

# Consumption, Justice and Futures: Where do we go from here?



ESA RN5 Midterm Meeting at Consumption Research Norway (SIFO)

Oslo Metropolitan University, Oslo, Norway  
31 August to 2 September 2022

## Call for Papers

The call for the RN05 midterm 2020 conference, launched in late Autumn 2019, began with the phrase “May you live in interesting times!” Certainly the disruption that followed only a few months after was beyond the expectations of most citizens. For those not working on the front-lines of the pandemic, life was confined to the home, and with a projectivity towards immediate futures. Over the months following local lockdown measures, the global pandemic made visible how consumption, at least for a very short while, could diminish: consumers could make do with less, work less and consume less, while at the same time save more, engaging in more local and perhaps even more sustainable forms of consumption. Now, at the delicate threshold of “normalcy”, we wonder, what different futures are being imagined, how do alternative futures shape current practices, and who has control over what futures are enacted? Will a Great Resignation of consumption take place (as hypothesized in the realm of work and employment) and lead us towards more sustainable and just futures?

The theme of consumption, justice and futures takes as a starting point the issue of what it means to live and consume well in future societies. A just future would need to grapple not only with constrained resource and climate crisis adaptation, but also with social justice in the face of rising uncertainty and inequalities. Working on futures is no simple nor straightforward terrain. Futures can be utopic or dystopic, represent a single or multiple (and competing) visions, and emerge from deliberative processes or be dictated and imposed. Futures can present different understandings of agency, human and technological narrations, and materialities. Sociology of consumption is an interesting space for reflecting on futures and justice, in relation to a number of themes: from the role of technological platforms and the sharing economy in energy futures, to that of prosumers or citizen-consumers, engaged in prefigurative movement politics or cultural practices, towards shaping future-oriented politics and practices.

Who is included or excluded from such dynamics is also central. Our ever more three-dimensional physical, digital, and hybrid reality imposes interpretative paradigms for evaluating developments towards transitions. These include political and procedural issues of how people come to be involved in decision-making processes, issues in relation to the distribution of and access to resources, (economic, social or cultural) barriers to engagement and justice through recognition. Questions of (in)justice are mobilised explicitly or implicitly in daily social relations and dynamics of consumption.

At the upcoming midterm conference, we hope to stimulate reflections on a series of questions of relevance for considering consumption transitions and futures, including, but not limited to: how might consumption dynamics today hold opportunities for social change in the future? how do future imaginaries shape present day dynamics? how can the study of consumption futures be approached methodologically? how can we grapple with the normative and political dimensions of imagining futures, including the aims of sufficiency, prosperity, democracy, inclusion and participation (to name a few)? We thus invite submissions that address sociological theorizing in and around societal and political struggles on these debates.

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## **Abstract Submission**

We invite the submission of abstracts for individual papers, organized paper sessions, lightning talks, roundtables and working sessions. All submitted abstracts should address various aspects of the sociology of consumption. More detailed information about the themes and types of submissions can be found below.

The abstract submission platform will be open in early January 2022:

<https://uni.oslomet.no/sociology-of-consumption-2022/abstract-submission/>

Abstracts should be submitted by 13 February 2022

Letters of acceptance will be sent to participants by 3 April 2022

A special event for early career researchers will be organised prior to the conference. A specific call for contributions is available here: <https://uni.oslomet.no/sociology-of-consumption-2022/early-career-colloquium/>

## **Guidelines for abstracts**

The abstract needs to include an informative and descriptive title and a body text of 150-300 words.

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

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

## **Possible themes include (but are not limited to)**

- Studies of futures in (and of) consumption
- Justice and consumption
- Inequalities and social exclusions
- (Alternative) systems of provision
- Sufficiency-based consumption strategies
- Sustainable consumption
- Consumption, movements and collective action
- Empowerment of consumer and citizen
- Ethical and political consumption
- Generations and consumer culture
- Lifestyles and consumption
- Collaborative and sharing economy
- Compulsive consumption
- Consumption and body (politics)
- Social capital and consumption
- Cultural consumption and stratification
- Digitalisation and consumption
- Food consumption
- Gender and consumption
- Leisure and consumption
- Consumption and tourism
- Material and immaterial consumption
- Politics of distinction
- Prosumption
- Sociology of taste
- Cultures of consumption
- Spaces of consumption
- Theories of consumption

## **Types of Submissions**

### ***Individual papers***

This is a comprehensive, lecture-style oral presentation. If a submitted paper abstract is not formally submitted as part of a proposed paper session, it will be organised with other accepted paper abstract proposals fitting within a similar theme.

- Individual paper presentation length: 20 minutes with 15 minutes presentation and 5 minutes of Q&A
- Length of required abstracts: max. 300 words

### ***Paper sessions***

Like the individual papers, the paper session is designed to be comprehensive, lecture-style oral presentations of thematic papers. A proposed paper session is intended to be a collection of papers organised by the session organiser.

- Paper session presentation length: recommended 20 minutes for each paper with 15 minutes presentation and 5 minutes of Q&A
- Total session length: 90 minutes
- Total number of session papers: Up to 5
- Length of required abstracts: max. 300 words

### ***Lightning talks***

A lightning talk is a quick and dynamic presentation of a concept and / or subsequent research. A lightning talk is delivered in no more than 5 minutes followed by a discussion. All lightning talks will be organized into a joint session.

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

### ***Roundtable***

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

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

### ***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 number of session participants: Unlimited based on interest
- Length of required abstracts: max. 250 words