

RSAI NEWSLETTER

THE REGIONAL SCIENCE ASSOCIATION INTERNATIONAL

new series 24 - November 2025

CONTENTS

From the Editors	1
From the President	2
RSAI membership information	2
Nurturing New Talent	3
3rd Southern Africa Regional Sciences Association Annual Conference	3
Central Asia conference	4
5th Urban and Regional Economics Workshop	5
Meet the Fellow: Sarah Low	5
Recent publications in Papers in Regional Science	6
The Epainos prize for Young Talent in Regional Science	7
Funding	7
Nicola Cortinovis	7
Mina Akhavan	8
News from Regional Science Policy and Practice	9

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 April.

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

RSAI NEWSLETTER

THE REGIONAL SCIENCE ASSOCIATION INTERNATIONAL

new series 24 - November 2025

FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear Regional Scientists worldwide!

As international academic activities have fully resumed, 2025 has been a truly significant year for our global regional science community. Since the publication of the previous newsletter, I have had the privilege of attending several landmark events, each rich in discussion and new connections.

In May, I attended the PRSCO Summer Institute in Colombo, hosted by the Sri Lanka Regional Science Association. This event offered an outstanding platform for direct exchange between young and senior scholars and clearly demonstrated the growing strength of regional science in South Asia.

In August, the ERSA Congress in Athens featured diverse, high-quality sessions on topics such as regional resilience and spatial policy, reaffirming the vitality and depth of the European regional science community.

In November, the North American Meetings of the RSAI (NARSC) were held in Denver. The conference showcased excellent presentations, lively discussions, and notably strong participation by early-career researchers, underscoring the creative energy that in-person interaction brings.

I am also delighted to report continued progress in the Nurturing New Talent (NN) Program, which has grown further thanks to the dedicated leadership of our Executive Director, Ana Viñuela, and the active support of RSAI Councilors. Nurturing emerging scholars remains a core priority of the RSAI, and we are committed to expanding these efforts.

The 15th World Congress of the RSAI will be held in Quito, Ecuador, in June 2026. The World Congress, our association's flagship event, provides an unparalleled opportunity for global scholarly exchange and collaboration.

Together with the World Congress, our supranational sections, including NARSC, ERSA, PRSCO, and LARSA, alongside our national sections, continue to advance regional science through their conferences and initiatives. These activities deepen our dialogue and extend the field into new regions and communities. I warmly encourage all members to participate in these events; your participation strengthens our scholarship and global network.

I look forward to meeting many of you at the upcoming RSAI gatherings and to continuing our shared mission of advancing regional science worldwide.

Warm regards,

Hiroiyuki Shibusawa

President of the Regional Science Association International



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.



RSAI NEWSLETTER

THE REGIONAL SCIENCE ASSOCIATION INTERNATIONAL

new series 24 - November 2025

NURTURING NEW TALENT

ONE OF THE MOST valued initiatives within the RSAI community is the Nurturing New Talent (NNT) Programme, designed to support early career scholars as they take their first steps into the field of regional science. Over the years, the programme has provided a platform for promising researchers to connect with established academics, receive guidance on their work, and gain confidence in presenting their ideas in international settings

In response to the evolving needs of our young scholars, RSAI has recently introduced some adjustments to the programme. The revised structure aims to provide even stronger mentorship opportunities, clearer pathways for professional growth, and more inclusive spaces for participants to engage with the broader community of regional scientists.

The adjusted Nurturing New Talent Programme remains rooted in its original mission: to encourage, empower, and inspire the next generation of regional scientists. At the same time, it reflects RSAI's ongoing commitment to innovation in how we train, mentor, and celebrate emerging talent worldwide.

The updated official description of the programme, outlining its goals, structure, and how it continues to build bridges between early career researchers and the wider RSAI network can be found at <https://www.regionalscience.org/index.php/programs/nurturing-new-talent.html>.

Below are reports from workshops hosted recently under the programme. The next deadline, for events taking place between June and December 2026, is on 1 June 2026.

3RD SOUTHERN AFRICA REGIONAL SCIENCES ASSOCIATION ANNUAL CONFERENCE

It was truly an exciting moment for Southern Africa, marked by the official launch of the Southern Africa Regional Sciences Association (SARSA). What began as an idea conceived in Harare (2023), followed by a gathering in Maputo (2024), has now blossomed into a fully constituted association. From 10-12 September 2025, the 3rd SARSA Annual Conference was hosted by the Department of Construction Economics and Management at the University of Cape Town.

THE THREE-DAY CONFERENCE KICKED off with the monumental signing of the SARSA Constitution by founding members – those who were present at SARSA's birth in Harare, Zimbabwe. RSAI representatives – Prof. Ana Viñuela, Prof. Tomaz Ponce Dentinho, Prof. Eduardo Haddad, and Prof. Samuel Odei – joined in affirmation. And with that, SARSA was officially launched!

The day proceeded with an insightful plenary discussion led by the City of Cape Town Department of Human Settlements team – Mr. Fatgie Moos and Mr. Lawrence Valetta. This was followed by an inspiring keynote by Prof. Ana Viñuela on the measurement of poverty at different levels, and a thought-provoking address by Prof. Tomaz Ponce Dentinho on the spatial interaction model with land use and upgrading with AI. The day was wrapped up with an informative excursion to the City of Cape Town's sponsored affordable housing developments.

Day 2 began with Prof. Samuel Odei's impeccable keynote on innovation for inclusive growth in sub-Saharan Africa. The programme was packed with vibrant paper presentations from scholars, practitioners, and policymakers. Prof. Ivan Turok closed the day with a dynamic keynote address on



harnessing the potential of the informal urban economy, focusing on small-scale rental housing. After thirty-four paper presentations and two keynote addresses, delegates came together for a Gala Dinner and Awards Evening, generously hosted and sponsored by the City of Cape Town.

The evening featured the introduction of three new SARSA awards, aimed at recognising excellence in research and scholarly contribution. These included the Best Paper in Regional Science, the Best Paper in Human Settlements and Sustainable Development, and the Best Paper by an Emerging Scholar, in addition to the Overall Best Paper Award. These awards mark an important milestone in SARSA's commitment to nurturing emerging talent and promoting high-quality, policy-relevant research across Southern Africa.

Day 3 featured Prof. Roger Behrens' thought-provoking keynote address on improving informal public transport services, drawing from South African pilot projects, followed by Prof. Eduardo Haddad's engaging presentation on modelling the impacts of tourism, offering insights for both modellers and practitioners. After several stimulating presentations, the conference concluded with much excitement and optimism about SARSA's bright future.

Now formally established as a duly constituted association, the Southern Africa Regional Sciences Association (SARSA) has elected its first executive committee, led by Dr. Tazviona Richman Gambe. The journey continues with upcoming events scheduled for Namibia in 2026 and Angola in 2027. We anticipate significant growth in SARSA's membership as we prepare to submit our application for ratification by the Regional Science Association International. We remain optimistic about this recognition, given the three successful consecutive conferences held since 2023, our growing and dynamic membership – including doctoral and postdoctoral scholars – and the continued participation of practitioners from government departments, local municipalities, and civil society, who have supported the Association from the very beginning.

*Elizabeth Musvoto
University of Cape Town*

The conference was sponsored by the RSAI Nurturing Talent Programme (2025), the SARCHI Chair in City-Region Economies – University of the Free State, the Department of Human Settlements – City of Cape Town, and the Department of Construction Economics and Management – University of Cape Town.





CENTRAL ASIA CONFERENCE

FOR THE THIRD CONSECUTIVE year, the Regional Science Association International (RSAI) has been promoting Sustainable Regional Development Conferences in Central Asia. This year, the annual conference was held at the Kyrgyz-Uzbek International University in Osh, Kyrgyzstan, on May 12-13, 2025, gathering participants and speakers from a diverse range of countries, including the USA, Spain, Portugal, India, Kazakhstan, and Uzbekistan. This initiative was supported by the RSAI Program entitled “Nurturing New Talent Program”.

As a result, more than 60 researchers from different regions of Central Asia took part in the conference as speakers and authors of articles. The main purpose of the conference was to mobilise and nurture talents across Central Asia and share the recent developments and methodologies that could be useful for spatial and regional analysis. The main target was graduate students, PhD students, faculty members, and researchers from Central Asia. The workshop was targeted at different research interests spanning regional development.

The inauguration of the conference was opened by Mamasydykov Abdilbaet,



Rector of Kyrgyz-Uzbek International University. Following this, RSAI member Tomas Dentinho delivered a welcome speech. Ana Viñuela, Executive Director of the Regional Science Association International, also addressed the audience virtually, expressing her support for the organisation of the conference in Kyrgyzstan and emphasising its importance in promoting research on regional science in Central Asia.

Further, the conference had a continuation in the plenary sessions, entitled “Recent developments in regional analysis and in Central Asia”. In the afternoon, parallel sessions were held with researchers from different regions. They presented the results of their research in areas such as “Sustainability”, “Innovations”, “Planning”, “Education”, “Agriculture”, “Economics”, among others.

Prior to the main conference, an intensive Summer School was organised at the Samarkand branch of Tashkent State University, Uzbekistan, from May 7th to 9th, 2025. It provided a valuable platform for young researchers to deepen their knowledge of regional science, explore sustainable development themes, and acquire new research methodologies and tools. A special contribution was made in both events by Humoyun Abdumavlon, from the University of Pittsburgh, who was the winner of the Graduate Student-Authored Paper Competition in NARSC 2024, with the paper “Market Access and Urban Growth in the Former Soviet Union”; the results were presented in Osh.

It is anticipated that these events will serve as a foundation for the development of future initiatives aimed at creating a Central Asian Regional Science Association.

Makhabbat Ramazanova, Assistant professor at University Portucalense, Portugal/Invited professor at Ualikhanov University, Kazakhstan

Farhod Ahrorov, Vice Rector of Samarkand branch of Tashkent State University of Economics, Uzbekistan

RSAI NEWSLETTER

THE REGIONAL SCIENCE ASSOCIATION INTERNATIONAL

new series 24 - November 2025

5TH URBAN AND REGIONAL ECONOMICS WORKSHOP

THE 5TH URBAN AND Regional Economics Workshop was held between the 25th and 27th of June at the Pontificia Universidad Javeriana in Bogotá. The Workshop had the support of the Colombian central bank (Banco de la República), the Colombia Network of Researchers in Economics (RED), the Colombian Regional Science Association (ASCR) and the Regional Science Association International.

As in previous editions, the aim of the Workshop was to put forward our understanding of various urban and regional phenomena in developing countries, with a special focus on the Latin-American region. For this edition, Eduardo Haddad (University of Sao Paulo) and Terciane Sabadini Carvalho (Uni Federal do Paraná) gave the keynote lectures. Along them, the Workshop brought together speakers from several countries in Latin America, including Brazil, Uruguay, Chile, Ecuador, Mexico and Colombia, as well as from Italy, Germany and Spain, and with the presence of the Executive director of RSAI, Ana Viñuela.

With the explicit aim of connecting researchers with policy makers, the Workshop held a “policy round table” with the participation of representatives of different governmental institutions to debate around regional development in Colombia and other developing countries.

The program of the workshop was complemented with a variety of social

events and visits to the city (and slums) of Bogotá. In parallel, the event included an intensive course on Urban and Regional Economics during the same week, providing an excellent opportunity for students, researchers, and practitioners to deepen their knowledge in the field.

The Workshop will have its 6th edition in 2027, hoping to be once again an opportunity for our community to share their research and debate about the urban and regional challenges that developing countries face.

David Castells Quintana
Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona

MEET THE FELLOW: SARAH LOW

SARAH LOW, PROFESSOR AND head of the Department of Agricultural and Consumer Economics within the College of Agricultural, Consumer and Environmental Sciences at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, has been named a Fellow of the Regional Science Association International — the highest honor in the field of regional science.



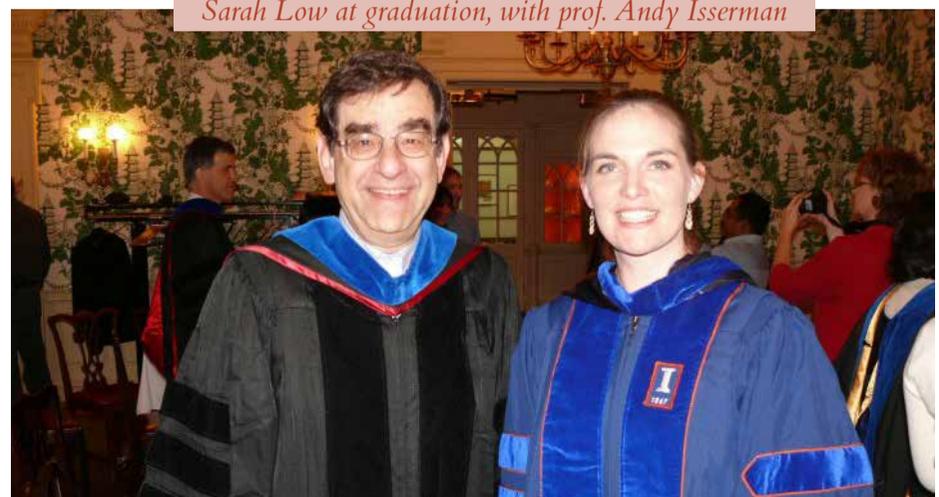
Low will be formally recognized at the 72nd Annual North American Meetings of the Regional Science Association International, taking place Nov. 12–15, 2025, in Denver, Colorado. This honor is reserved for scholars who have made outstanding and sustained contributions to the advancement of regional science, an interdisciplinary field that examines the spatial dimensions of economics, geography, and planning.

Low began attending meetings of the Southern Regional Science Association (SRSA) and NARSC in 2004 and was the late Prof. Andrew Isserman’s last PhD student. She was president of SRSA 2018–19 and serves as the Chair of NARSC in 2025. For almost 15 years, she has co-organized the Regional/Rural Development sessions at NARSC. She was the opening keynote speaker at the 2024 RSAI World Congress in Kecskemét and an editor of ERSAs *Global Challenges in Regional Science* journal.

“I’m deeply honored to be recognized by my peers in this way,” Low said. “Regional science has tremendous potential to inform policy and decision-makers, while strengthening communities. When we listen, collaborate, and co-create knowledge, we can generate insights that truly improve local



Sarah Low at graduation, with prof. Andy Isserman



economies and people's lives.”

A hallmark of Low's research and leadership is her focus on connecting economic science with real-world decision-making to support regional economic development. Drawing on her experience in the federal government, she emphasizes the importance of collaboration with stakeholders and policymakers to ensure that research delivers practical value to communities. Her work spans topics such as business dynamics, broadband impacts, rural household prosperity, value-added agriculture, and the development of entrepreneurial ecosystems.

Low's recent publications highlight participatory research as a method to enhance both scientific rigor and community outcomes, including [“Collaboration: A condition for Advancing Federal and State Rural Development Research”](#), [“Rural Development: Perspectives from Federal and State Experiences with a Broadband Example”](#) and [“Integrating Research and Extension to Improve Community Participation in Broadband Projects.”](#)

Since August 2022, Low has served as professor and head of the ACE department in the College of ACES. As department head, Low continues to champion engagement and collaboration to deliver on the college's land-grant mission, driving research that addresses pressing societal needs. Previously, Low held the Fred V. Heinkel Chair in Agriculture at the University of Missouri, where she served as the inaugural director of the Rural and Farm Finance Policy Analysis Center, and a University of Missouri Extension specialist in regional economic and entrepreneurial development. Before entering academia, she spent a decade at the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Economic Research Service in Washington, D.C.

“Sarah's leadership embodies the spirit of our land-grant mission — translating academic insight into real-world impact,” said Germán Bollero, dean of the College of ACES. “Her recognition by RSAI affirms both her global influence and Illinois' enduring strength in advancing regional science.”

Low earned her bachelor's degree from Iowa State University, master's degree in agricultural economics from Purdue University, and doctorate in agricultural and consumer economics from Illinois, which has produced an outsized number of RSAI Fellows over the decades, reflecting the university's leadership in shaping this discipline.

Adapted from ACES News, University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, with permission. Original article: “Sarah Low Named Fellow of the Regional Science Association International.”



RECENT PUBLICATIONS IN PAPERS IN REGIONAL SCIENCE

Today, researchers are increasingly focused on addressing questions and providing insights that respond to society's needs, particularly on issues that affect human well-being. Among the United Nations' well-defined Sustainable Development Goals, climate action and inequality stand out as key priorities where institutions have substantial room to improve and refine their interventions. The latest issues of Papers in Regional Science contribute to this discussion from a regional perspective, offering a few original pieces of research, according to editor-in-chief prof. Rosella Nicolini.



IN THE OCTOBER ISSUE (#5), Tatsuya Kasumi ([Gender differences in distance dependence of internal migration](#)) addresses the gender dimension — as a source of inequality in society — from a novel perspective: its role as a factor influencing welfare-improving migration. Drawing on evidence from Japan, the author finds that women's propensity to migrate is less deterred by distance than men's, *ceteris paribus*. This finding suggests the need to reconsider traditional push-pull factors in understanding migration patterns and indicates that population-attraction policies may need to be gender-specific.

In the December issue (#6), Andrea Caragliu and Chiara del Bó tackle the issue of socio-economic inequality among citizens from a digital perspective ([Regional institutions and the urban digital divide](#)). Their study focuses on European cities and shows that the uneven spatial distribution of the urban digital divide is closely linked to local institutional, economic, and social characteristics. Consequently, local policymakers who increasingly rely on digital solutions in urban planning should be attentive to the presence of a local digital divide among citizens and adopt corrective measures to ensure that digital urban policies can reach their full potential.

Still referring to inequality, Michel Dimou, Kevin Randy Chemo Dzukou, and Alexandra Schaffar proposing a timely discussion about the degree of integration of immigrants in the labor market in France ([Paris as a gateway? Spatial inequalities in immigrant integration across French regions](#)). Their analysis examines labor force participation and wage disparities by comparing the experiences of first- and second-generation immigrants. They find that, despite ongoing policy efforts, immigrants and their descendants perform noticeably better in the Paris region than in other French regions, where ethnic origin remains a significant barrier to both labor participation and wages. This spatial mismatch results in an uneven distribution of integration opportunities across the country, reflecting regional differences in institutional capacity, economic dynamism, and social openness.

As for the climate challenge, Papers in Regional Science (in its December issue, #6) keeps contributing to the general discussion: this time, by proposing a methodological studies on the models and applications of climate econometrics (Sandy Dall'erba, André Chagas, William Ridley, Yilan Xu, and Lilin Yuan, [Difference-in-differences with endogenous externalities: Model and application to climate econometrics](#)). Building on the Presidential Address at NARSC (2024), the authors introduce a new way to account for treatment-induced changes in a network linking treated

and control units within a well-established difference-in-differences (DiD) framework. They apply this approach to a case study in which drought affects global wheat trade and, subsequently, wheat production. The results show that a DiD model that ignores the network and its evolution significantly underestimates the overall treatment effects.

Rosella Nicolini, editor-in-chief

THE EPAINOS PRIZE FOR YOUNG TALENT IN REGIONAL SCIENCE

Prof. Frank van Oort recently finished his term as chair of ERSA's Epainos prize. He contributed a brief reflection on the prize, its mechanics, and its influence.

REGIONAL SCIENCE SITS AT the intersection of economics, geography, planning, and data analysis. Because of this interdisciplinary nature, attracting and supporting young talent is essential to keeping the discipline innovative, relevant, and future-proof. The Epainos Prize – ancient Greek for “praise” and “honor” – is awarded each year at the ERSA conference. It is designed specifically for early-career researchers and plays a key role in this mission. Such an award is a strategic instrument that contributes to scientific quality, network building, and career development.



Over the past five years, I have chaired the Epainos Prize Committee, supported by a jury consisting of editors of leading regional science journals, past prize winners, independent experts, and a member of the Local Organizing Committee. Session chairs and discussants in the Young Science Sessions—where contenders presented their papers either online (during the COVID-19 pandemic) or in person—also played a crucial role. I gratefully acknowledge the invaluable secretarial support provided by Katarzyna Kopczewska and Sébastien Bourdin in screening submissions for eligibility. What do we observe over these years?

For the prize, we look for a balanced combination of theory, methods, data analysis, research questions, and policy implications. We seek novelty that is firmly grounded in the state of the art in regional science. We also value contributions that show promise for timely publication. For young researchers, producing high-quality scientific articles is both crucial and often daunting. The Epainos best paper award offers a clear incentive to pay careful attention to methodological rigor, theoretical innovation, and societal relevance.

Each year, we saw increasingly ambitious submissions, employing new methods such as advanced spatial data analysis, machine learning, and mixed-method approaches. This trend highlights the importance of critical, creative, and interdisciplinary thinking. At the same time, we observed a growing emphasis on rigorous identification strategies — a trend also visible in contemporary economic geography and urban economics. For many early-career scholars, the competition provides their first formal recognition of academic excellence, an important step toward a sustainable academic career. In today's competitive academic environment, visibility often determines access to opportunities: research positions, grants, project funding, and international collaborations.

Regional science is an international discipline with strong professional networks and organizations, but access to these networks is not always

guaranteed for early-career researchers. Many young scholars bring strong and original ideas but lack the exposure needed to position themselves. We found this reflected not only in the prize-winning papers, but also in the outstanding runner-up contributions that made the selection process increasingly challenging. I personally believe the prize acts as a catalyst for integration into the international community — through professional interactions during the young science sessions and through the subsequent publication of many strong papers.

By explicitly focusing on young talent regardless of background, best paper awards can also help broaden the field. They create opportunities for researchers from underrepresented groups, countries, or institutions with fewer resources—including within ERSA and RSAI. We observed a growing diversity of submissions from all parts of the world, from both male and female researchers, and involving an increasingly rich set of empirical cases where regional science tools are applied. Many papers addressed policy-relevant societal issues such as the true pricing of external effects, sustainable development pathways, and the persistence of regional inequalities. This strengthens ERSA's societal reputation alongside its academic standing. One possible next step could be involving expert-policymakers in the assessment process: currently, seven academic jury members evaluate the papers, supported by at least two independent scientific reviewers per paper during the Young Science Sessions. The award demonstrates the vitality of the discipline, and societal relevance is integral to that vitality.

In a world where regional dynamics are becoming increasingly complex — from urban densification and climate adaptation to economic transitions — supporting young talent is not a luxury but a necessity. The consistently high quality of submissions to the Epainos Prize suggests that the future of regional science is bright!

*Frank van Oort
Erasmus University Rotterdam, the Netherlands*

FUNDING

In this new item, we will discuss recently started or recently finished projects from across the world, with different sources of funding. Hopefully, these can serve as inspiration for (young) scholars looking for new ways to obtain financial support for their research in regional science! Contributions are most welcome and can be sent to the newsletter editors. In this first issue, two Italians based in the Netherlands contribute: Nicola Cortinovis obtained an “extra small” grant from the national science organization, and Mina Akhavan a European Marie Skłodowska-Curie grant.

NICOLA CORTINOVIS

As young researchers, the journey to establishing an independent research line is full of challenges. We face significant pressure to develop our own research agendas, yet we frequently operate with a limited budget (📉) to pursue these ambitious ideas. The Open Competition XS grant from the Dutch national science organization (NWO) offers a fantastic lifeline in this respect. This scheme is specifically designed for tenured young researchers in Dutch Universities and provides the opportunity to submit a concise application for projects up to €50,000, to be spent in a period of 12 months.

My own experience applying in 2023 (and again in 2025) was overall very positive. I heard about the opportunity from a friend over the weekend, and I rushed to develop a proposal as the deadline was just a couple of weeks



away. I already had the idea for a while to create a new, comprehensive database of US crowdfunding projects, using AI to link them to specific industries in specific locations. Leveraging this data, the core objective of the project was to investigate whether and how capital provision through crowdfunding supports local industrial development. The project was successfully funded, leading to 12 months of intensive work where I – with the help of a research assistant and a data steward of Utrecht University – developed and validated the database, conducted the analyses, and presented the findings at several conferences. It was a very intense, but very fun year!

Interestingly, my research suggests that crowdfunding actively supports the emergence of new industries, particularly in regions with higher credit insecurity. Furthermore, additional

work indicates that crowdfunding fosters entrepreneurial activity in rural areas, especially when local entrepreneurs benefit from strong social capital connections. Thanks to the support from this grant, I have two papers currently under review and I can continue to explore this rich, new database for studying entrepreneurial dynamics, diversification, and the geography of entrepreneurial finance in the US. By the way, you can also use the database yourself! If you are interested, please reach out (n.cortinovis@uu.nl)!

MINA AKHAVAN

Europe's port-city-regions are full of contrasts. They are engines of global trade, yet deeply local places where people live, work, and breathe. They are hubs of innovation and green transition, yet also sites of congestion, noise, and environmental pressure. And although they operate far beyond municipal borders, their impacts are felt in neighbourhoods, regional corridors, and entire metropolitan landscapes.



The Marie Skłodowska-Curie project RePortFlows set out to explore these tensions by asking a simple but powerful question: What emerges when we stop mapping the port-city as a bounded entity and instead map the flows that traverse it and the regional spaces they generate?

This shift from 'port areas' to 'spaces of flows' opened up a new way of looking at port-city-regions. Instead of focusing on terminals, fences, and administrative lines, the project traced what really structures these territories: the movement of goods across logistics networks, the mobility of passengers on ferries and cruise routes, the clustering of maritime firms along rivers and railways, and the circulation of knowledge and innovation in emerging waterfront districts.

Through the case studies of Rotterdam and Genoa, RePortFlows produced a rich atlas of maps of freight and passengers, of environmental pressures, of socio-economic patterns, of land-use changes and business clusters. Layer by layer, these maps made visible how global logistics reshape everyday geographies: how a new terminal influences residential patterns kilometres away, how a port expansion triggers new mobility demands, or how energy-transition projects energise once-declining waterfronts.

These insights matter enormously for the regional science community. They show that port-city-regions are not isolated infrastructures but territorial systems whose boundaries expand and contract with each new flow,



project, or policy decision. They highlight why planning at the port-city interface must be interscalar, as the effects of a maritime decision are rarely confined to a single municipality. And they reveal emerging vulnerabilities and opportunities: where environmental pressures accumulate, where innovation clusters form, and where communities may be left behind.

These insights matter enormously for the regional science community. They show that port-city-regions are not isolated infrastructures but territorial systems whose boundaries expand and contract with each new flow, project, or policy decision. They highlight why planning at the port-city interface must be interscalar — because the effects of a maritime decision are rarely confined to a single municipality. And they reveal emerging vulnerabilities and opportunities: where environmental pressures accumulate, where innovation clusters form, and where communities may be left behind.

RePortFlows also confronted a governance puzzle familiar to many regional scientists: the mismatch between how port territories function and how they are governed. While the EU's Maritime Spatial Planning Directive has improved coordination at sea, its land-sea interaction component often remains a missing link in regional planning. The project found that port impacts — from emissions to housing pressures — are still managed in fragmented ways on land, despite being produced by highly interconnected systems.

To bridge these gaps, RePortFlows brought together port authorities,

planners, NGOs, businesses, academics, and community representatives from five European cities for a multi-stakeholder co-creation workshop. Using the metaphor of a 'Postcard from the Future', participants imagined what their port-city-region should look like in 20 or 30 years. Their visions for cleaner air, greener logistics, more accessible waterfronts, stronger innovation ecosystems revealed a shared desire to rethink port territories as inclusive, liveable, and sustainable regional spaces.

What RePortFlows ultimately offers is a new narrative for Europe's port-city-regions. It invites us to see them not as competing domains of port vs. city, economy vs. environment, but as dynamic, interdependent ecosystems that are essential to Europe's future. It shows how data-driven mapping, integrated planning, and collaborative governance can help unlock their full potential.

For more details on the project *RePortFlows: Understanding the Hidden Geographies of Europe's Port-City-Regions* and its outputs, see [the official CORDIS page](#).

Policy Implications, with guest editor prof. Carolina Guevara Rosero;

- "The future of Cohesion", with guest editor prof. Andrés Rodríguez-Pose.

On the second front, RSPP was recently listed A class journal for Geography and Economics in the Italian ANVUR list. Two more applications in national rankings are currently being reviewed. Please do get in touch with the EiC if you would like to suggest your own national or institutional ranking.

On the third front, early evidence suggests that the journal keeps growing in terms of quality, and, therefore, impact. RSPP's CiteScore went up from 3.6 to 3.7 in 2024 (statistics released in late Spring, 2025), and current statistics suggest a potential further growth in 2025. By the same token, in 2024 the journal's IF went up to 2.1 (from 1.7 in 2023).

The editors look forward to receiving your best regional and urban policy papers, be they quantitative or qualitative!

Andrea Caragliu, editor-in-chief



NEWS FROM REGIONAL SCIENCE POLICY AND PRACTICE

THIS NOVEMBER MARKS THE first anniversary of the new editorial board. After the excellent job by the two predecessors (Prof. Michael Carroll and Prof. Tomaz Dentinho), *Regional Science, Policy & Practice* entered a new stage. The board now includes Andrea Caragliu (Politecnico di Milano) as Editor in Chief, with André Chagas (University of Sao Paulo), Hee-Jung Jun (Sungkyunkwan University), Neil Reid (University of Toledo), and Terciane Sabadini Carvalho (Federal University of Paraná) as associate editors.



The new board brought about a number of changes, in the footsteps of prior actions for the journal:

1. A smaller number of focused, thematic special issues;
2. An effort in extending the indexation of the journal in national and international rankings;
3. A further investment in increasing the average quality of the papers published on the journal.

On the first front, as this article is being written, five special issues are accepting submissions:

- "Remote Working as a Driver for Rural Transformation?", with guest editors Profs. Hans Westlund & Nino Javakhishvili-Larsen;
- "Impacts of War in Ukraine: Perspectives and Challenges", with guest editor prof. Kateryna Zabarina;
- "Migrant Integration Challenges and Policies", with guest editors dr. Joaquim Oliveira Martins and prof. Tomaz Ponce Dentinho;
- "Understanding Spatial Disparities in the Global South: Evidence and