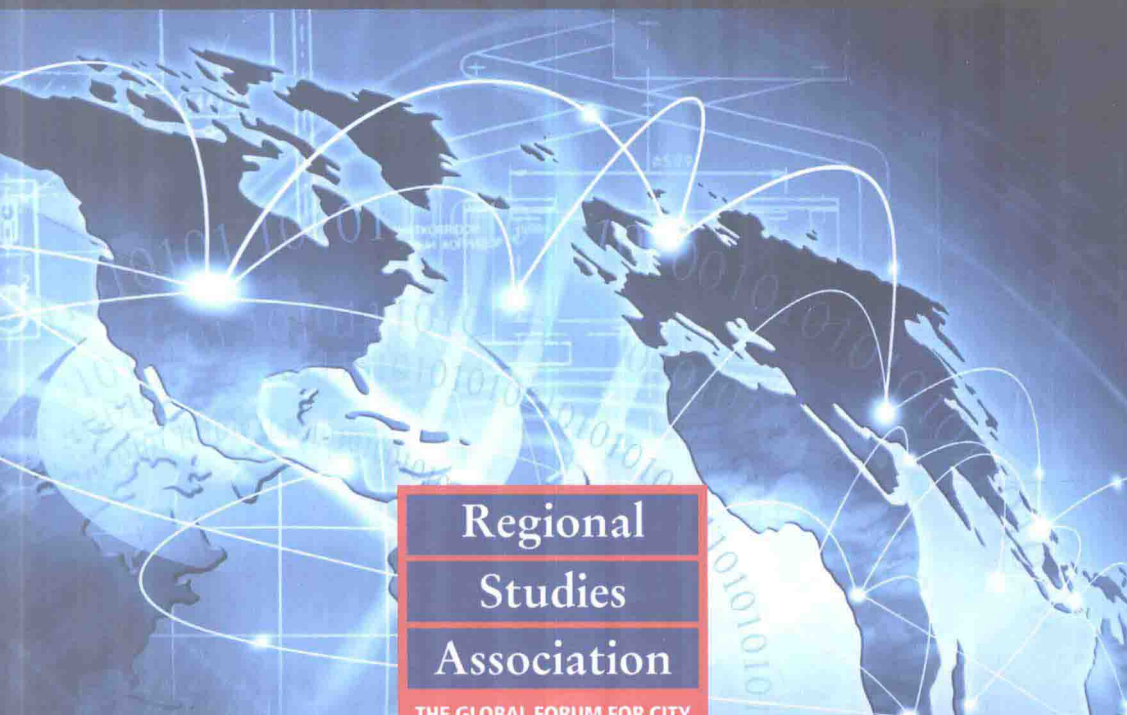


# NETWORKING REGIONALISED INNOVATIVE LABOUR MARKETS



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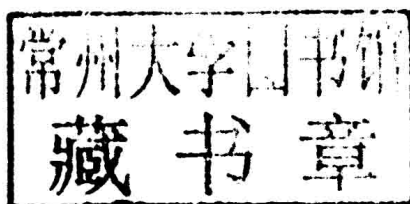
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AND HELEN LAWTON SMITH

# Networking Regionalised Innovative Labour Markets

**Edited by**  
**Ulrich Hilpert and**  
**Helen Lawton Smith**



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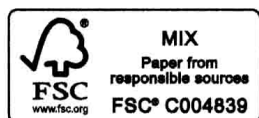
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# Networking Regionalised Innovative Labour Markets

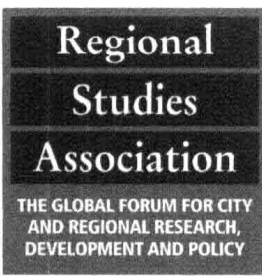
A map which shows where innovation is clustered worldwide is also a map of the location of highly skilled and talented labour. New technologies, their creative applications or synergy across different areas of scientific research or technology development always create opportunities for the employment of particularly creative labour. This book explores the kinds of institutions and structures that need to exist to make sure that such skills are both offered and employed in particular 'Islands of Innovation'.

*Networking Regionalised Innovative Labour Markets* illustrates the theme of how existing concentrations of skills in scientific, technological and managerial elites are reinforced through inter-regional mobility using exemplars from a range of countries and regions. These include the US, UK, Italy, Germany, and Central and Eastern Europe.

The book's originality lies in its in-depth assessments of the factors associated with the extent to which some regions hold their positions in networked Islands of Innovation. It is shown that those Islands of Innovation that attract highly skilled workers from abroad, particularly those from foreign Islands of Innovation, perform better for example in the US, Italy and the UK. In contrast, even the most innovative Czech regions tend to lose highly skilled workers vis-à-vis the most innovative regions of the world, mainly to regions in the USA.

**Ulrich Hilpert** is Professor and Chair of Comparative Government in the Faculty of Social and Behavioral Sciences at Friedrich Schiller University, Jena, Germany.

**Helen Lawton Smith** is Professor of Entrepreneurship in the Department of Management at Birkbeck, University of London, UK.



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# Contributors

**Josef Bernard** is Researcher, Department of Local and Regional Studies, Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic.

**Christopher Briem** is Senior Researcher, Center for Social and Urban Research, University of Pittsburgh, PA.

**Andrea Caragliu** is Researcher, Department of Regional and Urban Economics, University Politecnico di Milano, and Guest Researcher at the Department of Regional and Urban Economics, Free University of Amsterdam.

**Vincenzo Demetrio** is Senior Researcher, University of Turin.

**Paolo Giaccaria** is Assistant Professor, Department of Interateneo Territorio, University of Turin.

**Ulrich Hilpert** is Professor and Chair of Comparative Government, Friedrich Schiller University, Jena.

**Tomáš Kostecký** is Head of the Department of Local and Regional Studies, Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic.

**Helen Lawton Smith** is Professor of Entrepreneurship, Department of Management, Birkbeck, University of London, UK.

**Peter Nijkamp** is Professor of Regional Economics and Economic Geography, Department of Economics at the Free University of Amsterdam, and Past President of the Governing Board of the Netherlands Research Council.

**Věra Patočková** is Researcher, Department of Local and Regional Studies, Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic.

**Vijai Singh** is Professor, Department of Sociology at the University of Pittsburgh. He is also affiliated with the University Center for International Studies, Asian Studies Center, European Studies Center and University Center for Social and Urban Research, University of Pittsburgh.

**Michaela Tripl** is Assistant Professor, Institute for the Environment and Regional Development, Vienna University of Economics and Business.

**Rupert Waters** is Research Fellow, Centre for Innovation Management Research at Birkbeck, University of London, and Research Associate at the Oxfordshire Economic Observatory.

# Preface

Innovative and creative people are playing an increasing role in stimulating regional development. As regions become more advanced, both highly skilled labour and university-trained personnel are of greater importance. In a similar way to the process of regionalisation that built 'Islands of Innovation', such labour is concentrated in particular regions and locations. To explore this theme, this book takes continental and regional differences into account in order to further understanding of regionalised innovative labour markets, exploring patterns and processes in Europe and the USA.

Drawing on evidence from the book's contributors, three tendencies can be identified:

1. the concentration of innovative labour in a limited number of locations;
2. the tendency for the highly skilled to further concentrate in Islands of Innovation;
3. the pattern that once the highly skilled have migrated between Islands of Innovation, they frequently return to the innovative location from which they started.

These patterns have clear consequences. Some regions can continue their paths of successful development based on their strong innovative labour markets. Other regions that are not Islands of Innovation face the twin challenges of trying to retain those people who are likely to move to Islands of Innovation and that of trying to attract the most creative scientific personnel. Moreover, retention and recruitment of such professionals are fundamental to collaborative networking with partners elsewhere in Europe and/or the US.

This book therefore deals, in the first instance, with three processes: the regionalisation of innovative labour markets, migration of the highly skilled, and the impact that migration has on knowledge fusion and the building of collaborative networks within and between Islands of Innovation. Its chapters concern both the role of innovative labour markets in advancing regional development and the migration of researchers and engineers to particular regions or locations. In examining these issues, its contributors take into account the extent to which particular regionalised labour markets are capturing continental and global flows of people.



It is this capture through recruitment by firms and other organisations that forms networks of regionalised innovative labour markets. As a consequence of the exchange of labour between Islands of Innovation, particular bodies of knowledge will accrue in these regions. Networked regional innovative labour markets enable firms and other organisations to capitalise on the knowledge and competences of the highly skilled. This process further contributes to the regionalisation of competences, knowledge and innovation, the synergy based on leading-edge research at already outstanding locations, and the continuation of such processes for the foreseeable future. Thus emerging and continuing networks of recruitment are important for regional participation in global economic development.

Exploring such themes contributes to an understanding of how regional labour markets and regional development are embedded in inter-regional networks. The editors' objective is to provide opportunities for the book to be read in four ways:

- with regard to the topic of networking regional innovative labour markets, as explained above;
- with a particular interest in the relationship between development at Islands of Innovation and innovative labour that is attracted to these locations;
- with a particular interest in the problems and opportunities of regions that are not major locations of innovation but aim to attract innovative labour in order to modernise their products and industrial structures;
- with regard to network building, the recruitment of star scientists and university-trained labour, and how this relates to the sustenance of Islands of Innovation.

The focus on regional innovative labour markets also allows for a policy perspective. It is vital to foster in particular regions the kind of socio-economic development that provides employment opportunities for innovative and creative people. For example, funding scientific and technological research through government agencies on a regional, national or even European level creates a supply of and a potential demand for innovative labour. Both are increased by the formation of spin-off firms from leading-edge research or by programmes that support an application of scientific findings and new technologies in more traditional industries and products. All of these involve the kinds of transformation of knowledge and creation of competences that underpin socio-economic development. The challenge for policymakers at all levels is to capture the opportunities for innovation that the highly skilled present.

The study of regional innovative labour markets thus indicates a close relationship between government policies and the location, development and utilisation of skills. In addition, it suggests that focusing on the conditions under which regional labour markets develop provides an additional and important framework for the development of innovation policies. This may become particularly important for regions in the light of a shortage of innovative labour, which is likely to come in the near future.

Ulrich Hilpert, Jena  
Helen Lawton Smith, Birkbeck