

Methodological issues, challenges and good practice in Social Science and Humanities research

Chairpersons: Peter Thijssen, University of Antwerp, Belgium and Catherine Fallon, University of Liege,
peter.thijssen@uantwerpen.be and catherine.fallon@uliege.be

This session calls for presentations and critical discussion on the use of quantitative, qualitative and mixed methods in risk research, with a focus on the governance of radiological risks. We particularly welcome contributions on innovative methods and experiences, challenges and good practice in Social Science and Humanities research related to ionizing radiation.

Contributions addressing quantitative research in social sciences studies are invited to reflect, among other, on techniques to improve the quality of surveys related to technological risks. Possible topics may include quantitative or qualitative ways to limit response bias, the merits of using survey embedded experiments, the challenges of conducting protest surveys, the ways to make reliable cross-national comparisons, good practices regarding equivalent question wordings and detection of non-attitudes, the problems of differential item functioning, the do's and don'ts of using so-called vignettes in a survey.

Contributions addressing qualitative social science research are invited to discuss the use of interpretative methods to generate hypothesis or to gain in-depth knowledge for a better comprehension of social phenomena. Such methods give due emphasis to the meanings, experiences, and views of all the participants. The variety of qualitative research methods (QRM) is usually underestimated, as are the quality criteria mobilized to ensure internal / external validity to address the research question.

The session particularly encourages contributions reporting on research designs integrating the use of qualitative and quantitative research methods, as well as on experiences from trans-disciplinary research studies.

We invite participants of the conference to attend two refresher courses on methods on Thursday and Friday from 8.00 until 9.00.