



BOOK REVIEWS

The Impact of EU Enlargement on Regional Strategies and Policies – By Gabriela Marchis

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Impactul extinderii Uniunii Europene asupra strategiilor și politicilor regionale. Gabriela Marchis. București: Editura Didactică și Pedagogică, 2009. 183 pp, 28 figures, 13 tables, ISBN 978-973-30-2460-6.



The current evolution of the Romanian economy in the context of global economic crisis is strongly linked to the integration process into the European Union. Being a part of “STUD_COMP_IMM” research project (*Studies on the SME’s Sector’s Competitiveness with the Aim of Increasing the Regional and Local Durable Growth through Economic and Financial Policies*) this book aims two essential goals: the process of European integration and the enlargement of European Union and, on the other hand, the EU regional policies and their impact on the Romanian society.

The complexity of the integration process is visible in the above cited book in different approaches. One important feature is the explicit attention given to the impact of enlargement at political, economic and social level. These three dimensions that are closely interrelated and subject to permanent transformations and changes are defined as “*deepening, widening and enlargement*”.



The main idea of the book is that one must have a **vision over the entire process**, a holistic view that takes in consideration the connections between the concepts of EU integration process and its enlargement, the role played by regional policies and the system of financial assistance that ensures the achievement of the European objectives.

The philosophy of regional development shows that economic and social convergence must be achieved at different levels (national, regional and local) and that the regional policies are playing a complementary role in the European integration process.

The scientific value of the book is given by the analytic and logical interpretation of the conceptual and practical framework of the treated subject as well as by considering the points of view of the researchers in the specific field.

The first part of the book refers to the functional dynamics of the European integration process and of the EU enlargement, being descriptive at the beginning and analytic at the end. It is shown that these processes are sequential and simultaneous and, as a consequence, EU must be considered as a dynamic system that evolves both in time and space. The fundamental idea is that European integration generates, maintains and entails the mix between **inward convergence** and **multidimensional cohesion**.

The **horizontal dimension** of economic and social cohesion is approached both as the possibility of achieving real and nominal convergence with the European pattern and also from the perspective of divergences resulting from gradually regional economic development and from the differences among existing scenarios.

The second part of the book synthesizes the diversity of EU regional policies phenomena and of the corresponding instruments, representing the starting point from which the Romanian regional development policy is designed.

Through the investigation of theoretical and practical premises of the strategies, of the functionality and the evolution at EU level, a gnosiological support regarding the possibilities for Romania's development as a communitarian state is provided. In this way the book offers answers for the creation of a **legal framework for implementing strategic planning instruments**, depending on the particularities of the regions and their potential.

The author mentions some problems in identifying the main development resources and the modalities of their exploitation and emphasizes the need for including these issues in the **regional strategies and policies**.

As a conclusion, the book gives a good scientific overview of the European integration process and on the **communitarian vision** regarding **economic, social and territorial cohesion**. Another issue that receives a lot of attention is the identification of necessities and of the development directions for improving regional strategies and policies design, accordingly with the communitarian pattern. The chapters have been written concisely, making the book very



EuroEconomica

Issue 2(28)/2011

ISSN: 1582-8859

readable. I strongly recommend the book as a useful tool for theoreticians and practitioners in the field.