

Organization
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LOCATION, ACCOMMODATION AND TRAVELLING

The Congress will be held at the Superior Institute of Social and Political Sciences of the Campus da Ajuda in Lisbon. Lisbon has a wide variety of hotels and other temporary living accommodations. Students and others attending the Congress would also have bed and breakfast options as well as other residential accommodation options. The Lisbon International Airport is located close to downtown. Those intending to arrive via air travel to the Congress are encouraged to seek additional information about airport transportation on the internet.

Updated information about the Congress may be obtained at the website of the congress (www.irsa2012.com) that will be on line very soon. Alternatively, interested parties may **correspond directly** with the company in charge of the secretariat and the congress organization at info@irsa2012.com.



FIRST CALL

2012 LISBON



The New Rural World: From Crises to Opportunities
July 29 to August 4 | 2012 | Lisbon | PORTUGAL

HOST INSTITUTIONS

Superior Institute of Agronomy, Technical University of Lisbon

The International Rural Sociology Association invites everyone who is interested and involved in social aspects of agricultural and rural community issues to participate in the **XIIIth World Congress of Rural Sociology**.

PROGRAM BACKGROUND AND FOCUS

We are at a critical junction of modern history. On the one hand, we celebrate human creativity and capacity to transform nature. On the other hand, we are concerned that these very same efforts may be leading to a catastrophic conclusion. Globally we have over one billion people suffering from hunger and malnutrition. The poor have been devastated by a recent food price crisis brought on in part by the conversion of food to produce bio-fuels. At the same time, many suffer from obesity, diabetes, cancer and related health problems brought on by the food they eat. And research on climate change raises additional concerns about the sustainability of the way we produce and distribute foods.

Wars, deepening financial crises, corruption, political alienation and apathy reduce our resilience to cope with natural disasters. Under-resourced governments, overwhelmed by the neo-liberal assault, military conflicts, and declining public revenues, are unable to provide the social programs needed by the victims of human generated disasters, including environmental disasters. Self-interest and short-term thinking, reflected in today's global economy, undermine the legitimacy of leadership being provided by the global corporate elite.

Public apathy and distrust of fundamental societal institutions have resulted in increased political alienation. And as global pessimism widens, more and more people live in fear of the future or seek refuge in old dogmas.

It is time for sociologists to respond to these problems. We have the capacity to diagnose the causes of these problems, explore solutions to them and critically evaluate alternative paradigms.

Using classical sociological theory and concepts as well as more modern ones, we invite you to re-define the rural-urban divide, to explore new forms of social organization, to examine alternative agri-food regimes, and to re-envision utopias.


The framework for this World Congress has tentatively been defined by the following Preliminary Session topics:

- agricultural systems and policy responses to food and energy crisis
- climate change and sustainable ruralities
- consuming the rural, rural consumption
- technological ruralities
- alternative food movements, local foods
- the role of old and new co-operatives in agro-food systems
- food and water security
- poverty, marginalization and hunger
- food safety and food quality
- local responses to a global crisis
- third sector and rural development
- family farming transformation and survival
- ethnicity, race and population movements migration
- rural restructuring and adaptation
- social and economic dynamics of rural life
- spatial perspectives associated with rurality
- multifunctionality, sustainability and the new rural society
- rural gender issues
- land tenure/landlessness
- implications of the financial crisis for rural development.
- new technologies, seeds, bio-piracy,
- mobility and migration
- rural restructuring
- social and economic dynamics of rural life
- future of agriculture

The program for the Congress will include keynote lectures by invited speakers as well as opportunities for participants to present contributed papers and/or posters.



Reidar Almas
(President of IRSA)



Manuel Belo Moreira
(Chair of the Organizing Committee)