

18th Conference “Social Monitoring and Reporting in Europe”

Fears, Worries, and Anxieties in Contemporary Europe

Is there a societal climate change and what are the consequences for quality of life?

Villa Vigoni, Lovenno di Menaggio, October 7–9, 2024

Call for Papers

Fears, worries, and anxieties in their various forms and facets are increasingly impacting on contemporary European societies and seem to define the current societal climate. War, inflation, increased cost of living, a gloomy economic outlook, persistent pressure of migration, rising social and political conflicts are contributing to an atmosphere of widespread concerns fuelled by media reports and societal (including social media) discourses. Some of the fears and anxieties stem from the recent events like the COVID-19 pandemic, the Russian invasion of Ukraine, the energy crisis and price rises, while others are rooted in long-term processes of social and structural change, like modernization, globalization (including European de-industrialization), individualization and value changes (like the erosion of traditional gender roles), welfare state reforms, environmental degradation, climate change, and digitalization. The pervasiveness of individual and collective anxiety in contemporary societies has been conceptualized by some observers as “cultures of fear” (Furedi 2006, Glassner 1999), “liquid fear” (Bauman 2006), or “society of fear” (Bude 2018).

This call for papers invites contributions examining the various facets and manifestations, causes and consequences of fears, worries, and anxieties in European societies and their impact on quality of life and well-being. Issues that may be addressed include (but are not limited to):

- Evidence base concerning different forms and manifestations of fears, worries, and anxieties, in particular individual, collective, and societal fears.
- Description of fears in different life domains and social fields, like health related fears (e.g. pandemics, diseases, depression, mental illness), economic fears (e.g. unemployment, poverty, inflation, price rises, indebtedness, financial crises), social fears (e.g. social exclusion, loss of social status, loss of social relations), political fears (e.g. war, social and political conflicts, xenophobia, nationalism, populism, terrorism), cultural fears (e.g. loss of identity), ecological and environmental fears (e.g. climate change and global warming, natural and ecological disasters, environmental pollution), digital anxieties (e.g. artificial intelligence, cyber security, internet addiction, digital information overload, internet shopping, online gambling), media related fears (e.g. hate speeches), or fears of crime and violence.
- Longitudinal studies dealing with the temporal evolution of fears, worries and anxieties, in particular with the question whether the feeling of fear has increased in European societies over the past years.

- Analyses on how institutions and systems (labour market, health, housing, education, pensions, political parties) are contributing or reacting to fears, worries, and anxieties in society.
- Empirical analyses of the causes and drivers of fears, worries, and anxieties in European societies, including analysis of manipulation and instrumentalization of fears.
- Consequences and implications of fears, worries, and anxieties for quality of life and well-being (including the various aspects and sub-dimensions of quality of life/well-being).
- Studies on coping and dealing with fears and anxieties, i.e. individual, collective, institutional, and societal strategies and policies to overcoming fears and anxieties.
- Construction of indicators and indexes, including tools for social monitoring and social reporting on fears, worries, and anxieties.
- Methodological issues, particularly with regard to the measurement and the analysis of fears, worries, and anxieties.

We invite contributions using national as well as cross-national perspectives or specific case studies; comparative approaches and the use of large, internationally comparable datasets (e.g. ESS, ISSP, WVS) is encouraged by the conference organizers and particularly welcome.

As always, we are also inviting contributions presenting new initiatives, projects and releases for a session on recent developments in European social monitoring and reporting. In particular we are inviting contributions on the topic of the future of social monitoring and social reporting.

Submission procedure: The deadline for submissions is **May 15, 2024**. Please submit your abstract in English (no more than 500 words) to Christian Suter (christian.suter@unine.ch). The abstract should include the title of the contribution, all author(s) names and affiliations as well as contact information. It should contain clear information on the research methods, data sources and analytical tools to be used. Please indicate in the abstract submission if you are requesting a travel grant (see below). Decisions about the acceptance of submissions and travel grants will be made by the conference committee. Authors will be notified by **June 15, 2024** of abstract acceptance/rejection.

Travel grants: Thanks to the support of the World Society Foundation (Zurich, Switzerland) a limited number of travel grants will be available covering travel and/or accommodation costs (in full or in part) for one author per accepted paper using the most economical travel route. Researchers from Eastern Europe are in particular encouraged to apply.

Venue: The conference will be held at Villa Vigoni, Lovenno di Menaggio (Italy), October 7–9, 2024. There is no conference fee. For more information see: <https://www.villavigoni.eu>.

Conference committee: Jeroen Boelhouwer (SCP, The Hague), Peter Farago (formerly FORS, Lausanne), Laura Kestilä, (National Institute for Health and Welfare, Helsinki), Tadas Leončikas (Eurofound, Dublin), Heinz-Herbert Noll (formerly GESIS, Mannheim), Christian Suter (University Neuchâtel), István György Tóth (TARKI, Budapest).

For information on previous conferences see: <https://www.tarki.hu/villa-vigoni-conferences>.

Supporting institutions:

