

Financial Implications and Effectiveness of National Audit Authorities' Task
in the Framework of the European Union's Cohesion Policy

Marcel Bode

**Financial Implications and Effectiveness
of National Audit Authorities' Task in
the Framework of the European Union's
Cohesion Policy**

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To my daughter Marielle.

„Was immer du tun kannst oder träumst es zu können, fang damit an.“

– Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749-1832)

Foreword

Marcel Bode's book titled "**Financial Implications and Effectiveness of National Audit Authorities' Tasks in the Framework of the European Union's Cohesion Policy**" is a valuable piece of research that sheds light on one of the key questions in front of the national audit authorities. No authority is worth existing unless it is effective. European Union's cohesion is instrumental for ensuring the future of the union. The national audit authorities are called to oversee a number of important processes within the respective countries so as the necessary ground to be provided for cohesion. In this respect, knowing the nature of the national audit authorities is vital.

The book starts with a chapter dedicated to the nature and specificities of the Cohesion Policy. The narrative unfolds into an excellent overview of the history of this policy intertwined with the role of the national audit authorities as providers of central auspices on a number of important aspects of the economic and political life of the EU countries. The multilevel governance system of the EU is explained at a glance, with emphasis on the importance of the existing complexity of the various interactions among the particular players in it.

The second chapter expands the analysis presented in the previous one by focusing on the functions and responsibilities of the national audit authorities in the framework of the Cohesion Policy. These functions and responsibilities are reviewed and analyzed chronologically starting with the first programming period 2007-2013 and reaching up to nowadays. The author critically assesses the role of the national audit authorities for ensuring the effectiveness of spending for the purpose of implementing the Cohesion Policy. The analysis that he does and the conclusions that he reaches are of particular value for elucidating the research topic.

The third and last chapter of the book is devoted to the typology and specificities of Member States' financial instruments as a delivery mechanism in the Cohesion Policy. This, as the author highlights, is a challenging field of audit for the national audit authorities and one that requires particular attention on the part of the management of these authorities. In this chapter, a detailed characteristic of the financial instruments in the Cohesion Policy is provided. Then the narrative moves to the subject of governance structure in the area of financial instruments, and here

again the analysis is provided in chronological terms covering the period 2007 by present. The chapter concludes by looking into the shortcomings identified by the author in the implementation of financial instruments. This last part of the book is of particular interest to everybody who wishes to comprehend the extent to which the utilization of financial instruments for the purpose of cohesion policy has been effective or not.

The book is a valuable reading for everyone interested in Cohesion Policy and the prospects of its future. It brings a number of important conclusions that serve to better understand the EU policy at large.

Prof. Dr. Virginia Zhelyazkova

(VUZF University, Sofia)

January 2020

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