

Preface

For 15 years already, each year the Tinbergen Institute in Amsterdam has been hosting a 2-day workshop that brings together by invitation about 25 regional scientists from around the world who are a mix of senior scholars and younger scholars, including graduate students, to present papers on a theme that relates to regional development. The workshops are overseen by Peter Nijkamp, Roger Stough and Robert Stimson and are organised out of the Department of Spatial Economics at the VU University in Amsterdam. Occasionally a second workshop has been held at George Mason University in the USA and at The University of Queensland in Australia.

The objective of the annual Tinbergen Institute workshop is to provide a semi-formal forum for a small group of regional scientists to come together to present cutting-edge research on theory, methods and empirical analysis on a specific theme in regional development, with an emphasis typically on the quantifying roles of human capital, creativity, knowledge, innovation, entrepreneurship, social capital and other endogenous factors in regional development. The workshop format allows for vigorous discussion and critique and fosters the development of future collaborations. While most of the participants in the workshops tend to come from Europe and the USA, it is common to invite participants from Australia, Asia and Latin America as well.

Following the workshops, selected participants are invited to revise their papers and submit them for consideration for publication, which always involves a professional review process. The workshop overseers and organisers form small groups to edit a collection of the papers from one or more of the workshops around a relatively specific theme. Over the years, a large number of publications have come out of the workshops in the form of edited books and special issues of leading academic journals, reflecting the high quality of the Tinbergen Institute workshops which have gained worldwide recognition among regional scientists in many countries. This book is such a product.

The chapters in this volume are based on a selection of the papers presented at the Tinbergen Institute workshops during the last few years that have been revised for this volume. The chapters have been through a careful screening and review process.

The broad theme addressed is reflected in the title *Applied Regional Growth and Innovation Models*, with a major emphasis on quantitative research methods. In an introductory chapter to the volume, the editors provide some background on the notion of space in action and action in space, especially within the context of endogenous regional development. They summarise the key issues that may be derived from the collection of chapters that relate to the themes addressed in the three parts of the book: Part I, which includes four chapters that focus on knowledge and innovation in space; Part II, which includes four chapters that relate to human capital and regional growth; and Part III, which includes five chapters that address spatial systems and economic development.

Across the 13 chapters, there is an explicit emphasis on the methodology as well as tools and techniques – both standard and innovative – that regional scientists employ in investigating these themes. The contributions to the book demonstrate empirical analysis at a variety of spatial scales at which modelling is conducted. This book contains a mixed focus on theoretical and methodological issues as well as a rich array of situational and time–space empirical contexts across a variety of spatial scales.

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Karima Kourtit
Peter Nijkamp
Robert Stimson



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Kourtit, K.; Nijkamp, P.; Stimson, R. (Eds.)

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