Viola von Berlepsch, who successfully defended her PhD on June 21st 2018, has been awarded the 2018 RSAI Czamanski Dissertation Award. This prize is given by the Regional Science Association International (RSAI) to the author of the best PhD dissertation proposal judged to exemplify the philosophy and approach of Professor Czamanski, one of the pioneers of regional science. The award consists of a US$1,000 prize to the student and a plaque to the student’s advisor(s). Viola’s dissertation supervisors were Andrés Rodríguez-Pose and Neil Lee. The award ceremony will take place at the North American Regional Science Conference in San Antonio, Texas in November.

Viola’s dissertation, entitled “The long-term economic impact of migration and its significance for US prosperity” dwells, as the title says, on the very innovative evaluation of the long-term economic effects of migration. The analysis conducted in the PhD connects migrant settlement patterns in the USA at the turn of the 19th to the 20th century to present-day levels of income per capita at county level. The first three substantive chapters of the thesis analyse the effects of different compositional features of the historical migrant stock – diversity of migrants in one place, presence of women migrants, and distance travelled by the migrants respectively – on long-term economic performance at country level. The final chapter assesses the presence of migrant path dependency as a potential transmission mechanism in the transfer of the migrants’ economic impact across time, by establishing a link between past European and more recent Latin American migration to the US.

With close to 5,000 members in more than 60 countries worldwide, the RSAI is the organisation of regional science organisations, bringing together subnational, national, and linguistic associations, grouped into super-regions, under a single umbrella association.