Dauphine | PSL ★
UNIVERSITÉ PARIS

0IECOY02-Adaptive Regions: Policies to Global Challenges

Professors:
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Department: International affairs
Semester: 2

Course level: L3 Undergraduate / Graduate
Domain: Economic (+ Regional Development, Geography, Social Sciences)
Teaching language: English
Number of in-class hours: 15
Number of course sessions: 10
ECTS: 3

Course description and objectives

In an era marked by significant global shifts — demographic changes, technological advancements, and climate transformation — regions worldwide face unique challenges and opportunities. Under such context, this course poses several questions. How can regions adapt to and thrive amidst such transformations? How should they prepare for and respond to unforeseen shocks, such as the COVID-19 pandemic or the rapid advancements in Artificial Intelligence (AI)? Moreover, in managing these dynamics, how can regions foster economic development and ensure the well-being of their communities? Why do some regions succeed in attracting people, talent, and investment, while others lag? What are the implications of neglecting certain regions in the development process, particularly in terms of political and social consequences?

As responsibilities have shifted from the national to the local and regional level, the importance of regional actors in implementing development strategies, managing social and economic crises and promoting citizens' well-being has increased in recent decades. This course focuses on subnational institutions and policies, and on their role in guaranteeing that regions succeed in promoting economic growth, become attractive places to live in and remain engaged in political processes. This course aims to dissect these questions by delving into the drivers of development at the subnational level. Participants will explore and analyse a variety of policies and governance mechanisms that can strengthen regional prosperity and resilience. Moreover, the course will draw on academic literature, policy reports, and case studies. It will combine empirical analysis with policy-oriented training, so students are not only able to evaluate qualitative and quantitative evidence on regional development topics, but also use this evidence to navigate existing institutional constraints and promote concrete policies. More than just a review of the existing literature and evidence, students will be asked to apply the findings in a regional and place-based context through individual and group assignments.

Prerequisites

This course is addressed to both undergraduate and graduate students. The content of some classes relies on quantitative papers, so the student must be comfortable with empirical literature. The bibliography contains examples of the kind of papers we will discussing in class.

Learning outcomes

By the end of the course, students will have achieved:

(1) A solid overview of theoretical and empirical literature

(2) Exposure to case studies from advanced economies on policies related to the topics highlighted above.

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(3) The ability to critically evaluate qualitative and quantitative evidence on regional development topics from both academic and policy sources.

(4) The ability to analyse existing public policies in the field of regional development and to produce their own policy recommendations.

Assignments and grading

Individual assignments:

(1) **Essay** (1000 words and 10-15 visual presentation slides) on a question chosen by the student from a list proposed by professors, which will correspond to the lessons imparted ; the main outcomes of the essay will be presented orally during the class for others to comment on (**40%**).

Group assignments (2 to 3 students, depending on the total number of students):

(2) **Applied policy report** (3000 words) on the economic, social, and institutional development of a region, city or municipality chosen by the students and approved by the professors (**30%**).
(3) **Live debate** with students divided into 2-3 groups on an issue proposed by professors for which students prepare a brief presentation and arguments (**20%**).

Attendance and participation:

(4) **Active class participation** with students coming to class on time and ready to discuss weekly readings and with all potential minor tasks prepared as requested (**10%**). Class participation is based on quality of comments, not quantity.

The numerical grade distribution will dictate the final grade. The passing grade for this course is 10/20.

Course structure

Session	Topic	Dates (Week of)
1	Introduction: the rationale for place-based regional policies	13/01
2	Demographic change: the role of subnational governments in adapting to a declining and ageing population	20/01
3	Climate Change: regional policies for the new environmental reality	27/01
4	Technological change: AI and digitalisation – threat or opportunity for non-urban regions?	03/02
5	Envisioning the provision of public services for the regions of the future	10/02
6	Regions and competitiveness: direct and indirect drivers for regional development	17/02
7	Rich-resource regions: a development trap or an opportunity for all?	24/02
8	Fractured societies: economic decline, polarisation, and rise of populism in advanced regional economies	03/03
9	Live debate	10/03
10	Conclusion: what does regional well-being mean? Perception and strategies for well-being	17/03

Lecturer's biography

Marc Bournisien de Valmont is a Policy Analyst at the Regional Development and Multi-level Governance Division at the OECD Centre for Entrepreneurship, SMEs, Regions and Cities. He coordinates the OECD project "Shrinking Smartly and Sustainably" aiming at helping regions experiencing strong and sustained population decline to manage demographic change. In addition to demography, he also works in several other topics and initiatives related to public service provision in rural areas, regional attractiveness, multi-level governance, rural innovation, or rural manufacturing. Before joining the OECD, Marc worked at the think-tank Institut Montaigne and at the French Ministry of Defense. He holds a Master's degree in International Relations and a Bachelor's degree in Political Science from Sciences Po Paris, and also attended the University of São Paulo in Brazil.

Fernando Riaza is an Economist and Policy Analyst at the OECD, specialising in providing policy guidance for regions with significant mining and forestry activities. His role involves aligning these regions' strategies with broader regional development goals and ESG practices. Additionally, he coordinates regional contributions to the 'Strengthening FDI/SMEs Linkages' project, providing recent insights and policy recommendations in Czechia and Poland. Previously, Fernando was associated with KPMG and ItdUPM, where he collaborated with the FAO (UN) on projects in Central America. He holds bachelor's and master's degrees in environmental engineering from Universidad Politécnica de Madrid – receiving the top master thesis award on Human Development – and a Master's degree in Natural Resource Economics from Montpellier SupAgro.

Moodle

This course is on Moodle.

Academic integrity

Be aware of the rules in Université Paris Dauphine about plagiarism and cheating during exams. All work turned in for this course must be your own work, or that of your own group. Working as part of a group implies that you are an active participant and fully contributed to the output produced by that group.

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