

RSAI NEWSLETTER

THE REGIONAL SCIENCE ASSOCIATION INTERNATIONAL

new series 24 - May 2025

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FROM THE EDITORS

The newsletter of the Regional Science Association International (RSAI) appears two times a year and contains information about upcoming conferences and meetings, recent events and publications, and short contributions on current themes.

Mina Akhavan (TU Delft) and Martijn Smit (Utrecht University) form the editorial team. Text contributions for the newsletter are always welcome, and can be submitted directly to Martijn (m.j.smit@uu.nl) or to Mina (m.a.akhavan@tudelft.nl). The deadline for the next issue is 15 September.

In particular, short contributions on your current research are most welcome; these can be extracts from articles or reports, or opinion pieces. We also welcome proposals for a piece in the *Center of Excellence* series, announcements for conferences, workshops, and special issues, and reports from past events.

Martijn Smit
Utrecht University, the Netherlands

Mina Akhavan
TU Delft, the Netherlands



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FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear RSAI Members,

IT IS MY PLEASURE to let you know that, as of January 1, 2025, I have taken over the role of RSAI President from Professor Hans Westlund. First, I would like to express my sincere appreciation to Professor Westlund, who provided exceptional leadership during a key period by guiding RSAI through the post-COVID transition. I would

also like to warmly thank Dr. Andrea Caragliu, our former RSAI Executive Director, who supported the association's activities with great dedication over the past six years. I have been able to step into this role smoothly and with confidence only due to the gracious efforts by Professor Westlund and Dr. Caragliu.

This year, we also welcome a new Executive Director to the RSAI team. Dr. Ana Viñuela, from the University of Oviedo in Spain, officially began her term on January 1, 2025, taking over from Dr. Caragliu. This simultaneous change of President and Executive Director presents a unique opportunity to bring in fresh ideas and renewed energy. We see this transition as a positive and exciting moment for RSAI with great potential for new growth and development. Simultaneously, we are mindful of the need for continuity and stability. We are closely collaborating to ensure a smooth and mindful transition, and we truly appreciate your patience and support as we get fully up to speed. There may be a few bumps along the way, but we are confident that this new chapter will be a successful one with your cooperation and understanding.

The transition of our journals — *Papers in Regional Science* and *Regional Science Policy & Practice* (RSPP) — to open-access formats with Elsevier has been another big step forward for RSAI. This move was a bold and an important one for the future of our field. Thanks go to our Editors-in-Chief, Dr. Rosella Nicolini and Prof. Tomaz Dentinho, for their outstanding work in realizing this objective. We are also pleased to share that Dr. Caragliu has now taken over as Editor-in-Chief of RSPP. Open access means broader and faster dissemination of research, increased visibility and citations for authors, and improved accessibility for scholars and practitioners worldwide. We are excited about its impact on the future of regional science.

RSAI MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

All RSAI members have online access to *Papers in Regional Science* (PiRS) and *Regional Science Policy and Practice* (RSPP), the journals of the Regional Science Association International. Some recent articles from both journals are highlighted in this newsletter.

Members can log in and access full text articles online. In addition to the RSAI publications, members are offered an opportunity to purchase other regional science journals at reduced rates and participate in the national and international conferences at reduced rates.

To become a member and for details on your membership, contact the Executive Director, Ana Viñuela, at rsai@apdr.pt, or visit www.regionalscience.org.



From 2011 to 2021, I served as Executive Secretary of PRSCO, during which I had the opportunity to support and attend conferences in 11 countries across the Asia-Pacific. These experiences allowed me to meet many colleagues, learn from diverse perspectives, and witness the vibrant regional science community in action. I hope to bring these experiences to RSAI and, along with Dr. Viñuela and the RSAI Council, help further nurture and strengthen our global network.

As we move forward in the post-pandemic era, many international conferences are returning to in-person formats while incorporating the benefits of virtual platforms. RSAI's supranational sections (e.g., NARSC, ERSa, PRSCO, and LARSA), along with national sections, continue to host events around the globe. Looking ahead, we are excited to announce that the next RSAI World Congress will be held in Quito, Ecuador, in 2026.

There are many opportunities across the world to share research, explore new ideas, and connect with others in the field of regional science. I warmly encourage students, researchers, professionals, and all individuals interested in regional science to participate and enjoy RSAI's offers. I also earnestly look forward to meeting many of you at upcoming conferences and events.

Thank you again for your continued support for RSAI.

Hiroyuki Shibusawa
President of the Regional Science Association International



IN MEMORIAM: JEAN PAELINCK

ON FRIDAY 18 APRIL 2025, we received the sad news that emeritus professor Jean Paelinck, originally a Flemish Belgian who was born in Antwerp on 4 July 1930, has passed away at the age of 94. He studied at the University of Liège, located in French-speaking Wallonia, where he obtained his Doctor of Law degree maxima cum laude in 1953, and at the University of Cambridge, under the supervision of Nobel Prize winner Richard Stone.

From 1969 to 1995 Jean Paelinck served as a professor in theoretical spatial economics at the Erasmus School of Economics in Rotterdam, the Netherlands, and in that capacity he gave a speech at the annual meeting of the Netherlands Statistical Office on 2 May 1974. It became a legendary speech because it completely changed the landscape of empirical spatial economic research due to his introduction of the term spatial econometrics, the field where regional sciences and spatial econometrics intersect. For that reason he is generally recognized as the founder of this increasingly important and expanding field.

Both his first paper entitled “Spatial Econometrics” in the first volume of the journal *Economic Letters* and his book with the same title, written together with Leo Klaassen, appeared in 1978. Anyone fascinated by spatial econometrics and its history of development would do well to consult this work. In the single-authored paper, Jean Paelinck formulated five principles of spatial econometric modelling, among which the basic principle that “Economic phenomena localized in a certain space must often be explained by causal factors in other spaces”. In the introduction of the 211-page book, he introduced his insights as an “interim stock-taking” to organize ideas in order to subject them to external criticism, with the overarching theme of the relationship that exists or can exist between any two units of observation. With this as a starting point, this book, like modern journal papers, deals with techniques that can be used to derive, identify, test and estimate econometric models with a spatial dimension. This book is without doubt the most cited work that he has ever published and should not be missing in any collection of groundbreaking spatial econometric textbooks. In his “Au revoir”, Jean Paelinck indicated that space, friction, interdependence, missing observations, time-and-space components, and many other aspects interact and should be treated adequately, a call that has been widely heard and more than just answered.

In addition to his academic achievements, Jean Paelinck spoke more than ten languages and, as an avid piano player, composed the official march for the Western Regional Science Association. He was also known for his warmth, humor, and deep appreciation for culture and community. More information about his career can be found at the [website of Erasmus University](#) and in the [in memoriams on the RSAI website](#).

In 2006, the [Spatial Econometric Association](#) was founded by seven spatial econometricians, including Jean Paelinck, an organization that since then organizes an annual world congress, offers courses and organizes online seminars. In 2014, the Regional Science Association International established the [Jean Paelinck Award](#) in honor of his methodological contribution in the field of Regional Science Methods. This award, which is given every two years, recognizes Distinguished Sustained Scholarship in Regional Science Methods



and honors the outstanding scholarly achievement of a senior and internationally recognized regional scientist in the field of genomics. To date, this award has been given to five scholars active in the field of spatial econometrics. Both this organization and this award indicate how important Jean Paelinck has been as a pioneer of spatial econometrics.

Paul Elhorst, University of Groningen



NEW EDITOR-IN-CHIEF OF RSPP

Earlier this year, Andrea Caragliu became the new Editor-in-Chief of *Regional Science Policy and Practice*, having been Executive Director of the RSAI until then. He is Associate Professor of Regional and Urban Economics at Politecnico di Milano, Italy, where he acts as Coordinator of the Ph.D. programme in Architecture, Built Environment, and Construction Engineering. His work focuses on agglomeration economies, macroeconomic regional growth, cross-border regions, and smart urban development. With their permission, we reprint a short interview Elsevier as publisher of RSPP held with him.

What inspired your interest in Regional and Urban Economics?

AS A YOUNG GRADUATE in Economics, I started to focus on growth issues – and, as pointed out by Nobel Laureate Robert Lucas in the hyper-cited 1988 JME paper, “The consequences for human welfare involved in questions like [those related to growth] are simply staggering: Once one starts to think about them, it is hard to think about anything else.” Later, upon applying for a post-doc position at Politecnico, I discovered a world of colleagues who focused on the spatial breakdown of the economic outcomes that are determined by the rational decision of consumers and firms to locate in a place, due to the net benefits expected from this decision.

As the new Editor-in Chief of Regional Science Policy & Practice, what is your vision for the journal?

Let me take a chance here to highlight the recent Editorial that the new Team (André Chagas, Hee-Jung Jun, Neil Reid, Terciane Sabadini Carvalho, and myself) have just published in issue 1/2025. Now that the journal is gold open access since January 2024, all articles published in RSPP, the Editorial included, are fully accessible to everybody.

The two previous Editorial Boards, in particular the Editors-in-Chief, Michael Carroll and Tomaz Dentinho, did a terrific job. The journal has grown in terms of the number of submissions, average quality of the papers published, and overall impact. Still, there is always room for improvement. Our top priority now is to strengthen the journal’s identity. We want to make RSPP the reference journal of the best papers on regional policies, as well as on the regional impacts of space-blind policies, for all disciplines.

This first goal walks hand in hand with a further effort to raise the bar of the average quality of the papers published in *Regional Science Policy & Practice*, to better serve the RSAI community and regional science stakeholders globally.

As challenging as these goals may seem, we look forward to your support in making them happen. Please send your best spatial policy papers to RSPP and let us all make it the reference journal in the field of regional and urban policies.

What makes Regional Science Policy & Practice unique?

Regional Science Policy & Practice is among the very few journals explicitly focusing on regional and urban policies. The Editorial Team have been carefully selected to provide authors with a high quality and speedy review process, constructive comments, and the use of an inclusive language. RSPP is open to everyone, and we look forward to receiving high quality papers on regional and urban policies from all backgrounds.

All the above, combined with the global regional science community's commitment to the discipline, make the Editorial Team believe that authors who decide to submit to RSPP over the next couple of years will benefit from the journal's ongoing growth – in terms of impact, indexation, and the possibility to influence policy debates.

What are the hot topics in the field right now? Are there any themes on which you are particularly looking forward to receiving submissions?

While the focus on policies may suggest that RSPP occupies a relatively small niche in the scientific landscape, I am convinced that the continuous developments in new policies, as reactions to an ever-changing landscape, will provide countless sources of inspiration for regional scientists. One aspect that is haunting regional scientists, urban economists, and geographers globally is the changing interest in spatial policies. Rising global geopolitical tensions are forcing many countries to increase their budget on defense items, while less funding seems to be available to policies that not only focus on places as a means to offset the negative impacts of space-blind policies, but also target places as triggers of bottom-up development. I would also like to stress that the very concept of space-blind policy is tricky, as it seems to suggest that you may enact policies that exert equal effects all over different regions, while everything we do has a set of potential spatial consequences we should not ignore. So, plenty of food for thought!

Have you got any advice for researchers who wish to publish their paper in Regional Science Policy & Practice?

Think about policy experiments that have a potential spatial breakdown, or of policies that target regions and cities, and use the best empirical methods (be they quantitative or qualitative – and we welcome practice papers, too!) to find counterintuitive results, capable of influencing the policy agenda.

MEET THE FELLOWS: KIYOSHI KOBAYASHI

I AM A PROFESSOR EMERITUS and a Distinguished Professor of Infrastructure Management at the Graduate School of Management, Kyoto University. I currently serve as chair of the National Resilience Promotion Council, which is affiliated with the Cabinet Secretariat of the Japanese government. The global spread of recent online technologies and generative AI technologies is fundamentally transforming the way we work. These technologies are not merely complementary to the systems that support urban societies. They symbolize the fusion of real and virtual



spaces and provide new forms of communication that will become the foundation of human society.

In this newsletter, I would like to share my thoughts on hybrid societies, which are becoming increasingly important to consider in future urban and regional planning policies.

In 2023, generative AI, symbolized by ChatGPT, rapidly spread around the world. Before the advent of generative AI, how much time and effort did many researchers and practitioners spend collecting standard information and knowledge? However, if the challenges associated with generative AI are appropriately addressed, it will become possible to instantly and freely obtain standard models using generative AI. Research and knowledge/information

businesses will increasingly depend on how much they can deviate from the standard models provided by generative AI. This is an era where such deviation becomes the source of value. With the emergence of generative AI, standard models of knowledge and information suddenly appeared in society. The value of knowledge and information is now evaluated based on these standard models. I would like to call this the “benchmarking of society.”

The benchmarking of society has had a significant impact on the role of universities as institutions that generate new knowledge. Medieval universities in Europe originated from the University of Bologna and were established with the aim of training academic specialists in the fields of theology, law, and medicine. Education was conducted through face-to-face oral instruction. Over time, medieval universities, which had focused on training specialists, began to decline. In the late 18th century, the development of Gutenberg's printing technology gave rise to a new type of university. With the printing of books and the circulation of academic papers, knowledge and information became dispersed, leading to the emergence of diverse new ideas and concepts around the world. As McLuhan pointed out, an academic world resembling Gutenberg's galaxy, composed of countless stars, was formed. Advances in IT technology have begun to disrupt Gutenberg's galaxy. There were simply too many stars in the galaxy. The global spread of online and on-demand education due to the COVID-19 pandemic appears to have accelerated the collapse of this galaxy. Furthermore, the proliferation of generative AI poses a threat to the fundamental principle of Gutenberg's galaxy — the decentralized production of knowledge and information through books and papers. Of course, generative AI cannot be a co-author of creativity. However, it functions as a standard for evaluating creativity. Traditional educational methods, where knowledge is unilaterally transmitted in lecture halls, are facing the need for fundamental reform. Generative AI achieves the modern standardization of knowledge and information based on the databases available in its time. In fact, generative AI can combine existing logic to create new logic. However, only combinations that humans recognize as meaningful remain as creativity. Knowledge and information can be interpreted in diverse ways. This diversity, which deviates from the standard model, becomes the source of new added value.

It is said that the African continent is characterized by excessive diversity and instability. For example, the spatial distribution of savannas has changed significantly over time. Tribes that depend on specific living technologies

are forced to migrate in response to changes in the ecosystem. Tribal societies that are forced to migrate have no incentive to invest fixed capital in specific locations. As a result, the accumulation of fixed capital on the African continent had remained extremely low for many years. In history, settlement of people promotes capital investment in fixed spaces and leads to the emergence of cities. Cities function according to the logic of capital. The capitalization of cities requires ownership (or usage rights) of space. For example, individuals capitalize their living space by placing furniture and durable consumer goods in their homes. However, it is impossible to capitalize space that is not owned. When you leave your home, that space becomes someone else's space. Urban landscapes and commercial districts are formed through public and corporate investment. In this way, part of urban spaces became public spaces, and individual customization became impossible. However, advances in IT technology began to change this situation. In the real world, space is fragmented, and capitalization is exclusive based on ownership relationships. However, in the virtual world, capitalization (accumulation of content) can occur independently of such ownership rights. As a result, the boundary between the real and virtual worlds has become even more blurred. We now live in a hybrid society where the real and virtual worlds intersect. Furthermore, the COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated the global spread of telework and online meetings. This is a historic event that can be called the "online revolution."

The advancement of the real world requires social innovation and human resources to realize it. It requires investment of time and money from many stakeholders, and progress is not always rapid. New social technologies such as monitoring technology, IoT, big data, AI, and simulation are beginning to support the development of real urban spaces. Simulations that consider how people, goods, and information are arranged to move within real urban spaces are now required. This is no longer an era of formulating several alternative plans and comparing them qualitatively. We have entered an era where AI technology can generate an infinite number of alternative plans. The challenge lies in developing a system to evaluate the desirability of three-dimensional spaces. We must now develop an evaluation system for urban spaces that considers not only efficiency but also health and safety.

As hybrid society evolves, several issues have already come to light. Urban digital twins will become an important infrastructure in virtual spaces, serving as templates for creation used by many people. Of course, various legal issues remain to be resolved, such as information security and ownership of information assets. If customization of virtual spaces becomes possible, an infinite number of virtual spaces will emerge. This has groundbreaking significance in terms of urban theory. Among the various virtual spaces created by many people, a few may become famous, giving rise to "influencers" in urban space creation. Within this context, platforms to manage customized virtual spaces — including verifying the originality and importance of virtual spaces — will become necessary.

Human actions in real space are constrained by physical conditions. The information about the actions of avatars in virtual space is observed/controlled by individuals in real space. Individuals in real space are bound by time constraints. The flexibility of actions in real space is supported by capital and various infrastructures in real urban spaces. Of course, capital accumulated in real urban spaces can serve as templates for infrastructure in virtual spaces, such as digital twins. However, due to the constraints of the body in real space, it seems that the principle that the freedom of human behavior in hybrid worlds is guaranteed by capital formation in real space remains unchanged.

We live not only in the physical world but also in various virtual spaces such

as social media and the metaverse. The time of "a day" has begun to be grouped into several blocks. To make effective use of this block-structured time, we utilize virtual spaces including smartphones and social media. We can only focus our attention on either the physical world or the virtual world at any given time. Infrastructure has been invested in cities based on the assumption of the spatial fixity of infrastructure. However, with the advancement of online technology, we can now choose whether to communicate in real or virtual spaces. More importantly, we allocate our time throughout the day between activities in real spaces and those in virtual spaces. It seems that research in regional science must now expand to include hybridized spaces.

NURTURING TALENT: FROM THEORY TO ACTION

"From Theory to Action" was the title of the 5th Annual Intensive Course Program in Urban, Transport, and Environmental Economics at Universitas Indonesia, held in conjunction with the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, the Netherlands, and partly funded by RSAI's Nurturing Talent programme.

WHEN YOU LOOK OUT the window, you can see problems — and potential solutions — that await innovative approaches to benefit both society and the environment. This belief drove the organization of the 5th Annual Intensive Course Program in Urban, Transport, and Environmental Economics, which celebrates the power of sustained enthusiasm and collaborative effort to create a better world through spatial economics.

Held over an intensive four-week period from January 13 to February 7, 2025, at the Department of Economics, FEB UI and LPEM FEB UI, the program united scholars and practitioners from Indonesia and the Netherlands. It was delivered through a partnership between the Department of Economics, Faculty of Economics and Business, Universitas Indonesia (FEB UI); the Institute for Economic and Social Research (LPEM FEB UI); and the Department of Spatial Economics, School of Business and Economics, Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam (SBE VU), with generous support from the RSAI Nurturing Talent Program.

The course began with a comprehensive refresher in microeconomics, macroeconomics, and econometrics, led by FEB UI faculty members Vid Adrison, Ph.D.; I Made Krisna Yudhana Wisnu Gupta, Ph.D.; Dr. Beta Yulianita G. Laksono; and Dr. Ashintya Damayanti. These sessions established a common analytical framework before participants delved into advanced spatial topics. In the final two weeks, Prof. Dr. Henri de Groot, Dr. Gerard van der Meijden, and Prof. Dr. Erik Verhoef guided in-depth explorations of spatial, transport, and environmental economics. Through



interactive lectures, case studies, and team projects, attendees honed their ability to translate theoretical models into actionable policy insights, and their engagement throughout the course underscored the real-world relevance of these subjects.

Beyond its academic rigor, the program also provided a vital platform for cross-border dialogue, allowing participants to exchange perspectives on spatial-economic challenges and co-develop innovative solutions. The collaboration among FEB UI, SBE VU, and RSAI's Nurturing Talent Program exemplifies a shared commitment to advancing research capacity and fostering scientific development — particularly in emerging economies like Indonesia.

Henri de Groot, as one of the lecturers at the 5th Annual Intensive Course Program, hopes that this program will not only provide an opportunity for an intensive exchange of knowledge and ideas, but also strengthen cooperation and friendship, and serve as a foundation for future student exchanges in Master's or PhD programs. He also hopes that five years from now, we will celebrate the second lustrum of this initiative and that the fruitful cooperation between Indonesia and the Netherlands will continue to develop.

Looking ahead, it is hoped that this intensive course will continue as an annual tradition, attracting participants from diverse academic and professional backgrounds. By deepening understanding of spatial-economic issues and expanding the reach of evidence-based policy implementation, the program aspires to contribute meaningfully to sustainable development at regional, national, and global levels.

Silviana Maharani



RECENT PUBLICATIONS IN PAPERS IN REGIONAL SCIENCE

The two most recent issues of Papers in Regional Science share relevant research questions that are extremely debated in thinking of or talking about an inclusive (and equal) society: migrations and institutions. Editor in chief Rosella Nicolini reports.



IN THE WAKE OF the discussion proposed by this journal, in these two issues we propose two contributions centering the attention on migration, culture and ethnicity. [Annie Tubadji and Simon Rudkin \(2025\)](#) develop an approximation of the concept of Cultural Gravity (intended as the power of the cultural milieu of a locality to attract immigrants) to bring new novel results on the role of Cultural Gravity as well as its correspondent frictions in the redistribution of human capital through influencing internal migration across the European Union. In particular, the authors identify that prosperous regions (suffering from high degree of internal inequality) become less and less attractive for the majority of population, but second-runners in development are becoming more attractive because less unequal and endowed with a more culturally welcoming equitable milieu. Inequality is also the core concern tackled in [Roberto Antonietti, Chiara Burlina, Andres Rodríguez-Pose \(2025\)](#). These authors explore the role of formal and informal institutions in mitigating income inequality when referring to the technological adoption. Taking into account NUTS2 regions, the access to digital technology entails high level of income inequality. However, under these circumstances, informal institutions (above all the one linked to the creation of social capital) are the most effective in helping to contribute to a more even income distributions. In a nutshell, in order to avoid unexpected negative consequences from the digital transition, it should be recommended to local authorities to complement policies supporting the digital transformation with policies endorsing the development of social capital. Nevertheless, the creation (and consolidation) of social capital is an important challenge when referring to societies suffering from ethnic discrimination. The contribution by [Sylvain Chareyron, Yannick L'Horty and Pascale Petit \(2025\)](#) digs inside the relationship between ethnic discrimination and neighborhood composition in France by referring to a specific evidence: the employment discrimination toward African applicants in the fast food industry and associating it to the influence of the neighborhood composition. In particular, the discrimination towards the African-origin applicant decreases as much as the proportion of non-natives in the neighborhood rises. From the technical viewpoint, one of the most relevant novelties of this contribution is the exploitation of experimental data outside the EU whereas from the policy viewpoint this contribution is definitely food for thought.

Rosella Nicolini, editor-in-chief

REGIONAL SCIENCE AND ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

RESULTS OF A BIBLIOMETRIC ANALYSIS OF 20 YEARS OF PUBLICATIONS

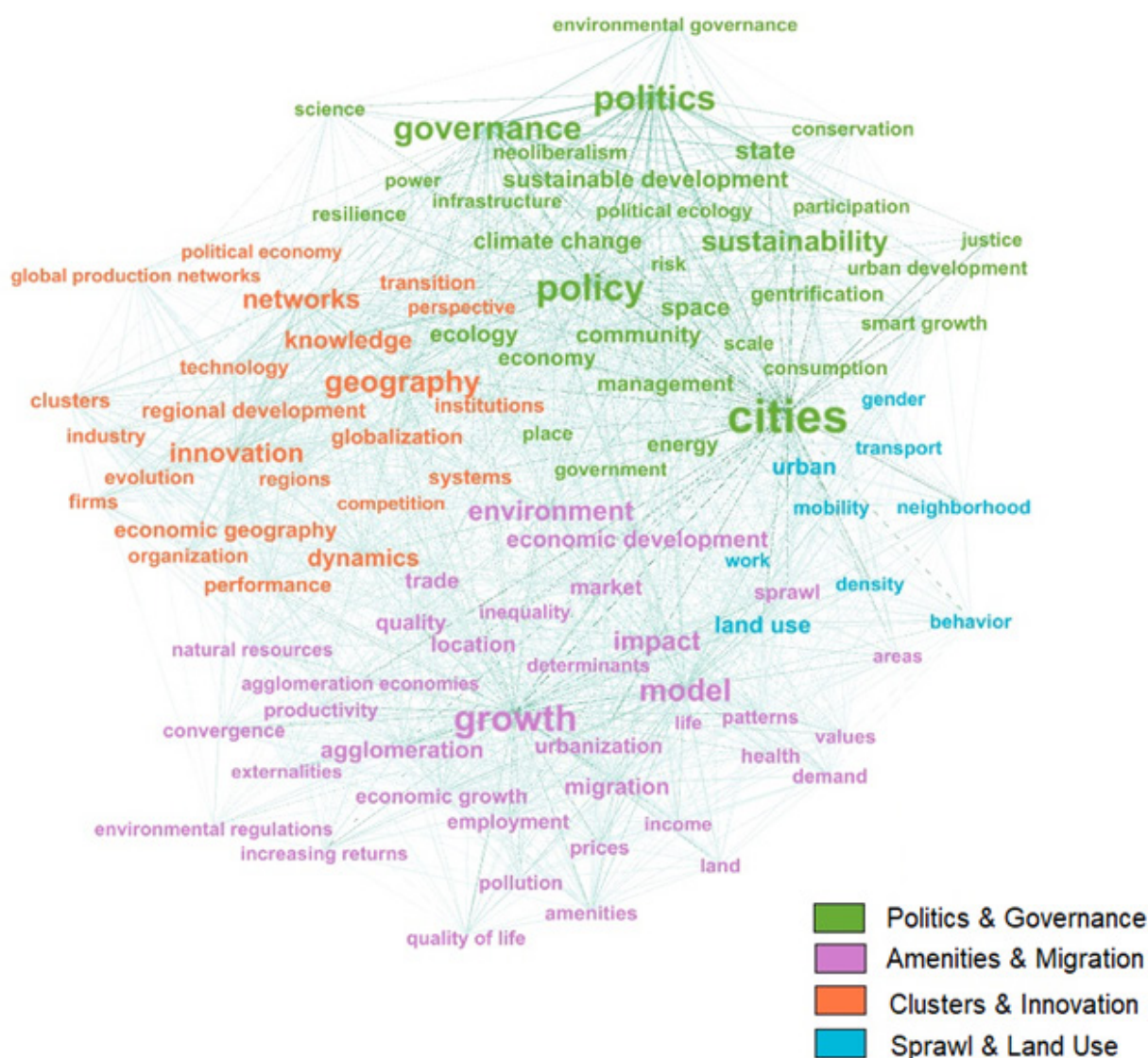
HUMAN ACTIVITIES ARE CURRENTLY facing major environmental issues calling for a profound transformation of production, consumption and transportation patterns. While these issues are obviously global, they also call for changes in terms of regional development and raise specific questions at the local level. Despite the high stakes and the relevance of a spatial and regional approach, several authors have claimed that environmental issues are insufficiently addressed in Regional Science publications (Donald and Gray 2019). Our study entitled “How does Regional Science address environmental issues? A bibliometric analysis of two decades of publications” (published online in [International Regional Science Review](#)) aims at providing a well-documented overview of how Regional Science deals with these issues. It relies on a bibliometric analysis which covers a corpus of 1,145 articles published in 18 leading Regional Science journals between 1999 and 2020. Although these publications referring to the environment account for only 6 percent of the articles published in these journals over that period, their number and the average number of citations per article have gradually increased, reflecting the expansion of this field of research.

To gain a clearer picture of the environmental issues addressed in Regional Science, we first propose an analytical framework that classifies them according to the approach adopted and the spatial dimension considered.

We distinguish two different approaches. On the one hand, based in particular on the notion of sustainability, the *integrative* approach addresses environmental issues mainly through the lens of regional development and transition strategies and policies. On the other hand, the *topical* approach places greater focus on specific environmental topics and on the environmental effects of human activities. Within this approach, we distinguish environmental issues according to their spatial dimension. Inspired by Turner et al. (1990), we define four spatial types of environmental issues: *intraregional environmental change* (produced in a region by human activities occurring in that region); *interregional environmental change* (produced in one or more regions by human activities or dynamics occurring in another region or other regions); *regional-global change*, where human activities located within a region or a set of regions directly contribute to systemic global change (e.g., greenhouse gas emissions); *global-regional environmental issues* that concern those situations in which global change may, via local phenomena, have impacts on regional human activities (e.g., natural disasters).

Then, we examine the corpus of articles using both a bibliometric quantitative analysis and a qualitative analysis of the most cited articles. Our key findings are twofold. First, based on our analytical framework, the search for specific terms in the titles, keywords and abstracts shows that the articles cover a broad range of environmental issues and that both the integrative and the topical approaches are equally adopted. In the first approach, sustainability is a largely predominant theme compared to transition and green growth/economy. Regarding the topical approach, the articles deal much more with intraregional or interregional environmental issues (relating to land, amenities and disamenities and, to a much lesser extent, to energy and water) than with regional environmental issues directly linked to global issues. Among these, climate change or natural hazards and disasters are more frequently mentioned than are GHG emissions or the ecological footprint. Second, a keyword co-occurrence analysis allows us to identify coherent subsamples within our large corpus of articles. As shown in the figure, it reveals four thematic groups: i) “politics & governance” which deals with public policies and stakeholders interplay in relation to environmental issues and includes a critical examination of urban planning (41% of articles) ; ii) “amenities & migration” which mainly considers the environment as a resource and a factor in the location of economic agents (28%) ; iii) “clusters & innovation” which addresses environmental issues mainly through firm innovation dynamics, relationships between firms and regional development (19%) ; iv) “urban sprawl & land use” which focus on the relation between environmental characteristics and mobility or urban forms (12%).

(continues on next page)



This article is a summary of “How Does Regional Science Address Environmental Issues? A Bibliometric Analysis of Two Decades of Publications”, by Stéphanie Truchet-Aznar, Francis Aubert, Olivier Aznar, and Béatrice Davi, which is forthcoming in *International Regional Science Review*. You can read the full paper [here](#).

KEYWORD CO-OCCURRENCE MAP AND THEMATIC GROUPS

In the end, this overview highlights that Regional Science approaches environmental issues from a particular angle and through specific questions. It also reinforces the idea that given its interdisciplinary, its multiscalar and applied approach and its analytical skills, Regional Science is particularly relevant for tackling environmental issues. Moreover, it suggests that the greater consideration of environmental issues opens up avenues for research and could contribute to a renewed analysis of spatial disparities and inequalities, spatial interactions and interdependencies, and the spatial dimension of public action.

Stéphanie Truchet-Aznar

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REPORT FROM THE 2024 ANNUAL MEETING OF REGIONAL SCIENCE ASSOCIATION OF CHINA

FROM OCTOBER 25 TO 27, the annual meeting of the Regional Science Association of China (RSAC) was convened at Northwest University in Xi'an, Shaanxi Province, China. This year's meeting was jointly hosted by the Regional Science Association of China and Northwest University, and organized by the School of Economics and Management at Northwest University, the Institute on Economy and Development of Western China at Northwest University, the "Belt and Road" Special Committee of the Regional Science Association of China, the Shaanxi Regional Economic Research Association, the Beijing Development Institute at Peking University, and the Yongxiu Think Tank. The conference, themed "Chinese-style Modernization, New Quality Productive Forces, and Coordinated Regional Development," featured 18 keynote speeches and 10 parallel forums on topics such as Chinese-style modernization and regional coordinated development, theory and practice of new quality productive forces, joint

construction of the "Belt and Road" and major regional strategies, and the new pattern of large-scale development of Western China. The conference also included one high-end dialogue session and one journal forum. Over 300 experts, scholars, and guests attended the meeting, engaging in in-depth discussions and contributing academic wisdom to the prosperity and development of regional science in China.



At the opening ceremony, Yang Kaizhong, the Honorary President of the Regional Science Association of China, delivered a speech, pointing out that the Regional Science Association of China, as an authoritative academic organization in the field of spatial economics in China, including regional and urban economics, has provided significant academic support for China's modernization efforts through promoting academic exchanges and theoretical innovation with a global perspective since its establishment. RSAC has achieved a transformation from simply following the international regional science research to running alongside through unremitting efforts.

This annual meeting focused on "Chinese-style Modernization, New Quality Productive Forces, and Coordinated Regional Development," aiming to respond to the significant practical demands posed by Chinese-style modernization to regional science scholars in China, to explore the high-quality development path of China with new quality productive forces as the focus, and to achieve higher levels of innovation and breakthroughs in Chinese regional science research in terms of both theory and research methods.

During the high-end dialogue session on the final day, ten experts conducted an in-depth dialogue and discussion around the theme of "New Quality Productive Forces and Coordinated Regional Development." At the closing ceremony, it was announced that the 2025 Annual Meeting of the Regional Science Association of China will be held in Beijing, hosted by the China University of Geosciences).

Text by Tieshan Sun and Paul Snow

