



Alicante, Spain & Virtual event

Urban Challenges and Sustainable Technological Revolution



Special Session Proposal

Digital (in)equality and sustainable cities

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Abstract

The availability, quality and accessibility of digital technologies, and the ability for people to seize opportunities, access services and work in a knowledge economy, are two intertwined elements. Therefore, the premises for the positive impact of digital technologies to build sustainable places are the supply of adequate infrastructure and the digital literacy that might allow people to use digital technology and access opportunities.

Digitalisation, together with climate change, contributes to create a new generation of inequalities previously not considered. In this respect, to achieve sustainable cities, reducing inequalities is of paramount importance, as promoted by SGD 10, and it should aim at targeting numerous disparities from the economic, social and environmental perspective. Furthermore, SDG 17 also aims to enhance the use of enabling technologies to contribute in reducing inequality of opportunity.

However, the spatial availability of such essential enablers might differ across places, with the risk of exacerbate existing disparities or even establish new ones. Therefore, an in-depth understanding of the spatial access to digital technologies and their differentiated use is needed, to provide policies with quantitative evidence that can inform and support interventions in the path of making sustainable cities.

This special session at the ERSA 2023 aims at exploring the relationship between urbanisation and digitalisation by looking at the spatial disparities related to uneven access to digital infrastructures and technologies, including data literacy of both individuals and administrations, in the urban space. The organisers welcome papers which address the following indicative topics with a clear spatial perspective:

- digital divide in terms of access to digital infrastructures and technologies;
- disparities across population subgroups in terms of use of digital technologies and digital literacy;
- open governments and digital transformation
- application of digital technologies in cities to address and overcome other urban inequalities;
- digital footprint and cities;

Studies with a comparative element, either involving international comparisons or comparisons between intra-national territories, would be especially welcome.