

# **ASSESSING THE IMPACT OF SPECIAL ECONOMIC ZONES (SEZ) THROUGH A COMPARISON AMONG EUROPEAN UNION MEMBER STATES**

Arbolino R.<sup>a</sup>, Lantz T.L.<sup>a</sup>

<sup>a</sup>Department of Human and Social Science, University “L’Orientale”, Naples, ITA

*Abstract* - The establishment of Special Economic Zones (SEZs) represents a typology of policy approach for achieving objectives of significant economic development. Currently, in the European Union (EU) there are 91 functioning zones, each of them implemented by legislative Authorities of the countries. These SEZs are interesting both for investors – who may benefit from special privileges in taxation, custom duties or access to infrastructure – and for the residents of the Zones, who may have tax reductions on income, property, transportation. Nonetheless, being influenced by several features, the SEZs’ success varies. This study analyses the general European framework of the ZESs to compare the role of the different regions in achieving economic development objectives. By using macroeconomic indicators from 2000 to 2016 for each zones we identified the structural changes in the economic, social and infrastructural context of the regions hosting a special area. The building of composite indexes allowed to ranking the SEZs for an easy comparison. Furthermore, quartile analyses and the used incentives will allow to offer policy indication in the implementation of new zones for the involved stakeholders.

**Key Words** — Economic development, European countries, Policy evaluation, Special Economic Zones

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