

## **Predictable Futures? On the Impact of Fear and Insecurity in the Baltic Sea Region**

The Baltic Sea region witnesses its fair share of transformations and monumental turning points, and the past years have brought upon some truly unexpected new challenges and external shocks. In addition, the dramatic nature of already recognised challenges is becoming more and more apparent to the common consciousness. Deep insecurity has permeated fields diverse as energy, defence, economic, social and health policy. These developments have illuminated hard questions related to climate crises, the stability of democracy and the integrity of the state. Analysts and policy-makers have differently assessed the likelihood of Russia's full-scale war against Ukraine or the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic and the consequences of such predicaments. The sheer magnitude of these events poses profound questions about the future trajectories of the Baltic Sea region, thus prompting greater societal insecurity and fear of the unknown.

These fears, as well as the related potential for unrest and tensions, represent a major challenge both for political and economic decision-makers. In order to obtain valuable policy prescriptions, lawmakers have increasingly turned to the expertise produced by the scientific community. Prediction-making, however, can be a rather perilous endeavour even for researchers, who by nature have to remain uncertain about their scientifically-grounded findings. That stated, a good grasp and empirical analysis of past events may still help in making future forecasts more reliable and improve early-warning mechanisms.

The Interdisciplinary Centre for Baltic Sea Region Research (IFZO) invites contributions that critically examine the potential of predictability, address questions of fear, uncertainty, and insecurity as they broadly relate to military confrontations, energy crisis and transformation, sustainable development, erosion of society and democracy, health crises, and maintenance of cultural heritage in the Baltic Sea region. We seek contributions that touch upon scenario building, future predictions, imaginary futures, pathways to the future, and their connections to the outlined academic themes.

The Interdisciplinary Centre for Baltic Sea Region Research (IFZO) at the University of Greifswald combines research competencies on the Baltic Sea region and offers an innovative research environment.

In the IFZO research network "Fragmented Transformations. Perceptions, Constructions, Constitutions of a Region in Transition", seven interdisciplinary research groups identify and study transformation processes relating to new understandings of cultural heritage, the energy transition, the change of security architecture, the emergence of new nationalisms, sustainability transformation and land-use in the Baltic Sea Region.

**Please submit your panel and paper applications (title, abstract (300 characters), short CV) via email to [ifzo@uni-greifswald.de](mailto:ifzo@uni-greifswald.de). The deadline is 10 December 2022.**