



Regional Design: impacts on territorial governance and planning practice

Co-chairs

Valeria Lingua (University of Firenze – Italy)

Alain Thierstein (University of Technology Munich – Germany)

Wil Zonneveld (University of Technology – The Netherlands)

The special session focuses on regional design as a practical and experimental response to a variety of processes which has drastically changed the way spatial planning used to work, such as decentralization, neo-liberalisation and shifts in institutional architectures and planning regimes. Processes of defining and redefining sub-regional boundaries call for spatial visioning and design for shaping the boundaries of urban regions, providing pro-active knowledge of their characteristics and trends and conceiving shared visions of their spatial development.

As a consequence, the 'art' of making spatial representations and the imagination of spatial metaphors has emerged as a powerful tool in capacity, and consensus-building in multi-actor settings.

Papers are expected to discuss the actual impact regional design has on regional governance and spatial planning issues in terms of:

- Changing dynamics of planning and regions in processes of institutional, political, economic and societal change
- (Re)-Conceptualizing the region and regional spatial planning
- Role of regional planning and design in regard to the relationship between statutory and soft planning theories and practices
- Contribution of visioning in planning city and regional futures
- Making the region visible: impact of real-time modelling of cities and regions in regional planning and design
- Performance of regional planning and design in allocating regional resources, shaping regional frames of reference, promoting regional fields of action
- Teaching regional planning and design: from analytical to transformative knowledge, from instrumental to strategic planning, through interdisciplinary education.

The main aim of the special session is to explore new paths for planning at the regional and metropolitan level, in a context of governance rescaling in which spatial planning policies and practices, still traditionally anchored to rigid administrative boundaries, are now challenged to be reinvented.