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Agric. Econ. – Czech

**Qineti A., Matejková E.,
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**Looking for the
evidence of socio-
economic
convergence within
the European Union**

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393

The purpose of this paper is to analyze

the evidence and impact of the EU integration between 1999 and 2009 on the EU regional economic growth and the socio-economic convergence. A regional convergence analysis is performed in order to examine if the EU overall aim of convergence is reached. The main growth- and convergence theories are used as the theoretical framework and form the study's hypothesis. The results show that an absolute β -convergence exists between the EU member states as well as regions. However, the σ -convergence is not confirmed, meaning that that the disparities between the regions are rather increasing than decreasing. Perhaps a possible reason why the σ -convergence does not occur at the EU level is that it is easier for smaller regions which are more similar to each other to converge than for larger regions which tend to be more dissimilar to each other. This reasoning is in line with the convergence theories which state that smaller regions within a country are more likely to converge towards each other in the absolute sense than countries. On the other hand, the EU countries and regions tend to convergence in the tasks like

unemployment rate, showing that they are not successful in resolving this difficult task. One of the main reasons of the high unemployment in all EU member states is their structural problem in the respective economies, consequently reflected in the long-term unemployment. The EU countries tend to convergence in terms of inequality as well, showing that they are egalitarian in character.

Keywords:

convergence, European Union 27, GDP capita, unemployment, inequality, CEEC

[[fulltext](#)]

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