SPRU Wednesday Seminar

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Speaker Claudio Bravo Ortega (University of Chile)
Title The Effectiveness of R&D Intensity Targeting Policies and the Characteristics of Intensity Transitions: Evidence from Developing and Developed Economies over the Last Five Decades

Abstract
Over the last five decades a growing number of governments in developed and developing countries have implemented R&D targeting policies to raise the R&D-intensity (R&D to GDP) of their economies. However, until now there have been few attempts either to evaluate the effectiveness of these policy efforts or to identify the characteristics of substantial country-level R&D-intensity transitions when they do occur. In this paper we examine both of those questions. First, we compile information about the R&D targeting goals of 53 developed and developing countries and their effectiveness in achieving them, finding that most countries have failed to fulfill their self-imposed targets. Second, we study episodes of substantial acceleration in R&D expenditure, using a longitudinal dataset of 62 countries between 1960 and 2007. We find that transitions to higher levels of R&D-intensity are relatively infrequent, tending to occur at intensity ratios around 2% and US$15,000 per capita income. These transitions, in general, can be correlated with higher income levels, though productivity and knowledge production variables (patents and scientific publications) seem to show a stronger association. Property rights, trade openness, higher credit availability and FDI inflows are other variables that show some correlation with R&D transitions.

Bio
Claudio Bravo-Ortega is an economist specialised in economic growth, innovation and international economics. He has developed research on the impact of natural resource abundance on economic growth and innovation, on the impact and the determinants of export diversification, on the determinants of productivity and the returns to R&D, and the trade linkages of macroeconomic volatility. Before joining the Department of Economics from the University of Chile, he worked for the World Bank. Previously, he worked at the Industrial Engineering Department of the same university, and in the think-tank Cieplan. During the academic year 2008 to 2009, he was Visiting Fellow at SPRU in the University of Sussex in the UK. He holds a PhD in Economics from UC at Berkeley, an MSc in Industrial Engineering and an Engineering degree from the University of Chile.