

Editorial

CIDADES, Comunidades e Territórios is pleased to publish issue 25 following an enriching 12-year history in search of top quality, diverse and ever challenging scientific production in Urban Studies. This seems to be the suitable moment to look back and appreciate the road we have travelled from the outset, chiefly as a vehicle for disseminating results of an assorted group of researchers closely connected to the former Centre of Territorial Studies, to the present situation as an open-access online journal benefiting from contributions from academics all over the world.

Demonstrating this constant progress is the fact that 80 per cent of the published articles this year alone resulted from the work of foreign authors, which plainly reflects an overall trend towards scientific production and diffusion overcoming geographical barriers. This is also true in terms of our readers, judging by available statistics that point to the fact that a fourth of our audience originates from countries other than Portugal. Indeed, we are happy to witness the consolidation of groups of readers from Brazil, Italy, the USA and Spain, among the 650 users currently enrolled in our journal's platform. On the other hand, the fact that all articles are fully and freely available online is visibly translated into the constantly increasing figures in website pageviews (close to 37,000) and downloaded articles (over 1200, so far).

This proximity with bounteous and heterogeneous audiences seems to accomplish our goal to capture an international network of experts as well as junior researchers, with a special emphasis on those with greater affinities in terms of language, history and culture, such as the Community of Portuguese Language Countries and the Ibero-American States. This may well be the key strategic path to success in our period of global crisis and added uncertainty.

This issue is clearly revealing of these trends. We set off with the problems of transportation and urban planning in the Lisbon Metropolitan Area (Miguel Padeiro), followed by the contemporary evolution in housing demand in the same region (Teresa Costa Pinto). We then move on to Brazil, with a case study on an alternative approach to sanitation policies (Beatriz Ribeiro, Luiz Oliveira and Alan Silva), an overview of the evolution of the Social Development Index in Aracajú (Christiane Jesus and Nelson Dias) and a discussion over the media speech covering public security in Rio de Janeiro (Pablo Oliveira). We conclude with an essay about urban impact in the landscape of Belo Horizonte (Marcos Guimarães) which turns out to be a spot-on junction between continents and epochs – a feasible view into the future of Urban Studies.

Lastly, we would like to address a final word to earnestly thank all authors who have reached out to CIDADES as a medium to disclose their research findings, as well as all experts who have agreed to perform referee duties to review and scientifically evaluate submitted articles since the beginning of the journal's new stage. This is a particular component of scientific work that, due to its very nature, requires anonymity and hence a certain invisibility which might easily discourage the performance of such a task. All the more reason for our Editorial Committee to praise the generosity and professional demeanour of those who have accepted this request, often more than once and following through with several versions of each manuscript, sharing our quest for improved quality. This has been an invaluable contribution to raise our publication criteria and to walk the path towards the highest standards of excellence as a reference journal in Urban Studies, as is the case of CIDADES, Comunidades e Territórios.

Walter Rodrigues

Editor