CALL FOR PAPERS

European Sociological Association

"Human Rights, Democracy and the threats of old and new Populisms: Anti-Semitism, Racism and Xenophobia"

RN31 Ethnic Relations, Racism and Antisemitism
Mid-Term conference

University of Minho (Portugal)
Department of Social Sciences of Education, Institute of Education

The ESA Research Network 31: Ethnic Relations, Racism and Antisemitism invites submissions of papers for its biannual Mid-Term conference. The conference will be held from 3 to 4 September 2020 at the University of Minho, Braga, Portugal. We will hold sessions that focus on theoretical, methodological and empirical aspects of research on antisemitism and racism, also in a comparative framework. The network’s perspective is to bridge an exclusive divide between the understanding of antisemitism and of racism, exploring the correspondences and affinities, but also the differences and contrasts. Our over-arching question is to understand what are the material conditions and the social, political and historical contexts shaping variations in racism (including neglected forms like anti-Roma discrimination, “antigypsyism”, but also anti-Muslim resentment) and antisemitism (including antisemitism related to the hostility to Israel, Islamic antisemitism, antisemitism of the left as well as of the right), across time and across different European and global contexts. Our network provides a space where antisemitism, racism, and xenophobia are each understood in the context of the others.

This year’s Mid-Term conference will particularly focus on old and new populisms and the challenges to human rights and democracy. Against the background that in recent years proto-totalitarianism and populism have emerged with great speed and ferocity into mainstream democratic discourse, we are interested in scholarly work on the democratic state, critiques of democracy, the totalitarian contempt for democracy, the critique of truth, critique of ‘the media’ etc.

In addition and given that this year’s Mid-Term will take place in Portugal, we are also interested in scholarly research on Iberian histories of antisemitism and the Sephardic diaspora.

Our special concern lies in (but is not limited to) the following issues:

- Critical Social Sciences in the face of inequalities;
- Theoretical/conceptual and methodological approaches to the actuality of antisemitism, racism and xenophobia in the context of democracy and its critique;
• Discourses on human rights and their relation to antisemitism and racism;
• Theoretical and empirical studies on conspiracy ideologies and exclusive nationalisms;
• Anti-establishment rhetorics and conceptions of the “white working class”;
• Antisemitism and anti-Muslim resentment as political and social rhetoric in the extreme-right movement across Europe;
• Neglected forms of racism and racialisation, including anti-Roma discrimination or “antigypsyism”; 
• The legacy of colonialism in the discourses and practices of democratic and post-colonial societies;
• Intersection of different racisms or of racisms with other axes of difference, inequality and power.

A perspective on the gendered dimensions of all these issues is most welcome. Moreover, we particularly welcome papers that offer a comparative framing (e.g. cross-nationally or from the perspective of different European regions), papers that offer a multi or inter-disciplinary framing (e.g. drawing on history), and papers that offer theoretical and methodological innovation in studying these questions.

During the sessions, each speaker will have 20 minutes. All presentations will be made in English. **Please send an abstract (500 words) including eventual institutional affiliation to the local committee of the Mid-Term conference: Maria José Casa-Nova (mjcasanova@ie.uminho.pt), Manuela Ivone Cunha (micunha2@gmail.com) and Patrícia Jerónimo (ppmj@direito.uminho.pt).**

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