

Special Session Proposal for ERSA2026

Title

Beyond GDP: New Measurement Frameworks, Inequalities, and Economic Sustainability

Organizer

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Purpose

The limitations of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) as a single metric for assessing social cohesion, sustainability, and well-being are now widely acknowledged in contemporary debates. The challenge of developing and implementing socio-economic indicators that look beyond GDP is nowadays essential. Recognising that GDP limits the capture of essential aspects such as wealth distribution, environmental health, or quality of life, this session invites theoretical and empirical contributions addressing the challenge of developing and implementing socio-economic indicators that look beyond GDP.

The emphasis falls on the dynamic interplay between inequalities (in income, opportunity, and gender) and the quality of institutions (governance, corruption, trust, etc.). The session aims to serve as a convergence point for innovative research and invites theoretical and empirical contributions on (non-exhaustive) themes:

- New Measurement Methodologies: Development and application of composite well-being indicators (e.g., BES, Sustainability Indices, Happiness Indices) and methodologies for integrating environmental and social costs.
- Institutions-Inequalities Interaction: Studies on the role of governance and institutional integrity in promoting equity and sustainable growth.
- Policy Implications: Proposals on integrating Beyond GDP metrics into national and international policy-making cycles.