

REGIONAL COMPETITIVENESS AND SMART SPECIALIZATION IN EUROPE

Place-based Development in International Economic Networks

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'In a world which increasingly requires place-based approaches to economic development, Regional Competitiveness and Smart Specialization in Europe offers a new methodology and a framework in order to promote the smart specialization of territories. Rich in examples and evidence, the book is an essential tool for the design of sound development strategies and a must read for policy-makers and development practitioners.'

– Andrés Rodríguez-Pose, London School of Economics, UK

Regions economically differ from each other – they compete in different products and geographical spaces, exhibit different strengths and weaknesses, and provide different possibilities for growth and development. What fosters growth in one region may hamper it in another. This highly original book presents an accessible methodology for identifying competitors and their particular circumstances in Europe, discusses regional competitiveness from a conceptual perspective and explores both past and future regional development policies in Europe.

The authors illustrate that for the concept of regional competition to be valued correctly it should not solely be identified by the structural asset characteristics of cities and regions. They therefore present a unique applied analytic framework that takes into account economically valued network relations between places of (mobile) production factors and traded goods. Underpinned with thorough analysis and theory, the framework uses actual networks of competing and economically valued relations between regions to help develop smart specialization strategies that are central in the place-based policy initiatives of the new European cohesion policy.

This path-breaking book presents a crucial contribution to the current academic discussion on regional competitiveness and the policy debate on smart specialization, place-based development and cohesion policy in the European Union. As such it will prove an invaluable read for academics, researchers, students and policy-makers with an interest in economics – particularly applied regional economics, European studies and regional studies.

Contents: 1. Introduction 2. Smart Specialization, Regional Innovation Systems and EU Cohesion Policy by Philip McCann and Raquel Ortega-Argilés 3. Regional Economic Development and Competitiveness 4. Clustering and Specialization in European Regions 5. Revealed Competition in European Regions 6. Dynamics in Revealed Regional Competition between Firms in Europe 7. A Smart Specialization Strategy: Locational and Network Determinants of International Competitiveness 8. Conclusion: One Size Fits Only One in Place-based Regional Policy Appendix: European Regional Trade Flows Bibliography Index

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