



UNIVERSITY OF TWENTE.



14th N-AERUS Conference, Enschede 12th to 14th September 2013

CALL FOR PAPERS [in French and Spanish available soon at www.n-aerus.net]

Jointly organized with GISDECO

Network-Association of European Researchers on Urbanisation in the South (N-AERUS).

Hosted by PGM (Faculty ITC, University of Twente)

URBAN FUTURES. Multiple visions, paths and constructions?

This conference is centred around the observation that current urbanization trends are leading to multiple futures affecting global development. One of the challenges is how to understand these uncertain processes from cross and multidisciplinary perspectives. No single discipline can fully comprehend and tackle the complexity of urbanization, or support policymakers in designing and preparing for better envisioned futures. Above all, conflicting paths will impede the realization of a better quality-of-life and environment for all. Having a prospective vision in current times of economic crisis -and under scenarios of greater social and political inequality- represents a challenge for the city management due to the difficulty to imagine a prosperous future in the longer term.

This conference aims to transcend the divide between research strategies (and epistemological/ontological stands) by encouraging participation from different strands of academic discourse on urbanization issues and reflecting on the different stands. A range of possible futures and the consequences for human well-being, built and natural environment will be explored. Four sub-themes will be addressed:

a- Spatial information and urbanizing futures:

Spatial information is promoted as an important facilitator of transdisciplinary and participatory work: stakeholders at all levels, from policy makers through to individual citizens, can take part in planning, design and decision making processes. Spatial information provides a 'common language' for communicating ideas across social groups at different stages and scales of the policy process. Investments in data collection, visualization, and utilization by government have been substantial in the global south. The utility of spatial information in developing and implementing urban policies requires rigorous analysis and debate. The aim of this session is to move beyond the uninformed hype and the scepticism surrounding spatial information and urban policy. We seek to identify empirical cases of success and failure, and seek to synthesize innovative approaches, drawing attention to the underlying drives of outcomes and impacts.

Some guiding questions for contributions on this sub-theme are:

How spatial information guides urban policy design and implementation?

What are the benefits and risks of utilizing spatial information and tools to better understand, plan, design, create, and manage complex urban environments? What are the tools and applications that are used to better understand the current urbanization processes and inform the modelling of possible futures?

Who controls the adoption and use of spatial information resources? How does the adoption of GIS, participatory GIS and voluntary GIS affect outcomes?

b- Crises and Futures: How cities and urban regions prepare to cope with socio-economic and environmental crises.

Most cities are confronted with various forms of crises from time to time. These may be related to local issues such as some types of natural or technological hazards, but they can also include regional or even global scale crises such as climate change or the global economic crises that has gripped much of the world since 2008. Irrespective of the scale issue, crises by their nature cause substantial disruption to the normal functioning of cities, their residents, workers, businesses and economic and social lives. The combination of crises with growing urban inequalities and associated social conflicts also contribute to the emergence of new social actors and modalities of management and production of the city.

Some guiding questions for contributions on this sub-theme are:

Are specific processes needed as preparations for crises? What methodologies have proven their worth in crisis mitigation and adaptation? Should and how can local governments institutionalise crisis planning and crisis management? Do crises create opportunities as well as threats to sustainable urban development? How growing urban inequalities exacerbate the disproportionate vulnerability of certain groups?

c- Planning, Policy and Futures: How at local scale we design for better urban futures development.

The test of futures planning is its ability to generate improved concepts for local urban development and to facilitate and guide its realization. Design processes make a direct contribution to this ability. Contemporary and innovative concepts, methods and practices for local area and neighbourhood design may contribute to better urban futures. Some guiding questions for contributions on this sub-theme are:

How are concepts of resilient and sustainable cities translated into local design practice? What innovative approaches to local design are emerging and in what way do they improve the quality of urban life? Does collaborative design improve local development? How can uncertainty be accommodated in local design processes and practices?

d- Tales from the future: innovative approaches both in methodological terms and theoretical perspectives.

This sub-theme highlights cutting edge contributions related to theories, methods and techniques for spatial planning in rapidly changing and uncertain contexts. Some guiding questions for contributions on this sub-theme are:

Does scenario based planning increase or decrease stakeholder uncertainty and in so doing, public and private investment? What are the state of the art tools for collaborative spatial planning and under what circumstances can they be successfully used? How will internet based mapping and planning services affect local spatial planning practices? Do high-tech spatial planning tools contribute to stakeholder and social exclusion and undermine transparency in spatial planning and decision making? How are digital city technologies changing the nature of spatial planning and decision making? Examples of cutting edge tool development and case studies illustrating their applicability are encouraged.

Papers are encouraged in any of these sub-themes. A poster session will be prepared in particular to engage students in the information exchange process of the conference. Some pre-conference workshops/meetings can be arranged for a small fee can also be facilitated. Should there be a desire for these please contact the local organization committee before 31 March 2013 (sec.naerus2013@utwente.nl)

Abstracts: 150-250 words should be submitted in .rtf or .doc by **6th May 2013 12:00 PM CET**, to **sec.naerus2013@utwente.nl**. Abstracts and papers can be written in English, French or Spanish. Abstracts should:

1. Indicate the sub-theme
2. Indicate a title
3. Explain the state the issue to be addressed, define the context, and highlight the main arguments.

A separate file should include the Authors and contact details and affiliation. These details should not appear on the main abstract file

Abstracts and full papers will be selected by an independent scientific committee composed by ITC, GISDECO and N-AERUS representatives, through a blind refereeing process.

The host conference team: Javier MARTINEZ, Richard SLIUZAS, Rohan BENNETT, Saskia TEMPELMAN (Local Organising Secretariat ITC)

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