



## Special Session Proposal

### **New working spaces, resilience, and peripheral areas during the Covid-19 pandemic**

#### **Abstract**

The special session is the continuation of a previous one organised by Ilaria Mariotti, Pavel Bednar, Amnon Frenkel, and Sigal Kaplan within the 59th ERSA Congress in Lyon in 2019. The session aims to collect papers related to the main theme of the Cost Action 18124 “The geography of new working spaces and the impact on the periphery” (2019-2023), which focuses on new and emerging working spaces (i.e. coworking and maker spaces) in core vs. peripheral areas of cities and regions, fostered by the digital transformation and the sharing and collaborative economy.

New working spaces as places or hubs for knowledge creation, diffusion of innovation, transfer of tacit knowledge, local collaboration, can be a driver of the economic change and building entrepreneurship ecosystem by retaining the creative class and the knowledge workers in the periphery and thereby increasing competitiveness and performance of peripheral areas.

Over the last decade, there has been a proliferation of NWS such as i) collaborative and creative working spaces (coworking spaces and smart work centres); (ii) makers paces and other technical spaces (fablabs, open workshops); (iii) other new working spaces (hackerspaces, Living Lab and corporate labs); (iv) informal new working spaces (coffee shops and libraries);

Findings from the literature, however, reveal that there is little evidence about the socio-economic effects of new working spaces in urban regions as well as in peripheral areas, while impacts on geography and spatial planning agenda are not fully explored yet. Moreover, scant is the evidence on the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic on new working spaces in urban and peripheral areas, on their resiliency level, and about their attractiveness towards remote workers?

Within this context, the special session aims to give an answer to the following main research questions:

- What is the role of new working spaces in the territorial strategies and more adaptive and resilient regions (before and during the COVID-19 pandemic)?
- May new working spaces enhance the workers' economic performance and wellbeing?
- Are new working spaces models recovering quickly after the Covid-19 pandemic (resiliency)? What are the new business models they have developed to face the Covid-19 pandemic?

- May new working spaces favor social capital building and encourage return migration of knowledge workers to the periphery, especially during the Covid-19 pandemic?
- May they provide inclusive spaces to women (i.e. mothers, and minority women) close to home, thus, favoring gender equality? Has this phenomenon been accelerated by the Covid-19 pandemic?
- Can they maintain the livability and economic viability of peripheries, and foster opportunities growth, thus enhancing a multiplier effect generating new knowledge communities?