



GDR DREEM



Année Franco-Egyptienne de la
Science et de la Technologie



INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH NETWORK (GDR) of the CNRS (National Center for Scientific Research)
Development of Euro-Mediterranean Economic Research (DREEM)
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***Second International Conference
Innovation & development
in the Mediterranean countries***

Cairo, Egypt, December 13-14, 2010

Hotel Mariott

University of Cairo

2^d international conference of GDR DREEM organized in the framework of the
Franco-Egyptian year of the science and the technology

Call for papers

With the participation of: FEMISE, Economic Research Forum (ERF)
and GDR « Economie du développement et de la transition »



GDR CNRS 2989
Economie du Développement
et de la Transition

Issues

The GDR-I DREEM organized its first international conference in 2009 in Istanbul about "inequalities and development in Mediterranean countries ". Its second international conference will be organized in the context of "the French year of science and technology in Egypt", in Cairo, on December 13th and 14th, 2010. The main topic is "innovation (in the broad sense) and development of Mediterranean countries".

Over the last twenty years, the concept of innovation has been emphasized in economic analysis. This is due notably to the development of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) as well as the increased content in knowledge and information in the whole economy. The innovation process is similar to technical progress and leads to structural changes in the economy and the society. Product innovation corresponds to the invention, new design and marketing of a product allowing the increase of the differentiation of products from the consumer's point of view. This technological meaning of the word "innovation" was included in the analysis of growth, the new international trade theory, the development gap, and the competitiveness of nations.

The theory of the endogenous growth stresses the role of technological innovation and human resources to explain economic growth, convergence or differences between countries. In addition, the disparities between countries were often analyzed by the innovation gap, in research and development, patents, quotations... An abundant literature points out for example problems of the effects of training of the foreign direct investments in the diffusion of knowledge in host developing countries. But little work at microeconomic level has been conducted in Southern and Eastern Mediterranean countries.

More recently, the emerging "new new international trade theory" (Marc J. Melitz and Pol Antras) emphasizes the crucial role of firm heterogeneity, i.e. the effects of firm differences in terms of productivity, technology as well as organizational innovation. These models show that when a small number of global firms are already engaged in export, foreign direct investment (FDI), outsourcing, then the domestic firms not engaged in these activities coexist in the same sectors and present wide productivity differences. Although recent empirical studies were developed in the case of industrial nations, with relevant results, little research concerns Mediterranean countries. An approach with individual data for these countries can usefully fill this lack of literature.

In addition, research based on the new economic geography widely stressed the particular role of location of technological activities, R&D as well as innovation in general for the explanation of concentration and regional disparities. The analysis of firm heterogeneity in innovation, which emphasizes the process of selection and exit of firms, allows renewing these approaches, and calls for future research in the Mediterranean countries.

However, innovation cannot be restricted to its technological dimension only. Recent analyses stress the necessity of extending this material vision of "the visible innovation" (through the usual criteria of productivity and technical progress measurements) to "not directly visible innovations", following the example of the considerable rise of the economy of services and the immaterial in advanced economies as well as in emergent countries.

Measuring a country's performance by the growth rate of its GDP and gains of productivity raises other problems related to definitions and measurements. Institutional and financial innovations should also be considered for countries south of the Mediterranean. This would allow us to examine the links between the financial innovations and the Islamic financial system which is developing in both the south and the north of the Mediterranean.

Environmental innovations are also overlooked by this restrictive definition of innovations and its outcomes. It appears critical to take into account organizational, institutional and social innovations in analyses of micro or macroeconomic performances.

It is however insufficient to engage in innovations to show growth, competitiveness and catching up performances. It is also necessary to develop specific strategies for the protection of intellectual property, strategic alliances in innovative activities and the promotion of human capital. It might be worth noting however that the protection of intellectual property may be a double edged sword in that while it may favor the production and diffusion of knowledge, it can also, and beyond a threshold, block their diffusion in southern countries.

At the macro-economic level, policies geared towards selecting qualified immigrants address, in principle, the needs for consolidating an economy of innovation. However, brain drain, which has gone through both a theoretical and empirical review, could have important positive or negative implications for the developments of the home countries, depending on the expatriation rate of qualified individuals which constitute the threshold effect.

Main topics of the conference:

- Education, human resources, productivity, competitiveness
- FDI and diffusion of knowledge
- Financing innovation
- Innovation, activities of R&D and growth
- Intellectual property rights, trades and innovation
- Innovation and territorial inequalities
- Clusters and innovation
- Evaluation of the knowledge policies
- Development of the industries and the technological services
- ICT and development
- Innovation, firms and structure of international trade
- Migrations, brain drain, regional integration and diffusion of knowledge
- Labor market and skills
- Financial Innovations and risk
- Institutional Innovation, social welfare and development
- Innovation, environment and sustainable development
- Innovation and development in the Mediterranean countries and in the Developing countries comparative analyses

Keynote lectures

Dr. Maryann Feldman (Department of Public Policy, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, USA)

Dr. Ahmed Galal (Director of ERF, Egypt)

Dr. Luc Soete (Director of UNU-MERIT (the United Nations University- Maastricht Economic and social Research and training centre on Innovation and Technology))

Concluding the conference

“Best Paper Award” session

Submission guidelines and timetable

Submissions of full papers (pdf files in French or English) are expected by **June 15, 2010** to the following address: dreem2010lecaire@gmail.com.

Decisions will be announced by July 10, 2010.

Organizers

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