

Review of: "Impact of COVID-19 on imports of medical products: A panel data approach"

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Potential competing interests: No potential competing interests to declare.

This paper aims to examine the determinants of imports by EU-27 countries. This paper contributes to highlighting the changes in the imports from extra-EU and intra-EU during the pandemic. However, this paper has some significant issues in configuring the regression models.

First, since the dependent variable is trade volume, this study should refer to the gravity model. The gravity model in international trade indicates that bilateral trade between two countries is proportional to their respective sizes, measured by their GDP per capita and population, and inversely proportional to their geographic distance. This study is consistent with the gravity mode by including the GDPs and population aged over 65 years of the destination countries and the distance variable (extra-EU and intra-EU). However, the author never mentioned the gravity model in the literature, leading to a major issue.

Second, the author argues that imports of some essential products have been seriously affected by the growing demand driven by the spread of the virus. However, this finding was no way from the regression model. In the regression model, the relevant independent variable is the number of available hospital beds, an infrastructure capacity variable. No variable captures the spread of the virus in the model.

Third, the author does not mention the definition of the HICP (the Harmonised Index of Consumer Price for Heath) and why the HICP is included. This variable has little significance in the result.

Therefore, I don't recommend accepting this manuscript in its current version.