



Special Session Proposal

Innovation, Entrepreneurship and Macroregion

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Abstract

This special session is conceived as a scientific forum organized around two distinct, complementary, yet autonomous axes:

Axis 1 -Innovation, entrepreneurship and sustainable development

The first theme of the session focuses on the dynamics of innovation and entrepreneurship, which are not viewed as a simple and unique technological outcome, but as a systemic process deeply rooted in regional and national ecosystems where industrial policies, institutional frameworks and networks of actors interact .

The emergence of new forms of innovation and entrepreneurship- sustainable, social and green - reflects a gradual shift towards goals that go beyond economic growth alone. This shift is taking place in a context marked by environmental urgency, rising territorial inequalities and the questioning of traditional production models. While there is a wealth of literature establishing the central role of innovation and entrepreneurship in economic growth and structural transformation, their capacity to support sustainable, inclusive and regionally differentiated growth trajectories remains insufficiently explored.

This special session aims to explore how entrepreneurship and innovation dynamics can integrate environmental and social sustainability principles while responding to concrete economic needs that vary from region to region.

The session thus invites participants to move beyond a strictly technological or normative view of innovation to analyse its real impact on growth, taking into account the institutional, sectoral and regional contexts in which it occurs. Contributions may also examine how entrepreneurship and innovation interact with public policies, institutional frameworks and industrial structures to produce - or not- sustainable effects on long term economic performance.

Axis 2 - Macroregions and spatial restructuring of the economy



The second axis of this session focuses on the emergence of macroregions as a new scale of economic organisation. In a context marked by the reconfiguration of value chains, the rise of regionalised trade and intensifying geopolitical tensions, megaregions are gradually establishing themselves as strategic hubs of the global economy, redefining the spatial hierarchies of development and the terms of international competitiveness (Harrison & Hoyler, 2015)

At this broader scale, cities and metropolitan areas are no longer the dominant analytical units, giving way to larger territorial configurations based on functional interdependence between urban systems, productive structures and infrastructure networks. Macroregions thus transcend administrative boundaries to form coherent entities, structured by the circulation of knowledge, factors of production, logistical flows and technological capabilities. Their centrality is not solely due to their critical mass or spatial morphology, but to their ability to organise integrated productive trajectories, promoting cumulative learning processes and supporting innovation processes.

The aim of this session is to examine how macroregions, as unique economic areas, generate economies of scale, network externalities and productive synergies that are crucial to the international competitiveness of the businesses and industrial systems they host. Their performance is based above all on functional coherence, understood as the ability to transform potential fragmentation of territories into an integrated system of exchange, learning and coordination

This session invites researchers and practitioners to examine this process of spatial recomposition as a functional, institutional and symbolic integration, through which initially dispersed territories become connected, high-performance economic systems capable of embedding innovation and productive transformation in sustainable development trajectories.