



## The regional risk perception of extreme weather events in Germany

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Damages to buildings, infrastructure and even human life caused by extreme weather events have significantly increased during the last decades. This has happened due to the interaction of several factors such as increases in assets, increases in vulnerability of infrastructure and people, or changes in patterns and the frequency of extreme events. Seen from a social perspective, this increase is basically connected to and framed as a direct consequence of global warming. Hence, extreme weather events such as heavy precipitation or hail are phenomena, which call for an inclusion of the social dimensions in the context of reliable mitigation and adaptation measures and risk actions to be taken in the case of extreme events.

Within the frame of the interdisciplinary project “Regional risk cultures of weather extremes”, scientists from different disciplines such as meteorology, sociology, and economics merge their conceptual and methodological expertise to investigate hazardous weather events (HWE) from an integrated perspective. Emphasis is put on the social perception and assessment of HWE as well as on actions taken regarding HWE such as heat waves, floods, winter storms, storm surges, and – in the present context – heavy precipitation and hail events. The aim of the project consists in gaining a better and regionalized understanding of the societal and cultural dimensions of risk in the context of HWE. For this purpose, street surveys were conducted at locations specifically affected by certain types of hazards in Germany. In addition to regions with an increased probability of a certain hazard such as hail or heavy rain, regions with a low likelihood of occurrence were considered for comparative purposes.

In the project, we address the following research questions concerning HWE:

- How are HWE perceived, explained and evaluated?
- What role does climate change play in the interpretation of HWE?
- What are the regional differences between risk perception, assessment and action in relation to experience and knowledge about an HWE?
- What protective measures have been, are or will be taken, and why?
- Can regional-specific risk cultures be identified and how are they structured?