

Review: Institutional convergence in Europe

The paper “Institutional convergence in Europe” by Schönfeld and Wagner considers the concepts of σ -convergence and unconditional β -convergence regarding the institutional development of Europe between 1996 and 2012 or 2013. The research question of the paper and findings are quite interesting.

The introduction points out the importance of convergence for the European institutions and gives a short review of the literature. Nevertheless, it is missed to explain why the paper differentiates from the existing literature and how it tries to fill any research gaps. The brief literature review makes it difficult to assess the later results. An extension of the literature review could therefore help to underline the importance of the empirical results of the paper.

The overview of the development of the European Union in Section 1 is good and helps to understand the integration process of the European countries. While section 2 defines and describes the convergence measures, there is no discussion about assumptions or potential advantages/disadvantages of the estimates (maybe also compared to other approaches).

The graphs in chapter 3 and 4 are difficult to read. I would suggest adding headlines to each graph so that it becomes clear which graph refers to which WGI.

The conclusions in section 3.3, 4.3 and 5 are improvable. It is rather a short summary of the findings than a substantial conclusion. It would be good if the findings would be compared to those in the literature.