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**Smart Regions - Opportunities for Sustainable
Development in the Digital Era**

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***Special Session (SS22) on:
Regional Disparities in the EU and Hungary in the Age of
Digitalization and the Pandemic***

Organizer:

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The aim and scope:

Discussion about the opportunities and challenges of digitization has been ongoing for many years. Digitalisation not only offers new opportunities and platforms for the less developed EU regions (eg in CEE), but also challenges the creation of digital infrastructure in regions is significantly limited by the socio-economic conditions of different regions and by their positions in the GVCs. The epidemic has opened up new possibilities and at the same time differentiating factors in the field of digitization at regional and city levels. Papers by Hungarian regional scientists examine these processes from different perspectives, in comparison with a broader EU perspectives.

The first study examines the growth effects of knowledge networks in terms of positions of actors within the knowledge network and their access to knowledge. Another paper examines the effects of FDI on GDP growth and GFCF, and tests the causal relationship between these variables in the Hungarian regions. Another study explores the empirical relationship between important work-related factors in the local spread of the SARS-COV-2 virus, like telework potential and neighborhood characteristics of workers and their commuting to work, and the structural characteristics of supply-chain networks of Hungarian industries and firms. A research evaluates Hungarian strategic urban planning from the perspective of well-being conceptualising well-being in line with Amartya Sen's capability approach (CA). The last paper presents a new conceptual approach towards the 'Smart City' concept in the context of digitalization using a pilot application focusing on smart rural communities in a peripheral cross-border environment.

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