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Erasmus School of
Health Policy
& Management



PANDEMIC & DISASTER Preparedness Center (PDPC)

CALL FOR PAPERS

Midterm Conference 2025 & PhD Workshop

Sociology of Risk and Uncertainty

European Sociological Association, Research Network 22

Caring during crisis: navigating risk and uncertainty in health, care and beyond

28, 29 and 30 October 2025, Erasmus School of Health Policy & Management, Erasmus University Rotterdam, the Netherlands

The year 2025 marks the 20th anniversary of the ESA's RN22 (*Sociology of Risk and Uncertainty*), a milestone that invites reflection on two decades of pioneering sociological inquiry into the dynamics of risk and uncertainty in modern societies. Since its inception, RN22 has provided a platform for scholars to examine the ways risks emerge, are communicated, and are managed across diverse societal domains. This anniversary is not only a moment to celebrate past achievements but also an opportunity to envision the future of risk sociology. As contemporary crises such as the COVID-19 pandemic, climate emergencies, and geopolitical conflicts challenge established paradigms, RN22 remains committed to addressing these issues through innovative research and interdisciplinary collaboration. The Midterm Conference 2025 aims to bring together both seasoned scholars and emerging voices to reflect on the network's legacy and to chart new directions for the study of risk and uncertainty.

This year's theme **Caring during crisis** delves into the intersection of health, care, and crisis within the framework of risk sociology. Health and care systems are increasingly tested by cascading crises such as global pandemics, climate change, geopolitical instability, and socio-economic

inequality. By foregrounding this theme the conference aims to foster a deeper understanding of how risk sociology can inform policies and practices that enhance practices of care during crisis and promote equitable health outcomes. Doing so, we aim to consider 'care' to extend beyond just healthcare, following Tronto, as everything we do to 'maintain, contain, and repair our 'world' so that we can live in it as well as possible'. The conference seeks to explore several key questions: How do crises redefine caregiving practices, and the other way around? What mechanisms of trust, communication, and governance emerge to manage risk during times of crisis and disaster? How can preparedness strategies be developed and implemented effectively to mitigate vulnerabilities during crises? How do systemic inequalities shape differential experiences of health risks, particularly for marginalized communities? These questions underscore the urgent need for sociological approaches to understanding and mitigating the impacts of crises on health, well-being and care. The conference invites contributions that analyze themes such as the dynamics of risk perception and management in health crises, the role of technological innovation in caregiving, and the interplay between local and global responses to crisis and disaster. Scholars are encouraged to examine case studies, such as responses to the COVID-19 pandemic, the mental health implications of climate-related disasters, or the ethical dimensions of digital health technologies in managing uncertainty.

The Midterm Conference welcomes papers addressing the sociology of risk and uncertainty across various domains, including but not limited to:

- Health, well-being, and caregiving during crises.
- Risk governance and resilience in health and other societal domains.
- Pandemic preparedness and response.
- Climate change, energy transition, and societal divides.
- Technology and digital risks in health care.
- Migration, mobility, and risk.
- Risk perception



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- We particularly encourage contributions reflecting on the societal management of risks and uncertainties at multiple levels and across diverse contexts.

Keynotes

The Midterm Conference 2025 will host confirmed keynote speakers: **prof. dr. Jens Zinn**, who will reflect with us on twenty years of sociology of risk and uncertainty, **dr. Patrick Brown**, who will discuss his critical sociological work on understanding the nature of vulnerability, **prof. dr. Roland Bal** will reflect on the ways in which counting counts in healthcare governance, and **prof. dr. Marion Koopmans**, a world-renowned virologist, who will share with us her work in mitigating pandemics.

Special Events

- **Risk Tour in Rotterdam:** We invite participants of the conference along on an exciting 'risk' tour through the Rotterdam area.
- **Art and Risk:** An engaging session showcasing how art serves as a medium to understand, represent, and navigate societal risks and uncertainties. This event will highlight collaborative projects and creative expressions that bridge the gap between sociology and art, fostering a deeper appreciation of risk through visual and performative mediums.

Submission Guidelines Midterm Conference

Abstracts (max 300 words) should include the title, author(s) name(s) and affiliation(s), and up to five keywords.

Submissions can be submitted via [our website](#) must be sent to by **31 May 2025**.

Notifications of acceptance will be sent by **30 June 2025**.

Call for PhD Workshop: "How do you qualitatively research risk? Methodological innovations and Challenges"

The conference will open with a PhD workshop specifically designed for early-career researchers. Held on the first day (October 28th 2025), this session provides an

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opportunity to delve into qualitative methodologies for studying risk, fostering collaborative discussions, and receiving guidance from leading experts in the field. Chaired by Dr. Bert de Graaff (coordinator of the RN22), this interactive session will offer participants opportunities to share their experiences and receive feedback in a collaborative setting. We welcome applications from PhD students at any point in their research and writing trajectories, who are keen to learn, share and critically reflect on their work, the work of others, and of the heterogeneous disciplinary traditions the workshop will reflect. To ensure a high-quality and focused discussion, a selection committee will admit only **6 PhD** students based on their submitted short abstracts.

Submission Guidelines PhD Workshop:

- Abstracts (max 300 words) should include the title, author(s) name(s) and affiliation(s), and up to five keywords. This can be the same abstract as the one submitted to the Midterm conference itself.
- Submissions must be submitted via [the website](#) by **31 May 2025**.
- Notifications of acceptance will be sent by **30 June 2025**. Selected participants will then be required to submit a long abstract by **1 October 2025**
- Participation at the PhD Workshop will be free of charge for PhD's who are also registering for, and presenting at, the Midterm conference.

Please email us as at caringduringcrisis@eshpm.eur.nl for any questions or concerns.

We are looking forward to meet you in Rotterdam!