



Dies Natalis 26 March 2019

*Laudatio on behalf of the honorary doctorate of Andrés Rodríguez-Pose at Utrecht University
by Ron Boschma, honorary supervisor*

Andrés Rodríguez-Pose is a world leading scholar in the field of economic geography. A common thread in his work is to understand why do some regions thrive, and others not, and why some policies succeed, while others fail. His rich oeuvre of almost 200 scientific publications and books has been a key source of inspiration for many in the field and far beyond. He is definitely one of most productive researchers in economic geography, and the quality and originality of his publications are persistently high.

Andrés has a long track record of research on many topics in economic geography, like inequality and regional growth, the geography of innovation, the role of migration for regional development, and development policies and strategies.

Especially his work on the role of institutions for regional development is highly cited. His work is closely related to one of the strategic research programs at Utrecht University, Institutions for Open Societies. Andrés has analyzed the role of institutions for regional economic development in the European Union especially, but also in other parts of the world, like Latin America, China and India. He has increased our understanding of what type of institutions enable regional development, what types of regional policies might work, and how that depends on the institutional context in regions. For example, there is considerable evidence that the quality of government varies widely across European regions. One of his major achievements is that Andrés has empirically demonstrated how that affects regional development and the effectiveness of regional policies in particular.

Andrés' work bears witness to the importance of doing interdisciplinary research to tackle scientific questions. Having a PhD in Geography AND a PhD in Social and Political Sciences, he combines insights from geography, economics, political science, innovation studies, and development studies. His scientific work has a high degree of societal relevance, which explains why he is regular advisor for international organizations, like the European Commission, the European Investment Bank, the World Bank, the OECD, the Inter-American Development Bank, among many other organizations. These abilities are combined with his great talent to communicate scientific results to a wider audience.

It gives us great pleasure that Utrecht University has decided to award an honorary doctorate to Andrés Rodríguez-Pose. With this doctorate, Utrecht University recognizes his landmark contributions to economic geography and his achievements to link geography and institutions to address societal problems with high policy relevance.