

## DIVERSIFIED EXCHANGE OF RESEARCH RESULTS



*Sven Bienert, Wolfgang Schäfers and Steffen Sebastian (above left) were the three organizers of ERES Annual Conference. A special part of the programme was dedicated to Professor Karl-Werner Schulte and his engagement in Africa (below right).*

During four days in June in Regensburg the biggest European conference about real estate research took place. About 450 participants met at the 23rd Annual Conference of the European Real Estate Society ERES at IREBS International Real Estate Business School at University of Regensburg.

Already since more than 20 years ERES is bringing together property industry and real estate research. "A core dimension of the European Real Estate Society is to facilitate interaction between academics

and practitioners in the real estate discipline at national and international levels", said Dr. Jim Berry, Professor at the Built Environment Research Institute of Ulster University in Northern Ireland and Executive Director of ERES. The ERES events are not only about presentation and discussion of most recent research results. The exchange with other academics as well as with practitioners of the real estate industry, the contact with already known and the meeting with so far unknown colleagues is at least of the same importance. That is the purpose of the annual conferences, but also of the educa-

tional and industry seminars. Every year a different university is hosting the ERES Annual Conference – in 2014 it was Bucharest, in 2015 Istanbul and this year it was the turn of IREBS International Real Estate Business School of University of Regensburg. And there gathered not only participants from Europe, but from Africa, America, Australia and Asia as well.

Main part of this year's programme were the Africa sessions. Reason for this was the 70th birthday of Professor Karl-Werner Schulte celebrated in Regensburg. "Karl-Werner Schulte is not only the

doyen of German real estate academia, but also, through his commitment to Africa, he has proven that his creative drive remains unbroken", Wolfgang Schäfers, Professor for Real Estate Management at IREBS, commented on his former doctoral supervisor. The sessions dedicated to Africa demonstrated not only the great diversity of the continent, they also proved that countries and markets in Africa are offering huge potential. "As a heterogeneous and developing continent, Africa offers distinctly attractive investment opportunities for risk-friendly investors", stated Karl-Werner Schulte, Honorary Member of ERES as well as of the African counterpart AFRES African Real Estate Society and Founder of IREBS Foundation for African Real Estate Research.

Not only for Africa, but generally the great number of presented papers and the related discussions proved the benefit of academic research into questions of the real estate practice. The broad range of topics covered nearly all aspects important for the real estate industry as well as for the academic teaching and research. But of at least the same importance were the conference breaks when mainly the sunny terrace with some catering was inviting to network and to talk to each other.

But ERES participants became not only familiar with the Vielberth Building of IREBS and the campus. The Icebreaking Event in the beer garden of a local restaurant, the Welcome Reception in the Old Town Hall, where the Lord Mayor of Regensburg introduced his city in a short welcome speech, the gala dinner in a traditional brewery and a boat trip on the Danube offered opportunities to learn a bit more about Regensburg and its local culture. Especially the international, but as well some German participants could discover one of the secondary locations currently favoured in discussions about real estate investments. There is to add: Regensburg left good impressions.

The closing event of ERES Annual Conference 2016 was the 12th IREBS Real Estate Symposium this year also dedic-



*Also from Africa a delegation came to ERES Annual Conference in Regensburg.*

ated to Professor Karl-Werner Schulte HonRICS and his 70th birthday. Among others Christian Ulbrich, recently appointed World President of JLL and the first German taking over this role, referred to "International capital flows and their importance for real estate investments and urban development".

Ion Anghel, Professor and Head of Financial Analysis and Valuation Department at Bucharest University of Economic Studies, was full of praise of the Regensburg event: "With this conference, IREBS has set new standards which will determine the work of ERES for years to come." Also the representatives of the real estate industry were impressed by the large variety and high quality of lectures. Martin Brühl, Managing Director of Union Investment Real Estate and till end of June 2016 World President of the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS): "The many challenges confronting the real estate industry can best be tackled jointly at both the theoretical and practical levels." And he continued: "The discussion on 'Best Practice' at this ERES Annual Conference has provided the ideal framework, and a very inspiring one at that".

To expect is the same with the next ERES Annual Conference, taking place from June 28 to July 1, 2017 at Delft University of Technology in the Netherlands. But before there are two Industry Seminars – one in October 2016 in Madrid, the other in March 2017 in Berlin.

On October 14, 2016 in Madrid the topic is "The Spanish Commercial Real Estate Market Post-Crisis: New Institutions – New Opportunities". Venue will be the headquarters of Analistas Financieros Internacionales AFI. Furthermore there is an Education Seminar in the English city of Nottingham on offer. On Friday, December 9, 2016 and Saturday, December 10, 2016 in Nottingham Trent University it will be about "Real Estate Investment: Theory and Practice". Both locations, Madrid and Nottingham, have currently a special attractiveness: Spain is back again on international investor's radar, and with the vote for Brexit UK has decided to leave the EU. Therefore travelling to both events might offer first hand impressions. Anyway, there are interesting lectures and discussions to expect. For further information please go to [www.eres.org](http://www.eres.org) | **Andreas Schiller**