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Challenges, policies and governance of the territories in the post-covid era

Desafíos, políticas y gobernanza de los territorios en la era post-covid

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ABSTRACT

Authors and e-mail of them: ¹Nuria Chaparro-Banegas, nchaban@upv.es; ¹Norat Roig-Tierno, norat.roig@upv.es; ¹Francisco Mas-Verdu, fmas@upvnet.upv.es; ¹Jose-Maria Garcia-Alvarez-Coque, jmgarcia@upvnet.upv.es.

University: ¹Universitat Politècnica de València

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Abstract: European eco-innovation: a fsQCA analysis over the period 2014-2021

Since 2009, the European Union (EU) has been pioneering eco-innovation through the development of policy measures, programs, and organizations with regional presence and impacts. The implementation of eco-innovation has become one of the fundamental pillars of the Europe 2020 Strategy (European Commission, 2022a). This strategy boosts regional competitiveness and sustainable development (Aiginger & Firgo, 2017), creating wealth and employment in the EU (Arundel & Kemp, 2009). A large range of public administrations has adopted eco-innovation with an impact on regional innovation systems (López-Rubio et al., 2021).

The literature has identified a myriad of drivers of eco-innovation, such as human capital, collaborative networks, public and private R&D, norms and regulations, government incentives, and business strategies, among others (Díaz-García et al., 2015). This contribution shows that there is not a unique pathway or policy mix that leads a nation or region to achieve high levels of eco-innovative performance. fsQCA methodology, which has not been frequently applied to explain eco-innovation, is proved to be helpful in identifying pathways that trigger regional eco-innovation during the period 2014-2021. Eco-innovation was approached by the compound index included in the Eco-innovation Scoreboard (European Commission, 2022b). By considering different drivers, we identified combinations of factors that could explain why a country or a region shows a higher eco-innovative performance and why such performance changes across the considered period. Sound governance, public and private R&D, the presence of excellent research institutions, and qualified human capital are proposed as conditions to build the fsQCA model. QCA has also been applied to other regional studies demonstrating that it is a methodology that matches the regional approach (Garcia-Alvarez-Coque et al., 2021).



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