Discover the OECD Trento Centre for Local Development

OECD Centre for Entrepreneurship, SMEs, Regions and Cities
About the OECD

The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) is an international organisation that works to build better policies for better lives. Our goal is to shape policies that foster prosperity, equality, opportunity and well-being for all. We draw on almost 60 years of experience and insights to better prepare the world of tomorrow. Together with governments, policy makers and citizens, we work on establishing international norms and finding evidence-based solutions to a range of social, economic and environmental challenges. From improving economic performance and creating jobs to fostering strong education and fighting international tax evasion, we provide a unique forum and knowledge hub for data and analysis, exchange of experiences, best-practice sharing, and advice on public policies and global standard-setting.

More: www.oecd.org | Twitter: @OECD

About the OECD Centre for Entrepreneurship, SMEs, Regions and Cities

The OECD Centre for Entrepreneurship, SMEs, Regions and Cities provides comparative statistics, analysis and capacity building for local and national actors to work together to unleash the potential of entrepreneurs and small and medium-sized enterprises, promote inclusive and sustainable regions and cities, boost local job creation, and support sound tourism policies.

More: www.oecd.org/cfe | Twitter: @OECD_local

About the OECD Local Employment and Economic Development (LEED) Programme

Since 1982, the mission of LEED is to contribute to the creation of more and better quality jobs through more effective policy implementation, innovative practices, stronger capacities and integrated strategies for local employment and economic development.

More: www.oecd.org/cfe/leed | Twitter: @OECD_local

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The OECD Trento Centre for Local Development was established by the OECD, the Italian Government and the Autonomous Province of Trento (Italy) in 2003. It is an integral part of the OECD Centre for Entrepreneurship, SMEs, Regions and Cities.

The mission of the Trento Centre is to provide policy advice and develop capacities for the effective design and implementation of policies that are tailored to local needs and focused on the key drivers of local economic and employment growth and well-being in OECD Member and non-Member countries. The activities of the Trento Centre support the Programme of Work of the OECD Local Employment and Economic Development (LEED) Programme.

The rising or persistently high inequalities among people and places are challenging current policy settings in most OECD countries. A range of other factors, from extreme weather to security issues to pandemics, undermines prosperity and growth across the world. In these circumstances, new economic arrangements compatible with social and environmental sustainability are more necessary than ever. OECD countries will inevitably undergo a number of transitions, which will affect people, places and firms in different ways.

The Trento Centre uses a holistic “from data to practice” approach to policies for sustainable development to offer local policy analysis, advice and capacity building activities for improved policy implementation. The work focuses on the human dimension (e.g. skills, jobs), the private sector (e.g. entrepreneurship, SMEs) and regions and localities (e.g. multi-level governance, local development, local policy making). In doing so, the Trento Centre also serves the OECD Regional Development Policy Committee and the OECD Committee on SMEs and Entrepreneurship.

The three main pillars of work

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<td>Today, OECD countries face two major productivity challenges, decreasing growth and increasing inequality. How can regional, rural and urban policy help find a more inclusive and dynamic system for economic growth?</td>
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<td>Capacity building is creating, developing and strengthening the abilities of organisations, communities and individuals to confront challenges and achieve goals. How to work collectively across institutional lines and policy silos and develop synergies?</td>
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Data analysis and research
(Spatial Productivity Lab)

The Spatial Productivity Lab at the Trento Centre is a dedicated research laboratory that generates and disseminates knowledge on the complex ways regional and local processes are linked to productivity performance at the subnational level.

Present productivity discourse, both in academia and policy-making, predominantly revolves around national and sectoral productivity determinants. From international comparisons, we know a great deal about the aggregate drivers of productivity growth. We know relatively little about the role played by places and regions in defining their own productivity performance.

Current national policies often ignore regional and local assets effectively missing a chance to stimulate regional productivity growth and to decrease interregional inequalities. To devise successful subnational and place-based policies, policy-makers need a deeper understanding of the spatial dimension of productivity is needed. The urgency of such knowledge further increases as global megatrends and the COVID-19 pandemic affect places along the urban-rural continuum differently.

The Spatial Productivity Lab (SPL) at the Trento Centre, created in 2018, works with local and global partners to address the challenges faced by regions, cities and rural areas in supporting and stimulating their growth. It explores the impact of agglomerated economies and the urban-rural linkages, the mechanisms of regional productivity catching-up (including innovation, digitalisation, entrepreneurship, human capital/skills formation and labour markets dynamism), the role of regional authorities in promoting efficiency and the bottom-up approaches to productivity improvement.

What can we offer?

- To research organisations: Collaboration opportunities to conduct policy-relevant research on drivers of spatial productivity.
- To governments: Analysis of economic trends and their effects on productivity performance of regions; policy advice on the ways to boost growth and wellbeing.
- To civil society: Participation on the international dialogue on subnational productivity, growth, spatial inequality and other issues of utmost importance.

All reports and events: https://oe.cd/spl

"The work of the Spatial Productivity Lab is making a real contribution to our understanding of the productivity challenges faced by different regions and countries. Working with an array on leading international partners, including our team at the Productivity Insights Network, colleagues at the OECD are pioneering new evidence to inform and influence policy. The productivity challenge is likely to become more acute in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, and the work of the Spatial Productivity Lab is crucial in advancing actionable insights."

Professor Tim Vorley
Pro Vice-Chancellor & Dean, Oxford Brookes Business School and co-Director of the ESRC Productivity Insights Network
Place-based policy analysis and advice

To be most effective, policies should account for the trade-offs inherent to the ongoing transitions, having in mind that subnational scales are often the best suited to address them.

In the aftermath of COVID-19, OECD countries will undergo new transitions, such as the rise of teleworking and green jobs, adding to foregoing megatrends, such as digitalisation, automation and ageing, which will affect people, places and firms in different ways.

In such a context, new solutions conducive to resilience and sustainable development are needed, including in the local labour market. To be most effective, policies should account for different political, economic and social contexts existing at subnational level and tailor their own place-based policies since there is no “one-size-fits-all” policy framework.

Co-operation between different levels of government, adequate local institutional capacities, and a place-sensitive approach to policy design and implementation will be key to achieving a fast, inclusive, and steady recovery tailored to local assets and needs as well as driven by well-thought objectives and instruments.

Focussing on policy innovations and emerging trends, as well as on bottlenecks and skills shortage that first appear locally, the Trento Centre brings its expertise on local implementation to make policy analysis and advice more actionable and relevant.

Tapping the OECD global network of subnational actors allows for a wider variety of practices and innovations to learn from.

What can we offer?

- Insights into emerging policy trends and challenges.
- Support to policy making through the analysis of local dynamics and comparison with international practices.
- Peer learning between practitioners and participation in high-level international policy fora.

All reports: https://oe.cd/policy-advice

"Throughout the COVID-19 emergency, the OECD Trento Centre provided data and key support to Italian decision makers. It was extremely important to have access to information on international practices in a vast array of policy areas and continuously be able to compare our own decisions to the ones taken in other countries. The OECD contribution also fostered co-operation between central and regional governments, allowing a clear picture of the overall response of the Italian public sector to the emergency. In government, as in life, having high-level partners is crucial, especially in hard times: the OECD Trento Centre has proved to be one."

Gian Paolo Manzella
Former Undersecretary for Economic Development, Italian Ministry for Economic Development

OECD TRENTO CENTRE FOR LOCAL DEVELOPMENT - 5
Capacity building for local practitioners on a global scale

Building effective capacity at local level is crucial to strive with new local development challenges and create sustainable, inclusive and resilient local economies and communities.

Designing and implementing effective local development strategies is not a straightforward task. Local leaders and organisations need specialised expertise along with conducive institutional settings to assess local needs and choose the right mix of policies, programmes and financial instruments to address them. Likewise, effectively coordinating with local stakeholders and other levels of government requires a specific skillset. Gaps in any of these areas can derail even the best-laid plans.

The Trento Centre works directly with local leaders to build the capacities needed to make their communities more inclusive, sustainable and resilient. Through almost two decades of experience, it has developed a unique and highly interactive approach to capacity building, blending the latest OECD research with practice-oriented sessions.

In its academies, trainings, webinars, workshops and conferences, participants learn from international experts and speakers, but also through concrete examples and “field visits” to local initiatives. Breaking down institutional barriers and fostering peer-to-peer learning are prodromal to sharing good practices and improving systems. By bringing insights from OECD work to thousands of local policy makers and practitioners – and helping them build the skills to act accordingly – the Trento Centre helps to transform research into local development.

What can we offer?

- Trainings and tailored activities to strengthen the skills needed to develop, manage and evaluate local development strategies.
- Peer-to-peer learning opportunities to learn from an international network of local development professionals.
- Support for developing vibrant community of practices and learning-enhancement tools.

All capacity building activities: https://oe.cd/capacity-building

From 2003, the Trento Centre organised over 297 capacity building events (specialised seminars, conferences, and workshops), 254 study visits, 113 policy reviews and studies. More than 33 300 regional development policy makers and practitioners from 105 countries have benefited from the Trento Centre activities.

An example of a capacity building activity is the International Summer School on Community and Local Development, which recently celebrated its 10th anniversary. Hundreds of local development practitioners from Latin America have attended the school. Other activities include the Winter Academy on Tourism Management for UNESCO Designated Sites in Natural Areas, the Summer School on Local Development Strategies and European Projects, and the Summer Academy on Cultural and Creative Industries and Local Development.
How to engage with us

**Spatial Productivity Lab**
Interested countries, regions and cities can join the Spatial Productivity Lab and suggest relevant research centres and universities in their countries to lead specific topics.

**Place-based policy analysis and advice**
Interested countries, regions and cities can join our ongoing projects (e.g. place-based teleworking toolkits) or seek for support to policy design and implementation as well as insights into new policy trends and international practices to learn from.

**Capacity building activities**
Interested countries, regions and cities can join capacity building activities as participants, provide their expertise, share their practices, host events and study visits. In particular, Trento Centre capacity building activities include capacity building seminars, workshops and conferences organised at the Trento Centre or in the sponsoring country or remotely and addressed to practitioners, academia, representatives of the civil society and the private sector.

How to contact us

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