

EDITORIAL

The Hungarian Regional Science Association

The Association was established in February 2002 by proposal of Regional Science Committee of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences and became officially registered at the Baranya County Court in December 2002 in Pécs.

The Association:

- provides professional forum for regional scholars and practitioners,
- disseminates the latest developments of Hungarian and international regional science research,
- serves as a bridge between international and Hungarian regional scientists by getting connected with international regional science organizations (ERSA/RSAI, RSA),
- builds contacts with regional policymakers to publicize findings of regional science research,
- provides support to scientific research institutes, universities and other organizations where regional science is currently practiced or will be practiced in the future,
- supports regional scientists to publish and popularise their research findings by means of offering research funding, scholarships and other initiatives,
- organizes conferences, workshops as well as publishing books and other publications to widen the audience as well as the community of users of regional science research.

The Hungarian Regional Science Association has more than 400 registered members associated with various organizations (research institutes, universities, central, regional and local government bodies, public and private companies etc.). Currently the HRSA has 104 active members from Hungary and 93 registered members from neighbouring countries. HRSA operates 12 regional sections (in all the 7 regions of Hungary and in 5 regions abroad where Hungarian speaking regional specialists are working). Half of the sections operate on a regular basis. The Association also serves as the Hungarian section of the European Regional Science Association.

HRSA Annual Meetings

The HRSA organizes thematic annual meetings, which were as follows:

- 2003: Future of Hungarian regionalism (in Pécs, in co-operation with the Centre for Regional Studies of HAS)

- 2004: Regional development and planning (in Nyíregyháza, in co-operation with the College of Nyíregyháza)
- 2005: Regional Transition in the Carpathian Basin (in Sopron, in co-operation with the West-Hungarian University)
- 2006: The role of cities in regional development (in Szeged, in co-operation with University of Szeged)
- 2007: The role of industry in regional development (in Miskolc, in co-operation with University of Miskolc)
- 2008: New elements in rural development (in Gödöllő, in co-operation with Szent István University)
- 2009: Cross-border and transnational cooperation (in Subotica, Serbia, in co-operation with Regional Science Association Subotica)
- 2010: The role of knowledge in regional development (in Debrecen, in co-operation with University of Debrecen)
- 2011: The role of waters in spatial development – Development problems and opportunities of the Danube and Tisza regions (in Komárno, Slovakia, in co-operation with Selye János University)
- 2012: Regional science today and tomorrow (in Győr, in co-operation with Széchenyi István University)
- 2013: The New European Cohesion Policy (in Kaposvár, in co-operation with Kaposvár University)
- 2014: Local development (in Veszprém, in co-operation with University of Pannonia)

The 12th Annual Meeting

The 12th annual meeting of the Hungarian Regional Science Association held between November 27–28, 2014 in Veszprém was hosted by the Faculty of Business and Economics, University of Pannonia. The circa 160 participants of the two-day meeting discussed issues of local developments and local socio-economic opportunities. As in previous years, the conference began with the General Assembly of the HRSA. The morning programme was centered on annual reports, regional sections' reports and the debate on the 2015 Draft Programme. Following the General Assembly, two plenary sessions were held during the afternoon, the first in English and the second in Hungarian language.

The foreign guest speaker of the conference was Roberta Capello, Past-president of Regional Science Association International, and Editor-in-chief of the scientific journal

„Papers in Regional Science”. In her presentation, the Professor of Politecnico di Milano *Static vs. Dynamic Agglomeration Economies: Spatial Context and Structural Evolution behind Urban Growth* presented novel, dynamic possibilities of the analysis of agglomeration economics and urban growth in a European context. A general consensus exists in the acknowledgement of metropolitan growth narrowing the development opportunities of smaller cities. The higher development level of metropolises is evident in a static view, however, by taking into account the time factor, the development of each settlement (small and large cities) can be demonstrated. According to the results obtained from the model elaborated by the Author and her collaborators (Roberto Camagni and Andrea Caragliu), agglomerations containing one dominant large city are characterized by lower development levels than those constituted by several smaller settlements. The number of inhabitants does not significantly influence urban growth, as opposed to the availability of urban functions. This latter influence decreases with the increase of settlement size. (Roberta Capello received information about the current conditions of Hungarian metropolitan growth in Győr just one day before the annual meeting, in the framework of the presentation on the spatial dimensions of the knowledge-based economy in Europe given to the students and professors of the Doctoral School of Regional and Economic Sciences, Széchenyi István University.)

Ádám Török, General Secretary of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Professor of University of Pannonia gave a plenary speech on the competitiveness of Hungarian innovation and science policy in which he investigated the Hungarian results in a European and a global context. In relation to the R&D&I policy efforts of the European Union, it can be stated that it strives to improve the performance of innovation systems by enhancing a single input indicator, while output and results indicators remained in the background for a longer period of time. The objective of the Lisbon Strategy in 2000 was to raise overall spending in the Union on R&D with the aim of approaching 3% of GDP by 2010. However, the average **GERD/GDP** ratio was 1.9% in 2010, showing almost no increase in a period of ten years. The same 3 percent ratio figures among the main targets of Europe 2020, the most recent growth strategy of the EU as well. The inclusion of indicators measuring R&D expenditure in the business sector (BERD), the number of employees and the efficiency of R&D in the analyses is highly recommended. The second part of the presentation focused on the possibilities of the measurement of scientific activities, such as the number of publications, citation indices, scientific and university rankings.

The English-language session was closed with the joint paper of Zoltán Gál, Senior Research Fellow of HAS CERS Institute for Regional Studies and Gábor Lux, Research

Fellow of HAS CERS Institute for Regional Studies. They presented the main findings of the project titled ESPON ET2050 (Territorial Scenarios and Visions for Europe), with a special focus on Central and Eastern Europe and the Danube region. Their speech began by examining the roots and causes of economic disparities between Western and Eastern European territories, followed by a presentation of scenarios for 2050 as outputs of the project. Four heterogeneous visions were elaborated: a base scenario relying on current indicators, one designed for large cities, one for mid-sized cities and a last one targeting regional developments. A main conclusion of the research is that the current state of affairs is likely to prevail in the absence of significant political and technological changes even post-2030.

The Hungarian-language plenary session was opened by the presentation of Bálint Csatári, Former President of the Hungarian National Rural Network, in which he investigated the opportunities of community based local developments from the aspect of rural areas. This category, exceeding the notion of local development, in addition to investigating it from a complex interdisciplinary (political, geographical, economic and sociological) approach, contains several elements and mechanisms which can be counted among the factors of smart, sustainable and inclusive growth, thereby enhancing the local development performance of sectoral policies. The knowledge, sense of belonging and the vision characteristic of the local economy and society are of key importance in the elaboration of development plans and concepts, however, leadership and community-forming capacities of local personalities are equally important. The Hungarian National Rural Network (MNVH) can be regarded as a possible pattern of community based developments, providing opportunities for project proposals in order to boost rural co-operations as a quasi non-governmental organization.

Zoltán Bajmócy, Associate Professor of Faculty of Economics and Business Administration, University of Szeged called attention to a major deficiency, namely that the objectives of local economic development are generally rarely discussed by the professional literature, while the main focus is on the analysis of the availability and application of instruments. While it is crucial to investigate instrument-oriented development, the study of skill-based local economic development cannot be neglected either. In the latter case, the individual participates in the processes as a stakeholder, disposes of capacities of choice, and at the end of the process, he or she will be able to live a life considered valuable with reason. The scope of the empirical analyses of the research extended to the developments of Hungarian cities with a county status, and it was demonstrated that competence-based local economic development was virtually absent from the Hungarian practice, new partners were

seldom included in the elaboration of urban partnership consultation plans, the inclusion of the local population and publicity were lacking during the initial phases. It was left for inhabitants to make certain steps towards increasing their chances of participation, however, participation tended to provide instruments only for those with power, and not for individuals excluded from power.

Cecília Mezei, Research Fellow of HAS CERS Institute for Regional Studies gave a presentation on the role of self-governments in local developments. During the 1990s, in harmony with the regulations post-regime change (Act on Local Governments, Act on Public Finances), the developments of municipalities were generally targeted at local infrastructure, had a typically ad hoc character, while during the second half of the decade, as a supplement to the provision of obligatory tasks, local development led by local governments was carried out on a residual basis. With EU integration in the 2000s, almost each development relied and depended on community funding. Due to the current centralization of public tasks and their financing, local governmental development resources and opportunities diminished. Local governmental developments are of crucial importance according to the empirical analysis, in 2003, 85% of the leaders of settlements considered that local economic development should be included among the basic responsibilities of local governments, which are in charge of ensuring its conditions, have access to local knowledge and must tackle unemployment and in general, they are the single most competent stakeholders. Nevertheless, they are lacking the necessary financial resources and their competences are not clarified either.

The closing speaker was Szabolcs Hollósi, Managing Director of BFH Európa Project Developing and Consulting Ltd., who gave a presentation on the role of the private sector in local economic development. The firm operating in three locations in Western Transdanubia participated in over 500 projects over the past ten years with an overall value of 40 bln HUF. The employment programs conducted by the organization are of outstanding significance, whose participants were local governments, enterprises and civil organizations, and their target was to increase employment through employment pacts and a broad partnership among participants. In order to achieve this, the employer-demand-led programs and the practice of dual training were often required. On the basis of the experiences of the head of the company, it is necessary to upgrade the professional and development institutions on each territorial level (national, county and settlement).

The granting of awards took place following the plenary session. According to the unanimous decision of the General Assembly, the Association granted the Pro Regional Science Award to HRSA Vice-president Attila Buday-Sántha, Founder of the Doctoral School

in Regional Policy, Professor Emeritus of Faculty of Business and Economics, University of Pécs, who passed away on May 17, 2014, to acknowledge his outstanding achievements in research, education and school-founding activities in the area of regional science. The Pro Regional Science Award was established in 2012. The HRSA grants this award to a natural person whose outstanding activities contribute to the development of regional science and the realisation of the objectives of the Association. This was the second occasion that the Award was granted to someone, the geometric small plastic and certificate of merit it involved were received by the family of Professor Attila Buday-Sántha.

The Association announced the call for applications for the Excellent Young Regionalist Prize, which the Presidency of HRSA - in collaboration with leaders of HRSA regional sections - awarded to Zoltán Bajmócy in order to acknowledge his valuable educational and research activities in the field of regional science. Twelve parallel thematic sessions – one in English language - were held during the second day of the conference which were as follows:

- Local developments in the globalizing world, global–local relations (Chair: József Nemes Nagy Professor, Eötvös Loránd University; Vice-president of HRSA)
- Local development strategies in city regions (Chair: János Rechnitzer Professor, Széchenyi István University; President of HRSA)
- Smart specialization of university cities (Chair: Imre Lengyel Professor, University of Szeged; Vice-president of HRSA)
- Local governments, public utility service (Chair: Zoltán Ág Editor-in-chief, Comitatus)
- Social development, innovations in the peripheries (Chair: Éva G. Fekete Professor, University of Miskolc)
- Community-led local development, agriculture and rural development (Chair: János Schwertner President, Academic Society for the Development of the Micro-regions)
- Social well-being and competitiveness (Chair: Viktória Szirmai Professor, Kodolányi János University of Applied Sciences)
- Local economic development, labour market, education and training (Chair: Károly Fazekas General Director, HAS Centre for Economics and Regional Studies)
- Tourism as a tool of local development (Chair: Tamás Molnár Associate Professor, University of Pannonia)
- Environmental factors, renewable energy and local development (Chair: Viktor Varjú Research Fellow, HAS CERS Institute for Regional Studies)

- Borders, borderlands and local development (Chair: Attila Fábián Dean, University of West Hungary Faculty of Economics)
- Local development in Central Europe (English session) (Chair: Zoltán Gál Senior Research Fellow, HAS Institute for Regional Studies)

Thematic Issue

Issue number 2. (2015) of the journal DETUROPE is of special significance from several aspects. This is the first time that an issue of the journal has a concrete topic as its focus. Moreover, this is the first volume which publishes only English-language studies. The thematic issue is also a novelty from the aspect of Hungarian Regional Science Association since the selected studies presented at its annual meeting are now published in an individual issue of a scientific journal. Over a 100 presentations were held at the annual conference. One-third of the presenters were requested to submit their publications on the basis of the proposals of sessions' chairs. 18 authors succeeded in meeting the requirements of the thematic issue and submitted their manuscripts in the form of journal articles before the deadline. The papers were adapted to the requirements of DETUROPE and following a lengthy (double-blind) process of peer review they were published all together at the same time. In our hopes, the publication of the issue will constitute a milestone both for DETUROPE and HRSA. It also contributes greatly to the realisation of our common objectives, especially those of internationalisation and supporting regional research. The Presidency of HRSA hereby expresses its gratitude to the Editorial Board of the journal and its Editor-in-chief, Prof. Sándor Somogyi.

Szilárd Rác

Editor of thematic issue