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Preface

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There are numerous real-life situations in which one or more items need to be located, and it is of practical interest to investigate how this may be done in an optimal way, subject to any constraints that may be present. Correspondingly, many different models have been developed that are appropriate in Locational Analysis. Indeed, one of the papers in this issue uses a model, for which there are practical applications, in which an optimal location is sought on a torus!

Locational Analysis became established in the sixties and early seventies with the introduction of the classical p-median, p-centre and covering location models. The pace of research increased in the eighties and we expect it to increase further in the present decade. A milestone occurred in 1978 with the first of the triennial Symposia on Locational Decisions (ISOLDE) which was held in Banff. Europe too is well represented with activities centering on the EURO Working Group on Locational Analysis under the chairmanship of Professor Christian Michelot. The group has just held its fifth annual meeting in Namur.

It was with great pleasure that we accepted the invitation to edit this special issue and we would like to express gratitude to our colleagues for their enthusiastic response to the call for papers. The result is a pleasing mixture of theoretical and practical papers on a variety of interesting topics.

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