

## **Section 11 - Metodologia della ricerca (Research Methodology)**

***Chairs: Luigi Curini, Vincenzo Memoli***

*Elenco e descrizione di tutti i panels*

### **Panel 11.2 Comparing experimental, digital, and multilevel methods in the study of contemporary xenophobia**

*Chairs: Mauro Barisione*

The rise of sovereignist forces and populist authoritarian parties, from the EU to the US, has brought a new light on the importance of understanding the origins and nature of contemporary xenophobia, i.e. negative attitudes or open hostility toward immigrants and other out-group minorities. Public opinion research is ever more reluctant to address this topic through traditional survey methods, because individual responses to questions explicitly focusing on race and identity-based issues are exposed to potentially high social desirability bias. For this reason, experimental designs have increasingly been used to study attitudes toward ethnic out-groups, in order to capture, and to do so less obtrusively, attitudes that may be prejudiced only at an implicit - and thus relatively unaware - level. Online survey experiments based on multifactorial within-subjects designs have typically been conducted to these purposes. However, digital conversations on social media platforms do also provide scholars with very rich textual data and metadata for sentiment, network, and content analysis. Moreover, multilevel analyses combining individual-level survey and macro-level statistical data can offer a further perspective on the study of xenophobia, for instance by estimating levels of hostility toward immigrants on the basis of institutional, demographic, socioeconomic, and other aggregate data for each geographical and time-series unit. This panel welcomes papers that study possible manifestations of xenophobia empirically by employing one (or more) of these three – experimental, digital, and multilevel – methods. In addition to methodological rigour, a certain epistemological commitment in reflecting on the potential and limits of the method(s) employed is encouraged.