EXTENDED DEADLINE FOR THE SUBMISSION OF ABSTRACTS

Call for papers
Special issue of the international journal
Informatica e Diritto
on:
“Law and Computational Social Science”
editors:
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Over the past 50 years, the advances in information science and technologies, together with the emergence of new scientific paradigms, not least that represented by complexity science, have significantly transformed the study of human beings and societies.

Social sciences have witnessed the gradual rise of a new approach to research through which the explanation of social phenomena is mediated not only by verbally expressed theories, but by the use of the formal and operational language of computation, by simulations and by the use of advanced technologies. This approach promises to bridge the gap between natural sciences, on the one hand, and social sciences and humanities, on the other, in terms of falsifiability and cumulativeness.

The origins of this trend, that can, briefly, be defined as "computational social science", go back to the 1960s when the spread of computers among social scientists paved the way for a school of thought encompassing a large number of scholars from Herbert Simon and Thomas Schelling to Joshua Epstein, father of generative social science.

Nowadays, computational social science represents an integrated and interdisciplinary way to analyze social phenomena characterized by the use of advanced computing tools that go beyond the traditional uses of statistics and mathematics. Enriched by the contribution of different disciplines, computational social science includes several approaches and methods:

- **Automated information extraction**
  Algorithmic methods of parsing and coding documents to extract information from data that can be used, amongst other things, for designing computational models or performing advanced statistical analyses.

- **Social network analysis**
  Graph theory applied to social groups and systems.
• **Complexity theory**
  Application of principles, concepts and models of complexity science to the study of social phenomena.

• **Social simulation models**
  Set of different simulation methods spanning from system dynamics to cellular automata and *agent-based social simulations*.

• **Geospatial analysis (socio-GIS or social GIS)**
  Geographic information systems (GIS) allowing the spatially-referenced analysis of social phenomena.

One of the most interesting features of computational social science is the move toward an holistic approach in the study of social phenomena. This may shed a new light on interactions and feedback between different levels of reality. Social simulations, in particular, represent an interesting methodology for the analysis of the relationships that link the micro level (biological bases of human behavior, individual cognitive dynamics) with the macro level (group behaviors and cultural, social, economic and institutional dynamics) of social reality.

The computational approach is already widely developed in some areas: sociological analysis as well as economics are achieving very promising results in terms of comprehension, explanation and, in some cases, prediction of phenomena under investigation. In this scenario, it is worth reflecting on the intersections between law and the perspectives opened up by this scientific paradigm, both in terms of theoretical implications (for the novel contribution that computational social science can provide in drawing the attention of legal scholars on the social dimension of legal phenomena), and operational profiles (to give just one example, the support that computational social science methods and tools can provide to policy and decision-making or to the regulatory impact analysis).

This special issue of “Informatica e diritto” aims at bringing together contributions that, starting from different perspectives (law, legal informatics, sociology, economics, physics, cognitive science and computational social science itself, etc.) discuss research topics in this area at a theoretical level or present computational social science applications that can be considered relevant for the legal field. Interdisciplinary insights are also encouraged.

Authors are invited to submit papers in English, not exceeding 56,000 characters in length, in any of the following formats: MS Word, Open/Libre Office, LaTeX. Submissions should be sent to the editors Sebastiano Faro (faro@ittig.cnr.it) and Nicola Lettieri (nlettieri@unisannio.it) and to the Journal's secretary Simona Binazzi (redazione_leD@ittig.cnr.it).

**Important Deadlines**

- **15 January 2012** Submission of title and abstract
- **31 January 2012** Notification of acceptance
- **31 March 2012** Submission of full paper
- **30 April 2012** Notification of peer comments
- **30 May 2012** Submission of final version