Utrecht University

CALL FOR INTEREST

We are interested in exploring the ways in which security is defined, applied, and researched across disciplines and faculties.

Our aim is to further intellectual collaboration and expertise within Utrecht University.

Requirements:
- We are looking for original and critical perspectives on security.
- Diversivity, cooperation and pro-active participation during a workshop in March 2023.
- After registering your interest by emailing us, you will be sent a contribution form to fill out.

**Deadline
7 October 2022**

Please confirm your interest to soshub@uu.nl

14 March 2023
Workshop

Contesting Security in Open Societies

Organized by the The Contesting Governance Platform and the Security in Open Societies Platform

Call for Interest

Contesting Security in Open Societies

The Contesting Governance and the Security in Open Societies (SOS) Platforms are co-organizing a workshop in March 2023 to bring together researchers across UU working on 'security'. Our primary objective is to explore the numerous ways in which security is defined, applied, and researched across disciplines and faculties, to provide space for further intellectual collaboration, and to showcase the expertise and conceptual richness harnessed within Utrecht University.

The notion of security is increasingly acting as "an umbrella term that both enables and conceals a very diverse array of governing practices, budgetary practices, political and legal practices, and social and cultural values and habits" (Valverde 2001, 90). This ranges from state-centric perspectives of security embedded within Eurocentric Westphalian understandings of sovereignty, to broader approaches, such as human security, cyber security, food security, emotional security, and economic security. How has the concept of security transformed across space and time, with 'security threats' travelling across different times and borders? Furthermore, in addition to exploring 'security', we also find value in research identifying the absence of security i.e., 'what is not security', and how, more often than never, the term has been politicized and utilized as discursive practice, i.e., as a means to an end. We would like to hear from researchers using the concept of 'security' in their work, to uncover whether it is useful to address and better understand new global challenges, such as climate change, inequality, nationalism, and fake news. Furthermore, how does security relate to neighbouring cocnepts, such as risk, vulnerability, and crisis?

Rather than taking the concept of security for granted, we are keen to hear whether and how researchers in different disciplines are challenging, historicizing or reconceptualizing the concept of security. We want to have a conversation about how the conceptual and normative boundaries of security are mapped out and limited, in different disciplines and policy fields; either by the concept's relation with competing external (legal) norms (e.g., individual freedoms) or by internal parameters inherent in the term itself. We find it valuable to identify, explore, and evaluate (invisible) definitional lines contained within the concept of security that feed into its conceptual parameters. We are interested in research that asks questions, such as, 'security for whom', 'security against what', 'security by whom', 'security where', and 'security when', and how security is operationalized in and through various forms and guises, such as performances, practices, assemblages, and discourses. We also find it important to see how these questions are casted and understood differently, depending on societies and their political, sociological, and cultural contexts. To explore this, we are also keen to discuss different research methodologies that are employed to understand security. How are concepts, such as 'security' and 'insecurity' measured across different disciplines and what do the indicators say about what is excluded or included in the concept? What are the limitations and challenges of certain methodologies, and can we think of innovative ways to better understand security?

By organizing a workshop around these topics, we hope to provide space for intellectual collaborations within UU. Like all Contesting Governance initiatives, our aim is to apply critical perspectives to unravel how the concept of security relates to changing landscapes of order across the globe, and how the concept of security is feeding into different global challenges, such as climate change, shrinking civic space, migration crises, and global poverty.

We invite UU scholars to display an interest in participating in this workshop by **October 7** by sending an email to SOSHub@uu.nl. We explicitly want a diversity of participants from different faculties with original and critical perspectives on security. Everyone is thus welcome and encouraged to participate. Participation entails a cooperative and pro-active involvement during the workshop in March 2023. Once you have registered, we will circulate a form with key questions that each participant will answer and these answers will guide the structure of the workshop. The deadline for this is December 1.