

Challenges of Convergence
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1. Convergence may mean a lot of different things. At least, two approaches should be clearly marked. First, "autonomous" economic processes in accession countries bring as a result some degree of similarity between them and EU economies. Various dimensions of this kind of convergence can be quantified, among them economic structure, degree of openness, trade structure, institutional features of financial system, structure of financing etc.
2. Another, somewhat overlapping, part of this real convergence is mostly driven by formal requirement of adopting acquis. Numerous institutional solutions are being prescribed by that, and here the degree of convergence is to be assessed both from legal point of view and by the impact these laws have on real economy.
3. Smooth and efficient functioning of the European Union requires a stable macroeconomic framework. Integration into the Economic and Monetary Union quantifies further nominal convergence conditions. However, interactions between real convergence and nominal convergence are a source of separate problem. In the long run, as the history of the European integration seems to suggest, real convergence facilitates nominal convergence. In the short run, that may be not true. Moreover, there are some arguments that policy targeting both real and nominal convergence in the same time, may be ineffective or inconsistent (Balassa-Samuelson effect etc.).
4. The last challenge, i.e. how to get into the EMU, is made even more difficult by some legal uncertainties – will convergence criteria and their application remain the same for new entrants?