



Editorial

Long lasting knowledge in Regional Science

The regional science community is saddened by the loss of Walter Isard who died on 6 November, 2010. Walter was the founder of regional science, and his leadership, scholarship and enthusiasm in this regard is discussed by David Boyce in a memorial piece immediately following this editorial. Walter Isard not only established an interdisciplinary movement on regional and urban research in North America, Europe and Asia but can also be viewed as the founding father of *Papers in Regional Science*. As described by David Boyce (2004) in the Golden Anniversary issue of *Papers in Regional Science*, Isard organized a 1954 conference in Detroit with a programme of 25 papers and proposed formation of a new association to be named the Regional Science Association. There was also support for publication of the papers presented at the meeting, which was accomplished by each author providing 200 copies of their paper which were bound together to form volume one of the *Papers and Proceedings of the Regional Science Association, 1955*. In 1991 the name of the journal was changed to *Papers in Regional Science* and the mission changed from publishing selected conference papers to that of a quarterly flagship journal for the Association. A lasting result of Isard's vision in 1954 is the 55-year record of scholarship in the field of regional science consisting of the *Papers and Proceedings of the Regional Science Association* and *Papers in Regional Science*.

Papers in Regional Science is now a leading regional science journal, with the most recent 2009 2-year impact factor for *Papers in Regional Science* increasing to 1.397. This is the second consecutive year that the 2-Year impact factor has been greater than 1, and in 2009 the Institute for Scientific Information (ISI) began publishing a 5-year-impact factor which takes into account citations to articles published during the last five rather than two years. The 5-year impact factor is particularly important for social sciences, since citation activity frequently occurs more than two years after publication of an article, and the 5-Year Impact Factor is less sensitive to citations arising from a single article that tend to exert a great deal of influence on the 2-year impact factor. The 5-year impact factor for *Papers in Regional Science* during 2009 was 1.767, which was above the traditional 2-year impact factor for the same period. This pattern of higher 5-year vs. 2-year impact factors was also true for earlier years, making it clear that articles published in *Papers in Regional Science* are cited more frequently in a three- to five-year horizon after publication than in the first two years. The longer term scholarly impact of articles published in *Papers in Regional Science* is also reflected in the cited half-life time that has a value around 9 during the last decade. The value of 9 means that citations to articles published in the 2000–2009 period account for half of all citations from *Papers in Regional Science* in 2009. From this we may conclude that articles published in *Papers in Regional Science* have had a long lasting impact on the discipline, speaking to the long-term vision of Walter Isard.

In 2009, articles published in *Papers in Regional Science* were downloaded from all online sources a total of 29,900 times. This was an increase of 14 per cent from the 25,600 downloads in 2008. The most downloaded 2009 article (accessed 560 times) was “Krugman's Papers in Regional Science: The 100 dollar bill on the sidewalk is gone and the 2008 Nobel Prize

well-deserved” written by Kristian Behrens and Frédéric Robert-Nicoud (2009), followed by the article “The spatial evolution of regional GDP disparities in the ‘old’ and the ‘new’ Europe” by Maarten Bosker (2009) which was accessed 400 times. As of August 2010 the most downloaded article from 2010 is “Thirty years of spatial econometrics” by Luc Anselin (2010) (accessed 450 times).

Special issues are an important aspect of *Papers in Regional Science* as can be seen by the citations they generate. The special issues “Spatial knowledge diffusion through collaborative networks” edited by Corinne Autant-Bernard, Jacques Mairesse and Nadine Massard (2007) and “New spatial econometric techniques and applications in regional science” edited by Giuseppe Arbia and Bernard Fingleton (2008) accounted for 51 per cent of the 2009 citations. The introduction to the special issue edited by Michaela Trippl and Gunther Maier on “Knowledge spillover agents and regional development” published in June 2010 has already been accessed 150 times in the very short period up until August 2010, and this will hopefully result in future citations.

The fourth *Martin Beckmann Award* for the best article published in *Papers in Regional Science* was awarded to Thomas Scherngell and Michael J. Barber (2009) for their article “Spatial interaction modelling of cross-region R&D collaborations: Empirical evidence from the 5th EU framework programme” with the award decided by a jury comprised of Masahisa Fujita, Jean H. Paelinck, John M. Quigley and Jouke van Dijk (chair). The authors received the award from Martin Beckmann himself during the 50th Anniversary Congress of the European Regional Science Association that took place in Jönköping (Sweden) during August 2010.

The editorial team of *Papers in Regional Science* continues the policy of rotating editorial board membership and this resulted in replacement of ten past members with new members beginning with Volume 90 of 2011. This policy allows us to express our appreciation to past board members for their service and gives us the opportunity to engage additional scholars in the peer-reviewing burdens of the journal. It also allows us to adjust the composition of the editorial board to better reflect submissions to papers in emerging fields. We would like to take this opportunity to express our thanks to the ten board members who recently completed their service to the journal. Their support in promoting the journal and reviewing manuscripts has been extremely important for operation of the journal and is greatly appreciated. The current editorial board can be found in the preliminary pages of this issue.

In concluding this editorial, the editors would like to thank all authors and reviewers for their co-operation. The number of submissions continues to increase and this allows us to publish high quality manuscripts, as evidenced by the fact that despite the increased size of the journal our rejection rate is around 70 per cent. Timely responses from reviewers allowed the editors to average around three months for a first decision on manuscript submissions. In addition, we would like to thank the professional support staff of our publisher Wiley-Blackwell for increasing the speed of publication and allowing wider dissemination of regional science scholarship. Manuscripts are (on average) published online in Early View within three months after acceptance and appear in print (on average) within six months. We hope that rapid editorial decision times, speedier publication, high impact and large audiences will motivate those seeking a publication outlet to place *Papers in Regional Science* at the top of their list, thus contributing to the vision expressed by Walter Isard in his foreword to the 1955 issue: “It is hoped that this initial set of papers will turn out to be but a modest beginning in the development of regional science, and yet at the same time provide seminal ideas for major contributions to our understanding of society” (Isard 1955).

Jouke van Dijk

Editor-in-Chief, also on behalf of the editorial team

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