



TRANSITIONEN

42. KONGRESS

**DEUTSCHE GESELLSCHAFT FÜR SOZIOLOGIE
UNIVERSITÄT DUISBURG-ESSEN | CAMPUS
DUISBURG 22 – 26 SEPTEMBER 2025**

Call for Papers


Development Sociology in Transition

Panel of the Development Sociology/Social Anthropology Section at the 42nd Congress of the German Sociological Association, September 22 - 26, 2025 in Duisburg, Germany

Development sociology as a sub-discipline has a long history dating back to the 1960s. Since then, it has developed considerably, both theoretically and empirically. With the aim of understanding societies and transformation processes in the Global South, development sociology offered a home for many sociologists researching on the Global South and contesting the universalisation of sociological theories. Particularly post-colonial and post-development theories, as well as the so-called empirical turn in development sociology, underlined the importance of critically reflecting on the colonial past of sociological thought and the need to reflect on knowledge production and methods within structures of power. By explicitly recognizing the plurality of ontologies, epistemologies and the contextualisation of methodologies and methods, development sociology opposed respective universal claims in sociology.

Scholars have also discussed power relations between the so-called Global North and South, drawing attention to the structural inequalities inherent in research projects, higher education, and international development cooperation. Under the term and concept of decolonisation, these structures and processes have been critically discussed in the last decades, particularly in world regions that experienced colonial and imperial rule. The aim has been to decenter 'Western' knowledge production and to supplant existing methodologies and categories. Development sociology has a rich history of research, emphasising the plurality of societies and forms of ethics, epistemologies, methods, and reasoning. Therewith, development sociology shares some common ground with contemporary theoretical perspectives in the field of global sociology, public sociology, decolonial sociology and post-development approaches which are challenging sociology's universal claims and highlight its enduring 'Western' orientation. At the same time, contemporary transitions in sociological knowledge production and its socio-historical path dependency remain interrelated and contested.

Against the background of these observations, we invite submissions addressing the following questions and topics, though not limited to:

- Which processes of change characterise development sociology today?
 - To what extent do concepts such as global sociology, decolonial sociology, post-development, indigenisation, and provincialisation help us overcome hierarchies in knowledge production between the Global North and South?
 - Do feminist or indigenous epistemologies and/or critical race studies provide a framework for decolonising knowledge production, and if so, how?
 - Which structures of power, inequality, and colonial legacies persist in development sociology?
 - How can we move forward to create epistemic freedom (Ndlovu-Gastheni 2019)?
 - How does the relationship between development sociology and development cooperation change due to the aforementioned considerations?
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We welcome contributions from development sociology, anthropology, and related disciplines. Please submit a 300-word abstract by the end of April 2025, to Susanne Brandl at susanne.brandl@uni-passau.de.

Session organizers: Lucas Cé Sangalli, Antje Daniel, Judith Ehlert and Eva Gerharz

