



Special Session Proposal

Exploring the place of human capital in regional science

Daniela-Andreia DAMIAN

(Alexandru Ioan Cuza University of Iasi, Romania, daniela.damian@student.uaic.ro) *

Bogdan-Constantin IBANESCU

(Alexandru Ioan Cuza University of Iasi, Romania, ibanescu.bogdan@uaic.ro)

Corneliu IATU

(Alexandru Ioan Cuza University of Iasi, Romania, ciatu@uaic.ro)

Abstract

During the past seven decades, the knowledge in the field of human capital has progressively advanced so that it has become essential in labor economics, education economics, human resource management, development economics, sustainability process (Blair, 2011), since human capital ‘*is the largest ‘asset’ class in the economy*’ (Teece, 2011). Despite its increasing importance and weight in regional development, human capital did not capture the deserved attention neither from the academics, neither from policymakers and national stakeholders.

Human capital is considered to be a driver of societal progress and development. Studies that have been undertaken in the second half of the last century (Becker, 1964; Lucas, 1988; Schultz, 1961) concluded that development can no longer be explained by classical factors alone (physical capital, labor, machinery), but is a combined outcome of classical factors and residual factors (technological progress and human capital). Empirical studies have revealed that the level of human capital and education (an indispensable input in human capital formation) contributed significantly to economic growth (Psacharopoulos & Woodhall, 1985, Rodríguez-Pose & Vilalta-Bufi, 2005), poverty reduction (Tilak, 2002), the decrease of economic inequality in less developed regions (Rodríguez-Pose & Ketterer, 2020), the increase in individual incomes (Patrinos, 2016), reconversion of local economies (Fratesi & Perruca, 2017), and to the reinforcement of governance systems (Gerged & Elheddad, 2020).

Nonetheless, despite its conceptualization, which has gained overall approval (although the debate is not settled), the scientific community still has issues in accurately measuring human capital and in properly placing it in the regional science discourse.

This special session aims to bring together new methodological approaches and empirical results focusing on the human capital and its various facets. We welcome contributions on, but not limited to:

- new instruments and methods for measuring human capital;
- empirical studies on local policies and measures for human capital (stock);
- rural-urban and core-periphery divides in human capital;
- the impact of human capital investments in regions;
- human capital and skills mismatch across regions;
- the role of human capital in economic development;
- addressing the inequalities in human capital in European Union.