



Special Session Proposal

Determinants and Effects of Regional Differences in Gender Equality

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Abstract

Achieving more gender equality and empowering women is one of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals outlined in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development adopted by the United Nations, along with such goals as reducing poverty, combatting the impacts of climate change, and promoting strong institutions. Gender inequality throughout the world is declining in all major domains, such as labor market participation, financial inclusion, educational attainment, and health. This decline is occurring across diverse religious and cultural traditions. In some areas, however, progress toward gender equality has been limited. Consequently, a better understanding of the determinants of gender equality is needed so that appropriate policies can be designed.

Recent research highlighted an important role of the regional environment in promoting gender equality in various domains. This research clearly indicates that the level of gender (in)equality varies strongly not only across countries, but also across regions within countries. Possible reasons for regional variation in the levels of gender equality within countries include, but are not limited to, regional industrial and occupational structures, legacies of political regimes, formal institutions and the presence of family-friendly infrastructures, and regional social norms concerning gender roles. Moreover, research suggests that regional gender inequalities tend to be persistent over long periods of time. In addition, the existence of persistent regional gender inequalities may significantly hamper regional development. Hence, understanding the determinants of regional differences in gender equality and their effects on regional development is crucial, in order to design appropriate policies that aim at fostering social inclusion and regional development. This call invites paper submissions that deal with the drivers of regional differences in gender equality, the effects of regional levels of gender inequality on regional economic outcomes, and discuss policies to successfully promote gender equality in regions.