiatives to take place under the scope of the RC.

I present also a new website, in which there is a 'The 'Discussions about Futures' is a space where members can write short analysis (no more than 1.000 words) about candent themes relate to futures research. To be published, the author should be member and should send the text to me. There will be an anonymous review of a RC's member. If approved, it will be published. The idea is to promote debate among members. The new site offers also access to Facebook to those more familiar with social network. It is a more

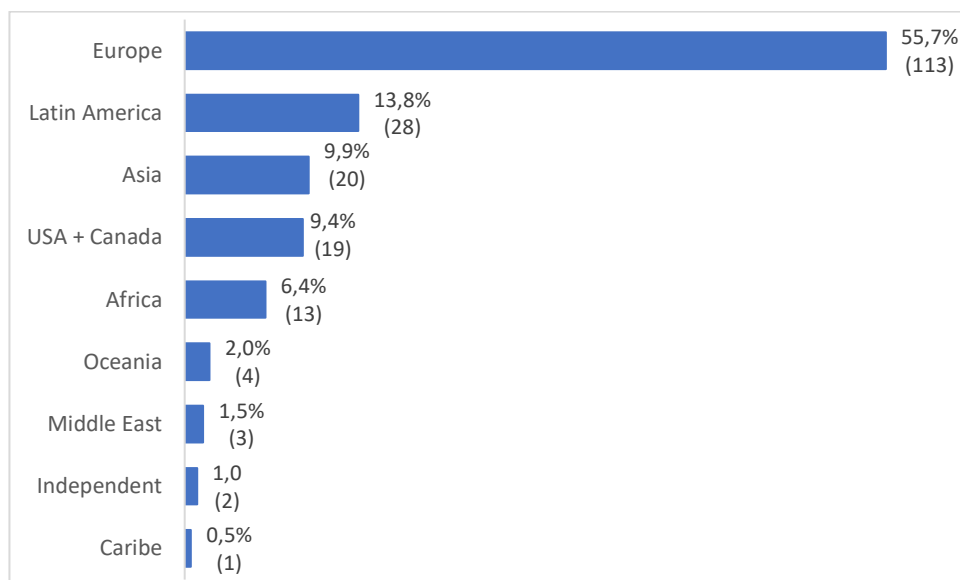
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dynamic and open way to encourage discussions and offer information.

RC07 presenters and themes in the last two ISA events

In the Vienna Forum of Sociology (July, 10-14, 2016) and Toronto World Congress of Sociology (July, 15-21, 2018) 161 papers were presented as posters and, most of them, as oral presentations. As many papers were produced by more than one researcher, 203 scholars had the authorship of them. As we can see in the graph below, more than a half of the authors came from European institutions, 13,8% from Latin-Americans, followed by Asians and USA's and Canadians, both with more than 9% of the presenters. It is striking low the proportional participation of sociologists from Africa, Oceania, Middle East and Caribe. Slightly over 10% of the papers had the authorship of scholars from institutions placed in these regions, while around a fourth of the world population lives there. We can ask ourselves: is there ways to stimulate a growth in the involvement of sociologist from these regions in the RC07 activities?

Graph 1. Distribution by Regions of authors of papers presented in Vienna Forum of Sociology and Toronto World Congress of Sociology.

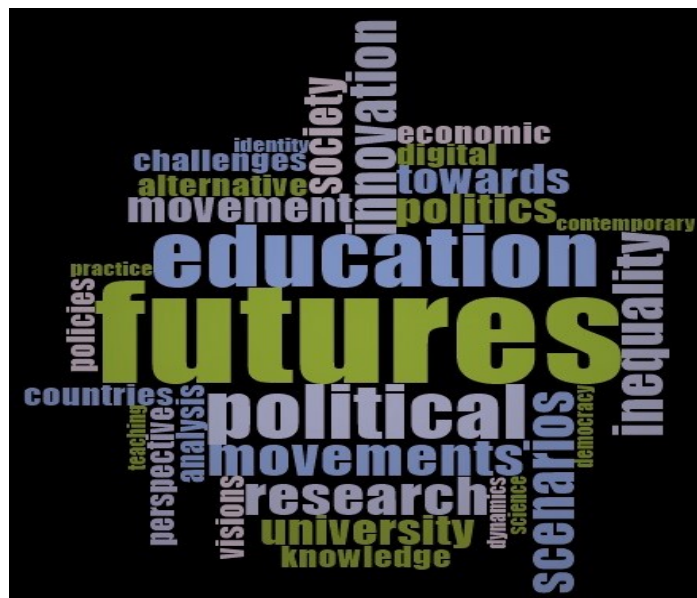


Source: ISA, 2016, 2018.

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As we can see bellow, aggregating the titles of all papers presented in the two events we can produce an image of the words most used by the authors. Futures, education, political, movements, innovation, inequalities, scenarios, research, university are at the centre of the presenters' concerns.

Figure 1. Map of words used in titles of the papers presented in RC07's sessions - Vienna Forum of Sociology and Toronto World Congress of Sociology.



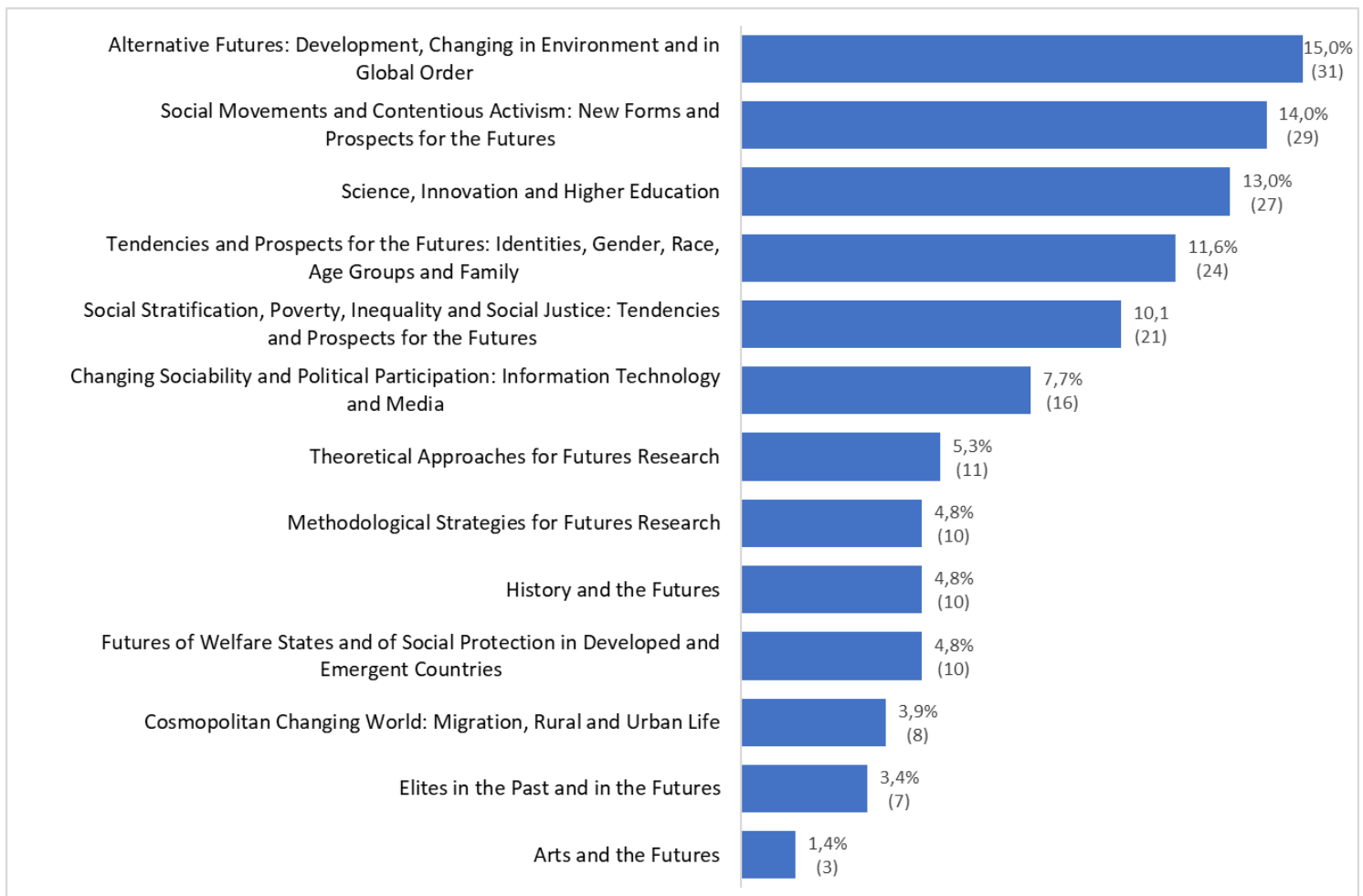
Source: ISA, 2016; 2018.

However, more expressive of the interests of research of these sociologists is the thematic analysis of the titles shown in the following graph. Using the titles of the sessions as an aggregative inspiration, it was possible to classify the titles in the thirteen big categories. The most popular themes are, from the higher to the lower percentage, *Alternative Futures: Development, Changing in Environment and in Global Order*, *Social Movements and Contentious Activism: New Forms and Prospects for the Futures*, *Science, Innovation and Higher Education*, *Tendencies and Prospects for the Futures: Identities, Gender, Race, Age Groups and Family*, *Social Stratification, Poverty, Inequality and Social Justice: Tendencies and Prospects for the Futures*. Regarding the objectives of the RC07, and its history, they are most adequate. They involve analysis of tendencies and prosections of structural changes not only in human but also in non-human environments, the quest of development, the tectonic restructuring of the global order, transformations in collective action, scientific and technological advances and the consequences of that,

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new, renewed and traditional forms of identity and families, issues related to gender, race, demographic transition, age groups, and regional, national and world modification in social stratification and patterns of inequality. It shows RC07 is fulfilling its objectives. However, we can ask if other subjects should be in the RC agenda. Issues related to theoretical and methodological approaches to futures research, to cosmopolitanization, migration, urbanization and rural life or any other issues should occupy a more relevant space in this agenda?

Graph 2. Distribution by Regions of authors of papers presented in Vienna Forum of Sociology and Toronto World Congress of Sociology.



Source: ISA, 2016; 2018.

We hope this brief analysis help us to think about the future trajectories we desire to promote in RC07, taking into account the rich and diverse debate it had emulate in past four years.

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