

REPORT ON THE ACTIVITIES OF THE COMMISSION ON LOCAL AND REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT – 2012-2016

1. Membership

A. Steering committee members

Chair of the Commission

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Vice-Chair

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Steering Committee members

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B. Corresponding members

The number of corresponding members, besides the steering committee members, receiving our information, notes and newsletters regularly, is 289 spread over 45 countries (see table below). On an irregular basis, we spread our news to a range of about 500 persons.

The number of members of the commission by country as of 31 December 2015

Country	Number of members
Australia	12
Bahamas	1
Bosnia and Herzegovina	1
Brazil	8
Canada	7
China	6
Croatia	1
Czech Republic	13
Denmark	5
Estonia	3
Fiji	1
Finland	6
France	6
Germany	15
Hong Kong	2
Hungary	1
India	11
Ireland	5
Israel	35
Italy	6
Japan	12
Mexico	1
Moldova	2
New Zealand	5
Nigeria	1
Peru	1
Poland	22
Portugal	1
Romania	19
Russia	23
Serbia	2
Singapore	1
Slovakia	1
Slovenia	1

South Africa	2
South Korea	1
Spain	6
Sweden	4
Switzerland	3
The Netherlands	5
Turkey	3
UAE	1
UK	11
Ukraine	1
USA	15
Total	289

URL of the Commission website: <http://www.biu.ac.il/soc/ge/igucomld/>

2. Meetings

A. Annual meetings organized during the period 2012-2015

Dates	Title	Location	Number of sessions	Number of papers	Number of participants
August 26-30, 2012	IGU International geographical congress	Cologne	5	20	30-50
August 5-9, 2013	IGU regional conference	Kyoto	7	26	50-70
August 18-22, 2014	IGU regional conference	Krakow	12	45 (+ 12 posters)	100
August 17-21, 2015	IGU regional conference	Moscow	14	57 (+ 26 posters)	140

It is hard to respond to the question about the number of participants. In every session the number of participants was on average 20 persons. Do we multiply the number of sessions by the number of participants in each session? Some of the participants attended all sessions and some shifted between sessions.

B. A brief summary of the questions addressed at the meetings

Our meetings in recent years have been conducted against a back-drop of turbulent economic and social conditions that are remaking our understanding of the processes shaping local and regional development. In particular, the roles of technology, international relations, globalisation, national economic policy-making, economic boom and bust, commercial freedom, infrastructure investment and so on are proving crucial determinants of the extent to which various tiers of government and endogenous community action can control or influence the evolution of regional and local economies. And it is becoming clear that very different approaches to managing these themes in different countries or regions within them can lead to very different outcomes. Some places can prosper greatly while others drift into recession or depression. In short, spatial economies are being reconfigured in a myriad of ways and with increasing rapidity, whilst conferring major benefits and costs on affected places. In this context the Commission's work in identifying the spatial outcomes of such processes is becoming ever more important for the world's population, as we focus on the very different processes operating between and within nations. It is crucial that we understand what contributes to spatial economic success or decline and how society might accentuate the former and ameliorate the latter. However, these issues are not immune from different philosophies or value systems operating geographically which can also affect outcomes. These include issues of social and cultural equity, environmental quality, intergenerational well-being, resource conservation and so on. International and regional comparisons on these dimensions can be valuable in shaping decisions about our future. So we are witnessing increasing tension between global comparative and competitive advantage on the one hand and local imperatives on the other. But perhaps there is a middle way as encapsulated in the principle: "think globally, act locally". As a result, there has been recently an increasing interest in local and regional development that, to a larger extent than before, takes into consideration specific qualities of the home regions. These tendencies were expressed in the titles of the conferences' sessions of the commission during the period 2012-2016, when the various meetings offered a variety of insights into issues revolving around local and regional development. These contained multifaceted approaches, which combined social, economic, environmental and cultural dimensions around the following topics: Regional Development: Planning and Disparities; Local Development in the Rural Space; Local Development in the Urban Space; Assessment of Local Development: Projects and Initiatives.

C. Timetable of future meetings for the period 2016-2017

Year	Month	Place	Comments	Theme
2016	August 16-19	Vladivostok	Annual meeting	Local and regional development in peripheral regions
2016	August 21-25	Beijing	IGU Congress	Local and regional development
2017	To be decided	Belo-Horizonte, Brazil	Annual meeting	Challenges of the local planning systems

3. Networking

A. Collaborative efforts with other IGU commissions

- In 2013 IGU Regional Conference in Kyoto – the commission had a number of joint sessions with the (C12.30) Commission on Mediterranean Basin.
- In 2014 IGU Regional Conference in Krakow – the commission had a number of joint sessions with the (C12.29) Commission on Marginalization, Globalization and Regional and Local Response and with the (C12.30) Commission on Mediterranean Basin.
- In 2015 IGU Regional Conference in Moscow - the commission had a number of joint sessions with the (C12.01) Commission on Applied Geography.
- In 2016 the commission is organising its annual meeting – August 16-19 in Vladivostok, Russia, together with the Pacific Institute of Geography, Far Eastern Branch of the Russian Academy of Sciences.

B. Collaboration with other international groups

- In 2015 – The commission organised a session and was involved in other sessions in the Fourth Economic Geography Conference in Oxford, UK. This is the third time we follow this practice which was first initiated in 2007 within the Second Economic Geography Conference, Beijing, China.

4. Publications

A. Newsletters and letters

Newsletters and letters that have appeared 2012-2015:

- September 2012
- July 2013
- November 2014

B. Special journal issues

The harvest of the annual meetings of the commission resulted in 2 special journal issues of the journal *Rural Studies*:

- 1) *Rural Studies* Volume no. 27, 2012, ***Local and Regional Development – Challenges and Policy Issues***, Editor: Jerzy Banski.
- 2) *Rural Studies* Volume no. 38 (2015) ***Local Development in Urban and Rural Space: Project and Planning***, Editors: Michael Sofer, Tony Sorensen, Konrad Czapiewski.

B. Salient insights or conclusions from the period's publications.

A more intensive publication activity is required. First steps are already in motion as a work begun on a future publication of two volumes in the JURA.

5. Archival Contributions

All newsletters were normally sent to the IGU archives at Villa Celimontana in Rome. Other publications will be sent to the archives run by Dr. Bruno Schelhaas, Leibniz Institute for Regional Geography, Archiv für Geographie, Leipzig, Germany.

6. Continuation

A. The new name of the commission, if it is to be changed

The name of the commission was changed in 2012 into the current name. We are satisfied with this name.

B. The commission's mission

The International Geographical Union's Commission on Local Development provides an international forum for the study of issues related to such matters as local and regional development, reorganisation of space, and the role of both institutions and

agencies in developing and reshaping the local space. The interests of the commission are exhibited in developing and developed nations. Yet, the perception and attitudes towards local development may be different in different countries. In some places the local development theme is closely related to (a) non-metropolitan development, in other parts of the world it is related to the establishment and development of new towns; (b) to the transformation of regional cultures of research, innovation, entrepreneurship, networking and mutual support, and venture capital development to enable the emergence of new high-tech cores; (c) or the restructuring of the rural space. The Commission's aim is to amalgamate such debates under one umbrella.

C. Steering committee members

In recent years there were some changes in the steering committee structure due to resignation and inactivity of a number of members, and the election of new members. Most members of the steering committee will have served 8 years by 2016 including the chairman and have to be replaced by new members. The changes in the members of the steering committee will be discussed in the coming business meeting during the IGU congress in Beijing 2016.

D. The work plan envisaged for the new commission, including a description of the results to be achieved during the 2016-2020 period

The work plan for the period 2016-2020 includes:

- 1) Organisation of the commission annual meetings sessions.
- 2) Organisation of the commission sessions in the coming IGU conferences.
- 3) Publications of papers from the commission's annual sessions as special issues in **JURA (Journal of Urban and regional Analysis)** and **Rural Studies**.
- 4) Refurbishing and further development of the commission website.
- 5) Development of the research network between the members of the commission leading to realisation of a potential research projects and knowledge exchange.
- 6) Transferring knowledge into practice – cooperation with regional and local stakeholders involved in local and regional development.

E. A description of the scholarly importance of the anticipated results of the commission's work

We are expecting that our meetings and knowledge exchange will formulate and expand the professional involvement of our members in local and regional development projects. Our aspiration is that the knowledge derived from the meetings of the commission will be implemented into development plans and will allow officials and local communities to better cope with issues concerning socio-economic spatial disparities in different parts of the world. Altogether a working "knowledge network" could be useful for both potential development projects and common research.