

Newsletter



Issue 5
January 2020

Welcome to the fourth edition of the ESA RN5 newsletter. In this newsletter we would like to point out recent and upcoming events, share a fair amount of recent publications by our prolific network members, as well as news on projects and teaching related to the sociology of consumption.

ESA RN5 events

Citizenship and Consumption – All-powerful, all-powerless?

Please join us for the ESA RN5 Midterm Meeting at SIFO, Oslo Metropolitan University in Oslo, Norway
Preceded by a PhD workshop
26 to 29 August 2020

May you live in interesting times! The theme of “citizenship and consumption” acknowledges that cultural, economic, political and social spheres and consumption cultures are closely intertwined. There is, however, a degree of uncertainty and ambivalence toward the ability of the consumer-citizen / citizen-consumer to influence these spheres. In social life, the distinctions between consumption and citizenship coalesce, as individuals tend to switch between various contextual roles, rules and practices. The intersection of consumption and citizenship is gaining in importance, particularly when reflecting on the ability and power to enact social change, towards more inclusive and sustainable futures.

Theorizing consumption is currently demarcated by debates about rising inequalities and social exclusion, physical and cultural boundaries and political borders, as well as climate change and environmental crisis. Additionally, social media contributes to never ending updates of political deadlock, threats of anxieties and unresolved political and economic crises. Regions of Europe are facing stark exclusion and quasi-tyrannical rule. Neoliberal economic policies hold out the invisible hand, while on the other (less invisible) hand safeguards the wealth of the few with protectionist policies. At the same time, climate activism endorses the political imaginaries of students around the world. Those who engage in 'lifestyle changes' are increasingly demonstrating forms of prefigurative politics, in contesting established ways of doing, altering systems of provision and imagining alternative futures. These more affirmative notions consider the collective power of citizens and consumers serving as foresight that overcome ideological boundaries and urges to enact utopian practices in these interesting times.

All this introduces dilemmas and conflicts as well as opportunities and hope for consumers that reaches far beyond the antagonism in the transactional relationship between consumers as customers, and sellers of goods and services. Consumption not only challenges identities related to being a consumer or citizen, but also being a merchant, a farmer or a labourer (and potentially all at once). Consumption is related to social justice, welfare, class, empowerment, democracy, inclusion, exclusion and governance. The research network for “Sociology of Consumption” of the European Sociological Association invites to seek novel perspectives into powerfulness and powerlessness of citizenship and consumption. We invite submissions that address sociological theorizing in and around societal and political struggles in these current, interesting times.

Abstract Submission

The abstract submission platform can be found at:

<https://www.conftool.org/sociology-of-consumption-2020/>

We invite the submission of abstracts for individual papers, organized paper sessions, lightning talks, roundtables, and working sessions. More detailed information about the

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session categories can be found below. Abstracts should address various aspects of the sociology of consumption.

Possible themes include but are not limited to:

- Citizenship and consumption
- Consumption & social movements
- Empowerment of consumers
- Ethical and political consumption
- Systems of provision
- Consumption inequalities & social exclusions
- Generations and consumer culture
- Lifestyles and consumption
- Collaborative consumption & sharing economies
- Compulsive consumption
- Consumption and body (politics)
- Social capital and consumption
- Cultural stratification
- Digitalisation and consumption
- Food consumption
- Gender and consumption
- Leisure and consumption
- Consumption and tourism
- Markets of consumption
- Material culture and immaterial consumption
- Politics of distinction/ identity by consumption
- Prosumption: Production and consumption reunified
- Sociology of taste
- Cultures of consumption
- Spaces of consumption
- Sustainable consumption
- Theories of consumption

Deadline: Abstracts should be uploaded via conftool by February 15, 2020.

Guidelines for abstracts

- Provide a title
- Length should be between 150-300 words

Abstract acceptance and quality will be judged by the coherence of the following evaluation criteria

- Sociological background of the research (theoretical / research / policy problem...)
- Research questions and methodology (where contribution is empirical)
- Key findings, if research is completed. If research is in progress, state it.
- Implications and significance of the study/ findings

Letters of acceptance will be sent to participants by March 30th 2020.

Types of Submissions:

Individual Papers

Designed to be more comprehensive, lecture-based oral presentation. If a submitted paper abstract is not formally submitted as part of a proposed session, then it will be organized with other accepted paper abstract proposals that fit within a similar theme.

- Individual paper presentation length: Recommended 20 minutes (15 min presentation, 5 minutes Q&A)
- Length of required abstracts: 300 words max

Paper Sessions – Like the individual papers, the paper session is designed to be more comprehensive, lecture-based oral presentation. A proposed paper session is intended to be a collection of papers organized by the session organizer.

- Paper session presentation length: Recommended 20 minutes per paper (15 min presentation, 5 minutes Q&A)
- Session length: 90 minutes
- Total # of session participants: Up to 5
- Length of required abstracts: 300 words max

Lightning Talks

A lightning talk is intended to be a quick and dynamic presentation of a concept and/or subsequent research. This content is to be delivered in no more than 5 minutes followed by a discussion. All lightning talks will be organized into a collective one or more sessions.

- Lightning talk presentation length: 5 minutes max
- Length of required abstracts: 300 words max

Roundtable

This is an organized discussion-based panel without papers or timed 15-minute presentations

- Session length: 90 minutes
- Total # of session participants: Up to 5
- Length of required abstract: 300 words max

Working Session

Do you have any idea for a project or a paper and would enjoy bringing equally-interested individuals into the same room to brainstorm with the purpose of walking away with a tangible plan of action? A working session will provide you the space to refine your idea and find potential collaborators.

- Working session length: 90 minutes
- Total # of session participants: Unlimited based on interest
- Length of required abstracts: 250 words max

More information is available at:

<https://uni.oslomet.no/sociology-of-consumption-2020/>

Upcoming events

Sustainability, markets and activist interventions

Royal Holloway University of London, UK, January 23th 2020

This event approaches marketplace activism in its various forms. These include targeting corporations to introduce responsible corporate behaviours, but also collaborating with business to change the legislation. As our speakers will show, market techniques and ideas can be used to counter dominant economic and social actors and positively intervene in developing social and environmental sustainability. The invited speakers are Professor Sophie Dubuisson-Quellier (Centre de sociologie des organisations, Sciences Po, France), Professor Frank de Bakker (Center for Organizational Responsibility, IÉSEG School of Management, France), and Professor Frank den Hond (Hanken School of Economics, Finland & VU University Amsterdam, The Netherlands).

For more information, please visit: <https://www.royalholloway.ac.uk/research-and-teaching/departments-and-schools/business-and-management/events/chronos-cris-research-seminar/>

Workshops in sustainable consumption, everyday life and social change

University of Helsinki, Aalborg University In Copenhagen, Uppsala University

This workshop series, funded by the Joint Committee for Nordic research councils in the Humanities and Social Sciences (NOS-HS), aims to provide new insights into the role of everyday practices in social change and environmental sustainability. With the hope of establishing a strong research network of early-career Nordic scholars, the long-term objective is cross-national and interdisciplinary research collaborations.

The workshops are divided into three themes: (1) contemporary research in the Nordic countries, (2) future theoretical and methodological challenges, and (3) policy and interventions. The workshops will be held in Helsinki (April 2-3, 2020), Copenhagen (December 2020) and Uppsala (early fall 2021).

We now invite applications from early-career researchers from Nordic Countries in the first workshop at the University of Helsinki, April 2-3. Travel and accommodation costs will be covered up to ca. 360 eur per participant.

The deadline for applications is January 30, 2020.

Applicants are notified by February 7th.

For more information, please visit: <https://blogs.helsinki.fi/nonesco/workshop-1/>

Sustainable Consumption and Care

Call for Papers and Participation

SCORAI Europe / NUI in Galway 13-14th of May 2020.

The purpose of the workshop is to delineate and differentiate the interplay between sustainable consumption and care. We are interested in care in the context of sustainable consumption as well as in sustainability in the context of care.

In a pre-workshop during the ERSCP in Barcelona last year we distilled three important thematic strands which we would like to carry forward in this workshop:

- Consumption as embedded in care practices
- An ethos of care as a pathway towards more sustainable forms of consumption
- The commercialization and outsourcing of care in the global economy

These different strands reveal quite different understandings of the term care. We invite contributions to distinguish between elements of

- self-care
- care in the 'home' context (friends and family, household resources, materials and garden, etc)
- care for community and the public good (voluntary and unpaid social and environmental engagement)
- care as professional activity (paid)

The workshop welcomes submissions of conceptual and empirical papers.

Please hand in an abstract for a paper or declare your interest to participate e.g. as a discussant by 25.01.2020 to the following address: scoraieurope@gmail.com

For more information visit:

https://docs.google.com/viewer?a=v&pid=forums&srcid=MDQyMTAwMzIxNTAwMTc5MDI2NDABMTQ1NjcwMzA3MjU4Mjk2OTg1MTABOXBoN2haTHVBZ0FKATAuMQE_Bdjl

5th Energy and Society Conference

8-10 September 2020, Trento

Energy transition: Does the mountain give birth to a mouse?

The Fifth Energy and Society Conference and midterm conference of the European Sociological Association's Research Network 12 Environment and Society. The theme of the conference calls into question how discourses about energy transition have been put into practice. As the "world's hunger for energy" still appears to be increasing, the transition to clean sources of energy will need to be "revolutionary", requiring the transformation of forms of social organization (Davidson and Gross, 2018). And yet, what is actually changing?

The deadline for submission is January 31, 2020.

For more information, please visit:

<https://webmagazine.unitn.it/en/evento/sociologia/71352/fifth-energy-and-society-conference>

Recent Publications

Articles and Book Chapters

Bartiaux Françoise, Maretti Mara, Cartone Alfredo, Biermann Philipp, Krasteva Veneta (2019). Sustainable energy transitions and social inequalities in energy access: A relational comparison of capabilities in three European countries. *Global Transitions* 1, 226–240. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.glt.2019.11.002>

Cebula, Michał (2019). Beyond Social Class and Status. The Network Embeddedness of Music Consumption. *Przeegląd Socjologiczny*, 68(2), 81-105. <https://doi.org/10.26485/PS/2019/68.2/4>

Escobar-López, S.Y., Espinoza-Ortega, A., Lozano-Cabedo, C., Aguilar, E. & Amaya-Corchuelo, S. (2019). Motivations to consume ecological foods in Alternative Food Networks (AFNs) in southern Spain. *British Food Journal*, 12(11), 2565-2577.

Farré-Ribes, M., Lozano-Cabedo, C. & Aguilar-Criado, E. (2019). The role of knowledge in constructing the quality of olive oil in Spain. *Sustainability*, 11(15), 4029.

Eugenio Gozalbo, Marcia, Ramos –Truchero, Guadalupe y Vallés Rapp, Cristina. (2019). Huertos universitarios: dimensiones de aprendizaje percibidas por futuros maestros. *Enseñanza de las ciencias*, 37(3), 111- 127.

Díaz Méndez C. & Lozano C. (2019). “Food governance and healthy diet. An analysis of the conflicting relationships among the actors of the agri-food system”. *Trends in Food Science & Technology*.

Díaz-Méndez, Cecilia & Garcia Espejo, Isabel (2019). “Social inequalities in following official guidelines on healthy diet during the period of economic crisis in Spain”. *International Journal of Health Services*, 49(3), 582-605.

Laamanen, M & Wahlen, S (2019) The Sharing Economy and Lifestyle Movements. In: Belk, Eckhardt, Bardhi (eds.) *Handbook of the Sharing Economy*. Edward Elgar Publishing.

Sahakian, M. (2019). ‘More, bigger, better’ household appliances: Contesting normativity in practices through emotions. *Journal of Consumer Culture*, first online. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1469540519889983>

Edited Books

Inclusive Consumption. Immigrants’ Access to and Use of Public and Private Goods and Services

Edited by: Anita Borch, Ivan Harsløf, Ingun Grimstad Klepp and Kirsi Laitala

Consumption plays a powerful role in the social and economic integration of immigrants. Most research on integration has addressed integration through work. Inclusive Consumption adopts a different approach, exploring the inclusive and exclusive potentials of markets and consumption.

The book’s chapters cover consumption of food, shelter, clothes, mobile phones, leisure activities, employment agency services, physiotherapy education and health

services. The key institutions of the welfare society – private and public markets, work, education, and health – are thereby addressed.

Open access: https://www.idunn.no/inclusive_consumption
Universitetsforlaget, 2019

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Voľný čas, spoločnosť, kultúra: Česká republika – Slovensko

Edited by: Ivan Charvát, Jiří Šafr

Title (in English): Leisure, Society, Culture: Czech Republic – Slovakia

SLON, 2019

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About ESA RN5

The research network addresses consumption in its social, cultural, symbolic, economic, political and material dimensions. It welcomes theoretical, methodological and empirical contributions to the study of consumption in a large range of areas: sustainability, political consumption, fashion, food and eating, tourism, culture, bodies, technology etc. In doing so, it intersects with other sociological fields, such as economic sociology, sociology of health, the family, gender, age and generations, the study of space and cities, or social stratification. Thereby the research network contributes to societal debates on contested and challenged aspects of consumption and assists in advancing associated policy measures and societal developments.

See you at our conference in Oslo next summer!

On behalf of the RN5 Board Members:

Stefan Wahlen, Coordinator, Germany, University of Giessen

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<https://www.europeansociology.org/research-networks/rn05-sociology-consumption>