

# **SOCIETAL RESILIENCE: RESILIENCE UPSCALED BEYOND CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTURES**

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## **Abstract**

This presentation explores the development of societal resilience as an emerging field in safety science. Based on the growing interest for safety and resilience at a societal scale – and the natural continuation of the expanding scope of each of the phases in the ‘three ages of safety’ – societal resilience is portrayed as a defining theme in a *fourth age* of safety. While safety science through the decades has developed steadily and provided several complementary perspectives, theories and models for human, technical and organisational aspects of safety and resilience, the research on societal safety and resilience is less mature, and does not yet enjoy the same theoretical repertoire as organisational safety. Second, the presentation explores the possibilities for approaching resilience as a *systemic trait*. While there is a tradition to address resilience at the scale of individuals/teams and organisations, resilience – with its root metaphors derived from ecological systems – could also be addressed at the societal or global scale, and this presentation explores the translation of resilience from the organisational to the systemic realm. In doing so, the dominating scope of societal safety, linked to critical infrastructures, is challenged. It is argued that societal resilience research should go beyond critical infrastructures and the national scope, and address the networks of risk also upstream from critical infrastructures that are at play in the Anthropocene, including global risks such as climate change and global migration.