



Commission on Geography of Governance

NEWSLETTER 1 / 2020

C16.12 - Geography
of Governance

January-June

2020

Commission website: <https://sites.google.com/site/igugeogov/home>

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INTERNATIONAL GEOGRAPHICAL UNION (IGU) IGU COMMISSION GEOGRAPHY OF GOVERNANCE (C16.12) NEWSLETTER 1/2020 January-June

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Lisbon, 31 July 2020

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1. INTRODUCTION

During the period reported in the Newsletter 1/2020, January-June 2020, the activities of the Commission have been deeply affected by the Covid-19 Pandemic. All scientific meetings had to be cancelled and postponed to 2021. It was the case of the IGU Thematic Conference on "Heritage Geographies: Politics, Uses and Governance of the Past", in Lecce, Italy, in May-June 2020, as well as the 34th International Geographical Congress "Geography: bridging the continents", in Istanbul, Turkey, in August 2020.

The proposal for an IGU Thematic Conference in 2021, in Mexico, on "Urban Governance: from Historical to Resilient Cities", jointly prepared and proposed by 6 IGU commissions (C16.37: Commission on Urban Geography 'Urban challenges in a global world'; C16.12: Commission on Geography of Governance; C16.14: Commission on Geography of Tourism, Leisure, and Global Change; C16.15: Commission on Geo-Heritage; C16.27: Commission on Latin American Studies; C16.33: Commission on Population Geography) was cancelled and a new date in 2023 is now being considered.

The online communication tools, intended to support the work of the Commission - the website, the electronic mailing list and the blog - have been used regularly for the dissemination of information. The digital online archive of past activities and publications continued to be updated. The directory of corresponding members has been enriched with new members. Recent publications by members of the Steering Committee, related to the core subject of the Commission, are listed below.

In sum, despite the constraints imposed by the Covid-19 Pandemic, we aim to continue enhancing the current debates on local and urban governance and to strengthen the Commission as a truly global community of researchers. As before, the Commission will consider and discuss proposals for possible collaboration and will continue its efforts to expand its activities to other regions of the world, alone or in collaboration with other IGU Commissions as well as organisations outside the IGU. In this context, the Commission will explore the possibility to hold future meetings also in Africa, Asia, Middle East, Oceania and South America. We continue strongly committed to maintain our successful publishing activity. The Springer book series on 'Local and Urban Governance', founded and edited by Carlos Nunes Silva, will have its first books published in September and October 2020, which include contributions by numerous members of the Commission.



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The IGU Commission 'Geography of Governance' publishes two Newsletters every year, the first in June and the second in December. Newsletter 1/2020 reports the activities developed during the first semester (January-June 2020) and presents the activity plan for the following months.

This is the last Newsletter of the current term (August 2016 - August 2020).

A proposal for the continuation of the Commission was submitted to the IGU Executive Committee on 30 May 2020. Formal final decision by the IGU will be taken in the IGU General Assembly in August 2020.



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2. STEERING COMMITTEE, AIMS, THEMES: 2016-2020

2.1 Steering Committee

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2.2 Aims

1. To advance knowledge of the geography of territorial governance, at the urban, local and regional levels, namely the conditions, scale and characteristics of new modes of territorial governance, and its social, cultural, political, economic and environmental consequences.
2. To identify new perspectives and to explore new research methodologies and different geographical approaches in the field of urban, local and regional governance.

3. To provide a platform for the exchange of information, research outcomes, and best practices among its members.
4. To enhance current bilateral and multilateral research cooperation among its members and to support the creation of new research networks in the field of urban, local and regional governance, connecting its members with existing international research programs and organizations, increasing interdisciplinary research collaboration across disciplines.
5. To support and promote the publication and dissemination of scholarly research outcomes of its members, in peer-reviewed international journals and in books.
6. To advance educational activities through workshops focused on urban, local and regional governance issues, contributing to the training of the next generation of scientists in this field.
7. To increase the awareness of urban, local and regional governance issues among citizens, local communities and governments.
8. To develop initiatives focused on specific issues in cooperation with members of other IGU Commissions sharing similar or related interests.

2.3 Themes

The Commission aims to explore, but is not limited to, the following themes:

1. Administrative decentralization and multi-layered governance
2. Local and regional government / governance
3. Urban and metropolitan governance
4. Local and regional government reforms
5. Administrative fragmentation and merger reforms
6. Decentralized cooperation and development
7. Inter-municipal cooperation
8. Cross-border municipal and regional cooperation
9. Governance of spatial planning processes
10. Governance of complex environmental systems
11. Governance in conflict and post-conflict areas
12. Citizen participation in local and regional government
13. Age-, disabled- and gender-responsive approaches in urban, local and regional government policies
14. Administrative systems and local public service delivery
15. Local government finance systems
16. Local Government, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and the Habitat-III New Urban Agenda
17. Anthropocene: changes and challenges for urban, local and regional governance

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18. The use of ICTs in urban, local and regional governance: e-Government, e-Governance and Citizen e-Participation
19. Transparency, accountability and good governance in local and regional government
20. Big Data and new digital research methods in urban governance

3. ORGANIZATION AND ACTIVITIES

During the period reported in the Newsletter 1/2020 the following activities have been developed:

- 3.1 Online communication tools
- 3.2 Digital Archive
- 3.3 Activity Plan 2020-2022
- 3.4 Membership
- 3.5 Organization of Conferences and other Meetings
- 3.6 Publications
- 3.7 Start of an Action Plan and Research Project focused on 'Local Government response towards the COVID-19 Pandemic'

3.1 Online communication tools. During the first semester of 2020 the online communication tools (website; electronic forum and mailing-list; blog) were updated and/or used for the dissemination of information.

- The IGU-CCoG Website: <https://sites.google.com/site/igugeogov/home>
- Mailing list: <https://sites.google.com/site/igugeogov/mailling-list>
- Blog: <http://igugeogov.blogspot.pt/>

3.2 Digital Archive. The Digital Archive of the Commission has currently five sessions and is available online (<https://sites.google.com/site/igugeogov/archive>). At the end of 2019 the Commission sent to the IGU Central Archive, located in the Leibniz Institute for Regional Geography, Germany, 23 documents (PDF) related to its activities in 2019. The same will happen at the end of 2020.

3.3 Activity Plan 2020-2022. The activity plan for the period 2020-2022 included a variety of initiatives (e.g., Commission meetings; sessions organized by the Commission in the IGU main meetings, as is the case of the IGU Thematic Conference in Lecce, Italy, in May-June 2020; or the sessions in the 34th IGC in Istanbul, in August 2020; publications, and tentatively also joint research activities). All these activities had to be cancelled or postponed due to the Covid-19 Pandemic.

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A conference planned to November 2020 in Hungary is still dependent on the evolution of the COVID-19 pandemic.

3.4 Membership. The list of corresponding members has been updated and expanded with the inclusion of members admitted during 2020. As the recruitment is done mainly during the conferences the increase has been small during this first semester of 2020 compared with past semesters.

3.5 Organization of Conferences and other Meetings. As reported in the following sections of this Newsletter, members of the Steering Committee have been active, during 2020, in the organization of scientific meetings focused on themes pertaining to the core subject of the IGU Commission Geography of Governance, as well in the planning of other meetings in the following years. However, due to the restrictions to onsite meetings and international travels all these meetings have been cancelled and postponed. Therefore, part of the activity during this semester has been to reschedule the meetings and to find the appropriate conditions to hold them during 2021.

3.6 Publications. Members of the Steering Committee published books, chapters, articles, and book reviews on issues related to the core subject of the IGU Commission Geography of Governance. The list of recent publications is available below.

3.7 Action Plan and Research Project focused on 'Local Government response towards the COVID-19 Pandemic'. The IGU Commission launched, on 25 March 2020, a collaborative Action Plan and research project focused on the 'Local Government response towards the COVID-19 Pandemic' as described below in section 6 of this Newsletter.

4. CONFERENCES IN 2020

4.1 XXI April International Academic Conference on Economic and Social Development, Moscow, April 6-10, 2020.

The conference was cancelled due to the Covid-19 Pandemic. For more information, see Newsletter 2/2019.

4.2 The 5th International Conference 'Urban e-Planning', Lisbon, Portugal, 6-7 April 2020

The conference was cancelled and postponed to 2021 due to the Covid-19 Pandemic. For more information, see Newsletter 2/2019 and the Commission website.

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4.3 IGU Thematic Conference, Lecce, Italy, 29 May - 2 June 2020

The conference was cancelled and postponed to 2021 due to the Covid-19 Pandemic. For more information, see Newsletter 2/2019 and the Commission website.

4.4 Quality Network for Sustainable Tourism – QNeST Project . Adrion Programme international workshop, Lecce, Italy, May 2020.

The conference was cancelled due to the Covid-19 Pandemic. For more information, see Newsletter 2/2019.

4.5 The 3rd World Conference of the Society for Urban Ecology - 'Cities as social and ecological systems', Poznań, Poland, 6-8 July 2020 - <https://www.sure2020.org/> Workshop: "Cities between Sprawl and Compaction".

The conference was cancelled due to the Covid-19 Pandemic. For more information, see Newsletter 2/2019.

4.6 34th International Geographical Congress, 2020

The congress was cancelled due to the Covid-19 Pandemic. For more information, see Newsletter 2/2019 and the Commission website.

4.7 Conference 'Regional Scenarios in Hungary', November 2020

The Conference is organised by CERS, HAS, on 09.11.2020. Ilona Pálné Kovács (Institute for Regional Studies, Centre for Economic and Regional Studies, Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Hungary, and member of the IGU-CCoG Steering Committee) is engaged in the organization of this conference.

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5. FORTHCOMING CONFERENCES: 2021-2022

5.1 - IGU Commission Geography of Governance Annual Conference - June 2021

The 2021 Annual Conference of the IGU Commission on Geography of Governance is planned for 23-25 June 2021, in Poznań, Poland. More information will be available soon in the conference website: <https://sites.google.com/view/geogov2021/>

5.2 IGU Thematic Conference, Lecce, Italy, May 2021

The next IGU Thematic Conference, to be held in Lecce, Italy, on 26 - 28 May 2021, is co-organised by the IGU Commission on Geography of Governance and five other IGU Commissions. The Conference theme is "Heritage Geographies: Politics, Uses and Governance of the Past".

"Heritage is a complex idea. It is an ambiguous term to translate with its multiple meanings and layer integrating elements referring to the past, culture, memory, identity, conservation and also, regrettably, conflict. Although heritage refers to the past, not everything from our past may enter into our heritage. Heritage is made only of what we want to remember. And what we do want others and future generations to remember about us. In this way, memories become the legacy, at times stylized, and for the most part selected and embellished. If we think about traditional cuisine as an intangible heritage, we do not want to eat everything that was consumed in the past, but only what in the food of the past we believe is worthy of being eaten. As regards physical heritage, we do not celebrate the narrow alleys full of mud and sewage of our historic urban centres, nor the smell, but we want to preserve just the houses and their walls, as if they were the shells of a different life. If heritage is selective, one of the big questions about heritage is the role of mediators. You can have a heritage from below or you need to have someone to help you understand what is important to pass on to your children about that past. Which institutions, then, must take on the role of creation/preservation of the heritage, and on what scale must they operate? What is the role of geo-parks, museums and ecomuseums, and what is the relationship between conservation activities, local institutions and society? Eventually, is it possible to talk about heritage from below? But heritage is not only selective; it can be controversial too, and even disputed. It is not just a question of culture, conservation and patrimonialization. It is an issue of power. "He who controls the past controls the future. He who controls the present controls the past". This is not just a brilliant quote from George Orwell's 1984. It is also a way for underlining the role of power in relation to the making of heritage. Because, those who controls the present, also controls the heritage. Because of its political relevance, heritage can be built in a way that promotes a message of peace. Or, it may suggest feelings of hatred and claims of revenge. The

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management of controversial places of memory and heritage therefore has an important political meaning. Geographical names can also celebrate a past that you want to impose. Or forget. In some cases, there is a double toponymy, which on the one hand celebrates the unity of the nation-state and of the majority population, on the other hand recalls the cultural specificity of the territory. In others, there are names in two or three different languages. Yet in other places, tourism erases the traditional toponymy and imposes its own, more in tune with the happy image that you want to promote. For this reason, a thematic conference on the “geographies of the heritage” opens a broad debate, which can involve many of the voices that the IGU commissions may put together.»

Sessions and papers may address the following sub-themes: 1. Heritage governance; 2. Heritage and Urban Planning; 3. Heritage-telling; 4. Patrimonialization of cultural heritage ; 5. Heritage and ICTs; 6. Memories from the territories and educational strategies; 7. Heritage geopolitics; 8. Heritage and knowledge economy; 9. Heritage for consumption: tourists and tourism; 10. Heritage and toponymy; 11. Heritages, Mediterranean cultures and Southern thinking; 12. Dark Heritage (from below).

The IGU Commission Geography of Governance proposed the following 4 sessions:

«Session 12. *Local Government and the Governance of Urban Heritage (IGU Commission on Geography of Governance)*

Chairs: Carlos Nunes Silva (University of Lisbon) & Anna Trono (University of Salento)

This session aims to explore recent changes in the role of local government in the governance of urban cultural heritage. Papers can be focused on local government issues (institutional models, cooperation models, organizational and financial issues, etc.) in specific local case studies or may offer a comparison of policy cases in municipalities and cities in the same country or in different countries. The session aims also to examine and to discuss past policy approaches in the field of cultural heritage management at sub-national tiers of government. Although the focus is on local and urban government, the analysis should consider, when appropriate, the multi-level urban heritage governance context. The session is supported by the IGU Commission Geography of Governance and is proposed for sub-theme: 1. Heritage Governance.

Session 13. *Citizen Participation in the Governance of Urban Heritage (IGU Commission on Geography of Governance)*

Chairs: Carlos Nunes Silva (University of Lisbon) & Anna Trono (University of Salento)

This session aims to explore the role and forms of citizen participation in the governance of Urban heritage. The session aims in particular to address citizen

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engagement in urban planning processes, namely in innovative models of urban planning and in alternative modes of urban heritage governance. The session is open to include case studies, comparative studies and historical analysis of citizen engagement in urban planning focused on cultural heritage. The session is supported by the IGU Commission Geography of Governance and is proposed for subtheme: 2. Heritage and Urban Planning.

Session 14. Smart Governance and Urban Heritage (IGU Commission on Geography of Governance)

Chairs: Carlos Nunes Silva (University of Lisbon) & Anna Trono (University of Salento)

This session aims to explore, discuss and present innovative theoretical and empirical research and ground-breaking approaches in the field of Urban e-Planning and its impact on the governance of Urban heritage. The session aims in particular to explore the impact of the growing number of digital innovations, new methods and new digital tools in the field smart governance of urban heritage. We welcome papers that address the current digital transition (digitization of urban governance and urban planning procedures, datafication of urban heritage activities and services, among other important changes) and its impact on the governance of urban heritage. The session is open to include case studies and comparative studies. The session is supported by the IGU Commission Geography of Governance and is proposed for sub-theme: 5. Heritage and ICT's.

Session 15. Urban Planning and Heritage (IGU Commission on Geography of Governance)

Chairs: Carlos Nunes Silva (University of Lisbon) & Anna Trono (University of Salento)

The session aims to address how urban heritage is included and dealt with in the formal national spatial planning systems. In particular, the session seeks to explore institutional innovations in the field of Urban Planning related to the urban cultural heritage as well as the new tools employed by municipalities in the planning and governance of urban heritage. The session is open to include case studies as well as comparative studies. The session is supported by the IGU Commission Geography of Governance and is proposed for sub-theme: 2. Heritage and Urban Planning.»

More information is available in the Commission website:

<https://sites.google.com/site/igugeogov/home>

5.3 34th International Geographical Congress, 2021

The IGU Commission on Geography of Governance will participate in the 34th International Geographical Congress "Geography: bridging the continents" to be held in Istanbul, Turkey, on 16 - 20 August 2021.

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The IGU Commission Geography of Governance proposed the following 10 sessions:

Session 1. Citizen Participation in Urban Governance: Formal and Informal Community Engagement in Local Government Policies

Citizens participation in local government policies is now common practice in democratic and decentralized countries. Global Urban Agendas adopted by the United Nations in recent decades, focused on human settlements and on sustainable development, put citizens at the centre of the decision-making process, in particular at the local and urban scale. Besides the now common formal institutional frameworks in which citizen participation is embedded there are also informal frameworks through which citizens can act upon the policy process and decision making. This session seeks to be a forum in which these formal and informal citizen participation modes can be presented, discussed, and confronted. The use of ICT in citizen participation processes, i.e. models and practices of e-participation in local and urban policy settings, particularly in urban e-planning, will also be explored and discussed.

Session 2. Climate Policy and Local Governance

Climate change is a serious environmental and socio-political challenge, with impacts visible at both local and global levels. This challenge requires urgent action. Local government must take part and lead these crucial actions. This session aims to explore and to discuss how municipalities and other tiers of sub-national government are effectively responding to climate change. The session intends to address these issues through individual case studies or in comparative approaches. In particular, the session aims to explore the policy responses in the field of municipal spatial planning, buildings, energy, transport, waste, among other sectors.

Session 3. Inter-Municipal Cooperation

This session aims to explore and to discuss current trends, institutional models and challenges in inter-municipal cooperation. Besides the traditional institutional models of municipal associations there are now new forms of municipal cooperation that have been developed in recent years. These trends in inter-municipal cooperation and the respective challenges need to be examined, compared, and discussed in the context of the overall transformation of local and urban governance institutional models. This session intends to be a forum in which inter-municipal cooperation, including its organizational and financial issues, inter-municipal spatial planning and inter-municipal policies - social, economic and environmental - are explored and discussed through individual case studies or in comparative approaches.

Session 4. International Cooperation of Local and Regional Authorities

This session aims to explore and to discuss current trends, institutional models and challenges in the field of international cooperation of local and regional governments, in continental wide arrangements, as is the case in Europe and in

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Africa, but also in global networks of local authorities. The session intends to explore and to discuss the different modes of decentralized cooperation for sustainable development as well as the current practices of municipal / city twinning, its actions, impacts and challenges, namely in the context of the global agendas on sustainable development adopted in recent decades.

Session 5. Local Government Reforms: Decentralization V. Centralization

This session aims to explore and to discuss the current reforms of local government in different regions of the world, confronting recent cases of re-centralization with the more general trend towards decentralization. Among other issues, the session seeks to discuss the impacts of these reforms in the organizational, functional and financial autonomy of local government, in local policies - social, economic, environmental -, and on the capacity of local government to fulfil its role in the implementation of the UN Global Sustainable Development Agendas, such as the Agenda 2030 and the New Urban Agenda.

Session 6. Metropolitan Governance: Trends, Models, Challenges

This session aims to explore and to discuss current trends, institutional models and challenges in the governance of metropolitan areas in different regions of the world. Besides the traditional institutional models of metropolitan government, applied in most of the metropolitan areas, new forms of governance of these large urban areas seem to be emerging. These changes need to be examined, compared with traditional models, and discussed in the context of the overall transformation of local and urban governance models. This session seeks to be a forum in which metropolitan government institutional models, metropolitan spatial planning and metropolitan policies - social, economic and environmental - are explored and discussed.

Session 7. Migrants and Refugees Democratic Rights in Local Governance

This session aims to explore and to discuss how local government policies have dealt with the rights of migrants and refugees in recent years, in Europe and in other regions of the world. The session intends to address these issues through individual case studies or in comparative approaches.

Session 8. Shrinking Cities, Expanding Metropolises, de Populated Villages: The Governance Responses

Cities losing population represent an important challenge for local government. The urban decline associated with the notion of shrinking cities affect numerous cities since the beginning of the 21st century, as a result of de-industrialization, socio-economic crisis and demographic transition. On the contrary, in other cities, within the same country, large metropolitan areas continue to expand. At the same time, in rural areas small villages continue to depopulate, which raises serious issues for the sustainability of these local communities. This session aims to explore and to discuss the responses of local government to these different processes, in particular the

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responses of the spatial planning system to these contrasted demographic processes.

Session 9. Spatial Justice and the Right to the City: The Role of Local Government

The announcement by the United Nations that in 2007, for the first time, the majority of the world's population lived in urban areas, a trend expected to expand, and the paradigm shift introduced by the New Urban Agenda, adopted by the United Nations in the Habitat-III Conference in 2016, in which urbanization and cities are now seen as drivers of sustainable development, put cities at the centre of the debates on sustainable development for all. Parallel to this development, there has been in the last years a growing interest in the idea of the 'Right to the City', namely in initiatives carried out in Europe and in Latin America. A landmark in this process was the adoption of the World Charter on the Right to the City. This session intends to explore and to discuss approaches and practices developed by local government in order to improve the quality of everyday life in cities and its outcomes based on a broader notion of 'Right to the City' - civil, political, economic, social, cultural and environmental rights.

Session 10. Transnational and Transcontinental Networking and Policy Learning

This session aims to explore and to discuss current trends, challenges and outcomes in the field of transnational and transcontinental flows of urban policies ideas. The session intends to explore and to discuss in particular the transnational flows of spatial planning ideas within continental wide networks, as is the case within the European Union, but also through transcontinental networks.

In response to the Call for additional sessions focused on the COVID-19 Pandemic, the IGU Commission on Geography of Governance proposed the following session, in addition to the previous ten: 'Local Government Response Towards Covid-19 Pandemic'. More information will be available in due time in the Commission website: <https://sites.google.com/site/igugeogov/home>

5.4 The 5th International Conference 'Urban e-Planning', Lisbon, Portugal, 2021

The 5th International Conference 'Urban e-Planning', convened by Carlos Nunes Silva (Institute of Geography and Spatial Planning, University of Lisbon, Portugal, and chair of the IGU Commission Geography of Governance), and organized by the 'International Journal of E-Planning Research' and by the Institute of Geography and Spatial Planning, University of Lisbon, will be held in Lisbon, Portugal, on 2021 (exact date to be defined). The Conference addresses three main themes: 1. Governance and Planning of Smart Cities; 2. Citizen E-Participation in Urban Governance; 3. Urban e-Planning and the Covid-19 Pandemic. The Conference is endorsed by the

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5.5 IGU-UGI Paris 2022: 100^e anniversaire de la fondation de l'UGI / 100th IGU anniversary - 'Le temps des géographes' - 'Time for geographers', Paris, 18-22 July 2022

The IGU Commission on Geography of Governance will participate in the 100th IGU anniversary, to be held in Paris, France, on 18-22 July 2022.

More information will be available in due time in the Commission website:

<https://sites.google.com/site/igugeogov/home>

5.6 Plan for other meetings (workshops / conferences / panels)

We also aim to take part in other meetings in Europe (RGS-IBG, AESOP, etc.), North America (AAG, UAA, etc.), South America (e.g., Latin America Geographers), Asia (e.g., China, Japan), Oceania (e.g., NZGS-IG), and in Africa (North and sub-Saharan). This will take the form of panels in large conferences or own workshops and conferences. Some of these activities are expected to be developed in association with other IGU Commissions as well as with other professional associations. More information on this plan will be provided in the coming Newsletters.

6. RESEARCH PROJECT - 'Local Government Response Towards the COVID-19 Pandemic' - IGU Commission on Geography of Governance (IGU-CGoG)

The IGU-CGoG COVID-19 Action Plan - "Local Government Response Towards Covid-19 Pandemic: Strategies, Plans, Actions, Outcomes, Impacts. A Worldwide Survey and Comparison" - launched by the IGU Commission on Geography of Governance, on 25 March 2020, two weeks after the World Health Organization informed, on 11 March 2020, that the COVID-19 could be characterized as a pandemic, aims to collect and to curate a list of resources related to the strategies, plans, policy measures, and actions taken by local government towards the COVID-19 pandemic, around the world, and its outcomes and impacts.

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The IGU-CGoG COVID-19 Action Plan has three main goals:

1. First, to collect evidence of the strategies, plans, policy measures, and actions taken by local government around the world towards the COVID-19 pandemic, making it available to all, as soon as possible, in its website, in a way that this information can still be useful during the current pandemic.
2. Second, to promote joint comparative research on the responses of local government towards the COVID-19 pandemic, its outcomes and impacts, and lessons for the future, to be carried out by members of the IGU Commission on Geography of Governance, and other interested partners, as soon as possible in the coming months.
3. Third, to present, discuss, and publish the outcomes of the comparative research on the worldwide responses of local government towards the COVID-19 pandemic. Specific meetings and/or panels, as well as publications, will be considered in the 2021 and 2022 activity plans of the IGU Commission on Geography of Governance.

The "IGU-CGoG COVID-19 Action Plan" aims to address the following research questions:

1. What strategies, plans, policy measures, and actions have been adopted by local government to control and shape the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic locally?
2. What strategies, plans, policy measures, and actions have been adopted by local government to tackle the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on health, on society and on the local economy?
3. What strategies, plans, policy measures, and actions are local government employing to distribute resources and care among local populations and what cooperation with local community organizations and citizen initiatives during the pandemic?
4. What has been the relationship between local government strategies, plans, policy measures, and actions towards COVID-19 pandemic and public behaviour?
5. How has local government strategies, plans, policy measures, and actions towards COVID-19 impacted on the effects of the pandemic?
6. How effective were different local government strategies, plans, policy measures, and actions, taken in different countries worldwide, in reducing the local spread of COVID-19?

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7. What changes have been introduced in central-local relations (decentralization / re-centralization) and what innovations in multi-level governance have been tried to tackle more effectively the COVID-19 pandemic?
8. What has been the role of inter-municipal cooperation and metropolitan government in this context?
9. What is being done through cross-border municipal and regional cooperation during the pandemic?
10. What local government strategies, plans, policy measures, and actions are being designed, in different countries worldwide, for the post COVID-19 crisis?

The stage 1 of this Action Plan consisted in the organization of a 'Worldwide Inventory of Local Government Actions towards the COVID-19 Pandemic' in March-April 2020. All countries in the world have a presence in this online repository of websites/portals with information on the national or city policies (responses) being developed by governments and cities across the world. This page compiles resources and information on local government strategies, plans, policy measures and actions towards the COVID-19 pandemic. This information can be accessed through the links available here: <https://sites.google.com/view/igucgog-covid19/local-government-survey>

The stage 2 of this Action Plan consists in the preparation of a series of individual contributions on specific countries or cities. These case studies started during the lockdown/confinement months, focused on the broad theme 'Local Government Response Towards Covid-19 Pandemic'. The first version of these studies is expected to be submitted in October, with second revised versions due in December 2020. For more information, please contact us: igu.geogov@gmail.com

The project publish country and local studies (on municipalities, cities, metropolitan areas, regions, and other geographies) in its website: <https://sites.google.com/view/igucgog-covid19/country-reports-and-local-studies>, namely in the form of Working-Papers: <https://sites.google.com/view/igucgog-covid19/working-papers>. Other publication options for the outputs of the project (special issue in the International Journal of E-Planning Research; and book in the Springer book series 'Local and Urban Governance') are also being considered. More information available in the project website: <https://sites.google.com/view/igucgog-covid19/home>

Collaboration in this Action Plan is open to all members of the IGU Commission on Geography of Governance (Steering Committee and Corresponding Members) and

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to anyone interested on these themes. For additional information, please contact us: igu.geogov@gmail.com

7. OTHER ACTIVITIES BY COMMISSION MEMBERS

The role of local governments in the COVID crisis- empirical researches in CERS led by Ilona Pálné Kovács (see www.rkk.hu).

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9. ANNEXES

9.1 ANNEX

IGU Commission on Geography of Governance, 2016-2020

(In: IGU CGoG website: <https://sites.google.com/site/igugeogov/aims>)

I. Introduction

The [International Geographical Union \(IGU\)](#) is an international, non-governmental, professional organization devoted to the development of the discipline of Geography. The IGU was formally established in Brussels in 1922. Its instruments are its National Committees (101, in 2016), Commissions (38, in 2016) and Task Forces (3, in 2016).

In 1984, the International Geographical Union established a Study Group under the title 'Geography and Public Administration', which was then used as the preliminary status before a Commission could be launched. It was replaced in 1988 by a Commission on 'Geography and Public Administration'. Since then, the Commission was renamed twice to reflect new issues and perspectives on the relation between territory and public administration. In 2000 became 'Commission on Geography and Public Policy' and in 2008 adopted its current title 'Commission on Geography of Governance'.

An important aspect of the initial period (1984-1988) was participation of Commission members in early debates about restructuring of local and regional government in the central European countries then dominated by the Soviet bloc. Two of the main meetings held in this period dealt with specific aspects of Poland and Hungary, and the wider debates in other Central European countries. Catalan regionalism and separatism also became a very live issue, with the Commission holding a meeting in Barcelona specifically to engage in the debate. A feature of the Commission's activities was collaboration with other organisations, such as the Academy of Sciences in Budapest and in Warsaw, and with the Institute of Catalan Studies in Barcelona. An important partnership was a collaboration with the sister organisation of IGU, the International Institute of Administrative Sciences (IIAS). Robert Bennett represented the IGU Group at an IIAS meeting in Berlin in 1984 just prior to the launch of the IGU Commission (Study Group). This founded collaboration with a Study Group of IIAS on L'Amenagement du Territoire (The management of territory), formed mainly of lawyers and administrative scientists, who were also centred on Central European reforms. As well as its own IGU Commission publications, collaboration with the IIAS produced a key publication in 1988: L'Amenagement du Territoire et les Pouvoirs Locaux et Regionaux face aux Mutations Economiques (Regional Planning and Local Government confronted with Economic Change), ed. Gerard Marcou (University of Lille). This was interdisciplinary with members of the IIAS, with 5 of the 11 chapters written by IGU members. In February 1988, at the end of the Commission's first four years, a path-breaking meeting was held in Washington D.C. jointly with the US Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations, and taking place in the Indian Treaty Room of the White House.

The Study Group formally became a Commission at the IGU Congress in 1988 in Sydney. A key feature of the period 1988-1992 continue to be restructuring of local and regional governmental in the central European countries. In the build-up to the removal of the Berlin Wall in 1990, and its aftermath, the Commission took an active role in many activities to implement new laws and reforms in countries now freed from limitations on open debate. One of its members, Jerzy Regulski became the minister for Local Government reform in Poland; other members in Czechoslovakia, Poland, Hungary and Russia became politicians, or were active as advisors and consultants. It was a dramatic period of change throughout central Europe in which the Commission played a small but important role. The Commission meeting in Moscow in September 1991 was uncertain, but did begin just as the siege of the Russian Parliament and Boris Yeltsin came to an end, with the parliament building surrounded by tanks. Collaboration continued with the International Institute of Administrative Sciences (IIAS), and new collaborations developed. A major meeting sponsored by the United Nations University (and others) took place in Spain in 1991 that widened the IGU Commission's brief to developing countries, and also focused on the other key themes of the period of decentralisation geographically, and to markets, often focused on



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privatisation. The Commission over this period also diversified through many bilateral collaborations focused on developing expertise in the new regimes of Central Europe. Key exchanges occurred with Amsterdam (through Petr Dostál) and the London School of Economics (through Robert Bennett) to help colleagues in Prague, Bratislava, Budapest, Warsaw and other centres to access library resources and advice to develop new curricula for students, and to re-equip their teaching and library resources.

The third four-year period (1992-1996) of the Commission maintained a close focus on Central European developments, but also now added routine sessions at the major annual conferences of Geographical bodies in many countries, especially the USA. There was also diversification of the Commission's interests into wider concepts of governance taking debates further into understanding how partner bodies operated with formal government administration in different contexts.

Commission members meet now regularly at its annual conference, held in different parts of the world, and during the sessions or panels organized within the program of the major IGU Congresses and Conferences. Field trips to study and discuss local issues has also been held as part of some of its annual conferences.

The Commission has been highly active during its first three decades of existence, holding numerous sessions in all IGU major congresses and conferences, in addition to its own annual thematic conferences. The Commission facilitates the exchange of research outcomes, experiences and perspectives on local and regional governance issues in different contexts around the world. One of the outcomes of this joint work is the publication of several books and edited collections of selected papers in peer-reviewed international journals, namely in 'Environment & Planning C: Government and Policy', 'GeoJournal', Acta Universitatis Carolinae / Geographica, Bulletin de la Société Languedocienne de Géographie, and in the 'International Journal of E-Planning Research'.

The Commission publishes a Newsletter twice a year, which is sent by e-mail to all its members. The Newsletter informs about its past and future activities, and provides information on meetings organized worldwide by national or local groups of geographers focused on local and regional governance issues.

The Commission has its own website, a blog and an electronic mailing-list focused on issues of urban, local and regional governance.

An archive of its past activities (1988-2016) is available in the website.



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- Commission blog: <http://igugeogov.blogspot.pt/>
- Corresponding Members mailing list: <https://sites.google.com/site/igugeogov/mailling-list>

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