

ARL

ACADEMY FOR
TERRITORIAL DEVELOPMENT
IN THE LEIBNIZ ASSOCIATION



TOR VERGATA
UNIVERSITÀ DEGLI STUDI DI ROMA

European Space between Consolidation and New Challenges. Spatial Planning and Spatial Research from 1975 to the Present

International Conference in Rome, 10 to 11 October 2024

Call for Papers

Human societies are influenced by space, but they also shape it. The correspondingly diverse relationships provide a fascinating research perspective that allows the respective social conditions to be more precisely determined through spatial analysis. As the German historian Karl Schlögel put it a few years ago: through spatial analyses we recognise societal problems particularly well – in space we read time. The space we want to refer to at the conference is Europe, in its enormous diversity – from the 1970s to today. We are interested in which readings of space (spatial analyses) have led to which political actions during this time and whether the particularly important scientific disciplines of spatial research and spatial planning have been able to exert the influence they claim, or not.

The aim of the conference is to critically evaluate and provide an analytical overview of important spatial developments and political decisions in Europe since the mid-1970s. The focus will not be on national comparisons but on the question of spatial constellations and the effectiveness of European policies (e.g. regional economic development) in influencing its "Gestalt" in the face of profound changes: the collapse of the Eastern Bloc, a new wave of globalisation, and comprehensive processes of economic, social, and cultural polarisation between urban and rural areas or old and new industrial centres.

Regional disparities have been a major topic of spatial planning and research since the 1970s. This is reflected not the least in the old but somewhat renewed "confrontation", or rather "differentiation", between rural and urban regions on the one hand and between backward or deteriorating old, industrialised regions and booming urban centres with high tech or service industries on the other – i.e., in the parallelism of regression and boom in almost all European states.

The ideas and concepts used to design and structure such spatial constellations have followed national premises, however, we can observe international exchange and even interwovenness between them, e.g., regarding the concept of central places (*Zentrale Orte*), to name just one example.

Nonetheless, no European-wide policies for regional and local development have been elaborated or even allowed beyond the national jurisdictions. However, the European regional economic development programmes and the agricultural subsidies have had an enormous influence on the

shaping of the European territories. These programmes can all be considered as part of an overall intention to promote spatial cohesion as the fundament for social cohesion. Yet, urban-rural divergencies continue, with considerable differences in social and national configurations relevant to the perception and shape of spatial policies and their political implications, not least in influencing political orientations and impacting political culture, regionally, nationally, and European wide.

Three themes are of particular importance regarding Europe's regions since the 1970s and thus will be of particular interest at the conference:

Theme 1: Intra-regional social and economic problems or boom and bust on an inter-regional scale.

Theme 2: The challenges related to Europe's loss of importance on a global scale, regarding the European model of society and questions of environmental and climate protection.

Theme 3: The actual functioning of the transformation paradigm for the mitigation of the above-mentioned problems, beyond purely normative or rhetorical policy approaches.

The conference is a joint project of the ARL Academy for Territorial Development in the Leibniz Association with the Università degli Studi di Roma Tor Vergata (University of Rome 2).

If you – including but not limited to young academics or planners – are interested in the topics of our conference, as outlined above, we would be pleased to receive your abstract for a potential presentation by 1 March 2024.

Please send the abstract (not more than 2,500 characters) of your planned presentation in English to Andreas Klee (andreas.klee@arl-net.de). The conference presentation itself should not be longer than 20 minutes. Naturally, it should tackle central questions and problems of our proposed concept – preferably including a central thesis and a résumé with an expressive title.

All the abstracts received will be evaluated. If accepted, we would like to invite you to Rome (one speaker per paper). Your travel costs and accommodation in Rome will be covered in accordance with the German Federal Travel Expenses Act (BRKG).

Guests who are not holding presentations are welcome to participate at their own expense. No fees are required.

The language of the conference is English. As with a previous event in Berlin in autumn 2022, the results will be published in an English-language conference volume by CAMPUS Verlag/Chicago University Press. No fees will be charged for the publication.

Please see also a more detailed project description written by the German and Italian organisers Detlef Briesen, Angela D'Orazio, Maria Prezioso and Wendelin Strubelt, all of whom are most willing to answer any questions you might have:

<https://www.arl-net.de/de/blog/call-papers-spatial-planning-and-spatial-research-1975-present>

At the beginning of May 2024, we will decide on the speakers, and by the beginning of June 2024 we will publish the final programme of the conference.

Deadline for abstract submissions: 1 March 2024

Please send your abstract to:

Prof. Dr. Andreas Klee

ARL HQ / Head of the Central Department

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