

BSA Social Statistics Annual Report (2018/2019)

Name: Social Statistics

Established: April 2018

Number of members: 44 members

Income: closing balance at 30/04/2019 is £200.

Aims:

Statistical methods have been essential to many fields of sociology for decades. The critical study of social inequalities, of populations, and the study of social change across space and time would be unthinkable without the help of quantitative methods and statistics. There has been an increasing interest in statistical methods by employers and students of other social sciences in recent year, who recognize that statistical literacy is an important skill in the job market for graduates. Large funding bodies have acknowledged this by major successful initiatives such as Q-step. Recent BSA annual conferences have also seen an increase in quantitative papers. Yet, until recently, statistics has played a marginal role in British Sociology and there has not been a dedicated space for quantitatively oriented sociologists to meet, exchange and critique work and develop new ideas. The new social statistics study group wants to offer a forum to do just that. The group aims to bring sociologists with a shared interest in statistical (or mixed) methods together and to offer a shared space to meet, develop ideas, present work. We would like to invite everybody with an interest in statistical (or other quantitative) methods along to the new study group.

The study group also aims to engage in local events and BSA conference events that promote statistical sociological methods.

Review of the year:

- 2018/19 saw the establishment of the Social Statistics study group, with Charlotte Brookfield, Stefanie Doebler, Jennifer Hampton, and Aneta Piekut the founding co-conveners.
- The study group organised a stream plenary session, within the Methodological Innovations stream, at the BSA Annual Conference (24th April 2019, Glasgow Caledonian University) addressing the conference theme of ‘Challenging Hierarchies and Inequalities’. The invited speaker was Professor Wendy Olsen (University of Manchester) who delivered a methodological and substantive presentation entitled ‘Challenging Gender Inequalities in South Asia using Quantitative Evidence: Social Statistics as Applied Child Labour’.
- The study group also organized and hosted a workshop at the BSA 2019 conference, on the 24th April. ‘Time on our side – Methodological developments in sociological research using time use data’. This was organized by Pierre Walthey.

Concluding remarks:

The Social Statistics study group looks forward to the forthcoming year. The group is currently discussing future events, such as possible BSA 2020 sessions.

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