

EconWorld2022@Athens

Determinant Factors of Smart Cities in Central and Eastern European Countries

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ABSTRACT

The challenges that cities have to face today are complex and refer not only to economic factors but also to social issues such as access to education, health and housing, environmental degradation and administrative issues that imply a lack of civic participation and low quality of life. In this context, a new concept has emerged (smart city) to better grasp the need for change in urban development practices that could increase the quality of life through the optimization of hard (transport, energy, resources) and soft (human capital, inclusion, participation) infrastructure. Much attention has been given to studying the concept itself and to the various factors that enable the smart transition of cities. Nonetheless, the focus is rather on the more developed countries in Western Europe, neglecting the emerging markets and developing economies as those in Central and Eastern Europe (CEE). The paper seeks to determine, using a quantitative analysis, the most relevant factors that tend to influence the movements in the Smart Cities rankings with a focus on the CEE countries. This exploratory study is more than relevant for policy makers to devise and properly implement tailored smart city policies that could, in the end, improve the citizens' quality of life.

KEYWORDS smart city; Central and Eastern Europe; determinant factors; smart governance

JEL H70, O18, Q56, R11