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Editorial Note

This first issue of volume 8 (2021), which is of the second pandemic year, publishes three important study contributions on some political and economical phenomena and processes on which largely our life depends, respectively at global, macro-regional (Europe), and national (Italy) scales.

Paolo Pane, in the first article, deals with the extension of the geopolitical competition from the conquest of terrestrial spaces to that of extra-terrestrial spaces, highlighting that the new geopolitics requires a reinterpretation in a modern key of some basic concepts of classical geopolitics, in particular on the concept of borders.

In conclusion P. Pane underlines “space determines new economic opportunities and new geopolitical relations, and in particular, I should add, new strategies for peace keeping. Space, in fact, exalts what is understandable even just by reflecting on long-range missiles, which have put in crisis and should have overcome some classic geopolitical theories on which this article rightly makes us reflect.

Sergio Conti still gives us a masterful paper, in addition to the one published in the previous issue, dealing here with the concepts of regional development and the role attributed in it to the space-environment values, considering specifically the territorial policies of the European Union. All the various versions of the European Spatial Development Perspective (ESDP, he states, “pivot around three *key general principles*, set out in Leipzig in 1994: social and economic cohesion, sustainable development, balanced competitiveness for Europe”. Reflecting on the the success stories that have marked local/regional development in Europe in recent years underlines some *key lessons* and concludes that success factors - so identified as “keys to local development” – are “territorial cohesion, polycentrism and active territoriality”.

Last article, by Silvia Grandi and Christian Sellar, using the geographical patterns of Italian banks’ international network as a case study, analyses the relationship between governmental economic strategies, the international strategies of banks, and firms. As it models the main strategic organizational processes of the banking system since the late 2000s and highlights the relationships with internationalization, trade flows, and government policies, it gives a relevant contribution to the Geography of banks.

The article also demonstrates the importance of a geographic approach - of the geographer's "mania" of wanting to understand the relationships between different phenomena and processes - to understand socio-economic systems and their developments.

Francesco Adamo