

NEWSLETTER OF
THE BIGSURV20
CONFERENCE

BigSurv20 Bugle

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The BigSurv20 Bugle supplements the [BigSurv20 webpage](#) and the [BigSurv20 Twitter feed](#). Please reach out to us at info@bigsurv20.org if you have any questions or if there is a topic you would like for us to discuss in a future newsletter.

COVID-19 Monitoring Decision: BigSurv20 will **NOT** be held in person in Utrecht in November 2020

The BigSurv20 organizing committee has been monitoring the spread of COVID-19 throughout the world over the last few months. Although the BigSurv20 conference is scheduled about 6 months from now, there is uncertainty about how the situation will develop in the Netherlands and around the world, and it is likely that disruptions will continue well into fall of 2020.

Why will BigSurv20 not take place in person?

With the safety of our participants as our main priority, we have decided that BigSurv20 will not be held in person in Utrecht in November 2020. Currently, all large gatherings are prohibited in the Netherlands until at least September. Beyond that it is not clear whether the local authorities will allow any large event with international guests in November, and there is a big chance we won't know for certain until close to the actual conference date. This would be too late for many participants to arrange for travel and accommodation. And even if it were possible to organize the conference, it would be very hard to properly implement social distancing measures and guarantee everyone's well-being throughout the conference.

What's next?

We are very sorry about having to make this decision. However, by making this decision early, we are hoping to provide clarity to participants and avoid problems with visa, travel, and accommodation arrangements. We are hope you understand our concerns and our decision. On the bright side, we are currently exploring two alternative options for BigSurv: We will either try to move the conference to a virtual format, or postpone the conference to a later date. We will make a final decision within the next few weeks and will reach out to you at the latest by June. For participants who already applied for a travel grant, we have decided to put the application process on hold. In case we move to a virtual conference, we will not be handing out any travel awards. Similarly, we are pausing applications for the student paper competition and submissions for the data challenge until there is a decision on how we will move forward with BigSurv20. Please reach out to us at info@bigsurv20.org with any question or concerns.

Hoping you are all safe and healthy.

Antje Kirchner and Peter Lugtig
Chairs, BigSurv20 Scientific and Local Organizing Committee

