

Review of: "The EU's Capacity for Enlargement: Does It Matter?"

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The topic is very interesting, particularly at the present time. The paper has plenty of references to the literature that could be useful to readers with limited knowledge of the topics if they were better organized. The paper is also reasonably well informed about the issue of EU enlargement.

However, the analytics is very poor and reduces the quality of the paper and its interest.

First, the paper refers to the EU as a confederation ("a supranational confederation of states" as is called by the author), but this is not true, since the EU has also some features of a federation (for example, EU regulations apply directly to individuals and firms as in federations). Much more importantly, most of the policies that are taken into account in the paper imply the existence of a full federation, or even a unitary state, and are not relevant for the enlargement. So why introduce them? It would have been more correct to focus simply on specific policies more concerned by the enlargement and evaluate the impact (on their feasibility, for example) on them from the enlargement.

Second, the concept of heterogeneity is not specified. Does it refer to the increase of the number of decision-makers and its implications on the difficulties of reaching decisions? Or to economic differences between member states and the deriving redistributive impact on the budget of the (con)federation? Or to the increase of coercion that would derive on EU citizens from the operation of the EU, more specifically from the provision of public and collective goods to a more diversified citizenry? Coercion (and its increase) here derives from the imposition of the same policy, for example, a specific environmental regulation, on agents that have (more) diverse preferences. As one can see, once the specification of the meaning of heterogeneity is done, its implications are completely different from those of another specification and have to be analyzed with different modeling tools. This is not done in the paper, unfortunately.