

SUSTAINING REGIONS, the newsletter of ANZRSAI, 3(3)

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EDITOR

REGISTER NOW!

We urge you and your colleagues to take advantage of the extended Early Bird Registration date (30 October 2013) for the 37th Annual Conference of ANZRSAI to be held at the Hervey Bay campus of the University of Southern Queensland from 3 to 6 December 2013. Register here:

<https://www.conferenceonline.com/index.cfm?page=booking&object=conference&id=17681&categorykey=2A9E1266%2D630B%2D4C07%2DB1BA%2D870F096FBE01&clear=1>

The keynote speakers are a particular feature of this conference providing leading edge information on national and international trends in regional research and practical regional development.

- Professor Richard Shearmur of McGill University, Canada is presenting on innovation, local development and territorial relations.
- Professor Graeme Hugo of University of Adelaide is presenting on population dynamics in regional Australia and the associated policy issues.

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- Professor Jacques Poot of University of Waikato, NZ, is speaking on the economics of regional population growth as he reviews the “Growth” section in the Springer Handbook of Regional Science (2013) which he edited.
- Professor Michael Carroll of Bowling Green State University, USA, who is Editor-in-Chief of Regional Science Policy and Practice, the international journal of regional practice, will conduct a panel discussion of leading thinkers on regional science and policy articulating the importance of good regional science to good regional policy.
- Professor Robert Stimson and Dr Jack Barton will present an overview and a workshop providing a hands-on guide to help you to access previously unavailable data on Australian cities assembled by the Australian Urban Research Infrastructure Network. All of these presentations have a direct interest for researchers and policy makers.

But wait, there is more! If your interest is regional practice and policy there are also several keynotes directly relevant to you.

- Jack Archer and Vanessa Barnett will present on the work of the Regional Australia Institute, including their accessible regional competitiveness database.
- Those of us with a particular interest in clusters and in regional practice will find an open innovation approach to cluster development in the presentation by Ed Morrison and his work on Strategic Doing. For more on this have a look at the following link.
http://www.pcrd.purdue.edu/What_We_Do/SD/default.aspx
- Our President, Paul Collits, one of Australia’s leading regional development practitioners is providing a Presidential Address on his learning from 20 years of practice in regional development in Australia.

RENEW

Please consider. When you do register we urge you to also join ANZRSAI.

INVITE YOUR COLLEAGUES

We also ask that you share this update with your colleagues and encourage them to attend what is sure to be another great event. There is something here for regional practitioners, policy makers and researchers.

VISIT FRASER ISLAND

Stay for the weekend after the conference and visit Fraser Island.

This edition of Sustaining Regions the Newsletter of ANZRSAI contains a brief on the unfolding regional policy settings in Australia following the change of government, an overview of a paper prepared for the Grattan Institute on barriers to productivity in Australia’s major cities, a reflection by Professor Robert J Stimson, Fellow of the Regional Science Association International of his remarkable career, and recent abstracts from Papers in Regional Science, an upcoming RSAI Conference and news from Council.

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Sustaining Regions, the Newsletter of ANZRSAI invites contributions on research, policy and practice relevant to urban and regional communities. These can be commentary, articles, book reviews, and descriptions of policy initiatives. Contributions must reveal the author; they will not be refereed, and will not enjoy the copyright protection of a refereed journal. Authors seeking refereeing and copyright protection should approach Australasian Journal of Regional Studies www.anzrsai.org.

Whither Regional Policy in Australia

With the change of government in Australia comes a change in regional policy. Exactly what will change is not exactly clear. The Editor

A Change in the Regional Infrastructure Fund

The pre-election statement issued by the Liberal Party on 5 September 2013 entitled “Final Update on Federal Coalition Election Policy Commitments” (<http://www.liberal.org.au/latest-news/2013/09/05/final-update-federal-coalition-election-policy-commitments>) contains a table entitled “Fiscal Budget Impact of Federal Coalition Policies”. This table shows at row 2.10 that the Regional Infrastructure Fund, which is conducted by Treasury, is to lose \$2,485 million over the four years from 2013-14 to 2016-17. The annual reductions are \$126m in 2013-14, \$920m in 2014-15, \$663m in 2015-16, and \$776m in 2016-17.

The Portfolio Budget Statement 2013-14 for Department of the Treasury in the May 2013 Budget papers shows provision for expenses from the Regional Infrastructure Fund - Stream 1 and 2 of \$105.3m in 2012-13, \$163.3m in 2013-14, \$613.8m in 2014-15, \$648.6m in 2015-16, and \$775.4m in 2016-17. (Department of the Treasury Budget Statements, Table 2.1.1 Program 1.1 expenses, Regional Infrastructure Fund – Stream 1 and 2. p.47).

A comparison of these tables shows that the new government proposes to transfer funds to other programs which will effectively exhaust the resources previously available in the Regional Infrastructure Fund at the Budget date. These funds were allocated for co-investment in infrastructure with State Governments. Less for the States!?

A Regional Fair Share Fund for RDA projects and local infrastructure

On the other hand, the Nationals Policy Platform 2013 “Our Plan for Regional Australia” contains the following:

At p.12: “When wealth is generated in a region a fair share of the resulting government revenue should be returned to that region and to regional Australia more generally. ...

“We will support the creation of a substantial Regional Fair Share Fund over four years with funding to be made available for:

- Projects approved by Regional Development Australia boards with matching contributions from state, territory and local governments; and
- Local community infrastructure projects.

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A Better Regions Program

At p.73: “The Nationals will broaden the Better Regions Program – a corrupted Labor version of the former Regional Partnerships program – to provide funding for community projects supported by partnership funds from state and local governments, the community, private enterprise and individuals. All applications will undergo rigorous assessment.

The Better Regions Program will have three components: Infrastructure project grants for large scale industry, tourism, community infrastructure and community service proposals; community grants for initiatives that increase social opportunities, community participation and interaction; and a range of small grants to help councils and not-for-profit organisations with minor community projects.”

A Stronger Regions Fund

The Nationals propose a Stronger Regions Fund focused on poorer communities. See (<http://www.nationals.org.au/News/LatestNews/tabid/94/articleType/ArticleView/articleId/8530/The-Coalitions-National-Stronger-Regions-Fund.aspx>)

“The National Stronger Regions Fund will help communities with poor socio-economic circumstances and higher than average unemployment, by improving local facilities, creating local jobs and building needed infrastructure.

“From 2015, councils and community groups will be able to apply for grants between \$20,000 and \$10 million, to meet half the cost of community building projects. Disadvantaged regions with a higher than average unemployment rate will receive priority for funds.

“The government “...will work with local communities by backing successful projects and contributing up to 50% of the funds needed to construct them. The remaining funds for the projects will come from local government, state governments, the community and private sector....

“Annual funding of \$200 million will support projects with the highest community benefit and value for money. Applications will need to set out how the project is:

- Meeting an identified and pressing community need;
- Improving community connections;
- Supported broadly within the community;
- Representing value for money investment;
- Managed and delivered within the organisation’s or the communities resources; and
- Leveraging funding from additional sources including state governments, local councils and local businesses.

The programme will be subject to the current Commonwealth Grant Guidelines.”

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It would seem that Regional Development Australia committees are intended to continue but perhaps with less coordination with Commonwealth policy, and certainly with fewer funds and a greater focus on communities with high levels of unemployment.

Reorganization continues and policy is still being settled.

The regional Ministry of the new Australian Government

- The Honourable Warren Truss MP, Deputy Prime Minister, Minister for Infrastructure and Regional Development and Leader of the Nationals.
- Mr. Jamie Briggs MP, Assistant Minister for Infrastructure and Regional Development.

The regional Shadow Ministry

- The Honourable Anthony Albanese MP Shadow Minister for Infrastructure and Transport, and Tourism;
- The Honourable Julie Collins MP, Shadow Minister for Regional Development and Local Government;
- Stephen Jones MP, Shadow Parliamentary Secretary for Regional Development and Infrastructure; and the
- The Honourable Warren Snowdon MP, Shadow Parliamentary Secretary for External Territories.

SELECTED PAPERS

Productive Cities: Opportunity in a changing Economy

Kelly, J-F., Mares, P., Harrison, C., O'Toole, M., Oberklaid, M., Hunter, J., 2012, *Productive Cities*, Melbourne: Grattan Institute. ISBN: 978-1-925015-32-4

Overview reproduced with permission of the Grattan Institute. For the full report follow the link <http://grattan.edu.au/publications/reports/post/productive-cities-opportunity-in-a-changing-economy/>

Overview

Most Australians live and work in cities. They are essential to generating growth and to creating and distributing opportunities. Cities are shaped by where people live, where they work, and how they get around. When these three things are in tune with the structure of the economy, cities operate efficiently and productively, and drive growth and innovation.

This report examines housing, income and travel data in Australia's four largest cities and reveals strains in the triangle of work, home and transport that could threaten national prosperity.

Addressing these issues will provide a significant boost to national productivity, because as the economy becomes more knowledge intensive, deep labour markets and good links between firms become more important.

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Firms engaged in high-knowledge activities benefit from connections that enable them to collaborate and learn from one another. They locate in places with deep labour markets to ensure that they can attract the talent and skill they need.

This report reveals, however, that labour markets are shallow in significant parts of Australia's biggest cities. In many suburbs – particularly outer suburbs – residents can reach fewer than 10 per cent of all metropolitan jobs with a reasonable commuting time.

Increasingly, employees with high-level qualifications and high incomes live close to the heart of our cities. Meanwhile, workers with trade skills or low skills, and people on lower incomes, tend to live further from the centre. Rising house prices have exacerbated this divide. If this polarisation continues, then many people risk being locked out of the parts of the city that offer the richest access to jobs.

How can governments respond? Governments are frequently called upon to create jobs in outer suburban areas by offering incentives to business to relocate or by building new employment clusters from scratch. Yet there is little evidence that such policies work. A better option is to move people closer to jobs. This can be done in two ways. First, the supply and diversity of dwellings in existing suburbs can be increased. Previous Grattan research has shown that people want more housing choice. It can be created if the disincentives developers face are addressed, if suburbs are not locked down by restrictive zoning and planning rules and if residents are engaged up front in decisions affecting their neighbourhoods.

Second, the transport system's capacity to connect people and jobs can and must be improved. That means better road systems and better public transport. Facing up to the challenges of road use pricing would go a long way to ensuring that space on city roads goes to the most important and most productive uses, and could raise revenue to help increase public transport capacity.

The shape of our cities is above all an economic issue. Giving knowledge-intensive firms access to more workers would make them more productive. It would also give workers more opportunities to find rewarding jobs. Better functioning cities would unleash higher productivity, and provide everyone with more opportunities. In this case, what is good for the economy is also good for the fair go.

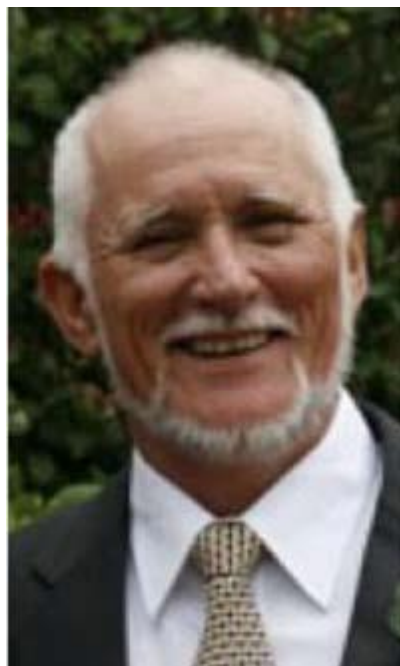
*Professor Robert J Stimson,
Fellow of the Regional Science Association International*

I became involved in Regional Science in 1972 when the economist Professor Alex Kerr invited me, along with a number of other people in Australia to attend a meeting to discuss the formation of an Australia and New Zealand Section of Regional Science. I thus became one of a small group who were the founders of ANZRSAI, with our first annual conference being held in 1976. I've been heavily involved in the Regional Science Association ever since, attending my first overseas meeting that same year – the North American annual conference held in Toronto.

In the time since then I have been to all except five (I think that's correct) of the annual meetings of ANZRSAI, and I was President of that Section for three years from 1980 to 1982. For the first time in

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1981 we hosted PRSCO in Australia. From the early 1980s I became a regular participant in the WRSA meetings, as well as PRSCO and NARSC meetings, and from the 1990s I have been a frequent attendee at



ERSA meetings, and since 2000 I have had the pleasure of occasionally attending the annual meetings of the British and Irish, the French Speaking and the Italian Sections, and also meetings of the recently formed sections in Brazil, Chile and Argentina.

So regional science has been a major part of my life, and the involvement in RSAI activities over what is now a span approaching four decades had resulted in not only making countless good friends around the world, but also in developing a number of most productive research collaborations that have resulted in publishing a number of books and other publications. International collaborations with other regional scientists have included Reginald Golledge, Rick Church, Lay Gibson, Edward Blakely, Roger Stough, Kingsley Haynes, Alan Murray, Antoine Bailly, Peter Nijkamp and Patricio Aroca.

I was deeply honoured when I was asked to become the President of RSAI in 2005 and 2006. And then in 2010 I was elected as Fellow of RSAI, an award that I cherish more than any other. Earlier in 1997 ANZRSAI had honoured me by making me a Life Member; in 2010–11 I was appointed President of WRSA; and in 2012 ANZRSAI presented me with the Distinguished service award.

All of this has been a life-enriching and career-enhancing experience that I never dreamed of when I started out as a young academic human geographer in an isolated country at the end of the world in the mid-1960s. I owe a great debt to regional science and the involvement in RSAI has been immensely enjoyable.

Reflecting on one's career as an analytical human geographer and regional scientist and the research in which I have been involved, it is interesting to identify in my case a number of distinct phases that seem to have run for overlapping spans of about a decade each.

When I started out as a Senior Tutor in Economic Geography at the University of Melbourne in 1966 (after a few years as a high school teacher following my undergraduate course at the University of New England in Armidale in rural New South Wales where I had grown up and gone to school), marking the beginning of phase 1 of my career, I had commenced conducting research into the patterns of post-war immigrant settlement in Melbourne. Then in 1968 when I moved to a lectureship in Geography in the School of Social Science at the two-year-old new Flinders University in Adelaide I extended this interest in social urban geography to investigate social differentiation in residential areas of cities and the residential location decision and choice. The latter was the topic in which I undertook my doctoral research while teaching at Flinders U. That then morphed (by the late 1970s) into a wider interest in investigating socio-economic advantage/disadvantage in cities within a welfare geography framework that was inspired by the writings of the geographer David Smith. That has tended to remain a theme in some

of my research up till the present. Part of that research effort was to publish a highly successful and widely used Social Atlas of Adelaide.

The 15 years I spent at Flinders marked phase 2 in my career. In many ways the years at Flinders were dominated by my developing a keen interest in the collection of primary data through survey research to investigate aspects of human spatial behaviour. That was spurred through two important influences that led to a long period of collaboration first with Reginald Golledge (the doyen of analytical behavioural geography and a former tutor of mine when I was an undergraduate at UNE), and Charles Cannell and Robert Marans in the Institute of Social Research at the University of Michigan where I spent a sabbatical in 1976. While at Flinders U, with a colleague Tony Cleland, a psychologist, we set up the Centre for Applied Social and Survey Research, of which I became the Director. CASSR was one of three survey research centres in universities in Australia at that time, the others being at the University Sydney and the Australia National University (ANU), with which we developed productive collaborations, along with the Australian Bureau of Statistics. Through CASSR I became heavily involved in multi-disciplinary research involving colleagues from a variety of disciplines. This phase I have referred to as the ‘sales and service’ days of my career, and it was great fun.

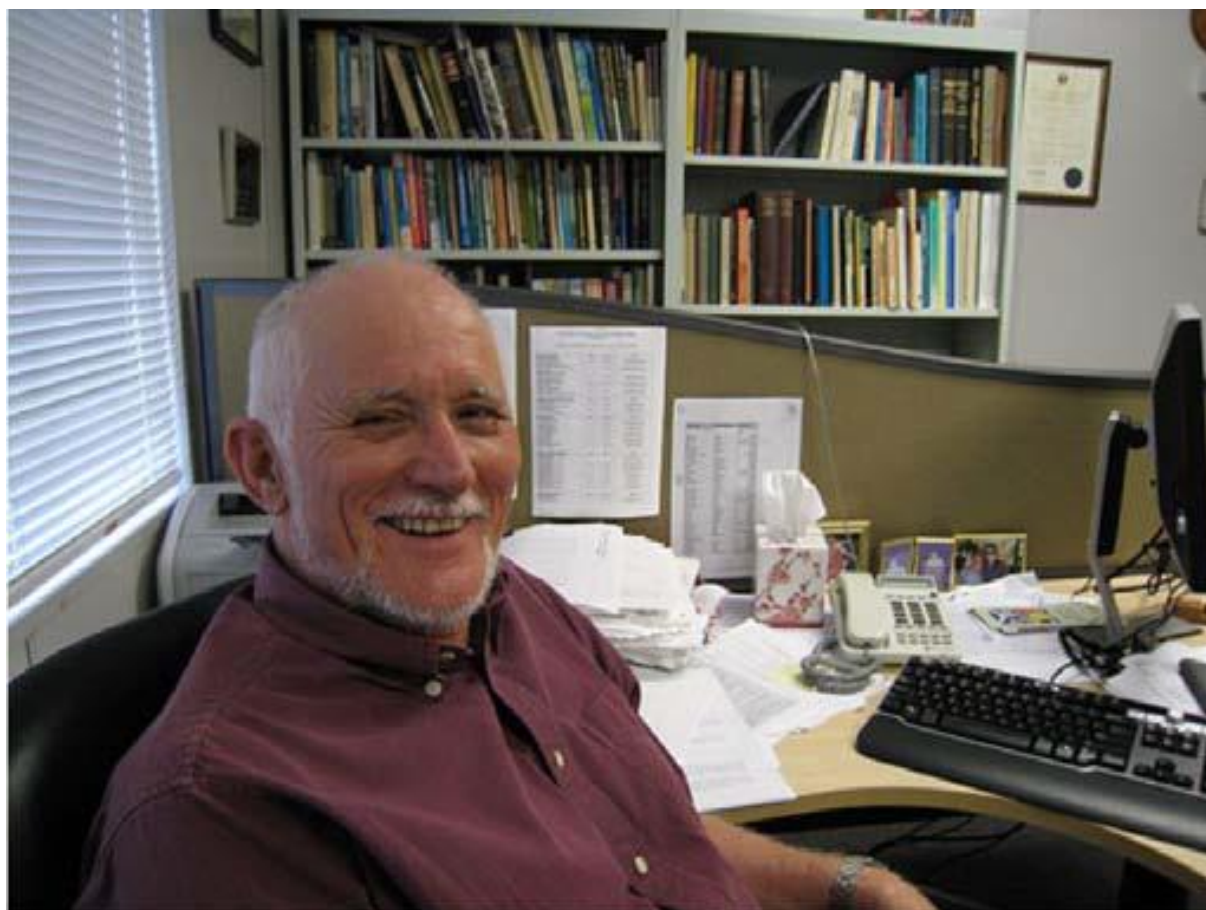
Phase 3 of my career saw me placing an increasing emphasis on undertaking research to inform public policy. While at Flinders U in the late 1970s I had become heavily involved in housing policy analysis. But following a move to Canberra (the national capital), where I became Director of the Australian Institute of Urban Studies (AIUS), my work became almost exclusively policy-oriented. At AIUS we conducted policy research on a variety of urban topics, including rental housing provision, foreign investment, urban real estate, and local economic development (the latter being undertaken in conjunction with Edward Blakely). The second part of my seven years in Canberra was spent as the Dean of the Management School at The Canberra College of Advanced Education, later to become the University of Canberra, where there was a strong teaching program in public sector management. Not surprisingly the administrative load was heavy, and my research was dependent more and more on collaborative effort with others taking much of the lead.

That focus on public policy was continued when in 1990–91, having completed my five-year stint as dean, I was enticed to Brisbane, Australia’s third largest metropolitan region by the then Lord Mayor of Brisbane City, Sallyanne Atkinson, to lead The Brisbane Plan project, which developed a comprehensive strategy for the development, planning and management of the city for the next 20 years. Thus began phase 4 of my career, which was predominately concerned with addressing urban planning issues with a focus on housing and economic transition and urban development. In 1991 I was appointed to the newly established Chair in Urban Studies at Queensland University of Technology (QUT) and began a research program monitoring the performance of the Brisbane-South East Queensland region.

Then in 1997 the Vice Chancellor of the University of Queensland (UQ) enticed me to relocate to UQ to a Chair in Geographical Sciences and Planning, where I had the role of providing leadership in developing a higher profile for urban and regional research in the university. Thus began phase 5 of my career. A new node of AHURI was also established at UQ. While there was a continuing focus on urban research, I also began a substantial effort to develop a much more explicit focus on regional economic development and especially on measuring and modelling endogenous regional performance. That involved collaboration

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with Roger Stough and Patricio Aroca. That orientation also led to me being asked to join with Peter Nijkamp and Roger Stough to be part of the group organising the Tinbergen Institute workshops that bring together 20 to 25 senior and young scholars to give papers on a theme in regional development focusing in particular on aspects of innovation and entrepreneurship. Those workshops have produced a number of edited books and special issues of journals. This is an example of how regional scientists collaborate to organise highly productive small events in a collegial atmosphere.



At UQ we developed the Centre for Research into Sustainable Urban Futures, of which I was the director, which later became the Urban and Regional Analysis program in the newly established Institute for Social Science Research. The research conducted at UQ over the period from 1998 to 2010 involved teamwork. Most of that work involved multi-disciplinary teams and covered a range of urban and regional fields including: evaluating homelessness programs in Australia; investigating the operation and future of the retirement village industry in Australia; conducting surveys to model subjective quality of urban life; modelling urban and regional opportunity and vulnerability in Australia; and building a large scale urban model for the Brisbane-South East Queensland. We also had a focus on developing spatial decision support systems, an initiative that in fact dated back to the late 1990s with Alan Murray when he was a Research Fellow with me, first at QUT and then at UQ.

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Phase 6 of my career also emerged while I was at UQ when in 2004 a group of social scientists from universities across Australia won a bid to establish one of the new Australian Research Council's Research Networks. Thus, the AUC Research Network in Spatially Integrated Social Science (ARCRNSISS) was established and I became the convenor for the life of the Research Networks program for the five years from 2005 to 2009. ARCRNSISS was a consortium of 18 universities and two federal government agencies and had more than 500 individual participants, along with some international participation. Among many things, we also put almost 100 graduate students through an annual residential Summer School in Spatially Integrated Social Science Theory, methods and Applications. And we developed with additional ARC research infrastructure funding a Shared Research Resources with data from some federal agencies and researcher generated data sets incorporation an e-Research Facility for Socio-Spatial Analysis and Modelling.

I was retiring at the beginning of 2011 when the University of Melbourne asked me to be the Director of the newly established Australian Urban Research Infrastructure Network (AUTRIN), a \$20 million federal government funded project to develop an e-Infrastructure for facilitation access to diverse distributed data sets, data integration, and data interrogation through the provision of on-line e-research spatial, statistical and visualisation tools to enhance research capability for urban and built environment researchers in Australia.

Looking back over my career I have been privileged to have been a university teacher and researcher during an era of great change. Especially in Australia, the period from the 1960s to the 1980 was really a time of rapid development of the university system. University life was highly collegial and it was really a lot of fun being part of it. I think the managerialism that has taken over universities to a significant degree since is a shame as the academy seems to have lost influence and certainly control of many of the important aspects of universities. Now it's all about key performance indicators, frequent restructuring, and often the loss of discipline identity. The collegiality of regional science is more and more a welcome heaven to escape from all of that.

If I had a message for younger up-and-coming regional scientists it would be to take every opportunity that RSAI offers for developing an international network that leads to collaborative research. RSAI is a unique institution to which many of the finest scholars in the world belong and they are very collegial and open to assisting younger scholars. RSAI can literally open up the world for you. Embrace it; you won't be disappointed; it will be richly rewarding as well as being a lot of fun.

Reproduced with permission from Meet the Fellows in the May 2013 edition of the Newsletter of the Regional Science Association International, May 2013.

UPCOMING CONFERENCE

Socioeconomic Integration and Transformation:

Reshaping Local, Regional, and Global Spaces

2014 MAY 27-29
10TH WORLD CONGRESS OF THE RSAI
BANGKOK, THAILAND

SOCIOECONOMIC
INTEGRATION AND
TRANSFORMATION:
Reshaping Local, Regional
and Global Spaces

HOSTED BY
Faculty of Architecture
and Planning,
Thammasat University;
RSAI

MAIN VENUE
Imperial Queen's Park Hotel,
Bangkok

RSAI
REGIONAL SCIENCE ASSOCIATION INTERNATIONAL

www.regionalscience.org

The Regional Science Association International (RSAI) invites regional scientists, policy makers and researchers of related disciplines to participate in the 10th World Congress.

The Congress will be hosted by the Faculty of Architecture and Planning, Thammasat University, Bangkok. It will be held at the Imperial Queen's Park Hotel in Bangkok, Thailand, May 27-29, 2014.

The Congress will feature several world-renowned keynote speakers on cutting-edge urban and regional science and policy issues, expert panels, research presentations and posters. It will be attended by 500 delegates from the worldwide community of regional scientists.

Research topics related to the theme of the congress are particularly welcome, but the conference will be open to other topics within the broader contours of the regional science, urban and regional studies, geographical sciences and planning, and development.

The Congress web site is at RegionalScience.org with information on the venue, abstract submission, registration, timetable, accommodation and travel information. The deadline for abstract and session submissions is December 1, 2013.

Check the Congress at 2014worldcongress@regionalscience.org for further information. We look forward to welcoming you in the dazzling city of Bangkok in May 2014.

Jean-Claude Thill, RSAI President

Tomaz Dentinho, RSAI Executive Director

CURRENT RESEARCH

Papers in Regional Science

ABSTRACTS Vol 92(3) 2013

Over-education and spatial flexibility: New evidence from Italian survey data (pages 445-464)

Carlo Devillanova

This paper addresses the effect of workers' spatial flexibility (commuting and migration) on their probability of being over-educated. The empirical analysis deals with two possible sources of misspecification: the endogeneity of migration and the omission of relevant job characteristics. It also controls for area and personal characteristics. Results show that commuting is positively correlated with the quality of the education-job match. However, analysis does not support the conventional wisdom that migration unambiguously reduces over-education. It seems fair to conclude that the link between migration and over-education remains unclear and that further research is needed in order to better ground policy prescriptions.

Closing the gap between absolute and relative measures of localization, concentration or specialization (pages 465-479)

Frank Bickenbach, Eckhardt Bode and Christiane Krieger-Boden

Empirical studies on the evolution of concentration, specialization or localization of economic activity have provided ambiguous results that strongly depend on the researcher's choice of the reference. This paper develops a decomposition method for Theil indices of localization that clarifies where this ambiguity originates from. The method allows expressing the difference between absolute and relative

Theil indices of localization in terms of Theil indices that are subject to straightforward interpretation. Illustrations show that the divergence of absolute from relative localization in the EU-15 and in UK manufacturing is largely a statistical artifact inherited from the peculiarities of the industry classifications.

Entrepreneurial quality and regional development: Characterizing SME sectors in low income areas (pages 495-513)

José Fernández-Serrano and Isidoro Romero

This paper analyses the characteristics of SMEs in less-developed areas in comparison with more advanced economies. The conceptual framework includes different factors making up the so-called 'entrepreneurial quality' of the SME sector: the personal characteristics of the entrepreneurs (motivations and previous experience), different dimensions of the SMEs' entrepreneurial orientation, and the patterns of the SMEs' insertion in national and global value chains. The empirical analysis uses data of SMEs in four different Spanish provinces representing examples of low income economies and comparatively high income ones, respectively. Results show the SMEs in the low income economies to be characterized by a lower entrepreneurial quality.

Urban spatial structure, agglomeration economies, and economic growth in Barcelona: An intra-metropolitan perspective (pages 515-534)

Miquel-Àngel Garcia-López and Ivan Muñiz

This paper presents an intra-metropolitan approach to analyse the impact of urban spatial structure on local economic growth. Focusing on the Barcelona metropolitan region (BMR) between 1986 and 2001, we estimate a

municipal employment growth model in which dynamic agglomeration economies related to urban spatial structure are considered using distance to employment centres, to assess metropolitan effects, and distance-weighted variables, to measure neighbourhood effects. The results obtained show the existence of neighbourhood specialization economies and metropolitan urbanization-localization economies fostering local growth. All of this leads to the paper's main conclusion: urban spatial structure is important for economic growth in an intra-metropolitan context.

Does political fragmentation lead to budgetary incrementalism? An empirical test on the French local public sector (pages 535–553)

Benoît Le Maux and Wenjia Zhang

This paper tests for the impact of political fragmentation on the volatility of public expenditures. Two different empirical strategies are implemented using the per capita operating expenditures of 90 French local jurisdictions (the départements) for an 8-year period. The first strategy focuses directly on the impact of the electoral margin, the fragmentation of the majority and the concentration of the opposition on the annual budget growth rates. The second strategy regresses the present expenditures on last year's expenditures over several subsamples. Both empirical strategies lead to the following conclusions. First, the less powerful a majority in terms of seats and fragmentation, the lower the annual fluctuations of the budget. Second, highly powerful majorities are not always associated with the highest budgetary growth rates.

US state and local fiscal policies and non-metropolitan area economic performance: A spatial equilibrium analysis (pages 579–597)

Yihua Yu and Dan S. Rickman

Faced with declining economic bases, many non-metropolitan areas find themselves balancing the need to be cost-competitive in terms of lower taxes against the need for provision of valued government services. Using a spatial equilibrium framework, this study econometrically examines the nexus between US state and local fiscal policies and non-metropolitan county growth in earnings and housing rents during the 1990s. The results suggest that state and local fiscal characteristics significantly influenced firm and household location. Some characteristics could be clearly identified as having dominant firm profit effects, while numerous others were identified as having household amenity effects.

Heterogeneous households and firms in an urban model with open space and agglomeration economies (pages 609–631)

Chen Feng Ng

This paper develops a model with heterogeneous households and firms that can locate anywhere in the city. The main features of the model are household preferences for open space which depend on distance to the greenbelts at the city periphery, and agglomeration economies for firms. Numerical results show equilibrium location patterns, rents, and wages under different model specifications. Under most conditions, monocentric location patterns (where there is a higher concentration of firms in the centre zones compared to surrounding zones) are observed, but duocentric location patterns for firms can emerge if both open space values and travel costs are high.

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ABOUT ANZRSAI

ANZRSAI Council

Conference planning has been the primary concern of Council in recent meetings.

At its August and October 2013 meetings Council agreed to put a proposed institutional membership policy to the Annual General Meeting in December. The aim is to position ANZRSAI as a linkage point between specialist institutions in regional research and practice. The policy offers a discounted individual membership to institutional employees while they remain with the institution.

Website renovation is in progress and hopefully the new website will be unveiled at the Conference. Improved payment and access facilities will be included.

Council has noted the substantial improvement in the publication of Australasian Journal of Regional Studies brought about by the editorial team of Tony Sorensen and Sonja Glavac. This provides a base for the next step which will seek to establish coverage of AJRS in the major journal citation databases.

ANZRSAI Council 2013

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