

# Evolutionary regional innovation patterns and economic performance

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## Abstract

Research on regional innovation processes has achieved important advances in the understanding of the conditions under which innovation occurs in a region and the spatial variants of regional innovation processes. Yet, several authors are increasingly emphasizing the need of a deeper and richer comprehension of how these innovation patterns can evolve over time and the economic implications of such evolutionary processes (Asheim et al., 2016). Consequently, an unexplored research avenue is the explanation of the determinants and implications of the dynamics of regional innovation patterns, through the analysis of the system of relationships (internal and external to the region) supporting them (Hassink and Klaerding, 2012).

This paper aims to contribute to this debate by focusing on the long term implications of the evolution of regional innovation patterns. This work starts from the concept of regional innovation patterns; they are conceived as alternative spatial variants/combinations of context conditions and of specific modes of performing and linking the different phases of the innovation process. This framework has been now conceptually accepted and empirically proved (Capello and Lenzi, 2013) and presents the advantage of considering all types of innovations, from radical to imitative approaches.

In the literature, studies on variations of regional innovation processes, possibly leading to progresses towards more complex ones exist. They are interpreted as the aggregate outcome of strategic individual behaviors of local actors pushing towards an endogenous switch and opening the way to alternative innovation modes, in accordance with recent debates in evolutionary economic geography (Asheim et al., 2015). Changes in regional innovation patterns have been recently identified for 262 NUTS2 regions of the EU in the period 2002-2006. The existence of these evolutionary changes in regional innovation patterns has called for analysis of territorial conditions enabling these structural changes to occur (Capello and Lenzi, 2017). What is missing in the literature is the analysis of the influence that these evolutionary, structural changes generate in the regional economic performance and dynamics in the years following such changes (2006-2014). This is the subject matter of this study.

## References

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