



Mental Health in Times of Uncertainty

Call for Abstracts

21st Biennial ESHMS Conference: “Mental Health in Times of Uncertainty”

19th August – 21st August 2026, Hamburg, Germany; www.uke.de/eshms2026

The present time is characterized by climate change and natural hazards, armed conflicts, displacement and flows of refugees, economic recession and austerity, the experience of a global pandemic, as well as demographic change and technological transformation. These trends foster uncertainty, characterized by a lack of control and incapacity to predict future outcomes. Uncertainty is taking place when information is unavailable or inconsistent and when people feel insecure in their state of knowledge. Uncertainty influences mental health at individual, community, and societal levels.

In the 21st biennial *European Society of Health and Medical Sociology* (ESHMS) conference, we seek to stimulate a dialogue on how uncertainty shapes (mental) health outcomes and the role of medical sociology in understanding and addressing these issues. We welcome abstracts for oral and poster presentations on this topic, as well as other relevant topics in health and medical sociology.

Abstract Submission

Abstract submission is now open via <https://www.conftool.org/eshms2026>

Submission deadline is **February 15th, 2026**

Submission guidelines

Abstracts should not exceed 350 words and should adhere to the following structure:

- Title
- Names and affiliations of the authors, please highlight the name of the presenting author
- Introduction, Methods, Results, Discussion
- Keywords, three to five keywords
- References are optional
- Title, names, affiliations, keywords, and references are not counted in the word limit

Submission choices

Abstracts may be submitted for

- *Open sessions*: these sessions will be planned around a field relating to the conference theme and other themes within the field of health and medical sociology.
- *Proposed sessions*: these sessions were proposed for the conference around specific topics and are open for abstract submissions. Accordingly, abstracts can be submitted to the following topics:
 - *Combining employment and care for relatives on the workplace level*
 - *Digitalized work and mental strain: understanding the health costs of the new work regime*
 - *Discrimination and mental health*
 - *Diverging trajectories and compounding inequalities: cumulative (dis)advantage in health*
 - *Embodied uncertainty: women's reproductive pain, biomedical practices, and mental health*
 - *Inequalities in preventive practices*
 - *Inconsistent parenting and mental health*
 - *Migrant mental health and healthcare utilization*
 - *Migration and mental health*
 - *Multilevel Analysis of Individual Heterogeneity and Discriminatory Accuracy (MAIHDA): advances, extensions, and applications in health research*
 - *Non-pharmacological interventions for suicide pre- and postvention*
 - *Patient and public involvement in co-production in health research*
 - *Social justice and the crisis of LGBTQI+ young people's mental health*
 - *Spiritual care*
 - *Studying pregnancy losses*
 - *Temporal misalignment, medicalization, and mental health*
 - *The potential of comics and visual storytelling to improve health narrative*
 - *Trauma in times of uncertainty*
 - *Work, mobility, and mental health in times of uncertainty*

During submission, please indicate a preference for an oral or a poster presentation. If both options are selected, the abstract will be reviewed for eligibility as oral presentation. If too many abstracts for oral presentations are submitted, the organizing committee may select abstracts for poster presentations.

Participation policies

- All presenting authors must register for the conference for their abstract to be listed in the program.
- ESHMS membership is encouraged. Membership offers several benefits, including a reduced conference registration fee.

Confirmation and acceptance

- All abstracts will be peer-reviewed.
- Notification of acceptance will be sent by the end of March 2026

For all further questions concerning the conference, please contact us via info-eshms2026@uke.de

For details, please see also the conference homepage: www.uk.de/eshms2026

Related Publication Opportunity

In parallel with the conference, a Special Issue of the *Scandinavian Journal of Public Health* titled “Mental Health in Times of Uncertainty” is being organized in collaboration with the ESHMS. This issue invites contributions that explore the social dimensions of mental health in the context of contemporary societal challenges.

All researchers working on topics related to the special issue are welcome to submit manuscripts, regardless of whether they participate in the Hamburg conference. Submissions from sociology, public health, epidemiology, psychology, and related disciplines are encouraged.

For details, please refer to the full call for papers available on:

<https://journals.sagepub.com/page/sjp/call-for-papers>