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Zoltan J. Acs · Henri L.F. de Groot
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The Emergence of the Knowledge Economy

A Regional Perspective

With 52 Figures
and 86 Tables



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Preface

Modern economic development is to an important extent determined and driven by the emergence of the knowledge economy. Knowledge has in recent years become a key driver for growth of regions and nations. Access to knowledge is generally recognised as a key condition for innovative activities in our modern space-economy. Consequently, also the creation and dissemination of new knowledge may act as a critical success factor for regional and national development. Knowledge has, however, important characteristics of a fluid good, which gets easily obsolete. It also has various features of both public and private goods. These characteristics of knowledge prompt a wide range of questions regarding knowledge research and knowledge policy. This is therefore a timely period to take stock of the importance of knowledge in regional development.

This book resulted from a series of conferences in the last few years organised by the Regional Science Association. It illustrates some of the most recent developments in the research fields of knowledge, innovation, and regional development. This research field addresses the fundamental question why some regions grow fast while others stagnate. All papers have in common that they aim at combining insights from various fields of research that have so far largely been developed in isolation, namely the new growth theory, the new economic geography and the new innovation theory. The papers aim at empirically operationalising the rich concepts developed in these theories.

We are grateful to Frans Boekema, Maarten Cornet, Marina van Geenhuizen, Geoffrey Hewings, Heli Koski, Ed Malecki, Richard Nahuis, Jacques Poot, and several contributors to this book for thoroughly reviewing the papers included in the book. Their useful suggestions and remarks have substantially improved the individual papers as well as their mutual coherence.

In editing a book like this one, editors heavily rely on co-operation of the authors as well as the professional guidance by the publisher. We are grateful to the authors for both their patience as well as their co-operation in finalising this book. The people at Springer have also been very co-operative and helpful in preparing the final version of this book and provided useful and detailed comments on the manuscript, which significantly improved the quality.

Zoltan Acs, Henri de Groot and Peter Nijkamp
Baltimore and Amsterdam, April 2002

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