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 every aspect of everyday life becomes increasingly apparent. Processes of globalization, and their economic, social and political dimensions, give rise to new forms of risk and contribute to changing strategies of intervention by the state and other actors. Meanwhile the models of interplay across different actors and their respective spheres of influence continue to shift. All that was thought of as solid and long-lasting seems to ‘melt into air’, as Marx once put it. New tools are required and 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. From the environmental costs of its existence to the socio-economic processes that take place there and model new relationships and spatial configurations, urban areas seem to be the ideal research ground for this kind of enterprise. 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 are uneasy to read with the usual dichotomy constructive/destructive, such as new forms of nightlife, parties, and practices related to being together and to sex. As a consequence, the identification of new risks in urban areas has allowed the birth of new definitions of “urban security” which, according to the new approaches, are closely related to the analysis of citizens’ understandings of risk and have consequences 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 popular 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 focused sessions.

The conference will take place in Perugia and Narni and will be hosted by the University of Perugia, one of the oldest academic seats in the world. A number of activities beyond the conference sessions themselves will be planned, involving the wider academic community in Perugia, not least the graduate and undergraduate programmes in ‘Sciences of Investigation and Security’ and the ‘Socio-Anthropological Sciences for Integration and Social Security’.

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
- Mental health and wellbeing
- Risk governance and security
- Social/Urban security and risk management
- Metropolis and environmental sustainability
- Power and crime in the city
- Acceleration: the rhythms of the city as a factor 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. Besides individual abstracts, it is possible to propose a panel including title, brief description, details of organisers and max 4 abstracts. Please see submission and acceptance deadlines below.

**Fees**

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<td>ISA &amp; ESA members</td>
<td>€ 100</td>
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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
Swift/Bic: UNCRITM1J11
IBAN: IT 68 I 02008 03043 000102979228
Reason: Fee SoRU21 cs 11905

**Travel Grants**
Two travel grants, open to PhD students and early career researchers (researchers who defended their PhD thesis in 2017 or more recently), will be awarded by the ESA Research Network 22 board, based on their evaluation of the best abstracts. The travel grants will each be of 250 euros towards travel and accommodation, plus waived conference fees. Please mention on your abstract if you want to be considered for this and briefly clarify how you meet the eligibility criteria.

**Dates and deadlines**
Dates: October 13-14 2020, before the IV Festival of Sociology to be held in Narni October 15-16 2020.
Deadline for abstract submission: March 15, 2020
Communication of acceptance: May 3, 2020

**Website**
For any further information and update, please refer to our website
https://www.soru21.org/