

Towards a new growth model in CESEE: convergence and competitiveness through smart, green and inclusive investment

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Very interesting study

The paper Analyses firm level data on innovation, digitalisation, climate change mitigation, skills and human capital in Central, Eastern and South-Eastern European EU countries (CESEE)

- Very actual and important issues are addressed
- The data are very up to date, interesting and very well presented
- The statistical analysis is done in a rigorous and interesting way
- Effects of Covid-19 are discussed
- Very recent EU policies are covered

General comments for improvements

- As the paper reads as a report than a scientific paper:
 - Perhaps having an executive summary with bullet points would better guide a reader throughout the text (which is reasonably long and spreads across four topics)
 - Also having a list of policy recommendations in the end would make the arguments and conclusions made here and there in the paper more rigorously presented
- A brief paragraph could be added on the data which you use in the paper (methodology of the statistical analysis, stratification, weighting, etc)

Specific comments for improvements

- Confusion with several terms: “growth model”, “Convergence”
- Figure 1 correlation between intangibles and GDP per capita - worth mentioning reverse causality
- Discussion on the dynamics of TFP growth could also briefly tap on the data limitations and measurement challenges
- DESI index is well addressed but with a rather positive angle – over the time the DESI index is not changing much across CEEC, which is worrisome
- Numbering of Figures is a bit messed up and Figures 6 and 7 are the same
- Concluding paragraph of section on skills reads like a conclusion of the whole paper