Special Session Proposal

Convergence outcomes of Cohesion Policy: Evidence from the Past and Future Perspectives

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Abstract

The aim of the EU's Cohesion Policy is to ensure the growth of the less developed regions, reducing regional disparities. In order to achieve this goal, the European Commission uses European Regional Development (ERDF) and Cohesion funds (CF). The question is whether this support has achieved its objectives and has boosted growth in less developed regions and led to regional convergence. This issue is widely discussed in the scientific community and gained its interest in policy analysis as well. However, the review of previous research disclosed that most of the studies investigate outcomes of regional support in terms of growth, productivity, and employment at country, NUTS 1 or 2 disaggregation level paying little attention to convergence and leaving open the question what outcomes ERDF and CF transfers generate at NUTS 3 level. Moreover, results of previous investigations are ambiguous, since outcomes of Cohesion Policy may depend on regional conditions, especially on institutional quality, and intensity of transfers. Therefore, the following aspects must be taken into account to improve the effectiveness of the Cohesion Policy.