

REPORT ON THE 9TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE OF THE ROMANIAN REGIONAL SCIENCE ASSOCIATION

On April 26-27, 2013 the 9th International Conference of the Romanian Regional Science Association – “Regional development between recent experiences and future challenges”, took place at Galati, in the South-East Region of Romania. It was organized in collaboration with the “Danubius” University of Galati, which had also hosted the 4th RRSA conference, in 2004. More than 65 papers were included in the programme, with over 120 authors representing many important university centres, research institutes, central and local administration institutions from various regions of Romania also from abroad (Italy, the Netherlands, Sweden, Poland, Bulgaria, Greece, France, Albania).

At the **Opening Ceremony**, **speeches** were delivered by the representatives of the co-organisers – Andi Pusca, Rector of “Danubius” University, Romeo Ionescu, Vice-Rector and Daniela L. Constantin, Academy of Economic Studies of Bucharest, President of the Romanian Regional Science Association, as well as by the honorary guests: Sevil Shhaideh, Secretary of State at the Ministry of Regional Development and Public Administration, Constantin Mitrut, Vice-Rector of Bucharest Academy of Economic Studies and President of the Romanian Society of Statistics, Peter Nijkamp, Free University of Amsterdam, Past President of ERSA and RSAI and Maciej Turala, ERSA Secretary. A message from Tomaz Dentinho, the Executive Director of RSAI was also delivered.

In the **Plenary Session** three excellent papers were presented by Peter Nijkamp – Free University of Amsterdam, the Netherlands, Karima Kourtit – Free University of Amsterdam, the Netherlands and Maciej Turala – University of Lodz, Poland.

A **Plenary Special Session** was also organized by Peter Nijkamp and Karima Kourtit on the – already famous – “New Urban World”, focusing on “The Life and Death and Life of Central and East European Cities”. Contributors were Peter Nijkamp, Karima Kourtit, as well as Daniela Constantin, Maciej Turala and Stela Raleva with three case studies from Romania (Bucharest), Poland (Lodz) and Bulgaria (Sofia).

Then, eight **parallel sessions** stimulated very challenging debates on issues of a great interest regarding: Territorial governance, institutions and regional policy; Clusters and regional competitiveness; Entrepreneurship and regional networks; Tourism, cultural heritage and regional development; Infrastructure investments, transport and territorial cohesion; Demographic changes, labour markets and migration; Central and East European regional issues; Municipal property management in Bulgaria and Romania (special session). All papers have been published in a special conference issue of the *Acta Universitatis Danubius – Oeconomica*, Vol.9, No.4/2013.

In the second day a **Round Table** on “Challenges to Romania’s Regionalization” was organized, with Daniela Constantin as convenor and Gabriel Pascariu as key speaker. The main contributors to the debates were Dorel Ailenei, Romeo Ionescu, Carmen Pauna, Claudia Ionescu, Victor Platon, Gabriela Marchis. The foreign guests who attended the

round table expressed interesting opinions as well, based on their countries' experience in this field (Poland, Sweden, Bulgaria).

The members of the Romanian Regional Science Association also participated in the **Annual General Meeting**.

On this occasion the results of the World Congress of Regional Science Association International, held in Timisoara on May 9-12, 2012 were discussed, being emphasized its huge success. Many thanks again to all participants and warm congratulations to the West University of Timisoara – Faculty of Economics and Business Administration for the excellent organization!

The possible actions in support to the Romanian Journal of Regional Science have been addressed as well, considering that it continues to be the leading journal in Regional Science in Romania and a very competitive one at international level.

An important on-going project of the Romanian Regional Science Association is the Regional Development Handbook, for which the completion schedule has been updated.

The venue of the next international conference of the Romanian RSA (2015) has been established, namely “Stefan cel Mare” University of Suceava, located in the wonderful Bucovina area of the North-East region.

Besides the activity and financial report and plan of activities, this meeting had to elect the new board and the current leading staff of the Romanian RSA. As President has been re-elected Daniela L. Constantin, Academy of Economic Studies of Bucharest. The Prime-Vicepresident and two Vicepresidents are Romeo V. Ionescu, “Danubius” University of Galati, Dorel Ailenei and Erika Marin, both from Academy of Economic Studies of Bucharest. Raluca Grosu, Academy of Economic Studies of Bucharest has been elected as the new Secretary General and Amalia Cristescu from the same university as the new Treasurer. The whole elected board is displayed on the RRSA web page.

At the end of the second day the participants enjoyed a wonderful **excursion by boat (and lunch) on Danube river**.

Pictures from all conference events are posted on www.rrsa.ro

The efforts of all members of the organising and scientific committee are gratefully acknowledged, with special thanks to the local organizers, who invested a lot of time and energy for the conference success.

To conclude, the latest conference of the Romanian RSA has contributed to a very useful exchange of scientific ideas and, above all, to the consolidation of the so-called “the Romanian RSA spirit”: the spirit of friendship and networking between the dedicated association members and participants in the RRSA events.