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Cohesion policy of the European Union – from enthusiasm through doubts to criticism

The cohesion policy of the European Union, of which the regional policy is a main component, still consumes the second greatest – after the Common Agricultural Policy - share (over one third) of the common funds. However, this policy, deeply rooted in the tradition equity-oriented approach, is not able to achieve its goals, since although the differences between the member state do decrease, many of them undergo internal regional differentiation.

This situation triggers more detailed analyses aiming at specifying the reasons of this unsatisfactory efficacy of this policy. One can easily notice an evolution of these evaluations – from a self-fulfilling demand-based HERMIN model to statements indicating that the external assistance directed to countries and regions with poor institutions and not sufficiently open may result in decreasing their growth potential.

This discussion is of paramount importance for Poland, since our regional policy still follows the old (and obsolete) paradigms and does not respond not only to the results of this debate, but is also not aware of it.