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RSAI
THE REGIONAL SCIENCE ASSOCIATION INTERNATIONAL

Newsletter
November 2018

IN THIS ISSUE

1. Introduction

1.1. Welcome from the RSAI President

by *Budy P. Resosudarmo*, Crawford School of Public Policy, ANU College of Asia & the Pacific (budy.resosudarmo@anu.edu.au)

Dear friends and colleagues,

Welcome to the second 2018 issue of the RSAI newsletter. This will be my last note as the President of RSAI as I will be stepping down on the 31st of December this year. Mark Partridge, whom most of you are familiar with, will take over the presidency. It has been a rewarding experience having the opportunity to lead a very large, dynamic and progressive association such as the RSAI. I have learned a lot about managing a large association and made friends with many capable academics.

When I took over the leadership of our association, my goal was to expand our regional science sections in developing countries, particularly in Asia, Latin America and Africa, while enhancing and deepening the knowledge of regional science. Our association is already well-established in developed countries, but is yet to cover more extensively other parts of the world, which consists mostly of developing countries. Doing so is important to ensure the relevance of regional science for policy development in those developing countries.

The RSAI has faced immense challenges to expand our association in developing countries. There are fewer academic activities in these countries; consequently, I have endeavored to provide my utmost support for conducting more activities in Asia, Latin America and Africa. This will encourage further collaborations between country sections in conducting existing activities as well as more cooperation between academics from developed and developing countries. It will also develop stronger "soft" cooperation between journals within RSAI in supporting academics in developing countries.

I was fortunate to have come across many leaders in our association that shared the same thinking, which allowed our organization to move towards achieving this common goal. I supported our association's efforts to ensure that our sections in Africa are active. I appreciate the contributions of Abdellatif Khattabi on this matter. We certainly hope that our section in Morocco becomes stronger and could set an example for the development of other sections in Africa.

LARSA and PRSCO have been working in developing more activities in Latin America and have allowed me to provide support to their initiatives. PRSCO, through its summer institutes, has been able to establish new sections such as those in Ecuador and Peru. Furthermore, the LARSA conference aims to strengthen the bonds between sections in Latin America. I thank Carlos Azzoni and Patricio Aroca for their contributions in these fields.

Besides its work in Latin America, PRSCO also ensures our association has activities in Asia. I was delighted to support Fu-Chuan Lai and Hiroyuki Shibusawa's efforts in encouraging the implementation of our nurturing talent program in Vietnam, Indonesia and the Philippines.

This year, our 12th World Congress of RSAI was conducted in Goa, India. The success of this major event is attributed to the many participants not only from the PRSCO region but also from ERSA and NARSC regions. I would like to express my appreciation to those who joined our World Congress to share their ideas with other colleagues. The association will have more activities in South Asia as a result of the successful World Congress. I have given support to Sumana Bandyopadhyay's initiatives for hosting regional science seminars/workshops in other countries in South Asia in the near future.

Including China in our association is another significant effort to broaden our coverage of Asia. Following the mandate of our Council, we continue communications with our counterparts at the regional science association in China, the RSAC, to pursue this objective. We are looking forward to seeing RSAC friends participate in our activities, as well as members of RSAI sections participating in RSAC activities.

While we put emphasis on expanding our coverage, ERSA and NARSC have continued to host impressive conferences and summer schools that have enhanced our knowledge in regional science. Thanks to leaders of both associations for doing their best in running their supra-regional sections.

Although we have made some headway in strengthening the knowledge of regional science and spreading this knowledge to the rest of the world, more progress is required to further achieve our goal. There are problems yet to be resolved and regions which are still not covered by our association. Your ongoing help to bolster the knowledge of regional science and to broaden the coverage of our Association is most welcome.

I am grateful for the contributions of all colleagues who have conducted various activities related to regional science and our association during my tenure as president. I would also like to thank the generosity of everyone that have assisted and supported me in running our Association.

Finally, I would like to congratulate our Morocco section for being elected by the Council as the host of our upcoming 2020 World Congress and Andrea Caragliu as our new Executive Director as of 1 January 2019. Please also join me in thanking Tomas Dentinho for serving as our Executive Director during the last 8 years. He has done an exceptional job. In particular, I would like to thank him for patiently working with me and providing effective guidance on managing our association.

And to all members of RSAI, I do hope that our connections and collaborations will continue in the future. I hope to continue meeting everyone at our forthcoming conferences.

Regards,

Budy P. Resosudarmo

1.2. Welcome to the 65th Meeting of the North American Regional Science Council, San Antonio (TX), Nov. 7-10, 2018

by *Monica A. Haddad*, Program Chair (haddad@jastate.edu), and *John Sporing*, Local Organizer (NARSCLocal@srsa.org)

¡Bienvenido a San Antonio!


On behalf of the North American Regional Science Council and the Southern Regional Science Association, we welcome you to San Antonio, Texas and the 65th Annual North American Meetings of the Regional Science Association International.

We look forward to some exciting events this year, including Jean-Claude Thill's RSAI Fellows Lecture on Wednesday, Nov. 7, 6:30-7:30, "Scale in World City Networks." Mark Partridge's Presidential Plenary on Thursday, Nov. 8, 10:30-12:00 is titled, "Rural Communities in an Urbanizing World: Will they survive? Should Urban America care?" The Alonso Prize Lecture, organized by David Plane is, "The New Science of Cities," presented by Michael Batty on Thursday, Nov. 8 from 12:15 to 1:30. For the Isserman Lecture, chaired by Luc Anselin, Jouke van Dijk will be presenting "Human Capital, Regional Economic Development and Inequality" on Friday, Nov. 9 from 6:15 to 7:15. Bruce Newbold will also be presenting during this year's Regional Science Policy and Practice Plenary session--his presentation is titled "Immigration in an Age of Populism" and will be on Saturday, Nov. 10, from 2:45 to 4:45.

Remember the Alamo! This year San Antonio celebrates its 300th anniversary. The city started with the founding of the San Antonio de Béxar Presidio and Mission San Antonio de Valero (now the Alamo). Be sure and visit the Alamo--literally across the street from the hotel. The hotel is located on the world-famous Riverwalk, full of exciting restaurants, bars, and shops...all just outside your room.

Explore amazing history at the Spanish colonial missions around the city, designated as the first UNESCO World Heritage Site in Texas, and enjoy pulse-pounding rides at world-class theme parks like SeaWorld and Six Flags. You can go wine tasting in the Texas Hill Country or visit the nation's third oldest zoo. When the stars come out, it's time to head to the nightclubs and dance halls. Main Plaza, in the heart of downtown, has live music all year long. Two-step to a country-western band at Cowboys Dance Hall, experience the legendary dueling pianos at Howl at the Moon, or see the city from new heights on Paramour's rooftop. Jazz TX combines the grit of a Texas dance hall, with the upscale class of a jazz club. Whatever your mood, San Antonio offers a wide range of entertainment options when the sun goes down.

We've provided a list of things to do in San Antonio as well as links to tourism information resources in the conference section of the NARSC Website.

Once again you will have a wonderful opportunity to renew and expand your professional network. It is an excellent opportunity to learn about cutting-edge research in a variety of regional science disciplines. We hope that you enjoy catching up with old friends and making new acquaintances. Hopefully, these conversations will stimulate new ideas for collaborations …and we can hear about them next year in Pittsburgh, PA!

We'd like to extend our special thanks to Neil Reid and Matthew Lehnert for their ongoing support and guidance throughout the planning process. Enjoy the conference and your visit to San Antonio!

1.3. Welcome from the Editors

by *Andrea Caragliu* (andrea.caragliu@polimi.it) and *Graham Clarke* (G.P.Clarke@leeds.ac.uk)

Dear readers,

Welcome to the latest issue of the RSAI newsletter.


Andrea Caragliu


Graham Clarke

First some news on changes to the editorship of this newsletter. We started working together on this important channel of communication in 2013. Since then, we have received an incredible amount of good quality contributions both from RSAI members as well as from colleagues from all related disciplines contributing to Regional Science (geographers, economists, planners…).

We hope that everyone has enjoyed the many issues dealing with important research topics in our field, detailing a number of outstanding centres of research in Regional Science all over the world, and on the interesting stories surrounding the careers of many of our illustrious RSAI fellows. These many different articles confirm the belief that ours is a lively community, with much good research being done amid a friendly atmosphere at the countless national, supranational, and world congresses showcasing the outcome of good quality research all over the world. For us it has been a privilege and an honor to co-edit the newsletter and interact with many new people in our field.

From the next issue of the newsletter a new main editor will replace the present one. More specifically, Martijn Smit (Utrecht University: his research centre is presented in this issue of the newsletter as a Centre of Excellence in Regional Science) will replace Andrea Caragliu, with Graham Clarke guaranteeing continuity and experience in this role for a while. To the new editor we wish the best, and we are both confident the newsletter will be in very good hands. We are sure he will have many

interesting ideas for making the newsletter even better and more relevant.
(Graham Clarke adds: I am sure we would all want to congratulate Andrea, and wish him well, in his new role of Executive Director of RSAI. I am sure he will be a fantastic success!).
Along with Utrecht University, this issue of the newsletter deals with an interesting topic for Regional Science, i.e. the potential death of distance! In 1997 Frances Cairncross advocated that with the diffusion of ICTs spatial friction would be so abated that the role of space would be reduced across all economic interactions. 20 years later, this issue's main articles revolve around continuing this debate and we are honoured to host an article by Frances herself, along with Graham Clarke, Andreas Lendle, Marcelo Olarreaga, Simon Schropp, André Torre, and Pierre-Louis Vézina.
For the Meet the Fellows column we are happy to have an article on Roberto Camagni's career. His story offers a great example of the 'Latin European' view on Regional Science. His own work spans four decades working in three major European countries (Italy, France, and Spain) where his textbook on Urban Economics has been translated and widely read.
This issue also hosts a great deal of information on the many recent initiatives of the RSAI for enhancing and spreading knowledge on Regional Science all over the world. Together they show an amazing number of training initiatives undertaken by RSAI in collaboration with a host of agencies. Often this work gets unreported but we are delighted to showcase it here.
We believe the menu allows enough choice for a well-served buffet. Therefore, we wish you bon appetit, and we very much welcome any feedback from you.
Enjoy the read!

2. News from the RSAI World

2.1. ERSA Winter School in Lille, France

by *Faridah Djellal*, Professor, University of Lille (faridah.djellal@univ-lille1.fr)

Sponsored by the RSAI Nurturing Talent Program, between January 22nd and Jan. 26th, 2018, the first Winter School of the European Regional Science Association (ERSA, French section) was held at the University of Lille 1, France. The Winter Course provided PhD students and young researchers lectures on the latest developments in regional science around the topics of innovation and structural change. Cristiano Antonelli, Marcus Desjardin, André Torre, Ron Boschma, Paul Windrum and Faïz Gallouj presented and discussed their ideas in an environment characterized by fruitful interactions. 28 students from 6 different countries (France, UK, Italy, Indonesia, Pakistan and India) eagerly participated in the course.

2.2. Workshop on the Geography of Craft Beer Brewing and Consumption, Gran Sasso Science Institute, L'Aquila, Italy

by *Maria Giulia* Pezzi, GSSI (giulia.pezzi@gssi.it)

The focus of this two-day workshop, held at the Gran Sasso Science Institute in L'Aquila, Italy on Jul. 5-6 2018, was the rapidly growing craft beer industry. Two keynote and two plenary lectures included Martin Stack's (Rockhurst University) and Christian Garavaglia's (University of Milano-Bicocca) lectures. In the first keynote, Martin Stack explored the growth of craft beer in the United States and provided an assessment of the impact of this growth on the broader brewing industry. In the second keynote lecture, Christian Garavaglia provided an overview of the growth of craft beer at the international scale.

Workshop participants eager to sample the delights of their research topic!

Following these two keynotes Neil Reid (University of Toledo) and Maria Giulia Pezzi (Gran Sasso Science Institute) gave two plenary lectures. Neil Reid examined the motivations of the craft beer tourist, while Maria Pezzi's lecture examined the contribution that craft beer can make to tourism in rural and remote regions.
The opening day of the workshop concluded with a presentation by Luca Marcotullio, owner of L'Aquila's only craft brewery, Anbra. The brewery is a product of post-earthquake L'Aquila. The city suffered a devastating earthquake in 2009, which killed over 300 of its residents. Following the earthquake, Luca Marcotullio decided to open the brewery, realizing that a taproom in the center of the city would provide a space where people could come, relax, and socialize with each other. In many respects, the taproom was Luca Marcotullio's contribution to the rebuilding of post-earthquake L'Aquila. Following, Luca's talk, he took questions from the audience, which proved to be particularly fascinating.
The second day of the workshop comprised presentations from eleven young researchers. At the conclusion of the second day, there was a wrap-up session in which participants' discussed

ideas for future activities and collaborations. An immediate outcome of the workshop will be a proposal for a special issue of a journal comprising papers presented at the workshop.

2.3. Special Issue on "Regional and Urban economics in Latin America: Informality and economic development", forthcoming in the Revue d'Economie Urbaine et Régional (http://www.reru.fr)

by *Rosella Nicolini* (rosella.nicolini@uab.cat) and *José Luis Roig* (joseplluis.roig@uab.cat), Editors

This issue deals with the way the informal sector affects the urban economic structure in Latin America. Selected contributions focus on the influence of the informal sector on the most important factors driving economic development. From an urban perspective, the informal sector is concentrated in the periphery. However, its impact on social and economic activities can be seen across several dimensions, above all when referring to the housing market or the territorial spreading of the activities. The contributions included in this issue analyze the socioeconomic effects generated by the presence of informality in the economy and its interaction with the formal sector. First, there is an interesting discussion about the best way to define and measure informality. Then, the issue proposes ideas about the impact of informality on the local labour market as well as the urban structure. Finally, attention is drawn to the influence of the informality on the international competitiveness of local production activities as one of the principal sources of economic development.

2.4. 31st ERSA Summer School Regional Policy Analysis and Planning – Evaluation Theory and Practice

by *Štefan Rehák*, University of Economics in Bratislava (stefan.rehak@euba.sk)

The 31st ERSA Summer School was jointly organized by the *European Regional Science Association*, the University of Economics in Bratislava and the Society for Regional Science and Policy – Slovak Section of ERSA. The summer school was financially supported by the Regional Science Association International (RSAI) and the Representation of European Commission in the Slovak Republic.

The call received 39 applications from 14 countries (based on the university applicants attended) - Austria, Brazil, Denmark, Germany, China, India, Italy, Portugal, Russian Federation, Slovakia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, and Turkey. 25 students from 12 countries – Austria (2), Brazil, Denmark, Germany, China, Italy (7), Russian Federation, Slovakia (2), Spain (3), Sweden (2), Switzerland (3), and Turkey were eventually accepted. In the end, 21 students actually participated, including 11 females and 10 males.
A subsequent questionnaire shows a very good level of satisfaction for all participants in the Summer School. We certainly look forward to seeing many of these young scholars participating in future RSAI events!

2.5. RSAI extends partnership with Wiley

RSAI and Wiley, their current publisher, are pleased to announce a new five-year contract to publish *Papers in Regional Science* (PiRS) and *Regional Science Policy and Practice* (RSPP). The agreement will run until 2023.
Key to renewing this partnership was a clear commitment from both parties to support journal growth, increase the academic and social impacts of both journals, embark on innovative new ventures, and offer enhanced benefits to RSAI members. From 2019, *Papers in Regional Science* (PiRS), will increase its frequency from 4 to 6 issues per year. Apart from plans to support the growth of PiRS, measures had been agreed to publish the backlog of papers awaiting publication in an issue by 2018 and to deter future buildup of another backlog. The goal is to provide authors with a quick and efficient publishing service by reducing waiting time to publication within an issue to not more than 6 months. Regarding *Regional Science Policy and Practice* (RSPP), the goal is to enhance its impact amongst scientists, practitioners, and policy makers around the world.

Participants in the RSAI-Wiley meeting in Cork. Left to right: Tomaz Dentinho, Jean-Claude Thill, Grace Ong, Rachel Smith, Mark Partridge, Roberta Capello, Heather Saunders, Budy Resosudarmo.

In addition to supporting growth, an important goal in the new chapter of this partnership will be a strategic focus on expanding current efforts to amplify the academic and social impacts of both journals. With the release of the 2017 Impact Factor scores, PiRs achieved its highest ever Impact Factor of 1.657, and future strategies will concentrate on improving on this significant

achievement. The goal for RSPP is to get an Impact Factor higher than 1.0 in the next few years.
"*I look forward to having a smooth collaboration with Wiley during the period of our contract. We should be able to improve our achievements*", said Professor Budy Resosudarmo, current president of the RSAI. Within the next contract term, the RSAI and Wiley will embark on a series of innovative projects such as creating a new website that will function as the 'home of regional science', and initiate discussions about a new Book Series.
From 2019, current members will be able to benefit from:

- Ongoing complimentary online access to *Geographical Analysis*, *Growth and Change*, *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* and *Journal of Regional Science*.
- 25% discount on Wiley books, excluding reference works such as encylopaedias, dictionaries, handbooks, bibliographies and other collective works.
- A discounted Article Processing Charge of USD1,500 for members wishing to make their article open access immediately upon publication. RSAI members must also be the corresponding author of the article.

Wiley is proud to support the RSAI's mission and looks forward to continuing as a valued partner for the Association over the next five years.

2.6. Intensive Course Program: Urban and Regional, Transport and Environmental Economics

by *Hera Susanti* (hera.cpt27b@gmail.com), Universitas Indonesia

With the support of the RSAI Nurturing Talent Program, between January 15th and February 10th, 2018, the Department of Economics, the Faculty of Economics and Business at the Universitas Indonesia (FEB UI), in collaboration with the Department of Spatial Economics, School of Business and Economics, Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam (SBE-VU) held an intensive course on Urban and Regional, Transport and Environmental Economics. This was organized by FEB-UI and was held in the Department of Economics building at Kampus UI Depok, Indonesia.
The objective of this course was to provide knowledge on Spatial, Transport, Regional and Environmental Economics, while at the same time functioning as talent scouting to seek the best candidate to join the Spatial, Transport, Regional and Environmental Economic Master Program (STREEM) at SBE VU Amsterdam. The course consisted of lectures, tutorials, and credit-earning assignments. All participants have been granted a certificate of attendance by FEB-UI and SBE-VU and/or a certificate of successful credits earned by SBE-VU. The faculty included Djoni Hartono, Vid Adrison, Dhaniel Ilyas, Usman, Erik Verhoef, Gerard van der Meijden, Henri de Groot, and Peter Mulder.

Participants in the IC-FEB-VU intensive course

Currently, there are three participants who will continue their education at STREEM Program at SBE VU Amsterdam, and they have already received support by the LPDP and STUNNED programs.

2.7. The 2018 UEH Summer School on Computable General Equilibrium Modeling and Applications Aug 1-3, 2018

by *Nguyen Luu Bao Doan*, School of Economics, University of Economics – Ho Chi Minh City (doannlb@ueh.edu.vn)

The *UEH School of Economics* and the *Regional Science Association International*, with the RSAI Nurturing Talent Program, jointly organized the 2018 Summer School of Computable General Equilibrium (CGE) Modeling and Applications from August 1 to August 3, 2018 at the University of Economics – Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam. The event was also partly funded by the EfD Center – Vietnam. Professor Fu-Chuan Lai, the President of the Pacific Regional Science Conference Organisation (PRSCO) also made a personal financial contribution to the cost of conducting the summer school. Dr. Nhi Tran of the Center of Policy Studies (CoPS) at Victoria University in Australia was the key resource person.
The summer school was an intensive 3-day training programme which provided hands-on experience of CGE and how to apply it in different contexts. 10 participants from Cambodia, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, South Korea, and Vietnam completed the course. Among the academic participants, six are affiliated with Vietnamese institutions, including three from the UEH School of Economics, and one from the Fulbright University, the Open University, and the University of Natural Resource and Environment. One faculty from the University of Malaya also joined the training. The remaining participants included graduate students and researchers working for various governments. Prior to the start of the summer school, two UEH faculty attended two weeks of CGE training at the CoPS in Melbourne, Australia thanks to a CoPS grant. They returned to work with Dr. Nhi Tran as teaching assistants during the training and helped participants to employ CGE models for their policy analysis exercises.

Participants in the UEH-RSAI Summer School

The course successfully introduced participants to the underlying theory and fundamental techniques of CGE and regional modelling. They also learned how to use the GEMPACK™ software to understand and apply CGE models. Several participants are now considering deploying CGE models for their own research in cooperation with CoPS researchers. For example, an attendee indicated that he would use the technique to investigate the impact of climate change on crop production (and rice production in particular) in Vietnam. Another attendee is developing a proposal which includes an objective to investigate the economy-wide and environmental implications of carbon tax recycling, or the so-called environmental fiscal reform in Malaysia.

2.8. 11th Annual Midwest Graduate Student Summit

by *Amir Borges Ferreira Neto*, West Virginia University (amneto@mix.wvu.edu)

The 11th annual Midwest Graduate Student Summit on Applied Economics, Regional, and Urban Studies (AERUS) was hosted by West Virginia University on April 7-8, 2018. The event was sponsored by the Regional Science Association International (RSAI), the North American Regional Science Council (NARSC), the Regional Research Institute (RRI/WVU), Center for Free Enterprise (CFE/WVU) and the Bureau of Business and Economic Research (BBER/WVU).

The 2018 AERUS included 40 participants from several universities such as Ohio State University, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, Purdue University, Georgia State University, University of Pittsburgh, Colgate University, University of Kentucky, and West Virginia University. All participants presented their work and received valuable feedback from peers and from the senior faculty who attended the event during three parallel sessions that occurred during the weekend.

The 2018 AERUS had the honor to host Professor Tessa Conroy from University of Wisconsin-Madison and Professor Adam Storeygard from Tufts University as keynote speakers. Dr. Conroy's keynote, "*Reflections on the Early Years of a PhD: It's Both Harder and More Fun Than You Think*", illustrated her perspectives about the first few years of professional/academic life after finishing the PhD program. Dr. Storeygard's keynote, "*Accessibility and mobility in urban India*", talked about his new paper using data from Google Maps to measure the accessibility and congestion in Indian cities and asses their determinants.

Three other activities were part of the AERUS program: two faculty panels and one workshop. The faculty panels were a friendly discussion between four panelists on two important topics: Distressed Economies and Future of Urban and Regional Science, with active participation of the students attending the panels. The Distressed Economics panel was composed by Dr. Tessa Conroy, Dr. Brad Humphreys, Dr. Lindsay Allen and Dr. John Deskins. The Future of Urban and Regional Science comprised Dr. Adam Storeygard, Dr. Peter Schaeffer, Dr. Josh Hall and Dr. Robert Dunn. The workshop was organized by Dr. Adam Nowak and addressed how to create datasets using website pages. This was an outstanding opportunity for participants to learn about web scraping and how to create their own datasets.

For more details on the 2018 AERUS, please visit https://sites.google.com/view/aerus2018.

Participants at the 2018 AERUS workshop

2.9. Job opening at Rutgers University

The Edward J. Bloustein School of Planning and Public Policy at Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey, seeks two full-time tenure-track faculty members in urban planning and public policy with specialties in one or more of the following areas:

- geographic information science,
- land use,
- informatics,
- health policy, and
- economics.

The Bloustein School values interdisciplinary scholars who teach and research across disciplines. Applicants may be focused on domestic or international policy, city and regional planning,

and/or health, social and economic issues, and the ability to address race, gender, and/or economic inequality is especially encouraged. The positions will be tenure-track at the assistant professor level.
Applicants must have doctorates, and we strongly prefer that they have their degree by May 31, 2019. We are committed to a diverse workforce and maintaining a learning and working environment that is welcoming to all. Doctoral degrees may be in any field relevant to urban planning and public policy (e.g. urban planning, public policy, geography, economics, public health, public administration, and political science). The standard teaching assignment is two courses each semester, including undergraduate and graduate courses. The successful applicant will be dedicated to excellence in teaching, have a demonstrated commitment and capacity to perform rigorous, high-impact applied research, and to attract funded grants. Salaries and benefit packages and other forms of professional support offered by the university are competitive.
For any information or for applying please go to https://jobs.rutgers.edu/postings/76029

3. The death of distance

In this next part of the newsletter we have four papers around the theme of the 'death of distance'. Each takes a different perspective on the issue and we hope the readers enjoy the debate. It is especially pleasing to have Frances Cairncross start us off.

3.1. Has distance died?

by *Frances Cairncross*, DBE, FRSE

It is just over 20 years since I wrote an article for The Economist - later to become a book - called "The Death of Distance". In those distant days what had struck me most forcefully was the way the price of long-distance communications was plummeting - "falling faster than we have ever seen the price of a key input fall before", as one World Bank official had pointed out to me. This was the result essentially of the advent of fibre-optic cable and wireless on the transmission of digitalised information. Many people at the time were interested in how the technology would develop. I was interested in what impact this change in cost and in the technology of communications would have on government, business and the lives of individuals.
In the past two decades, the impact of this technological change has of course been astonishing. I frequently think of the words of that perceptive economist, Alfred Marshall, in his Principles of Economics in 1920: "The full importance of an epoch-making idea is often not perceived in the generation in which it is made. A new discovery is seldom effective for practical purposes till many minor improvements and subsidiary discoveries have gathered themselves around it."
There have been several "minor improvements and subsidiary discoveries" - and one not-so-minor: notably the IPhone, which Steve Jobs correctly prophesied in 2007 would "change everything" by combining the power of the computer and the reach and portability of a wireless phone with a camera and a locational device in a pocket-sized, affordable form. As someone who makes a video call every night to my daughter in Washington DC, so that I can see my small grandsons at play, I am a considerable beneficiary of the death of distance.
Over the past two decades, we have watched a ferment of innovation driven by technological change. We have seen ways in which individuals can use their personal capital stock more effectively - think of Air BnB or Uber and Lyft. We have seen grand companies upended - think of Kodak or the big department stores - and a growing workforce of part-time, "on demand" workers who make up the "gig economy". We have seen changes, not just in our personal lives but in the structure of companies, operating in more fluid, decentralised ways. Our high streets struggle to survive as people buy from more distant suppliers, through Amazon or Deliveroo or Ocado. The technology-driven change in the structure of economic activity at every level has been considerable, and we cannot yet see where it will eventually lead.
However, my title, while an accurate description of some of the momentous changes of the past two decades, does not fully describe the world as we now know it. In many key areas, distance is far from dead.
For proof, take a look at the centre of innovation in the extraordinary technological revolution that is still under way. Where are Google, Facebook, Apple, Amazon all based? On the west coast of the United States, together with a host of start-ups and feeder companies. Such a geographical conglomeration would have been familiar in Victorian England, where companies would typically settle around a source of raw materials, or energy, or skilled labour. The West Coast of the US offers a concentration of venture capital, skilled technicians - and ideas, the ultimate raw material.
The last 20 years has not seen - as I had thought they might - a general reduction in the importance of location. There are all kinds of ways in which location still matters. As Paul Collier, a distinguished British development economist, has pointed out, distance still matters a great deal to countries: if your neighbours are France and Germany, you are more likely to flourish than you are if they are Congo, Burundi and Uganda. Moreover, as the concentration on the West Coast demonstrates, activities that require sophisticated knowledge and highly skilled staff have continued to cluster around a few centres, most of them either very large cities or centres of particular academic excellence.
Indeed, a part of the debate in Britain on the consequences of leaving the European Union has centred on the question of geographic mobility. Might financial services, which dominate

Britain's international exports of invisibles, move to Paris or Frankfurt? "There are more bankers in London than people in Frankfurt," scoffed one sceptic.

Most people with highly specialised skills work in areas where there is the deepest market for those skills. They may still live far from their workplace. Increasingly, employees spend all or part of their week working remotely - from home or from another workplace. That development in itself will increasingly affect labour laws and other laws affecting what happens at work.

The ability to work remotely will have other consequences. Since, in most countries, the public sector is the slowest adopter of new technologies but the one that dominates large areas of the service industries, it will be only in the coming decades that we see how far the provision of these services can be disengaged from physical geography. At present, the quality of education and health care is generally higher and more comprehensive in large cities than in rural areas distant from large conurbations. An important question for the coming years is how far this geographical inequality can be reduced by using technology to mitigate the impact of distance on rural populations.

So distance is far from dead - and will never die completely. The technological revolution of the past 20 years has dramatically altered the location and nature of economic activity. But, as Alfred Marshall observed a century ago, it may be the next generation that fully appreciates the change that is taking place.

3.2. Online commerce and the death of distance

by *Andreas Lendle* (andreaslendle@googlemail.com), *Marcelo Olarreaga* (Marcelo.Olarreaga@unige.ch), *Simon Schropp* (sschropp@sidley.com) and *Pierre-Louis Vézina* (pierre-louis.vezina@kcl.ac.uk)

Twenty years after Frances Cairncross predicted the death of distance and ten years after Thomas Friedman claimed the world was flat, academics are still mostly claiming that proximity matters now more than ever. What's going on? Did information technology really not shrink the world?

Ed Leamer, a famous trade economist, argued around 10 years ago that advances in communication and transportation technologies in recent decades had failed to reduce frictions between countries. He argued that humans cannot trust each other unless they are in the same space and this may explain why international commerce is still highly constrained by geographic distance.

What our research has taught us is that the death of distance is indeed happening. Aggregate trade data is just not the right place to look for it. Using ebay data, we showed that distance is not nearly as problematic for online trade as one might think. The distance effect is 65% smaller on ebay than for offline trade. Another way to look at it is that firms that export on ebay reach markets that are 30% further away across the globe, compared to offline firms. The online world is indeed flatter.

How does e-commerce reduce distance?

We argued online technologies reduce the distance effect as they reduce search costs and facilitate contract enforcement. A prospective ebay seller only needs to list items online to sell them across the world. She/he doesn't need to hire consulting firms to deal with local procedures and travel abroad to attend trade fairs and networking events to make foreign contacts. Innovative payment systems make it easier to exchange money safely, and seller rating mechanisms help to deter devious behaviour. International transactions between faraway countries have always tended to be risky. Online platforms enable individuals and firms to connect across cultural and national borders.

The rise of the online multinationals

Online markets such as ebay also make it easier for small firms in developing countries to take part in international commerce and reach distant markets. We looked at firms in 21 emerging economies and found that firms selling on ebay manage to export to 8.4 countries on average. Firms that only use offline, or traditional channels, export to only 2.8 countries on average. The difference in international market access is huge. It's also striking given that most ebay sellers are very small in terms of annual sales compared to other exporters. So in some way small online firms are much more multinational.

Why is this important?

Online commerce is booming. Platforms such as ebay, Amazon and Alibaba are changing the trade landscape. In 2017 The Economist ran a special report, detailing how the new bazaar now accounted for 8.5% of total retail trade and was changing the ways of commerce. Governments around the world have noted the potential of online trade to boost income and foster development. In China, the government has made e-commerce a policy priority to boost rural development and bridge the urban-rural divide. And back in 2015, President Obama pitched e-commerce as a strategy to boost US exports in a State of the Union address. He said that ebay exporters are much more multinational than their offline counterparts. He quoted statistics from our research, highlighting that US sellers on eBay export to on average 9.3 different countries and more than 50% export to more than five countries–a much higher proportion than offline.

So is distance dead?

The gravity equation is arguably one of the most successful empirical relationships in all of economics. It's not going away so easily. The boom in online commerce might not be big enough to reduce the distance effect on total trade, yet. The same goes for the rise in international trade in services, which is also killing distance, softly. Or maybe proximity to consumers is indeed no longer important. That would mean that firms or industries can now cluster more than ever and benefit from agglomeration economies, without worrying about being too far from

consumers. So intra-industry trade, a large chunk of trade, may have become more local while online trade has gone more global. This may also explain why, despite skype and cheap flights to everywhere, being in the right city, in the right place, is more important now than it ever was. That could be because distance is indeed dying.

Email us if you'd like a copy of our research papers!

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3.3. Proximity analysis: distance not dead but severely injured

by *André Torre*, University Paris-Saclay, INRA, AgroParistech (torre@agroparistech.fr)

Proximity analyses were not launched in reaction to the discussion about the death of distance but this question quickly arose, for two reasons. The first one is underlying in the primary goal of proximity approaches: show that space matters in the economics of industry and innovation and that production and exchange activities cannot give up dealing with distance. The second is the will to open the black box of proximity externalities and in particular to reveal the weaknesses of localized production systems analyses, which postulated that the simple spatial concentration of innovative firms on a given space allows to give rise to benefits in terms of production and innovation. Everybody is aware of the long series of failures of science parks or top-down clusters.

While the development of ICTs became an important question, and while the changes which it implied came to upset the game of proximities, the relationship of proximity analysis to the question of the death of the distance happened in three acts.

Act 1: the importance of organized proximity; the megadeath of distance

The basis of proximity approaches is to show that the relations and the interactions between economic actors, and most particularly between industrial and innovative firms, rest on two main categories of proximity. On the one side geographical proximity, which takes place in terms of metric distance, but also implies transport costs, transport infrastructures and physical geography - so that one could speak finally about functional distance. And on the other one of non-spatial proximities. If Boschma (2005) goes as far as counting 4, we group them under the term of organized proximity based on two logics (Torre & Rallet, 2005). The logic of belonging indicates the fact that two or several actors belong to the same graph of relations or still to the same network of actors. The logic of similarity corresponds to the mental adherence to common categories, in low cognitive distance; it can involve people who recognize themselves in shared projects or who share common values in terms of culture, religion... These relations of organized proximity allow us to exchange knowledge and to work at a distance, by abolishing wide constraints of geographical proximity, and thus distance, in particular thanks to the development of the ICTs like the internet, or social networks, which allow remote communication.

Act 2: temporary geographical proximity; distance reborn

The multiplication of field studies and applied works realized on this basis then showed two main things. First of all geographical proximity cannot stand alone for the success of innovation activities at the local level and quite particularly in industrial clusters. Organized proximity is also necessary, and thus spatial concentration is not enough, quality interactions are also needed. Then, that remote work, coordination or collaboration between firms located at a distance, in particular innovative or knowledge economy firms, cannot be successful in the absence of spatial or geographical interactions. Even the members of the communities of practice who develop in every corner of the world need to know each other or to bear on a central organizer that comes to meet them on a regular basis. The development of technological projects led at a distance need preliminary onsite meetings and also annual meetings where all the participants interact in the same place. The most important industrial conflicts can be resolved only by means of face to face interactions. The importance of face to face confrontation turns out determining, and signs the importance of fairs or congresses, where engineers and researchers go simply to meet and discuss. We then put forward the importance of temporary geographical proximity, which turns out to be necessary in the success of production and innovation activities: one cannot abolish distance (Torre, on 2008).

Act 3: proximities questioned; the return of the death of distance?

Nowadays the question of the death of distance is always at stake for proximity approaches according to the current changes in our everyday life. The progress of technology questions us: Skype meetings, increased reality, dematerialization and miniaturization of terminals, decrease of the transportation cost of the data, increase of bandwidths, lead to a permanent improvement of remote interactions. One can wonder if they do not draw a new increase of organized proximity relations, at the expenses of geographical proximity, still underestimated (Rallet & Torre, 2017). If this fact seems indisputable, with the rise of co-presence and ubiquity phenomena, we have to wonder however which types of activities it addresses. Without any doubt, this situation is more and more true for the exchange of remote knowledge or for the co-construction of innovation processes at a distance. But it is much less obvious in the human interactions at the heart of cities for example: geographical proximities turn out then essential, be they sought for (for the exchanges, the sociability, and the user-friendliness) or on the contrary

unwanted (congestion phenomena, land use or neighborhood conflicts) (Torre & Wallet, 2014). Our research reveals that certain things cannot be made remote and that distance imposes a cost which is not only related to the transport of data, be it digital. It is a social, and environmental cost which is paid in terms of friendliness and well-being. Research on these questions is now crucial, based on proximity relations, be they geographical or organized ones.

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3.4. Exploring the geography of e-commerce

by *Graham Clarke*, School of Geography, University of Leeds (G.P.Clarke@leeds.ac.uk)

Since the 1980s and 1990s there have been many predictions that distance would become less important in a new digital era of trade and commerce (see the reflections of Frances Cairncross and others in this newsletter). Retailing seemed to be an obvious area where this would happen. The argument has been built around the premise that as e-commerce became increasingly popular, physical access would be less important in the eyes of consumers as they could now shop more conveniently from home or work. To some extent this has come true. In Europe for example, according to 'Retail Research' e-commerce now stands at 8-9% of the total retail market (much higher in some individual countries and in certain sectors of the retail economy) and traditional shopping centres (in town and city centres in particular) have undoubtedly suffered. There have been many well-known brand and firm casualties: see for example Gerend, 2017 on German high streets.

However, the growth of e-commerce in many retail sectors has been much slower than predicted in the 1980s/1990s, and is spatially very varied across regions. In the UK, the e-commerce grocery market share for example currently stands at only 7.5% (and is much lower in the rest of Europe, with Spain and Portugal for example having e-commerce grocery market shares of less than 2%). In addition, there is evidence that geography remains crucial in e-commerce operations. There are at least 3 main reasons. First, the demand for e-commerce is spatially uneven. Clarke et al (2015), using data from the large UK survey company Acxiom, show how e-commerce usage varies by age and income group, with younger more affluent households much more engaged with this channel (hence demand is spatially uneven in line with socio-economic variations seen across regions: see also Soopramanien et al 2007, Longley et al 2008). Second, it is clear that consumers in more suburban and rural areas have a higher propensity to use e-commerce given poorer accessibility to physical stores. Figure 1 shows the spatial distribution of e-commerce usage in the city of Leeds in the UK. Area A has highest usage – an affluent area with less physical stores in close proximity. Area B has the lowest usage. This is the lowest income area in the city – almost an 'internet desert' in terms of grocery retailing. Consumers in this area are especially likely to be sensitive to delivery charges and minimum order sizes for example. (It is also interesting to note that retailers have red-lined certain low income estates in the UK because of fear of attacks on drivers and subsequent thefts from delivery vehicles). Area C is the city centre and student area where many young, professional consumers engage heavily with e-commerce. Area D is the most rural in the city – clearly poorer access to stores here is important.

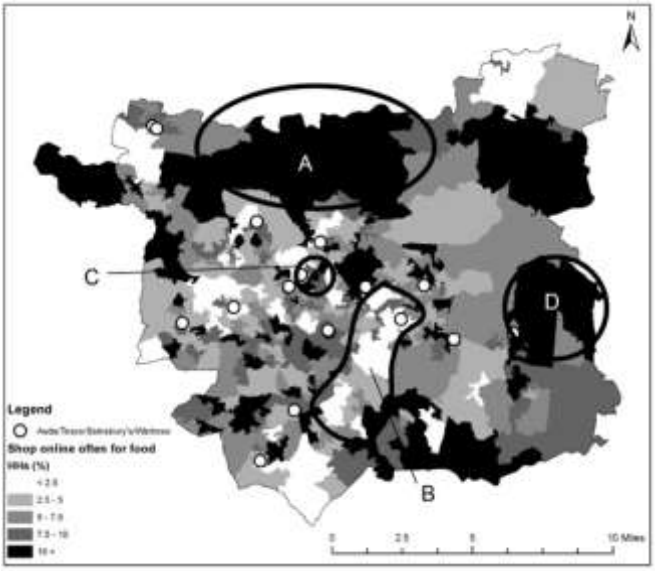

Figure 1: Spatial distribution of e-commerce grocery usage in Leeds, UK (source: Clarke et al 2015).

Third, there is growing evidence of a fascinating correlation between e-commerce usage and the physical location of stores *by brand*. Kirby-Hawkins et al (2018) plot the spatial distribution of consumers for one major UK grocery retailer for Leeds and Bradford (Figure 2). The map shows that e-commerce usage for this brand is strong in areas where consumers are some distance from their (usually large) physical stores. Thus, it may well be that if a consumer lives close to his/her favourite brand he/she will shop at that store even if he/she is younger and more affluent. However, consumers will substitute the physical trip for an electronic purchase if they are located at some distance from those stores. This pattern is clearly visible from Figure 2: note the high e-commerce usage for this retailer in areas 1-4 where this company's large stores are largely absent. This is evidence from only one retailer – but it is interesting nevertheless.

Fig 2: E-commerce usage in Leeds for one retailer (stores shown as circles relative to their size): Source: Kirby-Hawkins et al (2018)

Other important geographical considerations with e-commerce are the physical costs and network planning decisions associated with deliveries by the retailers themselves. It is a major geographical logistic exercise to minimise costs of delivery whilst at the same time maintaining standards of service (in relation to delivery times). We are also now witnessing the growth of 'dark stores' – stores which look like traditional supermarkets but solely serve the e-commerce market. The future distribution of these stores is a major new research area in retail location analysis. Also the growth of click and collect will be fascinating to witness from a geographical point of view. Click and collect cuts costs for retailers and allows consumers more flexibility over collection – each major retailer is now thinking of the geography of click and collect distribution points in terms of potential locations such as rail stations, petrol stations, schools, pubs etc. Thus one may speculate that the geography of e-commerce will remain an important component of retail location analysis for many years to come.

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4. Centres of excellence in Regional Science: Utrecht University, The Netherlands

by *Martijn Smit,* Utrecht University (m.j.smit@uu.nl)

Utrecht used to be the most important city in the Netherlands – in the medieval period. Unfortunately, it lost its appeal in the centuries afterwards, becoming the capital for a few months under Napoleons brother, and regaining a prominent position in the Zipf distribution in the twentieth century. In the current day and age, its centrality is its major asset: efficient public transport connects to Amsterdam, Rotterdam and The Hague every fifteen minutes with travel times to each below 40 minutes. The re-appreciation of urban lifestyles, combined with an attractive housing stock, has also meant housing prices in the city have risen tremendously, and the city is almost as unaffordable now as Amsterdam. It is therefore mainly populated by higher educated dual earners, as well as a large amount of students.

Houses on a canal in Utrecht

The University in Utrecht is among the oldest in the Country, but the Department of Human Geography and Planning and the Utrecht School of Economics were founded in the twentieth century. The Department of Human Geography for a long time was among the largest world-wide, rumor had it, with a thousand students all in Human Geography and Planning. Their possibilities for employment were, and still are, large in the Netherlands: dangers of flooding and a strong tradition of local government have led to meticulous planning and therefore ample demand for policy makers and consultants.

The Economic Geography group was given a large boost by Marc de Smidt, who started his studies in industrial geography, economics, and planning in 1959, finishing his dissertation on labor markets and firm structure in 1975 and making full professor shortly afterwards. He was particularly interested in

applied research, what we would now call valorization, and set up a foundation where students and recent alumni could perform contract research – this foundation is still active, and awards a yearly thesis award that bears his name.

A second boost was given by the now well-known tradition of evolutionary economic geography: Ron Boschma and Koen Frenken contributed significantly to this field, and still are important nodes in the network of evolutionary thinking in economic geography. Koen left the Human Geography Department proper, but is currently one of the pillars of the Copernicus Institute of Sustainable Development, where he works on Industry, Innovation and Platforms. This institute falls under the same Faculty of Geosciences, and in fact shares a brand-new building, replacing the iconic but slightly dilapidating skyscraper on the university campus that previously housed geographers, sociologists, and for a while even theologists – the latter reputedly were in tough competition with the geographers because both wanted to sit on the top floor, albeit for very different reasons.

Ron Boschma

Besides the scholars mentioned above, Utrecht counts a lot of other familiar faces in the Regional Science community, including Frank van Oort (recently moved to Rotterdam, but still partly affiliated to Utrecht) and Frank Bruinsma (has always worked at VU in Amsterdam, but lives in Utrecht). Moreover, the university has contributed to the education and career of young scholars like Frank Neffke, Dario Diodato and Matte Hartog (all now at Harvard). The Utrecht School of Economics is less focused on regional issues, although there are very well-known exceptions like Erik Stam (who has a PhD in Geography from Utrecht) and Harry Garretsen (now in Groningen). Instead, economic geographers frequently cooperate with UCLA, MIT, Harvard, LSE, Toulouse and Stavanger; and the regional science community in the Netherlands easily cuts across all universities, since they are so close to each other, with even "peripheral" Groningen a mere 2 hours away by direct train from Utrecht.

The old (left) and new (above) building of the Faculty of Geosciences at Utrecht University

5. Meet the Fellows: Roberto Camagni

I am not sure whether these short presentations of the scientific and cultural trajectories of RSAI Fellows could be of any use or inspiration for younger scholars in regional science. In fact, as Dante meant with his Comedy, in societies there is no hero but anyone is the hero of his own story. Nevertheless, I trust the interpretation of market demand by the editors of our Newsletter that have asked this since many years. (Editors: we believe everyone has enjoyed reading these research autobiographies!)

The beginning of my research was not about regional issues but in a related field: industrial structure, market power, technological progress and innovation. But soon, discussing with my friend and, at that time, research partner Riccardo Cappellin, I felt a fatal attraction towards regional and urban issues and decided that my work should have been embedded into a wider theoretical dimension, that of space and 'territory'. Interpreting interregional imbalance and the why and how of the existence of cities since history is there; and how human action does not inscribe itself into geography and history but molds geography and history themselves, or reacts unpredictably to the limits imposed by them.

Methodologically, I felt that theory and conceptualization should come first with respect to formalization and empirical testing and that these four steps should always come together sometimes and integrate each other. Moreover, I found disturbing and even harmful the conflict between formalised, stylised approaches and not-formalised, conceptual ones, both lacking their necessary counterpart, and the idea of a necessary convergence between the two became a continuous logical fil rouge of my research.

As early as 1980, I defined economic space as 'relational' in nature: "*the set of functional and hierarchical relationships*

that happen on geographical space" (later on, I added social and even identitarian relationships). The necessary formalization and testing of this idea came two decades after, with the concept of 'territorial capital', namely "*the set of local assets – material and immaterial, natural and artificial, public and private, cognitive, cultural and social – that constitute the competitive advantage and the attractiveness of places*"; this was achieved through the construction of an ideal production function with heterogeneous capital assets, when the immaterial ones were increasingly made available by statistics at the regional level.

In the early stage of my career (the 1980s) I built models of innovation diffusion (robotics) explaining inter-regional time and spatial lags, and worked with regional input-output tables. I was able to show how the construction of a large transport infrastructure, the *Autostrada del Sole* linking Italy's northern and southern parts in the early sixties, destroyed most of the handicraft production in light industries (clothing, furniture, food) of the south, challenged by northern mass production, while at the same time national economic policy was building huge capital intensive plants in heavy industries, creating the deficit in trade balance of the Mezzogiorno and its difficult employment equilibrium that persisted ever since. Building the first I-O table for an Italian region, Sardinia – an island, where external movements of goods are traced by ports and airports statistics – I showed how a 'smart' and integrated tourism investment like the Aga Khan's in Costa Smeralda in the 1970s, encompassing infrastructure, hotels and villas, an airport, an air company and a shipyard, was comparatively the best for that area.

With Roberta Capello at the ERSA Conference in Porto, 2004

Moreover, in the same years, a relevant effort was paid to the construction of mathematical ecology and spatial self-organisation models, linked to precise theoretical and empirical questions. A prey-predator urban dynamics model interpreted the interaction between urban profits (the prey) and land rent (the predator), giving rise to urban life-cycles; a different, self-organisation dynamic model of an urban system - where a stochastic, Schumpeterian innovation element replaced the usual, deterministic export-base element - showed that, for the emergence of a full urban hierarchy in presence of agglomeration costs à la Alonso, increasing net returns to urban scale are crucially needed. This last model (1986), fully elaborated in cooperation with a mathematician, Giorgio Leonardi, and a planner, Lidia Diappi (interdisciplinarity matters!) supplied largely the basis for many subsequent theoretical and econometric advancements in urban economics, achieved recently by the team of regional scholars in our research group at Politecnico di Milano.

The years 1985-2000 were mainly devoted to the construction of the milieu innovateurs theory, an evolutionary approach to the development of local production systems realized by an international group of scholars gathered by Philippe Aydalot at Sorbonne in Paris, the GREMI, led by myself after Philippe's premature death in 1987. The main theoretical element was represented by the role assigned to local space, that of uncertainty-reducing operator working through the socialized transcoding of information, 'collective actions' by private actors and processes of 'collective learning' (1991). Empirical testing of this theory was achieved by Roberta Capello in 1999.

With the late Richard Gordon, our American partner, in 1990 in Paris at a GREMI conference

In the same years, working with the scientific committee of DATAR, the French national agency for actions and policies of *aménagement du territoire*, I was asked to develop the economic rationale and a typology of cooperation networks among cities (*réseaux de villes*) (1993) that was subsequently used by the European Commission (namely in the ESDP). The concept was once again corroborated by Roberta for the WHO city network project. In these same years I prepared a textbook of Urban Economics (1992), later translated into French (1996) and Spanish, quite innovatively organizing the wide spectrum of existing literature into 5 principles + a summative one devoted to the theory of land rent.

The policy fall-outs of scientific elaborations were always a relevant goal in my mind, and was able to verify the importance of a sound theoretical background for the justification of my proposals when I had the opportunity to serve as Head of the Urban Affairs Department at the Presidency of the Council of Ministers in Rome with the first Prodi Government (1997-98). I also had the same positive experience working in different times

as consultant for the European Commission, with Commissioner Giolitti (1977-85), Wulf-Mathies (1997-98) and Cretu more recently, learning at my expense that innovative ideas necessarily – and rightly - need some time in order to be 'digested' by political administrations.

Scientific works of mine in more recent times are more accessible and well known. All were achieved thanks to the cohesion, enthusiasm and scientific efficiency of the present team in Milan, co-directed (and now directed) by Roberta Capello. I would just like to remind the MASST model for European regions - a macroeconomic, sectoral, social and territorial econometric model producing conditional quantitative foresights on a scenario basis built for the ESPON project – probably the only truly regional model in use, using the concept of territorial capital, now come to the fourth, updated and expanded version (2005- 2018); the TEQUILA model for territorial impact assessment of European projects and programmes, working at NUTS3 level, including quantitative impacts on territorial efficiency, territorial quality and – for the first time – territorial identity (2009); many works on urban issues (optimal city size; dynamic agglomeration economies; medium-size cities; urban strategic planning; economic assessment of large schemes of urban transformation) and regional and urban policy.

The Regional and Urban Economics team at Politecnico di Milano. Left to right: Ugo Fratesi, Giovanni Perucca, Andrea Caragliu, Camilla Lenzi, Silvia Cerisola, Roberto Camagni, Roberta Capello

When in 2010, after my presidency of ERSA, I was awarded the ERSA-EIB Prize, grateful and proud, again with Dante – when in the Limbo, being called to join the five great poets of antiquity, exclaimed: *ed io fui sesto fra cotanto senno* – I said "*I am the sixth among such intellect*" (in fact, the ninth!). The same gratitude and privilege that I felt last year when I was elected Fellow of the RSAI. But my deepest thanks goes to Roberta and the full Milan team, for the joy they provided me in working with them and the emotion for the fiesta and the publication of some of my works (Capello, 2017) they were able to organize – secretly! – last year for my (imposed) retirement.

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RSAI NEWSLETTER

The newsletter of the Regional Science Association International (RSAI) appears two times a year and contains information about upcoming conferences and meetings, recent publications and a periodic guide to graduate programs in regional science.

Please send all electronic submissions of material for the RSAI Newsletter directly to **andrea.caragliu@polimi.it** and/or **G.P.Clarke@leeds.ac.uk**.

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