



Universität Hamburg

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**FAKULTÄT**  
FÜR WIRTSCHAFTS- UND  
SOZIALWISSENSCHAFTEN

**CENTER**  
FOR SUSTAINABLE  
SOCIETY RESEARCH

LECTURE SERIES „AFTER SUSTAINABILITY“

# WHAT IS 'RESILIENCE' - AND WHAT COULD IT BE? LESSONS FROM THEORY AND PRACTICE

**PROF. CHRISTER PURSIAINEN**  
**(THE ARCTIC UNIVERSITY OF NORWAY)**

Photo: Unsplash

In this lecture, Christer Pursiainen, Professor of Societal Safety and Security at the UiT The Arctic University of Norway, talks about resilience as the buzzword of our time. While the term has a long history, it only gained academic popularity in the 2010s. Currently, resilience is studied in several disciplines, and it has numerous practical applications. This has led to definitional ambiguities about the meaning of resilience in different contexts. The talk provides a concise overview of the concept of resilience, its history and today's applications. It presents major developments in resilience research during the last two decades by examining societal, organizational, technological, ecological, macroeconomical, and psychological approaches to resilience. Among other things, the talk addresses a watershed division in resilience theories, namely the question of whether resilience is about recovery after an external shock or adaptation to change. Further, the talk focuses in particular on the question of whether resilience can be measured and how. Finally, it raises the issue of how transdisciplinary learning between different resilience concepts might provide a key to develop the field further in its variety of application areas. For discussion, not addressed in the current talk but rather as a future task, it is proposed to discuss in the gathering how the concepts of sustainability and resilience are related to each other.

Recordings of past Lectures on the [CSS Youtube Channel](#)

**Wednesday, 24th January 2024**

**6:00 PM**

**Gorch-Fock-Wall 3, Room 1021.**

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