
Preface

During the preparation of this *Handbook* Ronald van Kempen passed away after a short illness. His sudden death at the age of 57 was an immense blow in numerous ways and particularly for his loved ones, but also for this book. It was Ronald who had been approached by Edward Elgar Publishing about the *Handbook*. He was also the driving force behind the first stages of the book's completion and continued working on it for as long as he could. For a while after Ronald's passing, ignoring the book was a way of coming to terms with what had happened. Yet, neither abandoning the project nor asking someone else to step in as co-editor felt appropriate. I decided to complete the editing of the book on my own, in honour of Ronald and his scholarship, mentorship and friendship.

The consequence of my choices has been that the *Handbook* has taken longer to finish than originally intended. I am deeply grateful for the support that has made the book's completion possible. People I would like to thank in particular are Matt Pitman at Edward Elgar Publishing for his understanding and flexibility, the contributing authors for their patience and persistence, and the external reviewers whose generous and constructive comments helped to strengthen draft versions of the chapters in this book. I also want to thank Kirsty Ray, Nina Teng and Serkan Birgel for administrative support and help with the formatting and making consistent of the chapter manuscripts, the checking of references and many other tasks that are involved in the putting together of an edited collection. I am, finally, grateful to Ronald for asking me on a journey he was not able to complete himself and for sharing his experience and expertise in the early phases of the itinerary. I imagine he would have enjoyed the other parts of the trip too, as well as its destination.

Tim Schwanen
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