

**SPECIAL ISSUE**

of the journal

**QUALITY INNOVATION PROSPERITY**

on

**SCIENCE OF THE CITY:**

**Towards a Higher Quality of Urban Life**

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## **BACKGROUND**

We live in the ‘urban century’. Cities have become the dominant geographic settlement pattern of our dynamic world. They integrate all dimensions of modern life, ranging from socio-economic to technological aspects. The organisation of such complex entities calls for a more integrative and inclusive scientific analysis and understanding of urban systems.

## **SCOPE**

Cities have in the course of history become the most common settlement pattern all over the world. From a rural society a few centuries back, our world has moved into an urban world. Moreover, this trend will continue in this century; hence, the expression ‘the urban century’. The backgrounds of mass urbanisation are manifold. Economics has explained this urban trend from the perspective of agglomeration theory. Sociology has found the source of urbanisation in network behaviour and social motives of people, including social capital. Besides, urban architecture has regarded the management of the urban landscape and form of the built environment as a major stimulus for city formation and development. Finally, urban planning has given the impression that regulatory systems on land use and spatial amenities have been decisive for our ‘urban century’. The fundamental question is: Is the modern city an amalgam of various – sometimes mutually contrasting – forces, or is there a unifying conceptual framework that is able to explain the ‘why’ and ‘how’ of the ‘New Urban World’?

## **CASE FOR THE SPECIAL ISSUE**

The origin of the present Special Issue can be found in the Advanced Brainstorm Carrefour (ABC), held on March 22-23, 2016, in Napoli, in which various contributions were provided to a fundamental reflection on the roots and effects of a modern city. The focus was not only on economic and social drivers of the city, but also on architectural, ecological, demographic and planning dimensions (including urban landscapes, urban environments, segregation of cities, or urban creativeness).

The aim of the present Special Issue is now to offer a synthesis of the various contributions from this meeting, based on a multidisciplinary perspective on urban systems. The central goal is to provide a set of innovative contributions from different scientific disciplines to a better understanding of the background of rapid (sub) urbanisation and of the significance of cities for economic prosperity. In this collection of original studies, the role of agglomeration advantages and urban networks will assume a central position. Clearly, the planning and governance implications will also be articulated in this special issue.

**Keywords:** city; urbanisation; urban systems; economic prosperity; urban development