

# COMPASSS NEWSLETTER

## N°20 (11 Jan 2009)

### COMParative methods for the Advancement of Systematic cross-case analysis and Small-N Studies

<http://www.compass.org>

Main items :

1. COMPASSS 2<sup>nd</sup> generation – new site !
2. Calls for papers (NB deadlines 15 Jan & 1 Feb 2009)
3. Key recent publications

#### --1. COMPASSS 2<sup>ND</sup> GENERATION – NEW SITE !

Major news to share : we are glad & proud to inform you that the **2<sup>nd</sup> generation COMPASSS International resource site** has just been launched. The URL is unchanged [ <http://www.compass.org> ].

In short, the site has been expanded and improved in many ways :

##### **1. A more collective effort**

We have considerably expanded the core of people actually feeding and managing the site – with 14 experts (from Europe, USA & Japan) now constituting the core « research management group », plus the « core partners » around them. See <http://www.compass.org/pages/who.html> .

##### **2. Improved layout etc**

There are many changes and improvements in the layout, user-friendliness, navigability, etc. Enjoy !

##### **3. Existing pages pursued & improved**

Most of the existing pages (from the « 1st generation » site, 2003 – 2008) are being pursued & improved :

- Key recent publications -- <http://www.compass.org/pages/announcements/recent.html>
- COMPASSS activities -- <http://www.compass.org/pages/announcements/compasssa.html>
- Training -- <http://www.compass.org/pages/announcements/training.html>
- Conferences, workshops and events -- <http://www.compass.org/pages/announcements/conferences.html>
- Links -- <http://www.compass.org/pages/links/other.html>
- International bibliographical database -- <http://www.compass.org/pages/resources/international.html#>
- List of small-N people -- <http://www.compass.org/pages/resources/smalln.asp>
- COMPASSS working papers (now becoming a more formal WP series -- <http://www.compass.org/pages/resources/compassswp.html> )
- Conferences, workshops & seminars (call for papers) -- <http://www.compass.org/pages/announcements/conferences.html>

##### **4. Major additions**

The ambition of these major new pages is to provide more « hands-on » information and advice to users, to share experiences, and also to open up space for interaction.

- Best practices page -- <http://www.compass.org/pages/resources/bestpractices.html>
- Software review page -- <http://www.compass.org/pages/resources/software.html>
- Questions and answers forum [NB work in progress] -- [http://www.compass.org/pages/interactive\\_tools/qandas.html](http://www.compass.org/pages/interactive_tools/qandas.html)
- Mailing list -- [http://www.compass.org/pages/interactive\\_tools/maillinglist.html](http://www.compass.org/pages/interactive_tools/maillinglist.html)
- Configurational Comparative Methods textbook -- <http://www.compass.org/pages/links/ccmtextbook.html>

NB practical note (as of 11 Jan 2009) : **a few of the core pages** (in particular the « International bibliographical database », probably the most consulted page so far) **are in the process of being re-launched, and thus may be empty for a little while**. Just visit the site a few days later and this should be fixed. Thank you for your patience – this is quite some work.

For sure, there are still a few « bugs » here and there. Please notify these to the contactpersons / page managers mentioned at the bottom of each page.

Finally, I would like to personally thank Damien Bol for the huge work he has put into this. This 're-foundation' of COMPASSS could not have been achieved without his skills and energy.

On behalf of the COMPASSS research management group (Benoit Rihoux & Damien Bol at the Université catholique de Louvain, and Wendy Olsen and Hisako Nomura at the University of Manchester) and of the whole COMPASSS steering group,

Benoit Rihoux

## --2. CALLS FOR PAPERS

Two call for papers – **Note the approaching deadlines (15 Jan 09 and 1 Feb 09)**

### 1. SASE Mini-Conference, Paris, France, 16-18 July 09

[SASE = Society for the Advancement of Socio-Economics]

#### **Theme 4: Analyzing Institutional Diversity and Change: Using Set Theoretical and Configurational Methods in Comparative Research.**

This mini-conference invites papers that develop or apply new comparative methodologies, particularly QCA and related approaches (fs/QCA, MVQCA, etc.) Understanding the causes and consequences of institutional diversity in modern capitalism has long faced methodological challenges, such as the small-N problem (many variables, few cases), complex causation (involving the conjunction of multiple factors) or equifinality (where more than one path leads to an outcome). Recent advances in QCA and related approaches give new opportunities for causal inference based on more systematic cross-case comparisons, as well as chances for better methodological triangulation with traditional regression analysis or historical and case study methods. Much work remains to be done to more clearly situate approaches within existing theoretical debates, strive for greater clarity in their empirical applications, and test their strengths and limits. We invite papers on a wide range of empirical topics related to comparative political economy, economic sociology and organizational analysis that share an interest in applying new methodological comparative approaches. Prospective papers may include macro-comparative analyses of institutional and policy arrangements, their outcomes, and strategies of adjustment in different countries, as well as micro-analyses of firms and organizations.

Organizers: Ruth Aguilera, Sabina Avdagic & Gregory Jackson

**NB the deadline for the submission of paper proposals is 15 January, 2009.** Please contact Gregory Jackson (g.s.jackson@bath.ac.uk)

### 2. ECPR General Conference, Potsdam, Germany, 10-12 Sept 09

[ECPR = European Consortium for Political Research]

#### **Panel 86: Fs/QCA and Analytical Politics**

see details at : <http://www.compass.org/pages/announcements/conferences.html>

**The deadline for the submission of paper proposals is 1 February, 2009.** Please contact Barbara Vis (b.vis@fsw.vu.nl)

### **--3. KEY RECENT PUBLICATIONS**

see details at : <http://www.compass.org/pages/announcements/recent.html>

Apart from the “Configurational Comparative Methods” textbook (Rihoux & Ragin, eds, 2008) and the “Redesigning Social Inquiry” book (Ragin, 2008): two major recent books to mention :

-THE CONSOLIDATION OF DEMOCRACY. Comparing Europe and Latin America by Carsten Q. Schneider (Routledge)

-POLITICS, GENDER, AND CONCEPTS. Theory and Methodology by Gary GOERTZ and Amy G. MAZUR (eds) (Cambridge University Press)

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