



Social Progress for Resilient Regions

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Call for Papers: Regional Resilience in the face of Natural Disasters and Climate Change

Organized in cooperation with the Waddenacademie



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Convenors:

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We invite the submission of research papers dealing with **Regional Resilience in the face of Natural Disasters and Climate Change** for a special session at the 57th ERSA Congress. In the past few years, the topic of resilience received increased interest in consequence of the increase of social, economic and environmental pressures in urban and regional systems. In an increasing risky world, managing resources to govern uncertainty is the priority. Starting from the seminal work of Holling (1973), the definitions of resilience have been revised and applied to several fields giving rise to general criticism and distrust over the real value of the concept. To address the topic and create a solid theory of resilience, a group of scholars (Martin, 2012; Simmie and Martin, 2010; Martin and Sunley, 2014) proposed an evolutionary definition of resilience. Alongside this view, resilience is linked to the “adaptive ability” and refers to the capacity of a system to change its structure and functions to cope with external pressures. In an evolutionary perspective, resilience appears as a process more than a feature of the system. It may explain the evolution of the system clarifying the attitude of some regions to renew, re-organize and develop, designing a sustainable future (Lazzaretti and Cooke, 2015). The adaptive capabilities of a region’s economy affected by a crisis depend on the nature of the pre-existing socio-economic structure, and different regions react differently to a common shock.

The interest of scholars in studying the adaptive resilience have mainly been focused on impacts and responses of regions to economic crisis and poor attention has been paid on economic consequences and resilience in response to natural shocks. However, environmental disasters are increasingly the result of climate change and rising urbanization. Despite the emergence of such processes, a large part of analysis of natural disasters has tried to measure the economic impact of the shocks more than evaluating social, economic and territorial consequences of the response. An analysis of the evolution of cities and regions after a shock can help to find both weakness and key elements in foster resilience.

When considering resilience as a process, it is important to evaluate how specific urban and regional systems react to environmental shocks within a continuum that represents low to high levels of resilience. A comprehensive vision of the interaction between natural disasters and socio-economic regional structures are a requirement in order to build sustainable resilience processes. Climate change is expected to have an ever-increasing impact, whether directly or indirectly, on the development in EU territories. Populations and activities should increasingly experience the environmental as well as socio-economic consequences,

good or bad, of this major game changer. Inside territories, authorities, populations, social and economics actors will have to deal with or to take advantage of the local/regional impacts of natural disasters and climate change, in spite of the difficulty of accurately forecasting the specific consequences, of catastrophic and chronic natural hazards. As a consequence, there is an increasing need for concrete solutions that can reduce the vulnerability (e.g. earthquake proof buildings, dikes, water reservoirs) and enhance the resilience (e.g. risk management plans) of territories, populations and activities. However, the capacity to foresight, decide, steer and lead policy in such a context of uncertainty may also be one major issue for territories. If your recent research deals with the above mentioned issues we invite you to submit a paper for the special session on Regional Resilience in the face of Natural Disasters and Climate Change.

Submission and Deadlines

Please note that all submissions have to undergo the usual selection process. Accepted papers will be allocated a 30 minutes time slot for presentation and discussion and are assigned a formal discussant. While initial submission is possible with an extended abstract (1500 words including contribution, theoretical framework, empirical approach and/or first results) or a draft paper (between 5,000 and 10,000 words) to be submitted before the deadline of **February 10, 2017**, all presenters will have to upload a full (draft) paper before the deadline of June 9, 2017. For more information: groningen.ersa.org

We look forward to your submissions and to seeing you in Groningen.
