

The series of workshops called « urban resilience » began two years ago. Geographers from natural hazard studies and urban studies created this informal research group, based in the École normale supérieure (Paris), and they meet once a month. Geographers, historians, archaeologists, sociologist, engineers and practitioners regularly contribute to the workshop.

The workshop's purpose is threefold. First, we want to define the various meanings of the words “resilient” and “resilience”. We try to understand how the concept is used in several research fields (engineering, social sciences, humanities) and hence, to establish a comprehensive framework. Secondly, we apply this framework to different cases, *e. g.* natural disasters and urban crisis that occurred either recently (Katrina, earthquakes in Italy, volcanic hazards in Japan) or in the past (ancient Greece, Roma, Dresden). Thirdly, we transfer the resilience concept to urban studies, in order to investigate transitional processes in cities, even if those processes are not related to natural hazards or disasters. In this view, we consider both memory and heritage issues.

Our aim is to discuss two main topics:

- Resilience as a scientific concept: how do researchers define and use resilience? Is resilience automatically linked with vulnerability? Does resilience imply methodological adaptations and scientific innovations in hazard and disaster research? What are the theoretical and methodological problems, limits or difficulties? Finally, is the concept useful or efficient and why?
- Resilience as a discourse: who says that a city (or a system) is resilient? When and why? Thus, we have to investigate the resilience “story telling” and examine the consequences in terms of inequality increase or revival of fatalism. We must particularly have a very close look at the scientific, political and ethical implications of using resilience instead of vulnerability.