

## Press release

# Faces of Convergence

Edited by István P. Székely

## 15 years on, a new e-book presents personal accounts of the EU's eastern enlargement

The **Faces of Convergence e-book** is a collection of **34 short essays** by people who made major contributions to the process of convergence in the countries that joined the EU in the three waves of eastern enlargement. **Contributors come from business, government, banking, research, higher education, and civil society.** They share their views on the impact of the EU on the convergence process.

### Key messages

- › **EU membership can help speed up convergence** to the global frontier through several channels, such as trade, investment, financial integration and institutional reforms.
- › The opinions of the contributors differ with regard to which of these channels have worked and to what extent, but they **all agree that the EU has made a tangible difference.**
- › Whatever advantages EU membership may have, such **advantages are not automatic**, nor guaranteed.
- › Many contributors also emphasise the **significant social and political challenges** of the process. These have been more apparent in some countries than others.
- › It is always up to the country concerned to take full advantage of the opportunities the EU may offer. Like in many other areas, **national policies matter a lot.**

### On the project

The e-book was put together as part of a joint research project of the Vienna Institute for International Economic Studies (**wiiw**), and the Directorate General for Economic and Financial Affairs (**DG ECFIN**) and the European Political Strategy Centre (**EPSC**) of the European Commission. It was **edited by István P. Székely**. He is Principal Advisor in the European Commission's Directorate-General for Economic and Financial Affairs.

Link to the e-book and single chapters: <https://wiiw.ac.at/p-4908.html>

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