



Regional Studies Association Global Conference 2012
Sun 24th -Tue 26th June 2012 (Field trip on 27th June 2012)
Beijing Conference Center, Beijing, China

Sustaining Regional Futures

Conference background





As the learned society concerned with the analysis of regions and sub-national issues, the Regional Studies Association promotes interest and research on regional economies throughout the world. The application and dissemination of the results of this research in different contexts are important elements in our aims and objectives. Through our International membership we provide an authoritative voice of, and network for, academics, students, practitioners, policy makers and interested lay people in the field of regional studies. This conference truly reflects the global nature of the Association, therefore, by offering the opportunity for presentation, discussion and debate on topics in regional studies, which are of interest across the world.

For the first time, the Regional Studies Association annual conference is being held outside Europe and is being organised with our partner, the Chinese Academy of Sciences, around the theme of **'Sustaining Regional Futures'**. Over the last 30 years, China has been one of the fastest growing economies in the world and that growth has been sustained over a long period. Along with rapid expansion in other countries beyond Europe and North America, this is having significant impacts on many aspects of global economic sustainability but also within China itself. As we have seen during periods of expansion in more developed countries, the changes since 1980 have led to strong regional imbalances as the natural environment and economic foundations already vary so much across the country. In such a large territory, diverging rates of development exist not only between provinces but also between areas within provinces. As well as the plenary sessions at the Beijing conference, where keynote speakers will address some of the biggest issues facing regions and sub-national areas around the world in this new era, gateways are being organised on the causes and implications of these different patterns of regional development.

As in many other countries and contexts, China has implemented regional policies to help reduce regional disparities and promote more coordinated regional development. With a similar set of aims to regional strategies in western economies, this conference will have gateways dedicated to assessing the forms and successes of these regional policies in managing regional disparities, establishing basic public services, supporting endogenous growth and the comparative advantages of regions, promoting regional competitiveness, and sustaining harmony between the economy, society and the environment. Offers of papers on each of these themes are encouraged - on different countries' and regions' experiences, and on comparative studies. Papers on aspects of social justice, territorial politics, and peripheral and marginal regions are also welcome to address what has been happening in these times of rapid national growth and global upheaval.

Papers on governance, city-regions, spatial planning and analysis which may look at the position in China but which may focus elsewhere are most welcome. Debate and discussion, contrast and comparisons are essential to the success of Regional Studies Association conferences and to academic endeavour. Critical analyses and sharing of experiences in all these topic areas will ensure the Beijing conference achieves the aims that the Regional Studies Association and its partners have set out for it.

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