



IIAS2026 CONFERENCE

Seoul, South Korea

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**Growth for Society: Collaborative
Governance, Social Innovation, and Public Value**



iias-iisa.org/iias-2026-conference/

Data-Driven Governance: Performance, monitoring, and AI-enabled public administration

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Core Question

How can states measure, monitor, and improve governance performance under conditions of technological disruption, strategic competition, and rising societal complexity?

Background

This autonomous track explores how public administrations can measure, evaluate, and enhance governance performance in an era shaped by AI, geopolitical fragmentation, industrial transformation, and complex societal challenges. The track focuses on quantitative and comparative approaches to governance analysis, with particular attention to the role of data infrastructures, computational methods, and performance-monitoring systems in supporting adaptive and resilient states.

We welcome contributions examining how governments assess administrative capacity, public value creation, policy effectiveness, institutional resilience, and innovation outcomes across different national and regional contexts. The track is especially interested in the opportunities and risks associated with AI-enabled governance, including algorithmic decision-making, digital-state capacity, accountability mechanisms, and new forms of public-private coordination within global value chains.

Relevant topics include, but are not limited to:

- Quantitative indicators of governance quality, administrative capacity, and public-sector performance
- AI and data-driven approaches to policy monitoring and evaluation



- Comparative measurement of industrial-policy effectiveness and innovation governance
- Metrics and methodologies for resilience, strategic autonomy, and supply-chain governance
- Computational public administration and digital governance analytics
- Bureaucratic capacity, institutional adaptation, and comparative state effectiveness
- Public-value measurement and social-impact evaluation
- Governance of AI ecosystems and cross-sector collaboration
- Big data, machine learning, and predictive analytics in public administration
- Ethical, political, and methodological challenges in governance quantification
- Comparative perspectives from the Global North and South
- Open-government data, transparency, and accountability systems
- Human-capital measurement and talent strategies in AI transitions
- Governance dashboards, observatories, and real-time administrative monitoring

Beyond presenting individual research findings, this track is designed to contribute to the consolidation of an emerging field at the intersection of computational public administration, governance analytics, and AI-enabled state capacity measurement.

The track seeks to generate three types of outputs:

- Conceptual convergence, by identifying shared analytical frameworks for governance performance in AI-driven environments
- Methodological advancement, by encouraging the development and comparison of computational, quantitative, and mixed-methods approaches
- Comparative empirical grounding, by bringing together evidence from diverse institutional and regional contexts, particularly across the Global North and South

A key ambition is to move beyond isolated case studies toward a more systematic understanding of how states measure and adapt performance in technologically mediated governance systems.



Intellectual rationale and research gap

Despite rapid advances in digital government, AI-enabled administration, and performance management systems, governance measurement remains conceptually and methodologically fragmented. This fragmentation reflects a deeper disjunction between how performance is traditionally defined, through relatively stable administrative indicators, and how it is increasingly produced in practice through algorithmic systems, real-time data infrastructures, and geopolitically shaped governance environments. As a result, existing frameworks struggle to capture how these technologies and constraints jointly reshape what “state performance” means, how it can be observed, and how it should be evaluated.

In particular, three gaps remain insufficiently addressed. First, governance indicators remain largely static and institutionally bounded, limiting their ability to capture dynamic and adaptive state capacities. Second, emerging AI systems in public administration are often studied in isolation from broader performance measurement regimes, resulting in a disconnect between technological capability and governance evaluation. Third, comparative research on governance performance still lacks robust frameworks for systematically integrating Global North and South perspectives under shared analytical standards.

This track addresses these gaps by advancing a unified research agenda on data-driven governance measurement and AI-enabled performance monitoring systems.

Track format and scholarly exchange

To strengthen cumulative learning, the track will adopt a structured discussant model. Each paper session will include designated discussants, and authors will be invited to provide short written reflections on at least one other paper within the track.

Members

- **Marco De la Cruz** holds a PhD in Public Governance, an MSc in Statistics and Data Science (KU Leuven), and an Advanced Master in Development Evaluation (University of Antwerp). He is Scientific Director at the International Institute of Administrative Sciences (IIAS), leading applied research on government performance and coordinating international projects. He has



contributed to projects including COST Action EfficientJustice (EU court benchmarking), REMIT (EU Horizon semiconductor policy), and MLUMSE (ERASMUS+ higher education reform). As former Senior Research Expert at Ipsos, he served on the AI Advisory Board for European Public Affairs, applied machine learning to Eurobarometer sentiment analysis, and delivered analytics to the European Central Bank (Consumer Expectations Survey, SPACE payment study). He designed methodology for a European Commission DG Competition study on payment cards and analyzed the OECD Trust Survey. He recently trained the European Parliament on AI integration for policy research. His work bridges governance, advanced quantitative methods, and responsible AI use in research.

- **Anna Mergoni** is a Senior Researcher at HIVA, KU Leuven, within the Poverty and Migration Research Group. Her research focuses on education policy, equal opportunities in education, school funding, ICT use in schools, school leadership, and AI integration. Her methodological interests include policy evaluation, literature reviews, econometrics, and programming in R.



Practicalities

Key Links

- Conference website: <https://www.ias-iisa.org/ias-2026-conference/>
- Submission system: <https://www.conftool.org/ias2026/>
- Contact: ias-conference@ias-iisa.org

Important Dates

- Abstract / Panel submission deadline: **30 August 2026**
- Notification of acceptance and opening of registration: **30 August 2026**
- Full paper submission and registration deadline: **4 October 2026**

Submission Guidelines

- Unless otherwise specified in the track call, abstracts are limited to **500 words**. They should clearly outline the research question, theoretical framework, methodology, main findings (or expected findings), and implications.
- Accepted abstracts are expected to be developed into full papers.
- **Panels** are session proposals submitted under the main conference theme. A panel proposal includes a title, abstract, proposed chairperson(s), and a list of expected presentations. Panels are not required to produce full papers.

Evaluation

Proposals (papers and panels) are evaluated by the chair(s) (or co-chairs) of the track to which they are submitted. Evaluation criteria include:

- Academic quality and rigour
- Relevance to the track theme and overall conference theme
- Thematic fit and originality
- Clarity and quality of presentation

Paper Requirements

- Maximum length: **6,000 words** (all inclusive, including references).
- Structure: abstract, introduction, main body (developing the research question, theoretical framework, methodology, findings, and implications), conclusion, and references.

