



Call for Papers

Workshop

The Regional Science Association International

“THE ROLE OF ACADEMIC RESEARCH IN INFORMING EVIDENCE – BASED POLICY MAKING”

Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Montenegro, North Macedonia, and Serbia, all aspire to be members of the European Union. Although the six countries are at different stages of fulfilling their aspiration for EU membership, they have already been influenced significantly by EU policies and programs designed for them. These policies and programmes have aimed at supporting economic, political, and social development; speeding up the reform process facilitating transition from centrally planned economies to democratic market economies, and enhancing the rule of law and governance in these countries.

The EU's regional cooperation process has been the crucial institutional support for Western Balkan countries to overcome their previous historical challenges. The EU supported the Western Balkans through different instruments such as Stabilization and Association Process aimed at political, institutional, and economic integration and reconciliation between these countries. In addition, after the initial range of actions to support the progress of reforms in these countries, the EU embarked on the main support actions in the form of three Instruments of Pre-Accession (IPAs), followed by EU programs of education and research such as Erasmus, Horizon, which will support the EU education and research policies in the Western Balkans.

The scientific journal *Regional Science Policy and Practice* (<https://rsaiconnect.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/journal/17577802>) that belongs to Regional Science Association International (www.regionalscience.org) and it is committed to promoting the development of Regional Science across the globe specifically through the promotion of special issues nurtured by workshops is introducing a Special Issue call on “**The Integration of the Western Balkans in the European Union**”

The special issue on *Regional Science Policy and Practice* intends to promote the EU Integration Agenda, exploring how it is shaping current regional policy research across the Western Balkan countries. The special issue intends to challenge current and highlight new research perspectives on regional development brought by European Integration commitment to promoting an interdisciplinary exchange of ideas, knowledge, research, information, and recommendations between scholars, professionals, policymakers, and doctoral students. The organizers warmly invite inputs from researchers, policymakers, and practitioners working in all areas related to regional development with a particular focus on European Integration perspectives that relate to the following workshop themes and areas.

Special Issue Themes

1. EU Enlargement in the spotlight of global turmoil

- Good governance in regional cooperation
- Effective regional markets through neighborhood policies
- Spatial Planning and Territorial Governance
- Cohesion policies and enlargement challenges
- Territorialisation of the regional policies in EU candidate countries

2. Inclusive growth and regional development

- Regional growth policies and strategies towards EU integration agenda
- Socio-economic inclusion in the region
- The EU's role in sustainable development of the region
- Growth opportunities for inclusion in the EU market
- EU agenda towards green growth and energy efficiency
- Integrated territorial investments for resilient regions
- Strategies regional initiatives for sustainable tourism and cultural heritage
- Creative industries and regional development
- Transportation networks and accessibility
- Quality of education in Western Balkan countries, reforms, and challenges
- Agriculture and regional development

3. EU Regional Policies and institutions

- Reducing regional disparities and improving regional wellbeing
- Knowledge transfer and spillover effects
- Good governance in EU institutional reforms
- Regional cooperation in the management of EU funds
- Institutional transformation towards EU integration
- EU policy making and citizen's participation
- The role of government in developing economic and integration policies
- Governance challenges in EU negotiation process

4. Regional innovation, competitiveness and entrepreneurship

- Smart specialization and regional value chains
- Multinational enterprises and foreign direct investment in the region
- Industrial strategies for creation of regional innovative clusters
- Technological change and diversification
- Social innovation and resilient regions
- Regional digital transformation risks and challenges
- Digital skills and regional sustainability



- Effects of Covid-19 pandemic on regional digitalization
- E-commerce, E-learning, E-business for regional development
- Adaptive and resilient enterprises for faster integration in EU markets
- Structural transformation of operations in innovative enterprises

5. Regional finance, investment, and capital markets

- Efficiency and performance of regional financial institutions
- Internal controls and financial reporting for integration in EU markets
- Regional financial instruments for small and medium enterprises
- Effective public finance management for the EU integration agenda
- Sustainable financial analysis and auditing
- Challenges of financial reporting after the pandemic
- Free movement of goods and capital

6. Demographic change, migration, and mobility behavior

- Challenges and opportunities of brain gain
- Internal migration and regional change
- The new geography of regional population clusters
- Structural change and resilience in labor markets
- Urban reorganization new opportunities for peripheral regions
- Networks, interactions and inequalities in cities

Important Dates

1. Opening of paper submission April 20, 2023
2. Closing of paper Submission October 01, 2023

Submission of complete papers to:

<https://rsaconnect.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/journal/17577802>



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