

Institutions for Development: The Politics of Democracy, Regulation and Collective Action in Latin America

SLAS
SOCIETY for
LATIN AMERICAN STUDIES
Annual Conference
The University of Newcastle
13-15 April 2007

CALL FOR PAPERS

After 30 years of differing forms of transition, Latin America has leveled the playing field in terms of political processes and democratic systems of government are now the norm. Yet, development issues still remain unresolved: inequality has widened and poverty has increased in absolute numbers. If there is evidence to affirm that the absent of political liberties can make a setback in economic performance and *vice-versa*, it must be regarded in the foundation of both liberties together. This connection is important since developing and transitional countries need the political and economic institutions that can guarantee their democratic and human development.

Policy stability and coherence depend on the mechanisms by which policies are discussed and implemented. The main objective of this panel is to unpack different patterns of policymaking in Latin America in democratic systems by combining and complementing works on "political institutions". For this, it will

focus on three key areas: (i) the importance of democracy for development; (ii) the role of regulation; and (iii) the impact of organized actors in economic policymaking. For that purpose, the papers to be presented will combine quantitative and qualitative methods of research to determine the political and economic factors affecting the quality of democracy, regulation and public policy.

The panel addresses the question of how the institutional mechanisms (formal and informal) can affect and eventually transform the quality and coherence of public policies. In doing so, the selected papers will provide evidence from Latin America on: Why some societies with "proper" institutions are not able to reach a functional development? What affects the interactions between political institutions and market institutions? How are political interests organized and what is the role of special interest groups in economic reform, political institutional-building and regulation?

For further information, and to submit a paper proposal, a short abstract (100 words) should be sent to the panel conveners no later than **15 January 2007**.

Panel conveners:

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