



The spaces, politics, and experiences of insecurity

December 9-10, 2026 | Santiago, Chile

Insecurity has become a defining feature of contemporary life and an increasingly important field of research across the social sciences. However, much of the existing literature uses a narrow conceptualization of insecurity as acute episodes of risk and disruption, while examining its criminal, economic, cultural, environmental, and political manifestation separately. This conference takes a different approach by treating insecurity as a latent condition that shapes people's capacity to claim dignity and recognition in the present while limiting their ability to imagine their future. It therefore aims to shed light on how multiple forms of insecurities intersect, accumulate, and are experienced by different population subgroups. Most importantly, we move beyond understandings of insecurity as the unintended consequence of otherwise well-functioning institutions. Instead, we examine how insecurity is actively produced through the ordinary operation of socio-economic and political arrangements, including housing and labour markets, welfare systems, migration policies, technological transformations, and environmental governance. From this perspective, security and insecurity are not opposing conditions but mutually constitutive outcomes of social and political processes embedded in power relations.

These conceptual shifts open new opportunities for addressing a series of under-explored questions. How should insecurity be conceptualized in contemporary societies? Through what mechanisms is insecurity produced, distributed, and normalized? How do different forms of insecurity intersect and accumulate across places, generations, and social groups? How do experiences of insecurity shape identities, aspirations, social relations, and political behaviour? Under what conditions does insecurity foster adaptation, solidarity, resistance, withdrawal, or collective action? The conference welcomes contributions from diverse contexts worldwide that use different methods and data sources to address these urgent questions.

The call for papers focuses, but is not restricted to, the following topics:

- **Conceptual debates about insecurity:** Contributions that rethink how insecurity can be conceptualized in contemporary societies, including its relationship to concepts such as uncertainty, vulnerability, precarity, deprivation, fear. Attention will be given to research that frames insecurity as a latent, cumulative, and multidimensional condition.
- **Temporal and generational dimensions of insecurity:** Research on the accumulation of insecurities across the life course, intergenerational transmission of advantage and disadvantage, family strategies of protection and reproductive decisions, ageing, social mobility.
- **Responses to insecurity:** Research on individual and collective responses to insecurity, including adaptation, solidarity, care, political mobilization, withdrawal, social cohesion.

- **Symbolic dimensions of insecurity:** Research on mechanisms of boundary-making (stigma, prestige) across different urban domains, and their effects on identities and social ties.
- **Recognition and legitimacy of insecurity:** Research on the processes through which insecurities are interpreted, framed, recognized, contested, or rendered invisible in public discourse, policy, and everyday life.
- **The spaces of insecurity:** Research on how insecurity is produced and experienced across urban, rural, and virtual spaces. Topics include housing precarity, residential instability, segregation, environmental risks, rurality.
- **Virtual and digital insecurities:** Research on the implications of artificial intelligence, platform economies, digital surveillance, algorithmic governance, labour market transformations, automation, and emerging forms of technological regulation and exclusion.
- **Diversity and insecurity:** Research examining how insecurity is experienced across lines of class, gender, race, ethnicity, migration status, disability, sexuality, and other social positions, with particular attention to intersectional processes of exclusion and discrimination.
- **Politics of insecurity:** Research on the governance of insecurity, political narratives, public policies, democratic institutions, participation, social conflict, and the ways insecurity is mobilized, managed, or contested across different political arenas.
- **Methodological approaches to studying insecurity:** We welcome innovative approaches that advance the measurement and analysis of the production, experience, and consequences of insecurity using qualitative, quantitative, mixed, participatory, and computational methods.

Call for abstracts

Abstracts of up to 300 words should be submitted through the conference's online submission form: [\[Include form here\]](#)

Abstracts should clearly state the paper's research question, theoretical framework, methodology, and (preliminary) key findings.

Timeline

- Abstract submission deadline: October 10, 2026
- Notification of decisions: October 20, 2026
- Conference: December 9–10, 2026