

BRIEF REPORT ON RN 37- URBAN SOCIOLOGY ACTIVITIES

2015-2017

1- Contextualisation: Constitution of the RN37 Urban Sociology

The RN 37 was created at the 11th ESA Conference in Turim. João Teixeira Lopes was elected as a provisional coordinator. In 2014 the 1st Mid-Term Conference of the Research Network 37 was held in Lisbon, on November, 19th-22th, at the Faculdade de Ciências Sociais e Humanas, Universidade Nova de Lisboa (FCSH/UNL), Portugal. At this conference, members elected an electoral commission coordinated by Luis Baptista (Portugal) to prepare all the process in order to elect a proper executive team. At the beginning of the 12th ESA Conference, in Prague, there were 52 researchers affiliated in this RN. At the business meeting in Prague (August, 26th) the idea of a midterm conference in 2016 in Krakow, Poland, was approved by the present members and the following team was unanimously elected for the RN37 coordination and board:

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2- Construction of a scientific blog on Hipotheses and a facebook page

The team started to work on a scientific blog right after the election in Prague. This blog is a very important tool for the RN37: <http://esarn37.hypotheses.org/>

Also a facebook page was opened which has reached 1.131 likes until this moment and constitutes a dynamic mean of communication as the members ask the coordination and board to disseminate a variety of information through this channel.

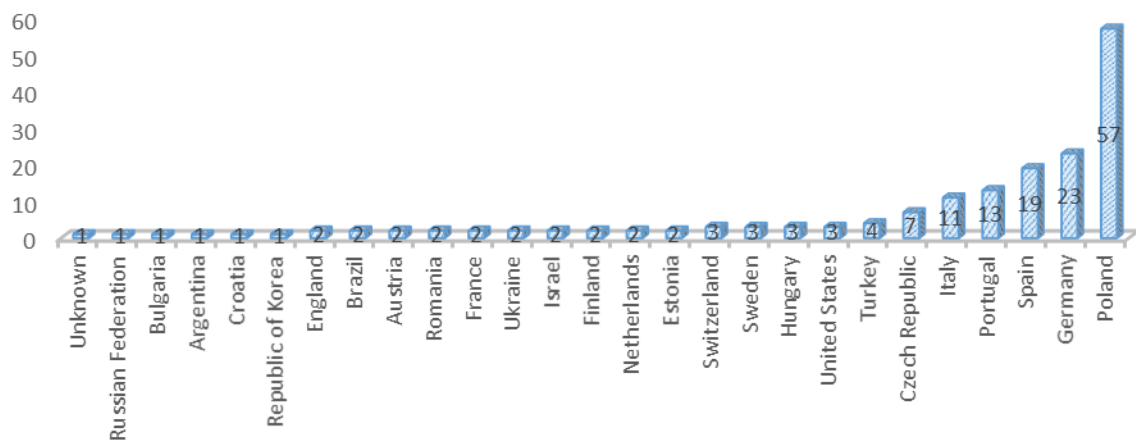
3- Organisation of the RN37 Midterm Conference in Krakow

The conference «Moving Cities: Contested Views on Urban Life» organized by the European Sociological Association Research Network 37, Urban Sociology, was held in Krakow from June 29th to July 1st, 2016, gathering more than one hundred participants. “Moving Cities” was a 3 day conference, where the delegates could attend 4 keynote speeches and 126 oral presentations distributed along 5 tracks, presented in 8 simultaneous sessions that took place in 11 rooms of the Institute of Sociology – Jagiellonian University, Krakow, Poland.

There were 16 hours of intellectual debate. But the midterm conference wasn't only a chance to improve our scientific spirit. It was also a time for discussion during the 5 organised social activities, representing more than 10 hours of friendliness and networking.

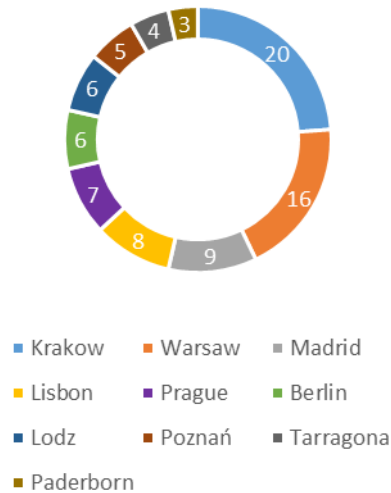
The response to the conference call for papers was overwhelming: colleagues from 91 institutions, working in 72 cities located in 27 countries were represented by 172 participants, including 153 speakers.

PARTICIPANTS PER COUNTRY



Great heterogeneity emerges from the number of cities represented at the conference by the participants. The top 10 Cities represent 84 participants (49% of all participants), but in the group of the represented cities at the conference, these 10 cities are just 14% of all the present cities.

Top 10 of Cities by participants



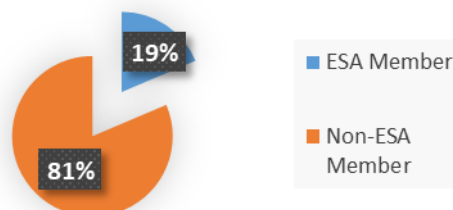
The mid term conference was organised in 4 keynotes and the following 6 tracks:

- [Track 1: Methodological approaches to the moving city](#)
- [Track 2: Moving cities: between structure and agency. Urban institutions and the pop-up city](#)
- [Track 3: Social processes in the globalised moving city](#)
- [Track 4: Dynamics and meanings of public spaces in the moving city](#)
- [Track 5: Changing Neighborhoods in the Moving City](#)
- Open Sessions

The most participated session was the Keynote n°3, delivered by Saskia Sassen with almost 280 listeners (the auditorium with the capacity of 280 places was almost full).

Finally, this conference, organised by the European Sociological Association Research Network 37, Urban Sociology, was open to everyone. The meeting was animated by speakers who didn't belong to ESA: 33 participants out of 172 were members of the association, among them 29 were speakers. During the midterm conference, the coordination and board invited everyone to the Business Meeting, where the team explained the advantages of being an ESA member, as well as a RN37 member.

ESA Members as participants



3.1.- Business Meeting ESA RN 37 “Urban Sociology” on June, 29th 2017, Krakow, Poland

- 1) Around 35 participants were present at 17h30.
- 2) The Meeting Chair was Lúgia Ferro, the RN 37 Coordinator by then.
- 3) Lúgia Ferro reminded the group about the next ESA Conference in Athens (2017).
- 4) The Nominating Committee for the next RN elections was selected from volunteers present in the meeting. The final composition was integrated by the following members: Lúgia Ferro, Gabriele Manella and Laura Guarino. Gabriele Manella was designated the chair of the nominating committee. It was defined that all Electoral Lists must be sent to Gabriele Manella and Lúgia Ferro in a date to be defined and sent to the members by e-mail (the date was later set to 27th July). It was also mentioned that the lists should be composed by 1 coordinator, 2 vice-coordinators (from at least 2 countries) with an electoral program (plan and initiatives for the period between September 2017 to August 2019). It was added that a proposal for the next RN Midterm Conference (2018) should be suggested. Non present members of RN37 in Athens can delegate their vote to another member, informing the *Nominating Committee* who that person will be. Present members should only receive 1 intention of vote each from non-present members.

Book published by RN37 – “Moving Cities: Contested Views on Urban Life”

Starting from the results of the RN37 Midterm Conference held in Krakow, Poland, last year, the team worked together to edit a book to published by Springer this summer. The book "**Moving Cities: Contested Views on Urban Life**" is edited by all of the RN37 coordination and board members. The book includes very relevant and high scientific quality papers written by **Saskia Sassen, Talja Blokland, Joan Pujadas, Gaspar Maza, Ray Hutchison, Heitor Frúgoli Jr., Maxime Felder, Loïc Pignolo, Riccardo Valente, Nunzia Borrelli, Kathleen Adams, Teemu Kemppainen, Sonja Lakic, Jennifer Morstein and Eve Avdoulos.**

In articulation with the LOC, the coordination and board organised the book launch for the RN37 business meeting at the ESA Conference in Athens.

4- The ESA Athens Conference

157 proposals were submitted to the RN37 sessions and 99 were actually accepted and presented at the conference. The debate was very intense and the colleagues were encouraged to participate at the Business Meeting. The RN37 sessions started with a keynote speech by its former coordinator, Prof. João Teixeira Lopes.

(Athens, 31st of August 2017, Panteion University, room PC 4.26, 7.30pm-8.30pm)

AGENDA

There were around 50 persons present at the session at 19h30.

1- Presentation of the book "Moving Cities Contested Views on Urban Life"

Lígia Ferro and Patrícia Pereira presented the book *Moving Cities. Contested Views on Urban Life* (<http://www.springer.com/us/book/9783658184612>). The book was published by Springer and it is the result of the RN37 mid-term conference *Moving cities* held in Krakow, June 29th – July, 1st, 2016. Many scholars participated in the meeting, and the selection process for the book was complex. After debating, the RN37 team decided that each coordination and board member had to propose two proposals to include in the book. Then the authors were contacted to submit a paper to peer evaluation through a blind peer review process. The keynote speakers of the mid-term conference (Saskia Sassen, Tanja Blokland, Ayo Mansaray and Jacek Gadecki) were also invited to submit a paper (Saskia Sassen and Talja Blokland wrote chapters for the book, Ayo Mansaray wasn't able to write due to work schedule and Jacek Gadecki didn't answer to the call). Springer accepted to publish the book. At the launch, the book was distributed to the presents so they could see its main contents.

2 – RN37: a presentation about the work of the RN37 team over the last two years

The RN37 coordination and board members briefly presented what have been done over the last two years. The team stressed not only the midterm conference in Krakow and the publication of the book, but also the increase of RN37 members: there are 105 members now and became one the biggest RNs in the European Sociological Association.

Lígia Ferro also presented the communication strategy implemented by the team: the decision was not to invest in a website due to the high costs that this would entail, but in the mailing list and the Facebook page.

A colleague asked from the audience about the organisation of the work within the RN Coordination and Board. The coordinator stressed that they have been in touch almost weekly by e-mail and they have meet by skype sometimes; meetings in person have only been possible at the midterm conference and at the ESA conference.

3 - The RN37 Board election process

This part of the session was coordinated by Gabriele Manella, chair of the nominating committee. Gabriele reminds that a call for nominations was sent through the RN37 mailing list and the RN37 Facebook page. The first deadline was July 27th and then it was postponed to July 31st due to the fact that no proposal was submitted by the end of the deadline.

Just one list of candidates has been presented (see Annex 1). Gabriele invited Marta Smagacz-Poziemska, the candidate for coordinator, to briefly present their program and answer some comments and questions.

After checking the participants at the meeting who have the right to vote (25 people), Gabriele propose two ways of voting: secret (using the ballots) or open (for hand lift). Gabriele reminds that in the last Business Meeting (Prague 2015) people opted for the open vote.

After that, the voting process was open: 25 votes in favour of this list. Gabriele communicated the result and the election of the new RN37 Board, and he gave the word to Marta as new RN37 coordinator; she thank all the assembly and briefly presented the work programme for the next two years.

In respect to the next mid-term conference, a proposal to organise it in Madrid in 2018 was presented by Juan Jose Villalon Ogayar. The colleague invited all the participants to submit possible topics for the conference. A call for proposals will be sent as soon as possible through the RN37 mailing list and the RN37 Facebook page. Juan also invites people to express their preference about the period for the conference: the end of June 2018 or July 2018. The majority is in favour of June; Juan Villalon will check the availability of the university facilities for that period.

4 - Other topics

The RN37 business meeting is open to all the people, ESA RN37 members and non-members. Svetlana Hristova, a non-member, asked to speak. She reminded that 2018 will be cultural heritage year. An important conference about this topic will be done in Bulgaria next spring. Svetlana also briefly presented a volume co-edited with Mariusz Czepczynski, *Public Space. Between reimagination and occupation* (<https://www.routledge.com/Public-Space-Between-Reimagination-and-Occupation/Hristova-Czepczynski/p/book/9781472453648>). She invites all RN37 members to make comments and propose collaborations on this topic.

After that, Lígia and Gabriele closed the Business Meeting; the next BM will be held in 2018, in Madrid.

ANNEX 1 – PROGRAMME PROPOSAL OF THE RN37/ ELECTED COORDINATION AND BOARD

Programme proposal:

The RN37 – “Urban Sociology” has been officially established in November 2014, at the 1st Mid-Term Conference “Public Spaces and Private Lives in the Contemporary City” in Lisbon, Portugal. Within almost 3-years activity we have had a number of evidences confirming that Urban Sociology is a very vibrant and productive area of study, interesting for many European researchers. The 37. RN integrates 85 members at the moment and it means that we are one of the most numerous RNs in the ESA. The strong interest in the 2nd Midterm-Conference “Moving Cities. Contested Views on Urban Life” in Krakow, Poland 2016 and in our sessions in Athens 2017, coming from academics and independent researchers illustrate that we really need space and opportunities for the transnational cooperation.

We would like to keep our path and continue the work we have been doing for the past two years: consolidating the network; improving the means to communicate with our members and to disseminate their work and creating opportunities for them to collaborate.

As members of this list and candidates for the RN 37 coordination our main aims are:

- to promote networking between all researchers interested in urban sociology.
- to disseminate and promote the results of the research projects, especially the publications of the RN37 members.
- to organize and support the organisation of collective publications between the RN members

- to encourage Ph.D. students in Urban Sociology, stimulating their active participation in the network and giving them the space for discussing their research ideas and projects.
- to strengthen the connections between science and society, i.e. by promoting the applied role of urban sociology among stakeholders (municipalities, NGOs, media etc.)

To do so we will:

- continue developing our Facebook profile (<https://web.facebook.com/esarn37/>) and our website (<http://esarn37.hypotheses.org/>). We have had about 1000 followers in May 2017 and we would like to make this page one of the most popular forums for European urban researchers. Our aim is that part of the content of these two pages comes from our members directly.
- organize the next midterm-conference in Madrid in 2018 (the local team lead by Victoria Gomez and Juan Jose Villalon) - as in Krakow, we would like to organise the conference attainable for Ph.D. students and for researchers which won't be financially supported by their institutions (and we would like to keep the low conference fee). We think of the summer school for Ph.D. students at this midterm conference.
- find support for the next publications (as in the case of the monograph published by the Springer in 2017).
- collaborate with other ESA's research networks and other urban research networks (e.g. RN-1 – Ageing in Europe, RN12 – Environment & Society; RN20 - Qualitative methods; RN35 – Sociology of Migration) and associations.

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Porto, September, 21st, 2017

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