



Call for papers: 2021 RSAI World Congress

Smart regions – Opportunities for sustainable development in the digital era

The [2021 RSAI World Conference](#) will be held from 25 to 28 May, 2021. It will be organized by the Moroccan Section of the Regional Science Association International. The meeting is open for the worldwide regional science community and aims to bring together the key elements of multidisciplinary regional science research and to provide a scientific platform for presenting and discussing research at the frontiers of the spatial sciences in a broad sense. The themes addressed zoom in particular on the pressing challenges of achieving the Sustainable Development Goals in the light of the socio-economic impact of covid-19, in both developed and developing economies, and cover spatial dimensions ranging from local to global development. Such challenges relate to both people and places, and call for innovative and critical contributions from a conceptual-theoretical, statistical-modelling, qualitative, practical evidence-based, or governance perspectives.

Consequently, topics such as urban-rural development, migration, spatial and resources location, border effects, urbanization, sustainable and circular cities, mobility, land use, environmental quality, disaster management, energy transition, culture, poverty, segregation, spatial justice, social justice, gender, social enterprises, policy and governance, entrepreneurship, spatial statistics and modelling are important ingredients of the 2021 World Congress. A new challenge to regional science research is formed by the emerging digital technology and its implications for analysis, monitoring, evaluation and forecasting spatial dynamics at all levels. Therefore, the potential of spatial and temporal big data, of social media information, and of the new spatial maps emerging from digitization and robotization are potential topics as well. Clearly, given the ongoing challenge, and threat, posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, studies dealing with the assessment of its impact on regional and urban economies will also be welcome.

The Mediterranean area and Africa present their own challenges. Morocco, named Africa's most attractive investment destination—according to the Africa Investment Index 2018, is the ideal venue to address the frictions between the developing and developed worlds.

The Ocher City Marrakech provides the perfect setting of a geographically varied and pristine landscape. It is well connected by air, and boasts plenty of high quality and modestly priced hotels. Regional scientists from around the globe can enjoy the desert in this historic tourist destination. Its geographical location at the foot of the Atlas Mountains and less than one hundred miles either from the Sahara dunes or the Atlantic beaches, is a guarantee for a creative and enjoyable regional science gathering.

Our plan is to hold the World Congress at the Mogador Palace Hotel in Marrakech, Morocco. If instead the public health conditions remain uncertain, we have plans for an online mode. Details will be provided later.

Because many potential attendees had previously submitted their abstracts for the 2020 edition of the World Congress, that was eventually postponed, the fees are unchanged. However, in case the conference switches online, fees will be considerably reduced.

Important dates:

December 21, 2020	Opening of Abstract/Session Submission Portal
February 15, 2021	Deadline for Abstract/Session Submission
February 28, 2021	Notification of Paper Acceptance
March 15, 2021	Pre-registration Deadline
March 30, 2021	Advance registration deadline
April 15, 2021	Preliminary Program
May 25-28, 2021	Conference in Marrakech/Online

Abstract submission portal:

<https://app.oxfordabstracts.com/stages/2427/submitter>