



**MID-TERM CONFERENCE OF  
THE SOCIOLOGY OF RISK AND  
UNCERTAINTY NETWORKS IN  
ESA (RN22) AND ISA (TG04)**



**MULTIDIMENSIONAL RISKS IN THE XXI CENTURY**  
With a special stream on the Metropolis and the role of safety, security  
and uncertainty in the growing Mega-Cities.

Risk and uncertainty are defining features of current political and media discourses and of a wider cultural *Zeitgeist*. Amid processes of reflexive modernisation where existing categories and beliefs are called into question, the need for new categories, analytical frameworks and ideas for studying how risk and uncertainty are interwoven within everyday life has become increasingly apparent, more so during the Covid-19 pandemic. Processes of globalization that have constantly given rise to new forms of risk and contributed to changing strategies of intervention by the state and other actors have been challenged in a way that would have been deemed unconceivable only a few months before. This has brought to light a systemic inner fragility that Modernity thought to have overcome and forced many leaders and thinkers to invoke a radical change in the face of an unknown future. All that was thought of as solid and long-lasting seems to ‘melt into air’, as Marx once put it. This conference welcomes contributions on the analysis of uncertainty and risk or, moreover, regarding the communication of uncertainty and risk.

One core feature of the conference is a stream of sessions exploring how these changing dynamics influence life in the growing megacities of the world. These cities can be thought of as prominent new actors in the era of global politics (Beck). From the environmental costs of their existence to the socio-economic processes that take place there; from the previously unnoticed weaknesses brought to light by the pandemic to the modelling of new relationships and spatial configurations, urban areas seem to be the ideal research location. Cities are no longer merely places where strangers meet (Sennett), but have become the stage where macro-processes and micro-strategies clash and adapt to one another – generating new forms of vulnerability and coping in the process. New and unforeseen forms of grassroots relationality may emerge here, such as associationism and cultural or solidarity networks, as a reaction against a depersonalizing functional pressure in banlieues as well as in abandoned historical centres. New lifestyles and rituals are also appearing, some of which breach the usual constructive/destructive dichotomy, such as new forms of nightlife, parties, and practices related to being together and to sex; while others are specifically Covid-related, but could become part of the “new normal”. The identification of these risks in urban areas has allowed the birth of new definitions of “urban security” which are closely related to the analysis of citizens’ understandings of risk and have consequences for, and effects on, smaller cities. The concerns raised by those living in large, segmented cities include urban decay, social exclusion, lack of services, and a more general erosion of the foundations of local communities. Some of these common concerns leave room for unfounded alarmism and repressive policies, with these responses exacerbating the sense of uncertainty among some citizens and strongly influencing local and national political life.

The conference will provide participants with the opportunity to listen to distinguished experts, through plenaries with key-note speakers and discussants, as well as to present their own empirical and theoretical research to an international audience in a wide range of sessions.

Due to the continuing pandemic, the conference – which should have taken place in Perugia and Narni – will be hosted online by the University of Perugia, one of the oldest academic seats in the world. The university has a long tradition in studying the themes of risk, uncertainty and security, inaugurating in 2006 the undergraduate degree course in “Investigation and Security Sciences”, soon followed by the Masters degree course in “Socio-Anthropological Sciences for Integration and Social Security”; both situated in Narni.

As usual with our mid-term conferences, we welcome papers which explore aspects of risk and uncertainty across a broad range of empirical topics and sociological and inter-disciplinary perspectives. For this conference we particularly welcome papers with a policy and practice focus, showing how sociological expertise has been implemented with regard to topics such as:

- Theorizing risk and uncertainty (classics and new perspectives)
- Methodological innovations in researching risk and uncertainty
- Human relations and strength of social capital
- Difference, familiarity and trust
- Ethnic, linguistic and religious marginalization
- Health and wellbeing
- Risk governance and security
- Social/Urban security and risk management
- Metropolis and environmental sustainability
- Power and crime in the city
- Acceleration: rhythms of the city and their shaping of stress and frustration
- The urban centre and the reorganization of the suburbs
- Staging: nightlife, eccentricity and deviancy
- Prostitution between the space of the city and the web

### **Key-note speakers**

Lia Fassari – Fiorenza Gamba – Justus L. Uitermark

### **Abstracts**

Abstracts (max 300 words), including a maximum of five keywords, should be sent to the email address [abstracts@soru21.org](mailto:abstracts@soru21.org) Please see submission and acceptance deadlines below.

### **Fees**

| FEES                                | Early Bird | Later Registration |
|-------------------------------------|------------|--------------------|
| ISA & ESA members                   | € 50       | € 100              |
| Non-Members                         | € 85       | € 135              |
| Students & ISA Category C Countries | € 25       | € 50               |

Fees can be paid by bank transfer using the following details:

Account Holder: Dipartimento di Filosofia, Scienze Sociali, Umane e della Formazione

Bank: Unicredit Banca spa

IBAN: IT 68 I 02008 03043 000102979228

Swift/Bic: UNCRITM1J11

Reason: Fee SoRU21 cs 11905

### **Dates and deadlines**

Dates: October 20-21, 2021.

Deadline for abstract submission: May 16, 2021

Communication of acceptance: July 5, 2021

### **Website**

For any further information and update, please refer to our website

<https://www.soru21.org/>