

– URBAN RESILIENCE –

International Summer School

16th–17th September 2014

and

Annual Spa-ce.net Conference

18th–19th September 2014

Bratislava, Spectra, Centre of Excellence (UM STU)

In the wake of its rapid expansion, the EU is being increasingly forced to take an active role in cohesion issues as well as in regional policy and development. This acceleration in spatial development has, however, also increased the likelihood of negative impacts from globalisation and EU integration. Recent economic and financial crises have highlighted this risk, presenting threats which were much less acute only a few years ago. Fragile spatial and societal structures have been exposed to huge pressures from international markets alongside unfavourable demographic trends, environmental hazards or other sources of risk.

Two particularly worrying factors are social instability and deteriorating social cohesion. Some municipalities have been stricken by a sense of alienation, the dissolving of traditional social structures, the loss of regional identities or dysfunctional social networks. Furthermore, they face many developmental challenges in the form of economic restructuring, suburbanisation, large-scale migration, the redevelopment of inefficient infrastructures, as well as pressures related to climate change. Europe's cities are particularly affected by all of these challenges.

Spatial planners must cope with increasingly ill-defined framework conditions for spatial development while reacting efficiently and flexibly to unpredictable external and internal shocks such as floods, fires and economic fluctuation. They must also deal with the unpredictable individual behaviour/decisions of multiple stakeholders. These factors represent risks not only for planning, but first and foremost for the sustainability of spatial development. Spatial planning has been transformed into an ongoing process of seeking useful solutions without any guarantee of success. Assessment and decision-making in the face of uncertainty – that's the order of the day.

Organised by

Spectra, Centre of Excellence at the Slovak University of Technology, Bratislava (Slovakia)

Leibniz Institute of Ecological Urban and Regional Development, Dresden (Germany)

Chair of Spatial Development at the Technische Universität Dresden, Dresden (Germany)

International Summer School

– Urban Resilience and Spatial Planning –

16th–17th September 2014

The Brundtland Report has taught us that city-regions must be more than just sustainable: In order to deal successfully with uncertainty and change, from sudden financial crisis and terrorist attack to extreme weather events, city-regions also need to be regenerative and to foster diversity as part of their inherent dynamism. In this scenario of uncertainty, the concept of “resilience” comes to the fore. This is the capacity to handle unexpected change without the danger of collapse, in which learning and innovation are emphasized as well as proactive action to prepare cities and their communities against future uncertainties.

The dominant vision among spatial planners is that we live in reasonably stable city-regions in which unpredictable events occur only infrequently (apart from those related to natural catastrophe). In actual fact city-regions can pass through transitional periods when changes arise so rapidly that uncertainty rather than stability is the defining feature. For instance, the European city-region is currently in one of these transitional periods, triggered by a paradigm shift in demographics combined with a looming financial crisis. Yet in the field of spatial planning the main focus is still on adaptation to climate change and strategies of mitigation. The Summer School “Urban Resilience and Spatial Planning” aims to foster discussion on the range of uncertainties facing city-regions as well as examining the role of spatial planning in promoting city-regional resilience. In particular, the following questions will be addressed:

1. Urban and regional resilience: a new challenge for spatial planning or a novel term for known concepts?
2. What are the relationships between urban and regional resilience, sustainability and spatial planning?
3. Which experiences have been made in promoting urban and regional resilience in Central, Eastern and South-Eastern Europe?
4. How can principles of resilience be promoted among city planners and incorporated in formal and informal planning documents and procedures?

Aims

The Summer School will investigate the manifold challenges and opportunities of resilience at city-regional level, while also looking to promote this concept within spatial planning. Specific goals include:

- To provide PhD candidates and young professionals the opportunity to present their research design/results and their practical experience,

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in Central, Eastern and South-Eastern Europe

- To discuss the presentations of PhD candidates and young professionals with external experts,
- To offer PhD candidates and young professionals the opportunity to benefit from knowledge transfer through international dialogue and exchange.

Format

The International Summer School comprises a variety of activities:

- Keynote lectures by invited guests lasting around 60 minutes plus 20 minutes discussion time,
- Oral presentations by PhD candidates (research theory, methodological design or results) and young professionals (practical experience in spatial planning) (20 minutes),
- Contributions of invited discussants concerning students' presentations (10 minutes),
- Exercises on how to foster active participation
- Organised excursion

We expect the PhD candidates and young professionals to participate in the Annual Spa-ce.net Conference 2014 (18th-19th September in Bratislava), which runs directly after the Summer School.

Application and scholarship

The International Summer School is aimed at highly qualified PhD candidates and young professionals from Slovakia, Germany and other European countries. Applicants must meet the following requirements:

- Maximum age of 35 years (as of 16th September 2014)
- A letter explaining your interest in attending (1 page)
- Curriculum Vitae (1 page)
- Summary of the dissertation proposal or a description of your current occupation and field of interest (1 page)

The application documents **must be sent by 17th July 2014**. Please send your documents in PDF format by email to Dr. Matej Jaššo (matej.jasso@stuba.sk) or Andreas Ortner (a.ortner@ioer.de). The selection and notification of participants is expected by the beginning of August 2014.

The scholarship of up to 750 EUR per participant is intended to cover travel costs to and from Bratislava as well as accommodation and food during the International Summer School and Annual Spa-ce.net Conference.

Annual Spa-ce.net Conference 2014

– Empirical Evidence of Urban Resilience in Central, Eastern and South-Eastern Europe –

18th–19th September 2014

As already indicated, spatial planners are currently facing an ambiguous situation. Not only is there a lack of sufficient information concerning future possible development, but also suitable criteria for evaluation is missing. Who knows what stakeholders really want? This uncertainty permeates all societies and communities, involving all actors and stakeholders. The stakes involved are exceedingly high, namely the future development of cities, regions and states that have grown up over centuries as well as the quality of life of millions of people.

Although various approaches to risk management in spatial planning have been outlined in a range of EU policy documents, the exact methods of integration at the spatial planning level are still being deliberated, with the exception of natural disaster risk management. In addition, the modification of available methods to take account of each city's specific conditions is a complex problem requiring an integrated, holistic and multidisciplinary approach.

The annual Spa-ce.net conference aims to discuss the following key issues:

1. Resilience as a new challenge for spatial planning or a novel term for known concepts?
2. Which experiences have been made in regard to urban and regional resilience in Central, Eastern and South-Eastern Europe?
3. Which risks and threats are most evident in the process of promoting urban resilience and which management strategies have been proved to be most effective?
4. Are there dedicated leaders, promoters or advocates of urban resilience or is this a purely process-related phenomenon?

We would like to invite you to contribute with your presentations and input. For more information feel free to contact the Spa-ce.net network coordinators:

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