



Alicante, Spain & Virtual event

Urban Challenges and Sustainable Technological Revolution



Special Session Proposal

Rethinking regional resilience

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Abstract

In current times of crises, the notion of resilience is often used to analyse the recovery processes of systems from a shock. It refers to the notion describing that systems, such as sectors or regional economies, recover from shocks or can build up capabilities to deal with future shocks (Fromhold-Eisebith, 2015; Martin & Sunley, 2020; Sutton & Arku, 2022). Recently, economic geographers and regional economists, in particular, have become interested in regional resilience in tackling the question of why some regional economies manage to renew themselves or to lock themselves out, whereas others are more locked in decline (Martin & Sunley, 2020; Evenhuis, 2017; Gong & Hassink, 2017). Regional resilience is a process, consisting of four stages: risk/vulnerability before the shock, resistance during the shock, and reorientation and recoverability after the shock (Martin & Sunley, 2020).

In most recent conceptual work, Martin & Sunley (2020) point at the relation between the intensity and duration of the shock and the different kind of transformations that could take place, ranging from short duration bounce-back resilience to long duration transformative resilience (Manca et al., 2017; Trippl et al., 2022). Many scholars, policy-makers and media reports hope that the COVID-19 crisis will create a chance for a transformation towards more sustainable regional economies, creating a window of opportunity for a sustainability transition and related innovations (Oliva & Lazeretti, 2021). Giovannini et al. (2020) speak of bouncing forward through

transformation, instead of bouncing back to pre-crisis conditions. On the other hand, while the urgency of socio-technical transformation is a consensus among scholars, so far, little attention has been paid to how the current crisis may potentially contribute to regions' resilience in such a fundamental transformative process.

Moreover, in addition to rethinking regional resilience towards more transformative forms, we see an additional reason to rethink regional resilience that is related to the position of regional economies in global value chains and global production networks. Given the increase in disruptions of these chains and networks, regional resilience has to be rethought and be combined with value chain resilience (Gereffi et al., 2022), particularly in those regional economies that are strongly embedded and hence dependent on these chains and networks (Gong et al., 2022).

To rethink regional resilience after the COVID-19 crisis as well as individual regions' resilience in the mega-trend toward sustainability, we need more in-depth, quantitative and qualitative research into underlying mechanisms, as well as into the role of transformative agencies (Bristow & Healy, 2014; Kurikka & Grillitsch, 2021). The latter include institutional entrepreneurs, place-based leadership, regional policy intelligence, experiences and lessons from previous experiences. Therefore, this session aims at rethinking regional resilience concerning transformative and value chain resilience. We welcome both theoretical, conceptual, as well as quantitative and qualitative empirical papers. The focus will be on, but not confined to, the following topics:

- The conceptualization and measurement of regional and value chain resilience
- The interrelationship between value chain resilience and regional resilience
- Transformative regional resilience, industrial restructuring and innovation
- Transformative regional resilience and sustainability transitions
- Transformative regional resilience and smart specialization
- The interrelation between sectoral resilience and regional resilience under socio-technical transformation
- Crises, behavioural changes, and transformative regional resilience

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