



Research Network Seminar Report

The second Seminar of the series of events organised by the RSA Research Network on 'Regional Development and the Changing Geography of Outsourcing Business Services in an Enlarged Europe' took place at the Jagiellonian University on 17-18th of September 2009. The event was hosted by the Department of Regional Development of the Institute of Geography and Spatial Management.

The Seminar, entitled '*The Role of Business Services and Knowledge Transfer in Cluster Formation in Central and Eastern Europe*', proved to be a very successful event and was attended by a diverse audience including established academics, young researchers and practitioners.

Speakers from across Europe (including United Kingdom, Ireland, The Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, Poland), presented eleven papers on issues ranging from the location of business services, through the role played by universities in local and regional development, 'knowledge' aspects of business services, to the impact foreign companies have on local milieus. Equally, the papers presented covered diverse geographical areas including Ireland, England, Central Eastern European Countries (including Ukraine).

Key notes addresses were delivered by prof. Seamus Grimes of National University of Ireland, Galway who explored the meaning of offshoring business services to Ireland, and prof. Robert Huggins of University of Wales who discussed the global and local knowledge flows from both theoretical and empirical perspective. Among practitioners, Anna Harendarz presented the operations of Lufthansa Global Telesales from spatial and organisational perspective .

Two days of debates were concluded with the Roundtable Discussion which enabled the participants to sum up the key points raised during the seminar and identify the directions for future research. Furthermore, the coordinators of the Research Network suggested publishing a selection of papers as a special issue of one of the leading journals.

Formal academic proceedings constituted main part of the Seminar, however thanks to the generosity of the sponsors the event comprised also social sections. The seminar dinner, sponsored by the Centre for Regional Analysis (local think tank institution), presented the participants with an important networking opportunity in an informal setting, while the tour of the Old Town allowed the partakers to learn more about the past of the town where the seminar was held.

The next meeting of the Research Network has been scheduled for Summer 2011. Prior to this, however, the RN will organise a session at the forthcoming RSA Annual Conference in Pecs. To stay up-to-date with the developments and the activities of the RN all participants have been encouraged to join the RN mailing list at bpo-geography@jiscmail.ac.uk

The organisation of the seminar was made possible thanks to support of number of organisations. Thanks to the RSA Research Network grant it was possible to offer accommodation bursaries to the vast majority of the contributors who have requested it and cover transfer costs. Financial contribution offered by the Centre for Regional Analysis covered the delegates packs and cost of catering (including dinner, lunches and tea/coffee breaks). To all the sponsoring institutions the seminar organisers would like to express their most sincere thanks.