

# **Urban Nexus**

## **An e-bulletin of the Family Network of CPRN**

---

Welcome to Urban Nexus – a new initiative of the Family Network of the Canadian Policy Research Networks.

Urban Nexus builds on the Family Network’s successful *Social Cohesion Nexus*, an electronic information service to the policy community for the last two years that ended in September 2002.

Urban Nexus is a monthly e-bulletin of policy research, news and events on cities and communities that starts from the premise that “place matters.” Urban Nexus is for policy makers, researchers and interested members of the public seeking up-to-date information, from Canadian and non-Canadian sources, about new research on cities. It covers a range of policy perspectives, and literature in French as well as English.

Urban Nexus uses an urban lens to present traditional policy fields in a new light, and to highlight emerging issues relating to cities and communities. In each issue you can expect to find:

- reviews and summaries of recent studies and reports on a specific theme;
- news about upcoming events and research; and
- direct links (where available) to authors, publications and related links.

Urban Nexus is edited by CPRN research associate Neil Bradford, author of CPRN’s landmark study, [\*Why Cities Matter: Policy Research Perspectives for Canada\*](#) (June 2002).

Urban Nexus is your one-stop source of information and news about the burgeoning field of urban policy studies. Please write us with your comments and suggestions about how we can make this service as helpful as possible.

So, welcome again. We look forward to hearing from you.

**Jane Jenson**

Director, Family Network

---

## **October 16, 2002 – Cities and Innovation**

Widely recognized today is the significant “urban dimension” to many public policy concerns, including

economic competitiveness, social cohesion, and civic participation in governance. Equally appreciated are the positive synergies flowing from the interaction of diverse, creative people in urban centres. But what practices and policies will best generate a high quality of life for all residents in metropolitan spaces? This opening issue of Urban Nexus considers different aspects of the innovation challenge facing Canadian cities and city-regions.

---

## Résumés

**Richard Florida. 2002. “The Rise of the Creative Class.”** *The Washington Monthly*, (May). <http://www.washingtonmonthly.com/features/2001/0205.florida.html>

This article (and the book from which it is drawn) brings together the various strands of Richard Florida’s extensive research on the changing sources of urban and regional advantage in the knowledge economy. Florida argues that economic growth across leading sectors now depends on a “creative class” of highly educated workers, ranging from scientists and engineers, to architects, poets, and other professional problem-solvers. Combining qualitative and quantitative research, Florida maps a “new geography of class” revealing that creative people have locational preferences for particular urban places. Cities that become magnets for high technology industries and talented people share attributes: tolerance of lifestyle and cultural differences; a vibrant street-level “scene”; outdoor amenities and authentic built environments; thick labour markets and an imaginative land use mix. Florida warns that too many cities are either locked-in to development strategies of a bygone industrial age, or fruitlessly trying to emulate the Silicon Valley model. He urges cities to cultivate among their residents “loose ties” of community, valuing diversity, mobility, openness, and learning.

Richard Florida is H. John Heinz III Professor of Regional Economic Development, Heinz School of Public Policy and Management, Carnegie Mellon University. His most recent book is *The Rise of the Creative Class: And How it’s transforming Work, Leisure, Community and Everyday Life* (New York: Basic Books, 2002). A Canadian application of aspects of Florida’s work is presently underway at the University of Toronto under the direction of Dr. Meric S. Gertler, Professor of Geography. Information on this research, as it becomes available, can be accessed at: <http://www.utoronto.ca/isrn/>.

---

**J. Adam Holbrooke and David A. Wolfe, eds. 2002. *Knowledge, Clusters and Regional Innovation: Economic Development in Canada*. Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press and the School of Policy Studies, Queen’s University.**

This book presents research from members of the Innovation Systems Research Network, a cross-national, inter-disciplinary team of scholars examining the dynamics of economic and social innovation in both large metropolitan centres and smaller communities in Canada. Specific case studies include multi-media and biotechnology cluster development in Montreal and Toronto, wood products manufacturing in regions of British Columbia, and community-based technology networking in Cape

Breton. The book also addresses broader themes such as the impact of free trade on capacities for innovation, the interplay of markets and states in cluster formation, and the role of university research in innovation processes. David A. Wolfe situates the various studies in an opening chapter that clarifies key concepts (social capital, learning regions, path dependency) in the innovation literature, while also identifying important differences between European and North American applications. Policy-relevant lessons in cluster development are drawn for governments at various scales, from the local to the national.

The Innovation Systems Research network is currently working on a major study of clusters and innovation across Canada. Members can be reached at <http://www.utoronto.ca/isrn/aboutus.htm>

---

**Eric Leviten-Reid. 2002. “Community Economic Development and the Innovation Challenge: A Preliminary Review of the Literature.” Caledon Institute of Social Policy and Community Economic Development Technical Assistance Program.**

<http://caledoninst.org> ; email: [levitenreid@sprint.ca](mailto:levitenreid@sprint.ca)

This paper sets the stage for a research project and consultation process examining the role of community economic development (CED) in the federal government’s recently announced national innovation strategy. The aim is to clarify the meaning of innovation in the context of CED work, to assess the strengths and weakness of CED organizations with respect to innovation, and to enhance their capacities. Leviten-Reid explores three factors identified in the innovation literature as drivers of change: leadership, learning, and relationships. Viewed through a CED lens, emphasis is placed on social entrepreneurship, learning communities, and non-hierarchical and networked organizations. The paper concludes by discussing areas of alignment between the federal innovation agenda and community economic development, as well as emerging challenges. For community-based organizations these challenges include broadening the focus of cluster development to include specific strategies for social inclusion and poverty reduction, making use of new information and communications technologies to support learning, and formation of local multisectoral partnerships.

---

**M. Lamari, R. Landry, and N. Amara. 2001. “Apprentissage et innovation: une analyse économétrique à partir de données d'enquête dans les entreprises des régions de Québec et de Chaudière-Appalaches.” Canadian Journal of Regional Science Vol. 24, No. 1: 57-80.**

<http://www.lib.unb.ca/Texts/CJRS/Spring01/LANDRY.pdf>

This paper assesses the impact of learning on innovation. Based on regional data on innovation, surveying 802 companies in the Chaudière-Appalaches and Quebec City regions, the paper deploys a multinomial logit model to test hypotheses related to different kinds of learning, and the consequences for three types of innovation: product innovation, process innovation, and simultaneous innovation in both.

The findings are that the consequences for innovation vary according to the kind of learning experience.

The major determinants of all three types of innovation are learning by using (advanced technologies) and learning by searching (learning through in-house R&D). Less important effects can be attributed to learning by interaction (measured by networking and trust), learning by regional externalities (being in a learning region), or learning from industry spillover. In addition, the study found that companies in the Quebec City Region were less innovative than those in Chaudière-Appalaches. The authors report little surprise at this result, given that the region of Quebec has traditionally been dominated by the public sector, while the other has long had an entrepreneurial and industrial culture.

The authors draw two conclusions for policy. The first is that, because there is little difference in rates and practices of innovation between large companies and small- and medium-sized ones, the authors are skeptical of programs based on size. Second, because some companies pay more attention to product than process innovations, public programs should be careful to support both types, responding to the real needs of the companies.

Réjean Landry, Nabil Amara and Moktar Lamari are in the Management Department at Université Laval. Réjean Landry holds the CHSRF/CIHR Chair on Knowledge Transfer and Innovation. Nabil Amara and Moktar Lamari are researchers attached to the Chair. <http://kuuc.chair.ulaval.ca/english/index.php>

---

## What's New?

### *Conferences and Meetings*

**“Brownfields 2002: A National Perspective on Community Building and Redevelopment.”** Canadian Urban Institute, Toronto Ontario, October 17, 2002. <http://www.canurb.com/>

**“Thinking Smart Cities.”** Institute of Political Economy, Carleton University, Ottawa Ontario, November 15, 2002. Contact: [fran\\_klowdawsky@carleton.ca](mailto:fran_klowdawsky@carleton.ca)

**“Knowledge and Economic and Social Change: New Challenges to Innovation Studies.”** ESRC Centre for Research on Innovation and Competition, Manchester UK, April 7-9, 2003. <http://les1.man.ac.uk/cric/2003conf/default.htm>

### *Publications*

#### Scholarly Journals: Special Theme Issues

*Urban Studies* **“The Knowledge Based City”** Vol. 39, No. 5, (May 2002). <http://www.gla.ac.uk/UrbanStudiesJournal/>

*Canadian Journal of Urban Research* “**Urban Quality of Life**” Vol. 10, No. 2 (Winter 2001).  
[http://www.uwinnipeg.ca/~ius/cjur/cdn\\_journal.htm](http://www.uwinnipeg.ca/~ius/cjur/cdn_journal.htm)

*Canadian Journal of Regional Science* “**Learning and Innovation: Implications for Regional Policy**” Vol. XX1V:1 (Spring 2001).  
<http://tornado.ere.umontreal.ca/~shearmur/CRSA.HTM> <http://www.hil.unb.ca/Texts/CJRS/bin/get.cgi?directory=CJRSback/&filename=Abstracteng24-1.htm>

## Policy Research Reports

Cortright, Joseph and Heike Mayer. 2001. **High Tech Specialization: A Comparison of High Technology Centers. The Brookings Institution.**  
<http://www.brookings.org/dybdocroot/es/urban/issues/economy/hightech.htm>

Working Group 1V: Governance in the EU. 2001. **Eurocities 2: European Governance White Paper: Towards a New Role for Cities in a Network Europe.**  
[http://europa.eu.int/comm/governance/areas/group10/index\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu.int/comm/governance/areas/group10/index_en.htm)

Rosenfeld, Stuart A. 2002. **Creating Smart Systems: A Guide to Cluster Strategies in Less Favoured Regions.** European Union-Regional Innovation Strategies. Regional Technology Strategies, Carrboro, North Carolina, USA.  
[http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/regional\\_policy/innovation/pdf/guide\\_rosenfeld\\_final.pdf](http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/regional_policy/innovation/pdf/guide_rosenfeld_final.pdf)

European Commission, DG Regional Policy. 2002. **Regional Innovation Strategies under the European Regional Development Fund, Innovative Actions 2002-2002.** Europa – Regional Policy Info. Inforegio.  
[http://europa.eu.int/comm/regional\\_policy/innovation/library\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu.int/comm/regional_policy/innovation/library_en.htm)

OECD (2002). **Territorial Reviews: Canada.** OECD Publications Service.  
<http://www.oecd.org/EN/document/0,,EN-document-0-nodirectorate-no-12-34290-0,00.html>

---

Send information on submissions you would like to have considered for a future update to [nexus@cprn.org](mailto:nexus@cprn.org). If you have not already done so, subscribe to the *Urban Nexus* list-serve at <http://www.cprn.org/en/nexus.cfm>