Economic Development, Institutions, and Urban Governance in the Region of Ottawa, Canada

Caroline Andrew

&

David Doloreux

1. Introduction: The Case of the Ottawa region

**Objective:**
- Understand the processes and mechanisms by which a region develops into an innovative region by analysing relationships between innovation and the development of institutional capacity and coalitions which operate in a region

**Goals:**
- Describe the local innovation arrangements and the capacity to build an institutional infrastructure that supports successful knowledge-based economic development
- Analyze the new forms of urban governance that have been emerging since the 1990’ high-tech boom in Ottawa
- Identify the economic and social challenges that Ottawa faces as an innovative region.
1. Introduction: The Case of the Ottawa region

• Case: Ottawa region
  – This case may offer context-specific insight into the institutional capacity and the means of identifying and addressing high-road strategies to promote technology-based economic development in a regionally knowledge-based context.

• From capital city to an innovative-driven region…
  – Since 1980s, high-tech boom in high-tech industries the ICT industry, electronics, and semiconductors
  – Additionally there has been a significant growth lately in optoelectronic and life-science activities
  – These sectors have high growth rates and have developed in clusters of more than 1,000 employees.
  – KIBS account for about 11.3 per cent of total regional workforce in Ottawa
Structure of the presentation

1. Introduction: The Case of the Ottawa region
3. Development of Associative Modes of Governments
4. Economic & Social Challenges
5. First Cut at the Theme 3 Interviews

- 1968 Trudeau – National Capital Region Ottawa and Gatineau
- Period of NCC Dominance
  - 1950’s – 1970’s
- Creation of Regional Governments
  - 1971 MROC
  - 1972 CRO
- Municipal Amalgamations
  - 2001 Ottawa
  - 2002 Gatineau
3. Development of Associative Modes of Governments

- OCRI (Ottawa Centre for Research and Innovation)
  - High Tech
  - Education
- TOP (The Ottawa Partnership)
  - Co-chairs – High Tech & Post Secondary
  - Clusters
- HIO (Hire Immigrants Ottawa)
  - United Way, City of Ottawa, LASI
4. Economic & Social Challenges

• Speaking for the Marginalized
  – Community Resource and Health Centres
• Immigrant Voices
  – LASI (Local Agencies Serving Immigrants)
• Women’s Voices – the intersections of gender and ethno-racial diversity
  – CAWI - IVTF
5. First Cut at the Theme 3 Interviews

- 25 Interviews
  - Economic Sector – 8 (6 business)
  - Social Sector – 10 (3 immigration)
  - Political/Administrative Sector – 5 (1 Prov, 1 Fed, 3 Mun)
  - Post-secondary Education Sector - 2
Major Themes

A. Little contact between the business sector and the social sector but new articulations by business sector
   • OCRI – education
   • Chamber of Commerce – recent interest in social housing
   • TOP – feels it should do more
   • RGA – more contact (on francophone side)
B. Business sector relatively self-satisfied

- See few social problems
- Limited understanding of immigration challenges
  - Involvement with HIO
  - Formal acknowledgment of importance but…
- Almost totally ignored growing Aboriginal population
- Almost no reference to francophone questions (except RGA, CESOC)
- No reference to Gatineau or to the NCR region
C. Business Leadership – Who is taking the lead?

• OCRI generally identified as most active
  – But some questions about being overextended
• Chamber of Commerce – seen as weak
• TOP – seen as in a period of low-activity
D. United Way – as the lead organization

- Almost universally recognized as the central organization
- Given central space
- Community Foundation – present but less visible
E. Agreement on Lack of Direction

- Almost unanimous
  - Little tri-level coordination
  - Lots of individual contacts
  - No overall structure/network/cooperation

- Two principal targets to explain inaction
  - City of Ottawa
  - Federal Government
City of Ottawa

- Everyone has contacts with CPS
  - Community and Protective Services / Steve Kanellakos – described as positive
- No mention of elected officials
- Lack of vision and direction
- Lack of political will
Federal Government

• No presence on local questions
• Doesn’t understand how to act locally
• Doesn’t get ‘place-based’ approach
• Contributes to under funding