



Les défis de développement pour les villes et les régions dans une Europe en mutation

Innovative Cities and Regions in Greece: Trends, Disparities and Challenges for the Future

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Résumé / Summary

This paper studies the concept of innovative cities and regions in Greece. Our analysis relies on the empirical argument that global economic forces have raised the profile of regions and cities. This means that regions and cities are facing new challenges. The competitiveness of a region and city itself depends to an increasing degree on its capacity for innovation. Successful regions and cities understand how to link intelligently local and regional 'players' such as firms, universities, research agents and public administration in order to produce new products, processes and services. The analysis takes also into consideration the theoretical argument that economic activity concentrates geographically because of scale and proximity effects. Innovation is an important and motivating factor for the clustering of economic activity. However, several studies have shown that there are differences in spatial concentration of innovative and economic activity. Both of them are concentrated in a few industrial sectors and in a few technological fields.

Patent data and statistics are used to describe and measure innovation production and test its performance in Greek regions and cities. Patents are public documents which represent sources of information, describe the technical content of industrial products and process and inform about applicants' strategies. The patent rationale is based on two rather contradictory ideas, namely disclosure and appropriation. Every application for a patent is made within the framework of a national or international industrial property system. Its evaluation and its merit depend on criteria of novelty and originality.

This paper tries to bring more light into an area that has been little studied in Greece. It links innovation production and performance from a regional and local perspective, trying to identify the most dynamic regions and cities among them. Results could be used in the development of both regional policy and management, aiming at strengthening Greek regions and cities and supporting and encouraging innovation production. Taking into consideration the very serious economic problems that Greece faces, the investment in innovation could be the only solution and probable source of development. The analysis shows that several

Greek regions and a large number of Greek cities are not involved in the process of innovation production and, thus, performance. However, the element of concentration of both production and innovative activities is confirmed. The paper findings suggest that the most innovative regions and cities are those in which most of production and commerce are generated. Few Greek large cities and especially the metropolitan area of Athens concentrate most of innovation production. The few exceptions of this pattern that are presented are related to specific national features and peculiarities of the Greek case.

Bibliographie / Bibliography

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