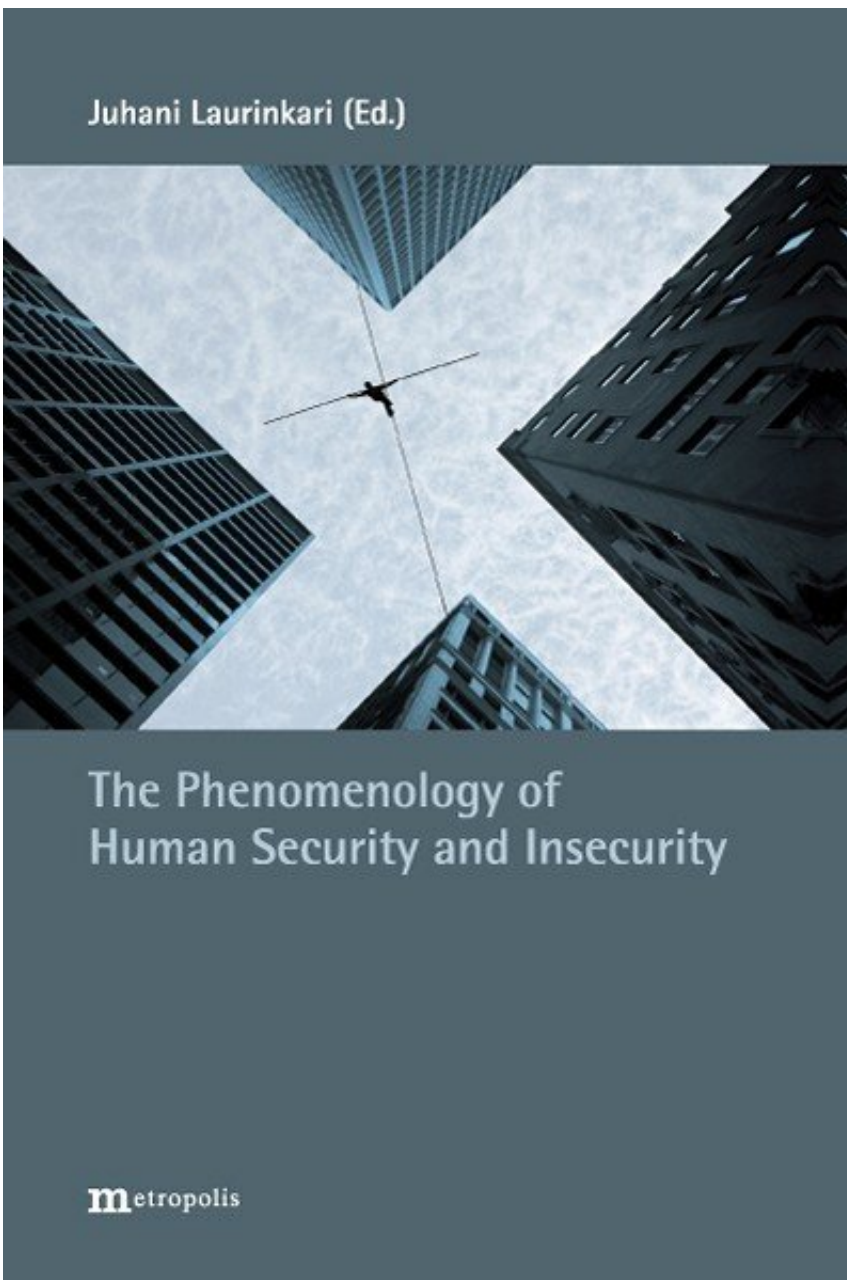


The phenomenology of insecurity and security

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Credit: Metropolis

Climate change, the war in Ukraine, the adequacy of natural resources, and demographic change are increasingly highlighting issues related to insecurity throughout the world. Published recently, the final report by Insecurity, an international research project, provides a comprehensive overview of the phenomenology of human security and insecurity. The report is based on research carried out at the University of Eastern Finland between 1989 and 2022, where researchers conducted interviews with people living in Finland and in Estonia.

Published by the German publisher Metropolis, the book, "The Phenomenology of Human Security and Insecurity," is edited by University of Eastern Finland Professor Emeritus Juhani Laurinkari in collaboration with Professor Emeritus Pauli Niemelä. Ten authors representing various fields of academic research, such as social sciences, economics and [social psychology](#), have contributed to the book. The book paints a comprehensive picture of the key features of [security](#) and insecurity in different population and age groups.

"Issues relating to security and insecurity have become increasingly complex and diverse. The findings of this exceptionally extensive research project contribute to our understanding of the different dimensions of these key themes, and facilitate the planning of decision-making," says the project's Director, Emeritus Professor Pauli Niemelä.

The project had an exceptional scale even at the European level, and it involved an extensive population study as well as a study addressing childhood insecurities and fears in Finland and in Estonia. In both countries, interviews with people aged between 5 and 85 were carried out. The researchers found that childhood determines fundamental

experiences of security and insecurity later in life. Those with an insecure childhood had experienced most insecurity and uncertainty in their life, whereas those with a secure childhood experienced their life as relatively secure. Young people—especially girls—and low-income pensioners experienced the greatest levels of insecurity at different stages of life. For middle-aged people, insecurity was caused by, for example, pension cuts, loss of a job or a livelihood, and loss of a loved one.

A key theoretical finding of the study is that security and insecurity are variables that penetrate all areas of life and are empirical and universal in nature. The theoretical model developed in the study analyses security and insecurity through multiple dimensions, such as traditional and modern, political and economic, material and spiritual, as well as ethical and technical.

The Insecurity research project focused on analyzing people's experiences from a phenomenological point of view. Multidisciplinary empirical and theoretical analysis of the concepts of security and insecurity has become topical, particularly in social and behavioral sciences and in social psychology, in a new way.

"The current war in Europe shows that the ideology of the war-waging nation has not fully embraced the ideology of the welfare state, which is what the Western countries winning the Second World War have set as a goal for humanity. Security is linked to well-being as a factor that runs through it. Security is a need, a value and a human right. This is why a lack of it, i.e., [insecurity](#), is so central from the human point of view," Niemelä says.

More information: The Phenomenology of Human Security and Insecurity. Metropolis, 2022. www.metropolis-verlag.de/The-P...ecurity/1514/book.do

Provided by University of Eastern Finland

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