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Editorial

The first issue of *Economic Themes* in year 2023 is devoted to papers relevant from an urban sustainability perspective. 2023 is a year of continued war in Ukraine, uncertainties of energy availability and the transition to new energy solutions, increasing political tensions not only between most European/Western countries and Russia, but also between China and Western economies. It is also a time of recuperation from the COVID-19 pandemic, and a risky as well as promising future with Ai and the promise of a new information generation paradigm. On top of all, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change –or IPCC - states in their recent scientific report that only swift action can avert the irrevocable path we are heading down. Yet, in times of drastic societal challenge and change, there is hope. A few decades ago, a themed issue of this kind would not have been an option. Sustainability was undefined and illusive, and at best associated with waste management than the societally accepted and increasingly integrated platform for a move towards a more resilient society. The Sustainable Development Goals or SDG's have functioned as important vehicles for the later years' transformation, and has done so by changing the focus from technical descriptions of parts and components to comprehensive and systemic frameworks where all have a role to play, and which offers a framework for policymakers to approach and implement goals in action. This special issue is a contributor in this respect; with a broad range of research topics, an international group of researchers are sharing their knowledge and latest research finds on topics such as transport management, commuting, tourism, energy management and migration. The common denominator in all papers is that they offer clear findings and policy for how to make the urban landscape a bit more sustainable, and thereby underlining the aims of this special issue – to contribute to a sustainable urban development.

Six papers are included in this special issue, of which transport, mobility and energy are corner stones. In the first paper, Teodorović and Nikolić (2023) are developing an analytical approach for decreasing congestions in traffic due to maintenance related work zoning on road infrastructure. Poor coordination of road maintenance can negatively affect accessibility, and with no gain in respect to road quality and maintenance. By modelling flows that reduces vulnerability in traffic, positive effects for accessibility, reduced pollution and better service for urban and economic, can be the result. Ian Shuttleworth (2023) is in the second paper studying overtime changes in daily commuting patterns, with particular attention to the distinction between active modes of commuting (walking and cycling) and individual travels which are mostly car driven. The specific gendered, and social group related differences between modes of transport are known from earlier studies, but Ian shows how over-time changes should be an integral part of promotion of sustainable modes of transport. In the third paper, Kourtit, Nijkamp and Scholten (2023) directs attention to local energy transitions, and the need for guidance and policy for facilitating both production and consumption on a more local level. The paper clearly shows that a systematic policy and management of transitions will be needed for a sustainable energy transition. In the fourth paper by Toger, Östh and Gebert Persson (2023), recreational mobility and the spatial consumption of tourism destinations are studied using cruise tourism as study population. The paper both contributes with novel

methods for collecting spatial data, as well as facilitates our understanding of potential footprint effects in sensitive heritage rich environments. In the fifth paper, Selçuk Özer and Türk (2023) are studying push and pull factors related to migration behaviour in Anatolia. Central in this study is the accessibility to amenities and services that are shown to be positively correlated to net migration patterns. The study stresses the environmental qualities for the resilience and sustainability of a regional population and in the longer perspective, the ability to secure regional economic and social stability. In the sixth paper of the special issue, Šantić, Langović and Đorđević (2023) are studying the drivers behind rural to urban migration patterns, and the subsequent attitude to emigration in Serbia. The study finds strong links between economic situation and the willingness to migrate and emigrate but also to the lack of consideration in regional and local practices. In order to maintain and develop a sustainable population and economy, these findings can function as a point of departure for future plans to limit population loss.

The special issues of the journal *Economic Themes* titled *Urban Sustainability* represents a result of the collaboration among the partners engaged within the Project ‘Twinning for excellence in Smart and Resilient Urban Development: Advanced Data Analytics Approach, UR-DATA HORIZON-WIDERA-2021-ACCESS-02’. Publishing of the issue would significantly contribute to the strengthening the scientific recognition of the Journal *Economic Themes*.

We would like to express special thanks to authors for cooperation and their excellent work and dedication and to reviewers who provided invaluable feedback and guidance throughout the review process. We hope that this issue will inspire further research and action towards achieving urban sustainable development. We encourage all readers to engage with the ideas presented and to use them as a basis for further discussions.

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