RC02 Economy and Society

LAST ISSUE OF 2024

Contents

President's Letter

At the end of the year 2024 the RC02 board is looking forward to our two next large events, the 5th ISA Forum in Rabat, Morocco from July 6-11, 2025 and the 21st World Congress of Sociology in Gwanju, Korea July 4 – 10, 2027. The forthcoming IV ISA Forum in Rabat, Morocco, will be the largest RC02 to date, with 28 sessions, nine collaborative sessions and a diverse expansion of membership across global regions to address broader economic and social challenges (see my article in this issue).

In this last issue of 2024, we introduce a new format where new RC02 members introduce themselves. Since August 2024 when the new board took office our membership has been growing steadily, now at about 220 total members. We are especially happy about the number of young scholars joining our RC, and the geographical spread of our membership across all regions of the world, ensuring diverse perspectives in addressing a wider range of economic and social challenges globally.

A highlight in our activities since the last newsletter was the International Political Economy of Labor Migration conference held in Duisburg, Germany, July 18 – 22, 2024, with generous support from the World Society Foundation. A full report on the conference appears is in this issue by Heidi Gottfried and Karen Shire. We thank the foundation, especially for the support in awarding travel grants to scholars from the Global South participating in the program.

In this newsletter we include original reports of research by several RC02 members. The article by Natascia Tieri underlines the importance of labor policies and employment as part of disaster relief efforts. RC02 Vice President Nadya Araujo Guimarães reports from ongoing research on collective care labor and the chains of solidarity required to support these. Readers can look forward to two Session at the Forum organized by Nadja and RC02 past president Heidi Gottfried to learn of more cutting edge theoretical and empirical research on global reproductive labor. An index for measuring patriarchal family relations, a part of understanding societal systems of patriarchy, is presented in the article by Mikolaj Szotzsek. His piece also illustrates its use in mapping results globally. Lynn Ng Yu Ling reflects on the failure of migrant destination countries to adequately recognize the qualifications of migrants obtained in their countries of origin. The misrecognition of qualifications is not only a matter of the loss of skilled labor, as skilled migrants are forced into underemployment, but also an act of systematic structural discrimination against migrants in destination labor markets.

While our attention is now focused entirely on the 5th Forum next year, the brief but shocking return to martial law in Korea this past month turns attention to the location of the 2027 World Congress, and memories of what happened in 1980 in Gwanju. The coincidence of the award of the Nobel Prize for Literature to Han Kang, an author from Gwanju writing about the 1980 protest, massacre and subsequent suppression of democratic movements, presents a rare chance to prepare for the conference through works of fiction. In her novel, Human Acts, published in English in 2017 readers follow the end of youth for adolescents wretched

out of their everyday school lives to witness, or fall victim to the mass and indiscriminate shooting of passers-by and protestors in 1980. In a third act about censorship as both physical and psychological violence, and a fourth about the long-term trauma of torture, readers experience how cultures and lives can no longer be recovered so easily, while humanity becomes a hard fought for condition. Kang could not have anticipated the return of martial law in 2024, however brief. The reaction of the Korean people in the last month in massive protests demonstrated how deeply 1980 Gwanju is embedded in collective memories and the will to protect Korea's hard-won democracy, while other so-called advanced nations seem to give up on justice easily in the ballot boxes of 'fair' elections. The World Congress presents us with a chance to build sociological knowledge about protecting and building more democratic and just social orders. What better place than Gwanju, Korea for this task!

Finally, we wish all RC02 members a joyful and fulfilling 2025 filled with happiness and meaningful experiences!.

Karen Shire

President, RC02 Economy and Society

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Understanding Skills: What do we know? What is still under the table, not being said?

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In the past four years, as the pandemic ravages the globe in ways still unfolding, we have seen a renewed interest in topics of social justice and advocacy. Likewise, political economy of labour migration studies has witnessed broader shifts over the years, with younger generations of scholars increasingly training the field's lens to critical race perspectives. Race and relations across the globe are diverse and dynamic but still tend to be framed around certain Western-centric (European and North American) experiences of colonialism and imperialism. As formative and crucial as colour codes are, the dominant discussions centred on especially Black/Brown/White, and other Persons of Colour (POCs) or "visible minorities" do not in fact correspond to most people's lived experiences of racial encounters. Bringing this perspective to labour market discrimination, I call on colleagues to unpack the growing complexity of the social constructions of skills in our midst as these are politically manipulated and deployed – in adverse ways – against professional immigrants.

I speak from current research engagements with the Labour Market Information Council (LMIC) in Ottawa, Canada, where a dedicated team of socially engaged analysts and community practitioners are looking at labour market information gaps. This project focuses on Foreign Credential Recognition (FCR) processes in Canada, a broad umbrella of degree and qualification conversion or 'translation' procedures that international students and skilled immigrants must undergo as a part of their settling-in requirements. Some key findings are not new realizations and are extensively researched; prevalent mismatch of skills and job requirements; deskilling and devaluation of immigrant credentials; widespread un/underemployment and overqualification; employer discrimination on the grounds of lacking a so-called "Canadian Experience" and/or cultural suitability; and outright racism that has little to nothing to do with established skills assessment frameworks. Other humanistic, sociological aspects of inequity and injustice in FCR, however, are not as widely publicized and understood. What else is there other than plain market economics? What of the uncountable human costs, cognitive and psychological, of the emotional labour of resilience in the face of social humiliation?

I trust that my colleagues at LMIC are not alone in their impassionate pursuit of labour market information gaps that remain largely obscure to the general public's awareness. In and beyond Canada, issues of skills discrimination tend to be discussed around national priorities of economic growth, industrial longevity, and demand-and-supply issues of concern to the domestic labour market. But in an increasingly migrant world of work, researchers are beginning to realize a growing gap between the existing (statistically or numerically driven) data and qualitative reports of people's life stories. The details in focus group narrations and lengthy interviews are typically glossed over or simply ignored in impersonal, large-scale reports of economic integration wellness. We know that international medical graduates (IMGs) and licensed physicians from abroad cannot practice in their field and are even coerced to take up domestic caregiving occupations in the informal, unregulated economy.

Canada's live-in caregiver program (LCP) has conventionally been a Filipino-majority migrant labour pool, most of whom have university degrees and practicing licenses yet are resigned to ad-hoc, minimum wage jobs. There are signs, though, that the profile of care service occupations are changing and diversifying in ways that outpace our analytical speed. Personally, I know of more than a couple of international graduate student counterparts in Canada who get by on piecemeal caregiving jobs due to a lack of relevant opportunities.

The list of deskilling and devaluation examples is by no means exhaustive. Labour market analysts point to the changing composition of an aging workforce globally (Future of Work) and the need for more information about implications of automation/artificial intelligence, among other trends, in potentially displacing both native-born and immigrant labour. Ongoing conversations of Understanding Skills, in that vein, necessarily involve digging into its myriad social constructions, political manipulations of verbally pleasing principles (e.g. equality, fairness, and meritocracy), and the proliferating, novel ways that powerful actors apply a vital labour market value to unjust ends.

As a broad collective, political economists have come a long way in coming to terms with apparently innocent or neutral-sounding terms, such as "skills", that mask ongoing colonial legacies of racial prejudice. Labour market integration has never been a fair playing field and the world is witnessing ever yet creative strategies of legal while unjust power plays. I join other researchers and colleagues at LMIC in reiterating that it is imperative to garner stories about people's lived experiences with race and relations in skills devaluation that often go unheard of in mainstream news. It has been encouraging to see a growing number of conference panels and public speaker events taking interest in such complicated issues.

What else about "skills" is not being said? And where does that leave us? Now is a timely moment to offer some parting thoughts in the form of possible directions for future and further research. I call on colleagues in political economy to delve deeper into the banal, mundane aspects of social constructions of skills that exert more emotional energies from unduly discriminated people than mainstream society likes to realize.

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Collective Care and Chains of Solidarity

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Understanding the dynamics of care work remains a significant challenge. In recent decades, vigorous research results have been achieved mainly concentrated on individuals in situations of dependency, such as the elderly, young children, and people with disabilities (England 2005). At the same time, since providing care involves establishing work relationships, whether paid or unpaid, analytical attention has been shifted to those who deliver care (Duffy 2011; Folbre 2012). In doing so, sociological studies have taken on the task of exploring the dynamics of interaction between caregivers and recipients, with particular emphasis on this dyad.

Since the nature and progression of this dyadic relationship needed to be contextualized, analysts sought to anchor these interactions within the rules of the socio-institutional framework, emphasizing the meso-level where they unfolded —whether in the home, outside it, or within public, philanthropic, or market-based institutions (Abel and Nelson 1990; Stacey 2011; Avril and Cartier, 2014). This expanded the analytical scope to include other actors, such as 'relatives', 'managers', 'colleagues', and 'neighbors'. Still, fully grasping these situational rules required looking beyond, keeping a sharp focus on the underlying systems of inequality. This is because it is at the macro-sociological level that the degrees of freedom for producing well-being rely – whether through the availability of resources (such as population dynamics, income distribution, and the nature of markets, especially labor markets), or through state action (regulating rights and designing policies). In short, understanding the dyadic relationship between caregiver and care recipient required looking outside the dyad and providing context (Daly and Lewis 2000; Razavi 2007). However, since the primary goal was to understand this relationship, the analysis always returned to the dyad, though now enriched with contextual information from both the meso- and macro-levels.

However, collective initiatives increasingly emerged to (re)establish well-being and meet collective needs. These forms of care gained prominence during the Covid-19 pandemic, mainly in the so-called Global South (Sanchis 2020). But not only then – they had already drawn attention in contexts challenged by extreme hunger or food insecurity, which impact the lives of impoverished populations (Vega, Martinez and Paredes 2018; Carmo 2022). This exposed the limitations of the caregiver-recipient dyad approach and introduced new challenges for the scholarly agenda.

Understanding these forms of collective care required situating them in territories – whether physical, social, or symbolic – where the need for care arises, giving meaning to the practices (Fraga 2022). Collective action is driven by more than just a shared material need (such as food, for example). Often, it is the shared sense of identity and the need to affirm and defend it that motivates collectives to care for themselves and their own (Faur 2024). This required broadening the scope of analysis to explore the social foundations behind the notion of 'us'. This identity can stem from ethnic or cultural belonging or from sharing a sexual identity – both of which shape communal interests and define the care agenda.

The driving force behind community action can, and often does, transcend economic deprivation, instead manifesting as the deprivation of rights and recognition – both of which are essential for accessing the means or dignified conditions necessary for sustaining life. In this sense, the 'other,' in relation to whom needs are identified and expressed, also varies. Therefore, it would be an oversimplification to reduce the production of community care to merely a response to the lack of resources to purchase care in the market or the state's failure to meet basic needs for sustaining life.

However, while community ties are the cornerstone, the resources needed to meet these needs are rarely found within the community itself. As a result, community care is rooted in 'chains of solidarity' that connect different points of the care diamond – at least from one of its vertices – linking major philanthropic actors with small, community-based grassroots organizations, while key intermediaries play a crucial role in bridging these two ends (Guimarães, Penati and Mundin 2024).

By introducing the concept of 'chains of solidarity' in the context of collective care, we aim to enrich the literature on welfare regimes. While this body of scholarship acknowledges the role of philanthropy in building protective frameworks – alongside the family, the state, and the market – it has predominantly concentrated on the upper levels of the 'chain' (Esping-Andersen 1990). Similarly, we also expand the canonical scholarship in the field of care studies, which, even when engaging with the concept of 'community,' has often confined it to third-sector organizations, which are highly institutionalized and equally rooted in philanthropy (Razavi 2007). Even when scholars began to consider mutual aid networks for providing care, interpretation shifted to the extreme opposite, narrowing the analysis to the microsocial level of 'help circuits' formed between households and/or neighborhoods (Guimarães 2020). By emphasizing 'chains of solidarity', we take this a step further, linking different actors and levels. In doing so, we contribute to the theorization of collective care, avoiding the limitation of focusing exclusively on territorially defined communities.

However, it is also crucial to reflect on the notion of 'solidarity', the other key component of the concept proposed here, given the remarkable performativity of this category. As a central analytical tool in sociological studies – ranging from classics like Durkheim and Mauss to contemporary scholars such as Paugam (2023) , Caillé (2000), and Steiner (2016) – solidarity has become a pivotal concept in the vocabulary of the actors themselves, especially during the pandemic. Similar arrangements have also been explored through network analysis, a perspective that the care literature has largely overlooked, although innovative studies have examined the intersection of vulnerability, survival strategies, network ties, and care (Desmond, 2012). In short, exploring the complexities of collective care chains opens up pathways that connect themes and ways of thinking about sustaining life.

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Labour policies and emergency management: challenges and opportunities

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Emergencies, both natural and caused by human, represent a significant challenge for social and economic systems. In particular, the labour market undergoes deep transformations due to critical events. This article aims at analysing labour policies adopted in response to emergencies, highlighting both challenges and opportunities for local development. Existing policies, new measures introduced and their impact on the resilience of territories will be hereinafter examined.

Theoretical framework

In an increasingly complex global context, emergencies and natural disasters pose significant challenges to contemporary societies. These events not only put a strain on infrastructure and public services, but also profoundly affect labour policies. The ability of a community to recover from a catastrophic event is often linked to the resilience of its institutions and the solidity of the employment policies in place.

The sociology of work offers useful tools for understanding how labour dynamics are affected by such events. For example, disasters can lead to a restructuring of the labour market, creating new opportunities in areas such as reconstruction and emergency management, but at the same time causing unemployment and precariousness in other areas. It is essential that labour policies are able to adapt quickly to these new realities, promoting forms of employment that respond to emerging needs.

In this context, local development plays a crucial role. Communities that manage to implement sustainable and inclusive development strategies can not only recover faster from a disaster, but also improve their citizens' quality of life. Investing in resilient infrastructures, (Madrigano et al. 2017), promoting education and professional training, and fostering local entrepreneurship are all key elements in order to build a strong economy able to face future challenges.

Finally, economy must be seen as an interconnected system, where labour policies, emergencies and disasters can influence each other. Analysing these interactions is fundamental to develop strategies which, not only mitigate the effects of disasters, but also promote a more equitable and sustainable economy in the long term. In this way, communities can not only survive adverse events, but thrive, turning crises into opportunities for growth and innovation.

Pre-existing labour policies and their efficacy in critical situations.

Existing labour policies, such as social protection systems and active labour policies, are often designed to deal with normal situations. However, in critical situations, these policies may prove to be inadequate or insufficient. For example, unemployment benefits may not be sufficient to guarantee an adequate standard of living, as well as professional training programmes may not correspond to the new needs of the labour market. (Tieri, 2014).

In a context of economic crisis, unemployment tends to increase exponentially, and unemployed people may face unprecedented challenges. Social protection policies, designed to provide temporary support, can quickly become obsolete when market conditions change dramatically. In such cases, it is crucial that governments review and update their approaches, incorporating measures that respond more effectively to emerging needs. For example, it may be necessary to develop more flexible unemployment benefits, able not only to cover part of the lost income, but also to include customised re-employment programmes. These programmes could involve specific training courses for growing sectors, such as technology or renewable energy, enabling workers to acquire skills required in today's market.

In addition, active labour policies should be enlarged to include psychological support and career counselling initiatives, helping people deal not only with economic difficulties, but also with the emotional impact of unemployment. The creation of community support networks, in which local companies can collaborate with public bodies and associations, could also help match labour supply and demand, contributing to a faster recovery.

Finally, it is crucial that labour policies are based on up-to-date data and in-depth market analysis. The use of advanced technologies to monitor employment trends and predict future market needs could significantly improve the efficacy of policies. Only a pro-active and adaptive approach can ensure that labour policies not only respond to current challenges but are also ready to face the uncertainties of the future.

Conclusions

In this context, it is crucial to develop intervention strategies that not only face immediate needs, but also contribute to long-term recovery. The creation of professional training programmes can be an opportunity to retrain the workforce, making it more adapted to new market needs. Such programmes should be flexible and adaptable, so as to respond quickly to economic changes and demands of growing sectors.

Furthermore, the promotion of active labour policies must include a focus on social inclusion. It is crucial to ensure that the most vulnerable groups, such as young people, women and people with disabilities, have access to decent work opportunities.

Emergencies represent a complex challenge requiring integrated and coordinated responses. It's necessary to invest in more resilient social protection systems, innovative active labour policies and effective public-private partnerships. Lessons learnt from previous emergencies can be used to build a more secure and sustainable future.

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The Patriarchy Index: A Pragmatic Tool for Cross-Cultural Gender and Generational Analysis

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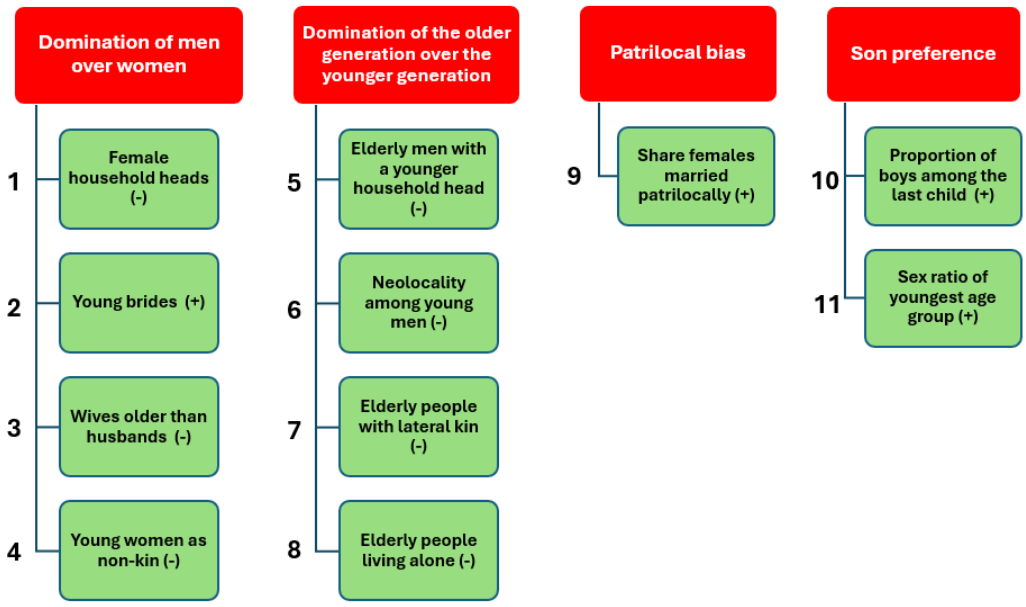
Most assessments of women's status and gender inequality focus on female participation in the public sector and variables such as literacy rates, education levels, labor force participation, health and income, or women's standing relative to men in social norms, traditions, and family law, using data from national or international agencies. However, a comprehensive monitoring of women's autonomy and experiences requires that we also have indicators that address gendered power distribution and hierarchy in the private sphere. This is critical given that traditional patriarchal practices in grassroots institutions like families, particularly in the Global South, continue to exacerbate gender bias and discrimination, significantly impacting long-term developmental outcomes across individuals and populations.

This paper introduces the Patriarchy Index (hereafter PI) to the sociological community, emphasizing its relevance in the current disciplinary context. The PI stems from three converging streams of social science analysis. Firstly, the revolution in census and census-like microdata availability created "big data" opportunities to explore co-resident domestic groups worldwide as matrices of statuses, functions, hierarchies, and relationships that influence individual autonomy and agency. Secondly, the recent reconceptualization of "patriarchy" as a multifaceted, historically dynamic social construct encompasses both the stratification of social attainment by sex and the domination of men over each other based on seniority (Therborn 2004; Wiesner-Hanks 2018). Thirdly, efforts to quantify detailed socio-anthropological descriptions of hierarchical family structures (primarily in Eurasia) propose ideal-type derivations for comparative analysis using measurable variables.

Accordingly, eleven quintessential principles of patriarchal family organization were proposed, applicable across various cultural contexts and historical periods, and organized into four domains, capturing key dimensions of the phenomenon: the domination of men over women, the domination of the older generation over the younger generation, the extent of patrilocality, and the preference for sons (see Figure 1 below) : Women do not head households (1), they marry early (at, or soon after puberty) (2), always being younger than their grooms (3), while staying with their natal families until marriage (4). Young men do not become household heads while seniors are alive (5), nor do sons of living fathers establish independent households (6). Some men remain in the family household permanently (7) and elders are not left to care for themselves (8). At marriage, girls move into their husband's or father-in-law's household (9). Parents prefer to raise sons over daughters (10), leading to girls receiving less care (11).

Figure 1: The four major dimensions of "patriarchy", and their eleven input variables

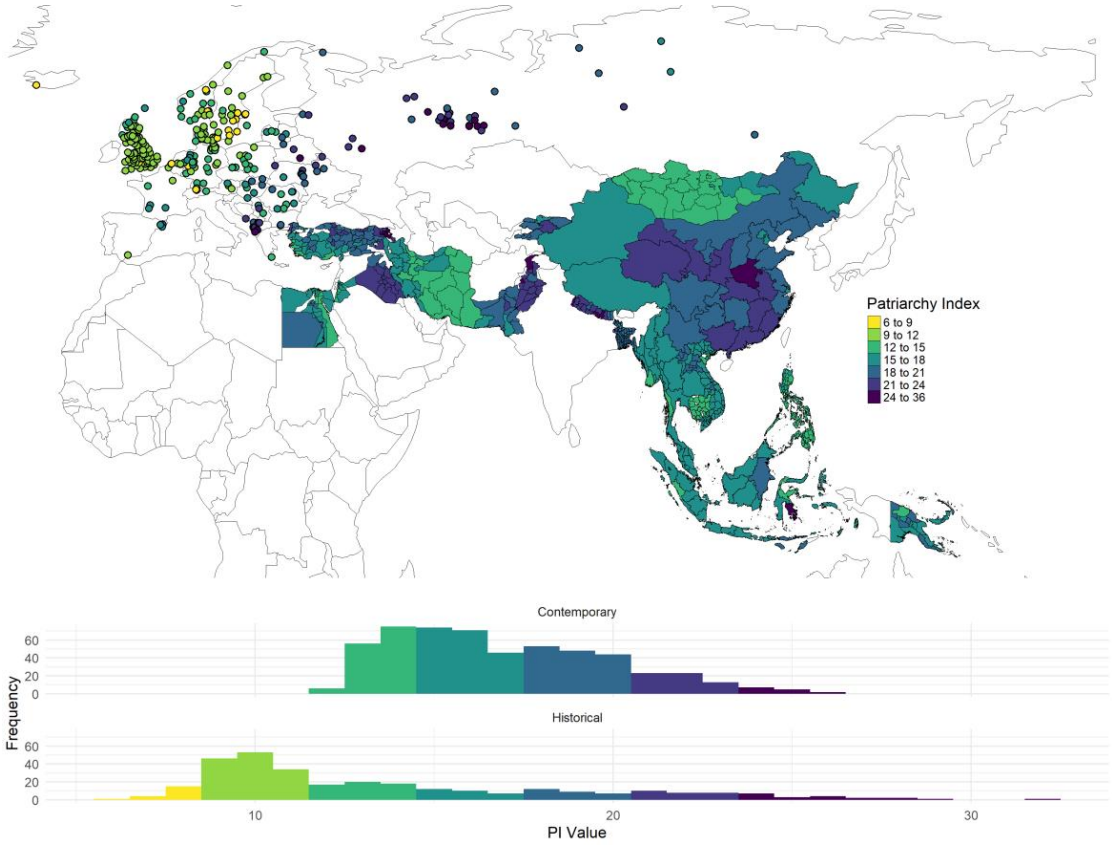


1) F (20+) / all adult household heads
2) Ever-married F/ age group 15-19 yrs
3) Wives older than husbands/ all couples
4) F living with non-kin only/ 20-34 yrs
5) 65+ yrs in a household headed by a younger male relative
6) Male heads with only immediate family/ ever- married men 20-29
7) 65+ yrs with at least one lateral kin
8) 65+ yrs without relatives or spouses
9) Ever-married F with at least one adult male kin of husband or his mother/ 15-30 yrs
10) Boys among children 10-14 yrs
11) Child sex ratios 0-4 yrs

Based on the above principles, the eleven input variables were operationalized to be computable from routine census microdata, whether historical or contemporary, even if the data is semantically weak. Most variables directly capture various forms of gender and generational biases at the household/family level. Other variables serve as proxies for behavioral patterns not directly observable in the census microdata, such as parental control over marriage, female participation in property devolution and labor force, and gender-discriminatory practices in infancy and childhood.

The PI uses a 10-point scale for each indicator, measuring each regional population on a 0–10 performance scale. The first nine indicators are benchmarked against the highest possible outcome, with the best region scoring 10 and others scoring lower (0 for a natural lowest value). The last two variables, due to their distinct ranges, use neutral proportions of 0.51 and 105 as minimum values, with a similar approach for maximum values. The overall patriarchy measure is a nested average of these 11 indicators across four dimensions, ranging from 0 (minimum) to 40 (maximum) patriarchy points. The index shows good internal consistency, with Guttman's λ6 values between 0.89 and 0.74, indicating reliability in measuring the underlying construct of patriarchy (see Figure 2 below).

Figure 2: Example of the spatial and frequency distribution of the PI across Eurasia



Note: points indicate historical data. Guttman's λ6: 0.89 for the historical data, and 0.74 for the contemporary data. Source: IPUMS-International census microdata from 857 regional populations in 26 European countries from 1700 to 1926, and 21 Asian/North African countries after 1970 (N=93 mln people)

Basic findings

The PI measures the intensity of patriarchy in family systems across cultures and over time. Figure 2 (above) maps the patriarchy levels in historical Europe and contemporary Asian societies on a common scale. It shows that while all regional populations exhibited some patriarchal features, none were fully patriarchal or completely free of patriarchy. There is considerable variability in PI values within Europe and Asia. However, historical Europe displays more heterogeneous patterns at both ends of the spectrum compared to modern Asia, with the highest and lowest PI values being more characteristic of Europe.

Interpretation

The PI characterizes the situations of women, the aged, and young people based on their access to socially valued resources, without considering their positions relative to normative standards. Thus, the index values represent absolute, not relative, measures of gender and age inequality, aligning more with measures of women's status than with gender-inequality metrics. Importantly, the PI is based on actual behaviors, not behavioral norms, capturing local/regional familial organizational patterns that enforce or mitigate gender and age hierarchies.

This corresponds to Walby's "private/domestic patriarchy" or Kocabıçak's "modern domestic patriarchy" domains (Walby 2009; Kocabıçak 2020). However, extant literature and the PI's validation against other indexes indicate that various aspects of the PI may hinder women's economic participation and empowerment beyond the family sphere.

Advantages

One of the greatest strengths of the PI) is its simplicity, making it theoretically applicable to any human society with basic data requirements. The PI can be easily calculated from routine census microdata, without complex or specialized statistical techniques. Noteworthy, it has recently inspired similar indexes for Africa, India, and Italy.

The PI offers several advantages. It can provide patriarchy estimates at both country and disaggregated levels, enabling focused interregional comparisons. To date, only the Gender Development Index (GDI) offers similarly detailed estimates. In addition to measuring gender and generational inequalities, the PI can be used to assess the strength of family systems and Gelfand's "tight" cultures, and to predict demographic behaviors and developmental outcomes. By focusing on household and demographic sources of gender inequality, the PI offers complementary information to existing measures. It is particularly relevant for LMICs, where persistent social practices may hinder progress toward more equitable societies, making it an important tool for researchers and policymakers.

However, the PI may be less applicable in developed societies with nuclear families and cohabitation or in non-Eurasian contexts, such as polygamous societies, without specific adaptations. Moreover, while the PI highlights gendered family systems, its broader applicability to patriarchy, such as in political leadership, requires case-specific assessment and improved data, as recent adaptations in India and Italy demonstrate.

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Participants of the conference International Political Economy of Labor Migration, Excursion to the Landschaftspark Nord at the site of a former Thyssen Steel smelting factory, Duisburg, Germany

Labor migration is a vast, global and highly fluid phenomena in the 21st century. The International Political Economy of Labor Migration conference, sponsored by ISA RC02 Economy and Society, and funded generously by the World Society Foundation, was organized by ISA board members Sandhya AS, Heidi Gottfried and Karen Shire. The event brought together over 100 participants from Europe, North and South America, Sub-Saharan Africa, the MENA region, and South, East, and Southeast Asian. Presentations included perspectives of sending and receiving countries, exploring historical and contemporary research on the macro-structures, institutions, actors, policies and practices shaping global migrant mobilities. The conference set out to gather recent and pioneering research on migrant mobilities in global (re)production networks, the partial liberalization of cross-border mobility, the rise of new sending states promoting migrant exports, migration development regimes, imperialism and migration in capitalist development, and the burgeoning of a contemporary for-profit migration industry with recruitment networks at the lead. Developments in migrant mobilities presage fundamental changes in world society.

The conference highlighted contributions in three cross-cutting themes that explore the relationship between sending and receiving states, labor markets, development strategies, brokers, and the autonomous agency of migrants: 1) governance and the making of transnational labor mobilities and migrant labor regimes; 2) transformation and trans-nationalization of social reproductive labor; and 3) activism and resistance.

Program committee members Eileen Boris, Jenny Chan, Julie Greene, Nadya Araujo Guimaraes, Hans-Peter Meier-Dallach, Ngai Pun, Nicola Yeates and the above-named organizers guaranteed the participation of a strong representation of scholars from ISA category B & C countries (35% of all participants) and the inclusion of several panels and keynotes on historical global migration studies, regional migration regimes (South Asia, Southeast Asia, and Latin America) and care migration. Highlights included the three plenary sessions:

I **Migration Politics**, with keynotes by RC02 members Eleonore Kofman and Rina Agarwala;

II **Migration, Dissent and Dialogue** chaired by Polina Manolova with contributions from four migrant advocacy organizations – Waling/Waling (Angie Garcia), Unite the Union (Khadija Najlaoui), Fair Mobility (Szabolcs Sepsi), and Stolipinovo in Europe e.V. (Polina Manolova); and

III **Labor Migration and the Making of a US Empire** with keynotes by historians Julie Greene, Justin F. Jackson and Madeline Y Hsu.

Recently published books by RC02 members were highlighted in two Book Salons: (1) *Homecare for Sale: The transnational brokering of senior care in Europe* edited by Brigitta Aulenbacher, Helma Lutz, Ewa Palenga-Möllenbeck and Karin Switer, 2024 Sage; and (2) *Trafficking Chains: Modern Slavery in Society* by Sylvia Walby and Karen Shire, 2024 Brill.

A total 67 individual papers were presented in 22 sessions. The panels on Migration Development Regimes and several panels on Care and Social Reproduction have, in revised form, been accepted as part of the RC02 program at the ISA V Forum in Rabat.

Hosted by the University of Duisburg-Essen, the conference took place in the heart of the Ruhr industrial region, at the intersection of the Rhine and Ruhr Rivers, where deep coal mining and the production of steel drove successive waves of migrant labor from the 19th to the 20th century, contributing to the so-called German economic miracle. The Ruhr region, despite its rich history of integrating migrant labor, is neither immune today from right-wing attacks on asylum seekers, nor from the tragic turn in social democratic politics embracing deportation and failing to address how private recruiters and extreme exploitation are impoverishing the labor migrants upon which the region continues to depend. Participants were invited to join excursions to the Landschaftspark Nord, the site of a former Thyssen smelting plant, shuttered in 1985 as one of the last in a wave of closures deindustrializing the region. Today the site retains the smelting facility ruins as an ode to industrial heritage in the region. The conference ended with a second excursion through the inner harbor, today one of the largest inland harbors in the world, and the terminus of the Chinese one-belt/one-road infrastructure initiative.

Alongside the main funder, the World Society Foundation, the conference benefitted from additional funding from the University of Maryland Center for Global Migration Studies, Wayne State University Fraser Center for Workplace Issues, the journal Critical Sociology, the DFG Research Training Group 2951 at the University of Duisburg-Essen and Bielefeld University, Cross Border Labor Markets, and the ISA Research Committee 02 Economy & Society.

The conference covered research areas that are relatively undertheorized in sociological and historical migration studies. In her paper on south-to-south migration RC02 member Anju Mary Paul and co-authors examined how high skilled migrants from South Asia and the MENA region favor working in the UAE due to several factors enabling cosmopolitan lifestyles. A panel organized by RC02 member Gracia Liu-Farrer on the Mobilities of Indonesian Migrants, with travel funding support from the Japan International Cooperation Agency, discussed the development of outmigration policies and infrastructures in Indonesia as part of a "skill sending regime." A paper by Kaxton Siu presented research on the impact of Chinese FDI in Cambodia and Vietnam on creating a labor regime without enforcement of labor standards or representation of rural migrant workers, the different roles of both destination states, and the dynamics of NGOs and international organizations to restore labor standards. The paper by Binod Khadria and Ratnam Mishra in a panel discussing the recent work by Rina Agarwala on Migration Development Regimes, featured in the first plenary, critically assessed protections and development goals for migrants, largely absent in the UN's sustainable development goals and marginalized in "management of migration" international policies. A spectrum of alternative political economic perspectives informed debates on the sociology of markets, thematizing Polanyi in conversation with Marxism and feminism.

New forms of transnational marketization and corporatization of domestic services emerged interwoven with the establishment of a new migration industry. Chains of brokering agencies play a leading role in transnational provision of nationally embedded domestic services and market making. Papers on Venezuelan women in Colombia and cross-border migration to Singapore highlighted the importance of south-south migration corridors.

The conference provided a comprehensive platform to analyze the complex dynamics of global labor migration, highlighting the interplay between governance, labor markets, social reproduction, and migrant agency. By fostering diverse perspectives and forging multidisciplinary dialogue, it underscored the urgent need for equitable policies and research to address the challenges and opportunities of transnational labor mobilities.

RC02 plans on hosting another forum on global labor migration in the future. A preliminary discussion of the next event will take place at the ISA Forum in Rabat.

RC02 at the 5th ISA Forum in Rabat, Morocco, July 6 – 11, 2025

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The IV ISA Forum in Rabat Morocco is the largest in the history of the RC02, with 28 sessions, seven joint sessions led by other RCs, and two integrated sessions in the conference program. While actual numbers of participants may change at the time of registration, the full program of sessions is likely to be maintained, as distributed papers are moved into oral presentations, and oversubscribed panels are given an additional session. Since taking office at the conclusion of the World Congress in Melbourne in July 2023, we have recruited approximately 30 new members to the research committee, but most importantly the expansion of our membership in all world regions ensures diverse perspectives in address a broader range of economic and social challenges globally (See the profiles of some of our new members in this issue).

The global reach of the RC02 Forum program reflects this trend and is driven by the increasing diversity of the executive board and the program committee for Rabat. Session participants are drawn from all world regions, and several invited sessions initiated by program committee members are dedicated to topics of great importance to sustainable economic development and non-European/non-North American regional developments. Continuing a theme highlighted in the RC02 interim conference in Duisburg, Germany in July 2024 (see Gottfried and Shire report in this issue), one invited session is dedicated to the new theoretical paradigm introduced by Rina Agarwala on Migration Development Regimes, with a focus on the historical-empirical case of India. A continuation from the 2023 World Congress is an invited session on the Global Social Protest Data Base 1851 – 2023, designed as a panel of data base participants discussing the results for world-economic change and waves of social protest, led by Corey Payne and Beverly Silver. Another continuation from the world congress in Melbourne is the session organized by Ece Kocabıçak on the Political Economy of Violence, extending the theoretical work on violence and society by past RC02 President Sylvia Walby with presentations on India, South Africa, Kurdistan and Iran. Another invited session navigates the theoretical advances in studying authoritarian capitalisms under the title of Insights from Variegated Perspectives on Labor, Gender and Social Economies, organized by Kaxton Siu, with presentations of original research on sub-Saharan Africa, East and Southeast Asia. A further invited session returns to a topic that has long occupied economic and political sociologists -- revolutions. Organized by Heidi Gottfried and Valentine Moghadam this session revisits debates and trajectories in research on revolutions.

The RC02 program in Rabat, as in the past, highlights important new books by our members in Author-Meets-Critics sessions. A new book by Jihye Chun and Ju Hui Judy Han titled Against Abandonment: Repertoires of Solidarity in South Korean Protest will direct our attention to our program for the 2026 World Congress in Gwangju, South Korea through its symposium format. The association of neo-liberal globalization with violence in the economy and extreme exploitation in labor relations is the topic of the recent volume by Sylvia Walby and Karen Shire, Trafficking Chains: Modern Slavery in Society, with critics Margaret Abraham and Chris Tilly.

Integrated into the RC02 Forum program in 2025 are two sessions dedicated to early career researchers, organized by Sandhya AS who participated in the workshop for young scholars at the World Congress in 2023 (see report in the Spring 2024 newsletter by Michelle Hsieh).

The open sessions in the RC02 program advance some of the leading research areas that have come to form the profile of the study of economy and society in the 21st century: sustainable and just development, care work, financialization, migration, climate and environmental change, and new perspectives on Marxism, socialism. These sessions all include research and scholarship from medium and low-income regions of the world. Several panels on these and other topics carve out new research directions, such as the sessions on the wealthy, examining their lifestyle impacts on climate change, on digitalization in the form of platform economies as a continuation of neo-liberal economic change, and on disaster socialism, exploring whether alternatives to capitalism are possible amid environmental disasters.

A total of seven joint and two integrated sessions align our research committee with the activities of 14 other RCs and 3 working groups. Of note is the continuing intensive cooperation with the Working Group on Violence and Society, with RC07 Futures Research, RC17 Organizations, RC23 Science & Technology, RC30 Sociology of Work, RC44 Labor Movements, and RC24 Environment & Society.

Participants from ISA country categories B & C and those in precarious employment are eligible to apply for registration grants. Research Committee 02 will also open a call for travel grants for these researchers soon. Participants are invited to join a member dinner following the business meeting in Rabat, details of which, along with the program for the two integrated sessions, will follow in Issue 1 of the 2025 newsletter.

Join us at IV ISA Forum in Rabat to explore groundbreaking ideas and connect with leading minds shaping the future of economy and society! Stay engaged with the RC02 to be part of transformative discussions and impactful collaborations.

The profiles of some of our new members

Şahan Savaş Karataşlı is an Assistant Professor at the University of North Carolina-Greensboro. He examines the dynamics of historical capitalism, inequality, social movements, labor, and nationalism from a global, long-historical perspective. His research combines theoretical, comparative-historical, and quantitative approaches to address critical social problems on a global scale and to explore pathways toward a more emancipatory and equitable future rooted in transformative societal change. Email: skaratasli@uncg.edu

Natascia Tieri, PhD in Social Policies and Local Development, works at a public school. She is a sociologist with experience in professional coaching, career guidance, social policies, European funding and environmental sociology, with particular attention to emergencies and disasters. She is passionate about mindfulness applied to school. e-mail: natascia.tieri@yahoo.it; LinkedIn: https://www.linkedin.com/in/natasciatieri/

Kawtar Lebdaoui is an associate Professor and a researcher (HDR) in sociology at Sidi Mohamed Ben Abdellah University (Fez). Her research interests are varied, with a particular focus on gender dynamics, social economy and education. She is also an active member of the LaRECS-Fez, 2I2S-Fez, and RSSI-Rabat laboratories. Her field of involvement includes consulting projects in social sciences.

Fatima-Zahrae Berrfai: A Ph.D. student in Curriculum & Instruction at Indiana State University, where she serves as a Teacher Assistant, mentoring teacher trainees and facilitating professional development. An aspiring educator of Indiana State Teachers Association, Fatima-Zahrae is a TEFL-certified Fulbright Scholar, with a commitment to international education highlighted by her work adjudicating 5 U.S. Arabic Debating Championships with Qatar Debate and coaching debate teams. During her Fulbright at Wofford College, she taught Arabic and led cross-cultural events that fostered intercultural competence. https://www.linkedin.com/in/fatima-zahrae-berrfai-975230288/

Sanaa Bouarourou: Associate professor at the Faculty of Education Sciences, Mohamed 5 University.Member of the « Educational Policies and Social Dynamics » laboratory. Involved in the developement of research in the fields of professional skills dévelopment, personal branding and marketing. E-mail: s.bouarourou@um5r.ac.ma"

Dimitris Soudias is the PI of the DFG-funded research project 'Welfare Visions 2.0: Future-Making Practices in the Social Economies of Athens and Berlin' (Department of Political Science, Universität Kassel). His research builds on political sociology and cultural economy approaches to study such issues as happiness, solidarity, social innovation and care in neoliberalism. Email: d.soudias@rug.nl

Hanane Bouketaya, University Professor, Sociology. Faculty of Arts and Humanities, Mohammed V University, Rabat, Morocco Work Fields, Family, Migration and Gender. b.hanan@yahoo.fr

Simone D'Alessandro: Researcher of General Sociology at the University of Chieti-Pescara. Courses: 1. Social Research Method; 2. Sociology of creative processes; 3. Welfare service management techniques. Main lines of research: a) the relationships between creative and innovative processes; b) interactions between humans and non-humans. Orcid:0000-0002-9366-7220; https://dea.unich.it/home-dalessandro-simone-18259

- *End of the newsletter* -