

Call for Papers

Special Session on

Problems & Prospects of Slowly Growing Medium-sized Cities

at the

57th ERSA Congress, Groningen, The Netherlands

(29 August - 1 September 2017)

According to publications of the European Commission cities are of fundamental importance as growth engines for a sustainable future of the European Union. Especially for medium-sized cities (100,000 to 500,000 inhabitants) it seems questionable though, if all of them can fulfill these high expectations as some of them grow slowly or even shrink. Compared to so-called mega or primate cities, the group of medium-sized cities received relatively little attention in research and politics, although these cities play a significant role regarding the number of inhabitants, GDP, employment opportunities, supply of goods, centrality functions as well as cultural and architectural heritage.

This explains why the announced special session at the 57th ERSA Congress in Groningen wants to focus on the specific problems and perspectives of slowly growing medium-sized cities in Europe.

Focusing on slowly growing or even shrinking medium sized cities all kind of contributions regarding general research, as well as case studies are welcome. A special emphasis should be placed on how local governance is responding to slowed growth or even shrinkage and how it contributes to the transformation of medium-sized cities. Presentations for this special session could also embrace the following topics:

- Typical challenges, e.g. dependence on a few big employers, low level of skills or brain drain, peripheral location
- The role of medium-sized cities within the urban system
- Regional interdependencies, interlinks and the dynamics of flows between medium-sized cities and their surroundings
- Path dependencies and the role of a city's (economic) history
- Factors of success or failure in managing the necessities of structural change
- Policy recommendations
- International exchange of experience and cooperation of scientists working in this field
- The process of "learning from other regions and cities", especially from medium-sized cities which have been successful in the process of interregional completion
- The interpretation and comparison of different methodological approaches

Submission Instructions & Important Dates

- The initial submission for special sessions is on the basis of an extended abstract (1500 words including contribution, theoretical framework, empirical approach and / or first results) or a draft paper (between 5000 and 10,000 words). **The deadline is February 10th, 2017.**
- All presenters have to upload a full (draft) paper. **The deadline is June 9th, 2017.**

Conveners

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