

Universities driving stronger, fairer and cleaner cities & regions. Lessons from the international reviews of higher education in regional and city development.

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Following decades of expansion in higher education, policy attention in OECD countries and emerging economies has begun to focus on how universities and other higher education institutions contribute to regional and local development. With the processes of globalisation and localisation, the local availability of knowledge and skills, and the transfer of technology and innovation to SMEs and communities have become more and more important. In recent years there have been many initiatives to mobilize higher education in support of economic development and community engagement.

This presentation draws on the lessons from the international multi-annum work on higher education in cities and regions. Since 2005, OECD has reviewed the role and engagement of higher education in more than 30 cities and regions in over 20 countries. The reviews of Higher Education in Regional and City Development have facilitated partnership building between governments, universities and communities. They have helped mobilise higher education institutions for economic, social and cultural development of cities and regions. They have analysed how the higher education system impacts upon regional and local development and have brought together universities, other higher education institutions and public and private agencies to identify strategic goals and to work towards them. The reviews have benefited from collaboration with partners such as the World Bank, UNESCO, Inter-American Development Bank (IADB), National Center for Higher Education Management Systems (NCHEMS) and Lumina Foundation.