

Regional clusters in a globalized economy - A human capital perspective -

Scope of the Workshop

Human resources are commonly seen as a key factor for the success of both firms (e.g. Barney and Wright, 1998) as well as regions (e.g. Faggian et al., 2019). For instance, they offer the potential to advance firms' efficiency, to exploit novel business opportunities and to prevent approaching competitive threats (Barney, 1991; Lepak and Snell, 2002). As a consequence of an increasing shortage of qualified labour, especially nowadays they are of particular relevance for company managers and (regional) policy-makers (Martinez-Fernandez and Weyman, 2012).

In this context, it has been theoretically as well as empirically shown that companies tend to locate in regional clusters, providing a pooled labour market, in order to satisfy their demand for skilled employees (Combes and Duranton, 2006; Overman and Puga, 2010). Subsequent scientific contributions discussed in this context the advantages as well as disadvantages of this pooled labour market. On the hand, it has been highlighted that clusters create a common market pool for workers with specialized skills that offers advantages in terms of risk reduction and efficiency gains in the job search process for both the workers as well as the hiring firms (David and Rosenbloom, 1990; Krugman, 1991). Moreover, the importance of labour mobility, being one of the main mechanisms through which knowledge diffuses, has additionally been stressed (Boschma et al., 2009; Eriksson and Lindgren, 2009). On the other hand, potential disadvantages, such as labour poaching, have also been identified (Combes and Duranton, 2006; Otto and Fornahl, 2010). Although there are already some contributions dealing with this topic, compared with other localized externalities (particularly knowledge spillovers), still relatively little is known about human capital and clusters (Bienkowska et al., 2011; Combes and Duranton, 2006; Kunkel, 2010). This holds particularly true in view of the steadily progressing globalization, which is also affecting regional clusters (De Martino et al., 2006). Multinational enterprises (MNE) that locate their subsidiaries in and even move their headquarters to regional clusters are a frequently observed form of this trend. However, the corresponding implications of the resulting new regional labour composition for e.g. incumbent firms, networks dynamics and the overall regional development remains yet to be investigated.

The aim of this workshop is therefore to shed light on the relationship between (international) human capital/resources and regional clusters, both from a systematic empirical as well as from a theoretical point of view. In particular, but not limited to, we are interested in contributions, which deal with the following questions:

- In what ways does international labour mobility contribute to the knowledge transfer within clusters?
- Do intra-, inter-regional and international labour mobility contribute differently to the knowledge transfer within clusters?
- Which conditions positively moderate the effect of intra- and inter-regional labour mobility on innovation/productivity (e.g. skill level)?

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- Does the embeddedness of MNEs in clusters influence the local labour pool (e.g. in terms of new mobility patterns and/or the overall network structure)?
- To what extent does the labour market composition of a cluster influence the regional and/or firm performance (e.g. in terms of innovation and productivity)?
- What is the role of mobility enhancing (or restricting) institutions in clusters?
- Do firms settle internationally in order to gain from access to local labour market pools?

Participation

The workshop will take place in a hybrid form, meaning that some presentations will be held at the University of Bremen (Germany) while other presentations (particularly from international colleagues) will run virtually. The applied software enables a satisfactory exchange between virtual and analogue speakers. The workshop will take place from **September 17 to September 18**. Each presenter will get 60 minutes to present and discuss his/her paper (30 minutes presentation, 30 minutes discussion).

Several researchers have been invited directly to submit a paper for presentation at the workshop. Nevertheless, we also want to encourage other researchers in this area to submit ideas that focus on the workshop's subject. Therefore, feel free to circulate this call for papers.

An abstract has to be sent by email to NGrashof@uni-bremen.de. The abstract (max. 350 words) must be delivered by **August 31, 2020**. Decisions on acceptance for the workshop will be emailed by September 04, 2020.

Participation without presenting a paper is also welcome. Due to limited space capacities, however, only online participation is possible. For the registration, please contact Nils Grashof by email (NGrashof@uni-bremen.de).

Costs and fees

There are no participation fees. Lunch and dinner are free for researchers presenting a paper analogously in Bremen. Lodging and travel costs will be reimbursed for these presenters as well.

Publication

It is intended to publish a selection of contributions of the workshop in an edited volume with Edward Elgar Publishing. To be considered for a potential publication in this edited volume, please submit your complete paper before 31st December 2020. Please note that extended abstracts cannot be considered for the submission process.

Local organizers

Dirk Fornahl
Nils Grashof

Literature

De Martino, R., Hardy Reid, D. M., & Stelios, C. Z. (2006): Balancing localization and globalization: exploring the impact of firm internationalization on a regional cluster, *Entrepreneurship & Regional Development*, Vol. 18, Issue 1, pp. 1-24.

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Boschma, R., Eriksson, R., & Lindgren, U. (2009): How does labour mobility affect the performance of plants? The importance of relatedness and geographical proximity, *Journal of Economic Geography*, Vol. 9, Issue 2, pp. 169-190.

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Martinez-Fernandez, C., & Weyman, T. (2012): THE CROSSROADS OF DEMOGRAPHIC CHANGE AND LOCAL DEVELOPMENT, in: Martinez-Fernandez, C., Kubo, N., Noya, A., Weyman, T. (eds.): *Demographic Change and Local Development - Shrinkage, Regeneration and Social Dynamics*, pp. 15-36.

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