

# ***Call for Papers for a Special Issue of the European Journal for Security Research***

## **Critical Infrastructure and Resilience in the Tension between Security, Democracy and Technological Transformation**

The security of modern societies is inextricably linked to the functionality of critical infrastructure. These infrastructures form the physical backbone of the state's ability to act, and they are also symbolic and operational hubs where social vulnerabilities, threat perceptions, and democratic control and legitimisation issues converge. Given the multiple crises of the 21 century, ranging from geopolitical power shifts to climate change and digital transformation, we need an interdisciplinary perspective that views critical infrastructures as socio-technical phenomena within democratic societies. The protection and design of these infrastructures will determine the path towards resilient democracy.

This special issue brings together interdisciplinary contributions that situate the concept of critical infrastructures outside technocratic risk management discourse and engage with security policy, democratic theory and governance research. The special issue understands critical infrastructure and democratic resilience as two complementary concepts that enable an innovative systemic perspective on current security risks. In this way, the special issue takes a broad approach to security research.

We kindly invite authors to submit abstracts that consider the following perspectives:

1. Political science contextualisation: We invite contributions that explore the constructivist character of critical infrastructure, moving beyond technology-centred approaches to critical infrastructure studies. Of particular interest are analyses of the associated processes of social self-assurance regarding the existential functions, tasks, and institutions of a political community.
2. Multi-level governance: We welcome analyses ranging from the digitalisation of local administration to national critical infrastructure strategies and EU platform regulation. Submissions should examine how protective mechanisms can and must be coordinated across different levels of governance to ensure comprehensive resilience.
3. Temporal dimensions of resilience: Contributions should address the fact that infrastructure security requires proactive, future-oriented design as well as reactive crisis management. This includes approaches to anticipatory legal frameworks or strategies for defence against latent hybrid threats.
4. Empirical analyses and case studies: We welcome submissions presenting evidence-based research from fields such as energy supply, digitalisation, administration, and maritime security. These contributions should provide insights into the practical challenges and solutions of critical infrastructure protection, revealing how theoretical concepts manifest in specific sectors and how resilience strategies are implemented and adapted in real-world scenarios.
5. Conceptual and theoretical reflections: We invite papers that develop analytical frameworks on the connection between infrastructure policy, democracy, and security. Submissions should help to clarify the complex interplay between technical systems, democratic governance principles and security imperatives, thereby enriching the theoretical basis of critical infrastructure studies.

This special issue puts forward the case for a broader understanding of critical infrastructures that emphasises their political design and the process of their securitisation to a certain extent. We propose

that resilience is not achieved through technical compartmentalisation, but rather through complex, interdependent social, political, economic and technical processes operating at multiple levels. The interdisciplinary scope of this special issue therefore highlights the fact that analysing critical infrastructures from a political science perspective is a key area of research in the fields of security and democracy.

The submission process has two steps. First, a max 400-word abstract has to be sent to [kocak@hsu-hh.de](mailto:kocak@hsu-hh.de) by 15 September 2025. Authors of accepted abstracts will be invited to submit the completed manuscripts by 20 January 2026. All manuscripts will go through the standard double-blind peer-review process ([Peer Review Policy, Process and Guidance](#)). As a matter of general policy on special issues, all submissions will also be checked by the editor-in-chief.

Please contact Deniz Kocak ([kocak@hsu-hh.de](mailto:kocak@hsu-hh.de)) if you have any questions.

Guest Editors:

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