



## Commissioner's Seminar Series 2022

### Differentiated approaches to inclusive, responsible and sustainable innovation

1<sup>st</sup> December 2022, Brussels, Belgium



## COMMISSIONER'S SEMINAR SERIES ON COHESION POLICY

The purpose of these seminars is firstly, to signal the Commission's desire to encourage growth in the number of researchers working on Cohesion Policy and related topics to build a greater pool of expertise. Secondly, to give the opportunity for relationship building between participants and policymakers to allow sharing of understanding and to refresh the expertise from which the Commission pulls in formulating and implementing policy. Finally, it offers the early career participants the opportunity to gain important and influential, high-level policy related feedback on their research.

This seminar series is an initiative by Dr Elisa Ferreira, Commissioner for Cohesion and Reforms and a collaborative venture organised between Commissioner Ferreira and her Cabinet; the European Commission's Directorate-General for Regional and Urban Policy (DG REGIO) in partnership with the Regional Studies Association's European Foundation (RSA Europe).

## *2nd Seminar*

### *Differentiated approaches to inclusive, responsible and sustainable innovation*

1st December 2022, Brussels, Belgium

Innovation is considered a driving force for increased productivity and economic growth. Currently however, we are witnessing how innovation is unequally distributed only benefiting a few and concentrated in some places. This is particularly pertinent for marginalized groups and places that are 'losing out' both in terms of participation in processes related to innovation, and the benefits stemming from such ventures.

Moreover, we can see the emergence of normative currents in contemporary innovation studies and policies, such as 'Responsible Research and Innovation' (RRI). Here the focus is on how to make innovation more ethical, inclusive and sustainable. As a consequence, those that are successful are concomitantly able to use innovation to bolster regions attractiveness and economic performance.

There is a need for an increased understanding of how responsible innovation plays out in different geographies, namely how different places and spaces influence (culturally, socio-politically, economically etc.) responsible innovation processes and outcomes leading to questions such as:

- How can innovation lead to growth in left behind places?
- How poor growth performance could be improved?
- How can innovations improve a region's attractiveness?
- How can social innovations help?

Potential topics could include (but are not limited to):

- Diversity and inclusion in creating responsible, sustainable solutions, and contextual factors affecting this association
- Inclusion (exclusion) of citizens and groups of citizens that are often 'left - behind' in innovation processes (children, elderly, immigrants)
- How different regional contexts stimulate and hamper responsible innovation
- The geographic concentration of innovation and how to bridge the growing innovation divide across EU regions
- Designing place-sensitive innovation policies

The academic lead of this seminar is Professor Marte C. W. Solheim, Head, Stavanger Centre for Innovation Research, UiS Business School, Norway.

# SEMINAR PROGRAMME

**Date & Venue:** 1<sup>st</sup> December 2022, Cours Saint-Michel 23, 1040 Bruxelles

**13:00-13:30** Arrival

**13:30-14:00** Participants' briefing by RSA Europe

**14:00 -14:30** Coffee and networking

**14:30-14:45** Info session

The work of Directorate-General Regional and Urban Policy (DG Regio) - Anna Rizzo, Team Leader & REGIO Coordinator for Events Organisation, European Commission, DG Regional and Urban Policy

**15:00-17:00** Commissioner's Seminar: Differentiated approaches to inclusive, responsible and sustainable innovation

## I. Presentations

1. The significance of change agency for innovation and transformation in relationally peripheral regions - Max Rößler, University of Greifswald, Germany

2. The Role of Transnational Value Chains in Regional Innovation. Analysis of Central and Eastern European Regions engaged in Automotive and Electronics Production Networks - Cristian Gangaliuc, Faculty of Information Studies, Slovenia

3. Technological invention and local labour markets: Evidence from France, Germany and the UK - Carolin Ioramashvili, University of Birmingham, UK

Reactions by Commissioner Ferreira and discussion

## II. Presentations

4. Clusters as Platforms for Research Collaboration: Evidence from the V4 Countries- Lukas Danko, Tomas Bata University, Czech Republic

5. Regional Innovation Capacity in Slovakia - Sila Ceren Varış Husar, Kütahya Dumlupınar University, Turkey

Reactions by Commissioner Ferreira & Marte C. W. Solheim

Discussion

**16:45** Seminar ends



#### Participants' Feedback:

*I think all of us got a nice vibe and good networking. For me, I got a nice opportunity to test my idea among my peers but also high-ranking EU representatives. I hope to continue (at least) communication with my colleagues who also presented.*

Dr Cristian Gangaliuc, Early Career Researcher, Faculty of Information Studies, Slovenia

*This seminar was especially valuable as it gave me the opportunity to meet with researchers working in my field. From the DG Regio and Commissioner's side, it was interesting for me to hear about the ideas behind the policy making – especially on the smart specialization, regional ecosystems. The comprehensive brief by Anna Rizzo enables me to learn more about how policymaking works in general and seeing directly the reactions and answers of the Commissioner to the debates gave me some insights. I can say that this experience increased my visibility personally and professionally. In addition to meeting with researchers in similar fields, I was also able to establish personal ties. I now have more ideas about the work and research conditions in different contexts.*

Dr Sila Ceren Varis Husar, Early Career Researcher, Kütahya Dumlupınar University, Turkey

*I would like to say thank you for considering me for the Commissioner's seminar. I am so grateful for being given a chance, as I would never have thought I would be considered, let alone chosen for the seminar. It would be nice to know the support to enhance the personal and career development of PhD researchers and ECRs, as it is a good seminar which allows us to think outside our daily academic work and improves confidence in different spaces.*

Alice Mpofo-Coles, PhD student, University of Reading, UK

*I am grateful for the participation in the seminar and the opportunity to present in front of a political audience that was new to me for the first time and to receive direct feedback from the EU Commissioner. All in all, it was a very successful seminar, with exciting contacts and excellent organisation and preparation.*

Max Rößler, PhD student, University of Greifswald, Germany

*Attending the Commissioner's Seminar on differentiated approaches to inclusive, responsible and sustainable innovation is one of the highlights of my early career period. I had the opportunity to discuss the topic of clusters that I am passionate about with an interdisciplinary group of researchers and practitioners. The feedback I received was constructive and it really helped me set the agenda for further research, pitfalls of collaboration of universities and industries in left behind places. More importantly, I am now more confident that research of clusters and RRI is relevant for Cohesion Policy, and I appreciate that findings of early career investigators stimulated a complex discussion between policymakers, practitioners, and academia involved in the seminar. I appreciate the way the event was organised and I was impressed with the outcomes that were presented.*

Dr Lukáš Danko, Early Career Researcher, Tomas Bata University, Czech Republic

*Thanks for organizing this seminar and giving me the opportunity to join. I had a great time. I enjoyed all the interesting talks and the discussion with the Commissioner that followed. The seminar allowed me to get to know other researchers and get a better idea of how researchers and policy makers can work together in order to solve the societal challenges of today. The seminar has therefore been very useful to me.*

Marijn Knieriem, PhD student, Radboud University Nijmegen, The Netherlands



**Elisa Ferreira**  @ElisaFerreiraEC · 21m ...

A great pleasure to hold a seminar with early career researchers in collaboration with [@RSAEurope!](#)

Policymaking and academic research go hand in hand.

Interesting presentations and discussions on innovation and the role it can play for place-based regional development.





# ABSTRACTS

## **Clusters as Platforms for Research Collaboration: Evidence from the V4 Countries**

Lukas Danko, ECR, Tomas Bata University, Czech Republic

The paper focuses on the collaboration between business and research in 4helix among members of the Visegrad Group (V4) and their national ecosystems for research and innovation. According to the cluster's theoretical model, this collaboration should occur in each cluster as one of the foundations of its existence. The rationale behind this paper is the issue that all countries of the V4 are characterized by a relatively low level of innovation compared to the EU average (growing innovation divide across EU regions). One of the reasons behind this fact are the weak linkages between universities/research institutions and firms. The aim of the paper is to provide an overview on how companies and universities/research institutions benefit from collaboration and what is the stakeholder engagement in research collaboration models. The research aim is to identify activities, factors conditioning collaboration, and models of collaboration that occur in practice. Research design concerning the models of collaboration and factors conditioning collaboration in the platform of cluster organisations is based on qualitative primary data gathered through semi-structured in-depth interviews with cluster managers. Interviews are designed to describe the role of the cluster organisation facilitating the collaboration. Furthermore, interviews reflect on the motives, factors, and challenges influencing B2R and R2B collaboration.

## **The Role of Transnational Value Chains in Regional Innovation. Analysis of Central and Eastern European Regions engaged in Automotive and Electronics Production Networks**

Cristian Gangaliuc, ECR, Faculty of Information Studies, Slovenia

My research is based on a symbiotic approach based on two main theories: the Regional Innovation Systems (RIS, see Asheim and Isaksen, 1997; Cooke, 1992; Asheim et al., 2005; etc.); and Global Production Networks (GPN, see Henderson et al., 2002; Ernst, 2002; Gereffi et al., 2005; etc.). The developed model considers the interplay of endogenous and exogenous circumstances that create opportunities, pressures and conditions for innovation. It continues the argumentation of RIS and GPN theories and states their simultaneous impact. Each region draws from both sources and the context created through their conjunction. For example, an area can rely primarily on local interactions to fulfil the demand of transnational value chains while simultaneously adopting technologies to meet their standards. Thus, the three aspects are present – the importance of local communication, the relevance of foreign technology, and the innovation demand/pressure created through GPNs embeddedness.

There is no balance in their impact on local companies. The degree is circumstantial to the situation in the region. Consequently, the model acknowledges the competence of economic agents themselves. It is not only the “atmosphere” that matters. It is also the ability of companies to cope and use the opportunities that become available within their network. Local competencies and the Multinational Corporations' demand can determine the region's development. The regional innovation system will be shaped depending on compatibility between endogenous and exogenous forces, timing, geographical positioning (e.g., transportation logistics, raw materials, access to markets), industries represented in the region, and others. Thus, the model is a dynamic vision of the innovation process. Changes in local competencies or global trends can shift the established equilibria. Performing a qualitative and

logical analysis of eight regions in Central and Easter Europe revealed that the model is viable and capable of explaining regional divergences.

#### References:

- Asheim, B., Coenen, L., Moodysson, J., & Vang, J. (2005). Regional Innovation System Policy: a Knowledge-based Approach. Research and Competence in the Learning Economy. Centre for Innovation, Research and Competence in the Learning Economy (CIRCLE) Lund University P.O. Box 117, Ivegatan 16, S-221 00 Lund, SWEDEN [http://www.circle.lu.se/publications%5CnISSN 1654-3149](http://www.circle.lu.se/publications%5CnISSN%201654-3149)
- Asheim, B. T., & Isaksen, A. (1997). Location, agglomeration and innovation: Towards regional innovation systems in Norway? *European Planning Studies*, 5(3), 299–330. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09654319708720402>
- Cooke, P. (1992). Regional Innovation Systems: Competitive Regulation in the New Europe. *Geoforum*, 23(3), 365–382. [https://doi.org/10.1016/0016-7185\(92\)90048-9](https://doi.org/10.1016/0016-7185(92)90048-9)
- Henderson, J., Dicken, P., Hess, M., Coe, N., & Wai-Chung Yeung, H. (2002). Global production networks and the analysis of economic development. *Review of International Political Economy*, 9(3), 436–464. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09692290210150842>
- Gereffi, G., Humphrey, J., & Sturgeon, T. (2005). The governance of global value chains. *Review of International Political Economy*, 12(1), 78–104. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09692290500049805>
- Ernst, D. (2002). Economics of Innovation and New Technology Global production networks and the changing geography of innovation systems. Implications for developing countries. *Econ. Innov. New Techn.*, 0(0), 497–523.

#### **Technological invention and local labour markets: Evidence from France, Germany and the UK** Carolin Ioramashvili, ECR, University of Birmingham, UK

This paper studies the effect of patenting and graduate employment on non-graduate and mid-skilled employment at the NUTS1 and NUTS2 level in France, Germany, and the UK. While these three economies are also the most innovative in Europe in terms of patent filings, they are different in terms of macroeconomic conditions, their innovation systems and the regional distribution of innovation and employment. I estimate employment multiplier effects from skilled employment and innovation on non-graduate and mid-skilled employment. Innovation only has a significant effect on mid-skilled, but not low-skilled employment. Using local projections, I estimate the effects over 5-year horizons. In some cases, impacts disappear after several years, emphasising the importance of considering dynamic and not only static multipliers. Analysis of cross-country heterogeneity reveals similar effects in France and the UK, but larger effects from innovation in Germany, consistent with the higher levels of and more widespread innovative activity there.

The paper makes three contributions to the literature on innovation-employment multipliers (Brenner, Capassi, Duschl, Frenken, & Treibich, 2018; Eberle, Brenner, & Mitze, 2020; Frocrain & Gitraud, 2018; Kemeny & Osman, 2018; Lee & Clarke, 2019; Moretti, 2010; Moretti & Thulin, 2013; Van Dijk, 2018; Van Roy, Vertesy, & Vivarelli, 2018). First, it considers the effects across three countries with very different national innovation systems and labour market institutions, thus testing the robustness of the underlying theory in different contexts. Second, I consider two education groups below tertiary education. The paper shows that employment effects for those with post-secondary education below degree level are different from those for those with no formal qualification. Third, the paper separates the innovation multiplier into two, where one effect is stemming from patenting and the other from skilled employment. This shows that the

labour market effect of innovative industries cannot be captured from skilled employment alone.

### **The significance of change agency for innovation and transformation in relationally peripheral regions**

Max Rößler, PhD student, University of Greifswald, Germany

My PhD project departs from the acknowledgement that numerous mechanisms of innovation and with that the genesis of knowledge-based regional development paths are undergoing a highly dynamic process of change. The reasons for this are above all developments in the area of digitalization, as well as new requirements resulting from decarbonization targets. These megatrends result in new up to now insufficiently researched implications not only for economic centres but also for structurally weak areas. They are (potentially) opening up new regional opportunity spaces. The first aim of the research project is to clarify and assess the impact of new dynamics of economic and societal change on regional transformation processes. So, I ask the question, in what concrete form the aforementioned drivers of innovation processes change the spaces of opportunity for the development of relational-peripheral regions. From the findings already available, it can be seen that the trends described above exert considerable pressure for change on relational-peripheral regions and can also create new opportunities for initiating and shaping regionally and supra-regionally relevant innovation processes in these regions. Secondly, it aims to identify options for actions arising in this context when establishing knowledge-based development paths. In doing so, the focus of the research project is deliberately put on innovation networks in peripheral regions. For this area, the implications of emerging socio-technical dynamics remain insufficiently researched. Existing literature attributes a specific institutional and convention structure as well as particular factor endowments to relational-peripheral regions. Against the backdrop of globally changing framework conditions, it needs to be clarified to what extent these have an inhibiting or enabling effect on the development of alternative regional development paths. So, I am focusing especially on the role of regional agents of change in the initiation and realization of changed regional development paths.

### **Regional Innovation Capacity in Slovakia**

Sıla Ceren Varış Husar, ECR, Kütahya Dumlupınar University, Turkey

The regional economic performance has been largely affected by the combination of the existing knowledge in different ways, production, and absorption of the new knowledge, and transformation of all these into innovation in a region. These help regions to connect to national and even international economies. Disciplines as economics, regional science, and planning have been scrutinizing the relationship of innovation with space. One of the main determinants of regional innovation is the knowledge base in the region. This research aims to scrutinize the regional innovation capacity of regions at NUTS 3 level in Slovakia and neighbouring Central and Eastern European countries in terms of sectors, employment and human capital. In the first phase, secondary data obtained from public institutions, primarily the National Statistical Institution of Slovakia, OECD and Eurostat will be used. Both local and global statistical models are subject to analysis. Local statistical models created with components that positively affect regional innovation show that geographical location has a varying effect on innovation outputs, specific to the provinces of Turkey (Varış, 2021<sup>1</sup>) and the aim of the project is to replicate the conceptual model and test it in Central Europe characteristic by several smaller countries and vast regional differences. This research proposes the development of regional innovation

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<sup>1</sup> Varış, S. C. (2021). Determinants of Regional Innovation in Turkish NUTS 3 Regions from the Spatial Dependence Perspective. PhD Thesis. METU, Ankara.



policies primarily in Slovakia with the help of the spatial and statistical analysis of local dynamics through both global and local models. These analyses are assumed to be based on the forms of production in the regions, the technology, knowledge, and R&D intensities of the sectors and people. The research aims to contribute to the discussions in the field of regional innovation and regional disparities and will create practical interventions for the regional policy in Slovakia and neighboring countries.