

BOOK REVIEW

Gabriela Carmen Pascariu and Maria Adelaide Pedrosa da Silva Duarte (Eds.)

Core-Periphery Patterns across the European Union

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The European Union (EU) is one of the most spectacular institutional constructions in the world history and, definitely, one of the most important after the second world war. Bringing so many people together, from countries that have been fighting together along their history, or that have been part of separate ideologies for almost half century under the umbrella of common values, principles and interests is an amazing and complex endeavor.

The EU is an endless source of research. European construction is an ongoing process and each step brings a new challenge. Therefore, the literature devoted to the EU issues is growing and the research on European topics is more and more complex.

The book presented here, *Core-Periphery Patterns Across the European Union*, edited by **Gabriela Carmen Pascariu and Maria Adelaide Pedrosa da Silva Duarte** “seeks to answer some of the challenges faced by the EU” (p. xxvii), mostly related to the role of the economic integration process in shaping the centre - periphery model. What factors contribute to the development of the periphery? Why the gap between periphery and the more developed regions does not necessarily diminish, even when the periphery experiments growth?

Focused on these kinds of questions, the book is an interesting and useful collection of analysis that resulted from years of research under two joint research projects coordinated by the Centre of European Studies of Alexandru Ioan Cuza University of Iasi and University of Coimbra, Portugal, and preoccupation of different scholars from Romania, Portugal, Poland, Greece, and Germany.

The topics developed in this book are very useful for specialists, scholars, students and those interested in the study of the regional development strategies, programs and measures and how these contributed or not to the harmonization of the development level, what influences the increasing or the decreasing of the gap between different regions and mostly, what kind of lessons can be learned in order to increase the efficiency of the integration process. As the editors state “Policies matter and

have to be appropriate; EU funds (...) do not guarantee per se that the selected targets are reached. On the contrary, in the absence of the adequate policies, EU funds might act through several channels jeopardising productivity and growth” (p. xxvii).

The book provides interesting, well documented and highly methodological sustained analysis. The eleven chapters offer a deep analysis on the topics related to integration, growth and convergence in a context shaped by structural transformations in South and Eastern EU countries. Above this comprehensive analysis, another merit of the book is the case studies from the third part of the book that reveals periphery forces in action in Eastern and Southern EU. These case studies bring additional educational value to the book, very useful in the teaching process.