Report 4: Diana Prelorenzo, Session H. Regional Upgrading & Urbanisation in Developing & Emerging Economies

By Diana Prelorenzo, PhD Candidate at the Center of Research and Documentation on Americas (CREDA) of the Sorbonne-Nouvelle University, France

The RSA Annual Conference 2024 was held at the Department of Economics and Business Sciences and the Department of Architecture at the University of Florence, Italy. Sessions were dedicated to analyzing global challenges, regional collaboration, and the role of space.

On Thursday afternoon, the "Regional Upgrading & Urbanisation in Developing & Emerging Economies" session features four presentations, each covering case studies from different world regions: China, Brazil, India, and Northwest Africa.

In the first presentation, Miguel Hidalgo Martinez from Xi'an Jiaotong-Liverpool University analyzes the city of Chongqing in southwestern China, which has great economic potential in terms of a new internal city connecting to multinational industries, discussing the urban redevelopment challenges.

Secondly, Fernanda Faria Silva from the Federal University of the Minas Gerais presents an interesting work on gender inequality in the mining sector. This work analyzes women's incomes in the city of Mariana (Brazil), which is fully dependent on the mining industry, using a survey to ask 413 "heads of households" of the region.

Then, Taruna Bansal from the Jamia Millia Islamia investigated the Urban Development of Mathura and Vrindavanin, India, from a cultural perspective. The analysis uses data from the census of India and satellite imagery from 1991 to 2020 to analyze urban expansion's spatial and demographic patterns. The results show urban growth associated with an increasing population density and the development of economic activities and reveal the impact of religious tourism and urbanization on the area's cultural landscape.

The final presentation made by Andrius Kučas from the JCR of the European Commission focuses on creating a new decision support framework to help design a transport infrastructure and facilitate the collaboration between different kinds of actors to invest efficiently. This framework has been developed to identify and characterize a strategic transport and urban corridor in West Africa. Based on an innovative methodology, the model of the framework uses explicit spatial criteria to create different policy scenarios and prioritize investments.

The different presentations were all specifically related to developing and emerging countries, addressing issues that are highly pertinent to regional studies. They explored how various dimensions—geographic, social, economic, and cultural—interact in these contexts. The discussions highlighted the challenges in addressing these complex interactions and making informed decisions to drive sustainable development and urbanization.

About the author

Diana Prelorenzo's research focuses on regional development strategy through the economic specialization in Mexico.