

S46 Thirty years of EU Cohesion Policy: What works? Where? for Whom?

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The ongoing scholarly and policy debates on past achievements and future perspectives of EU Cohesion Policy has moved from narrow questions on the overall policy impact ('Does it work?') to the more nuanced questions on the conditions that shape heterogeneous impacts ('What works?') across regions and policy areas. The debate is also giving increasing emphasis to the diversity of impacts that Cohesion Policy can bring about in the EU regions in terms of broader socio-economic, environmental and welfare level transformations. Convincing evidence-based answers to these questions are central to the debate on the future of EU Cohesion Policy after 2020 in the framework of increasing budget constraints following Brexit. This Special Session invites papers that explore the features of EU Cohesion Policy and heterogeneous models of policy implementation in order to link them with heterogeneous impacts ('For whom?') and localized conditioning factors ('Where?'). In order to address these fundamental issues this special session encourages papers that adopt appropriate methods for counterfactual analysis and/or capture the factors conditioning success and failure of Cohesion policy. Rigorous in-depth case studies are also very welcome. The discussion of this selection of papers will make it possible to single out a set of high-level policy implications and contribute to the design of an agenda for future research in this field, informing an evidence-based debate on the future of EU Cohesion Policy.