

## Paradigm Shifts in Local and Urban Governance Editorial to the Thematic Issue

### *Paradigmaváltások a helyi és városi kormányzásban: Szerkesztői bevezető a tematikus számhoz*

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The way the vertical structure of the State is organized, to solve collective needs, changes over the years, in different ways, in each country, as results of specific national historical processes, but also due to external global influences. The prospect for the future suggests a similar pattern will continue to occur.

The study of these shifts constitutes the core subject of the IGU Commission on Geography of Governance, as it aims to advance knowledge of the geography of territorial governance, at the urban, local and regional levels, namely the conditions, scale and characteristics of new modes of territorial governance, and to identify new perspectives, to explore new research methodologies, and different geographical approaches in the field of urban, local and regional governance.

The 2023 Annual Conference of the IGU Commission on Geography of Governance – “Paradigm Shifts in Local and Urban Governance” –, held in Budapest, on 4–6 September 2023, and organized in collaboration with the Centre for Economic and Regional Studies – MTA Centre of Excellence, explored and discussed shifts and innovations in local and urban governance, in the context of the increasingly complex and uncertain policy context, at multiple governance levels, namely in crisis management.

This thematic issue of the journal *Tér és Társadalom* („Space and Society”) comprises a selection of double-blind peer reviewed articles from the 2023



Annual Conference of the IGU Commission on Geography of Governance. The conference was organized into three main tracks: Institutional shifts in Local Governance; Resilient Local Governance; and Governance of Spatial Planning Systems.

Issues of institutional shifts in local governance systems due to globalization, nationalization, decentralization, and digitalization were examined and discussed, as well as the challenges and innovations with which local governance is confronted, comparing local government systems and practices in different regions of the world. In addition, the responses of local governance to natural and manmade disasters were also addressed, as well as the analysis and discussion of the role of spatial planning in shaping multi-level territorial governance, including coastal and marine spatial planning. These issues were addressed in country and cross-country approaches, studies of individual cities or municipalities, and the comparison of cities, municipalities or countries with one another, and with those in other regions of the world.

The articles included in this thematic issue offer evidence and groundbreaking insights on a sample of these paradigm shifts, pointing also future lines for further research in this field.

Just picking some from the questions raised in the papers, we emphasise some examples for the governance challenges and the changing role and design of planning, which is one of the most important instruments of territorial governance. Resilience is a challenge in planning, but making it workable through societal participation is not easy, as the paper about the French case, by Louise Edrei, points out. German cities, however, were successful in addressing planning related protests, based on a favourable political environment and sufficient local capacities, as the authors, Gerhard Kienast and Grischa Bertram, argue based on convincing data and methodology. Resilience has local challenges in every sectoral policy field, so research combining sectoral goals, conditions with local efforts are welcome. The article on French territorial food policy, by Margaux Alarcon and Nathalie Corade, shows that local projects could contribute to resilience in agricultural production, but need strong, integrative governance intervention to achieve reorientation of the food system in order to be more just and democratic. Transport is another sectoral policy which has crucial importance in rural areas and we cannot imagine any successful service provision without the cooperation between the central state and local actors. Agathe Daniel's paper addresses a good example of why cooperation at different scales is difficult even in a country like France, where both public institutions frames, and societal traditions are favourable, in addition to the special state policy interventions that support this.

Housing is traditionally important policy in social and economic development in general, and it remains crucial from the point of view of resilient and fair social development. Housing is an extraordinary problem in South

Africa, but municipalities responsible for housing are suffering from lack of governance capacity and mistrust, political instability, as the paper by Lucia Leboto-Ketshi shows.

Different times, regions and policy fields need different solutions, which must be based on rigorous scientific and policy studies. An excellent case study by Eran Razin and Joseph Drew analyses, for example, school reform in the Australian federation. The authors conclude that remoteness needs centralized redistribution, but spatial disparities can be managed by multi-actor, multi-level systems at the same time.

As organizers of the IGU CoG conference in Budapest we had the impression, that the choice of centralized vs. decentralized model is still a dilemma and cannot be answered globally and for ever. The general message of this thematic issue, like the whole conference, is that in a time when the scope of local governments may be narrowing here and there, we must take into considerations that neither centralization nor decentralization are definitive. A more fine-tuned, multi-level and multi-sectoral territorial governance model may be more suitable and appropriate to provide the conditions for a sustainable development focused on aspects of social fairness and resilience.