



The RSA Research Network on EU COHESION POLICY

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30 YEARS OF EU REGIONAL POLICY: SOUTHERN EUROPE AT A GLANCE

Madalena Fonseca and Sérgio Telésforo*

Abstract

This paper aims to provide a reflection on the regional dimension of the Europe 2020 strategy in what concerns human capital accumulation in Southern Europe. *Europe 2020* constitutes the main action plan for the European Union (EU) growth path until the year 2020, setting targets on a wide range of development aspects (employment, innovation, environment, education and poverty).

After 30 years of European regional policy, regional disparities in Southern Europe persist, when assessed with a set of indicators for NUT II level. A question must be raised however on the analytical tools and theoretical framework that is used to assess and map those disparities. What kind of convergence if any has occurred? How is convergence been assessed?

Building an approach to a Southern Europe Atlas of growth and development – *Southern Europe at a Glance* – the paper aims to raise more questions than to give answers.

A set of indicators are included on educational stock and economic growth and development for Portugal, Spain, Italy and Greece.

The scope and amount of information collected provides a broad and comprehensive perception on regional dynamics and will help deepen the discussion on the application of the Europe 2020 strategy priorities for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth on a regional basis.

This study will be further developed in the future, with the inclusion of additional variables and additional categories of analysis, taking into account, however, the limitations of Eurostat's information availability, and its disaggregation to the regional level.

* **Madalena Fonseca** (A3ES & UP) and **Sérgio Telésforo** (A3ES)