

# A GREEN RECOVERY: PROSPECTS FOR THE EU'S LEAST ADVANTAGED REGIONS

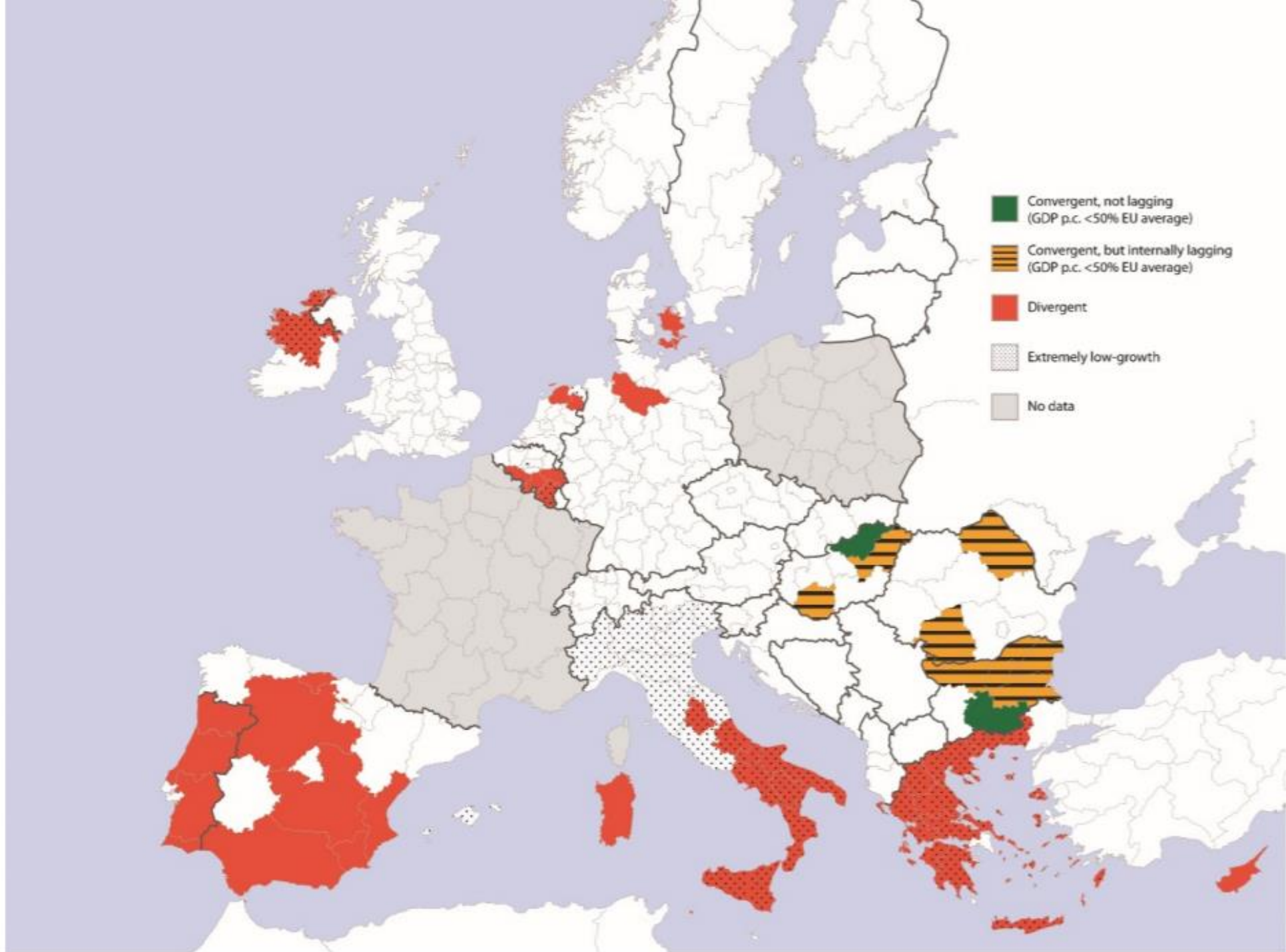
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## Who are the EU's least advantaged places?

- GDP performance over time
- Internally lagging, divergent and extremely low growth regions
- Pervasive issue in some countries
  
- Beyond GDP: Well-being
- COVID-19's impact – too soon to say
  
- EPC Study for the REGI Committee “[EU lagging regions: state of play and future challenges](#)” (Oct 2020)





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## The Recovery and Resilience Facility

- Greater visibility of disadvantaged areas
- Cohesion objective but what impact assessment?
- Territorial sensitivity?
- Revived European Semester
- Structural reforms, twin transitions
- Speed vs quality?

EPC discussion paper “[National Recovery and Resilience Plans: Empowering the green and digital transitions?](#)” (April 2021)



## Insights into the uphill struggle faced by disadvantaged places

- What does a 'green recovery' look like?
- Multiple, place-based challenges in the recovery process
- High risk of exacerbating the EU's 'winners and losers' dilemma
- Weak policy making environments & a painful reform process
- Structural breaks expose reform deficits..
- .. leaving the most vulnerable exposed to the impact of the crisis and the challenges of the twin-transition
- A significant EU response package but...



## **What is needed to support the least advantaged places?**

- The EC's reinforced commitment: 'no person or place left behind'
- Improved EU inter-institutional dialogue (plus wider community)
- Championing 'cultural' change
- 'Building back better' – beyond the theory, to the outcomes
- Avoiding a 'one-size-fits-all' low carbon pathway
- Seizing the current momentum for the EU's new reform agenda
- Acknowledge and manage the trade-offs

## Final messages

- Pre-existing challenges have not disappeared, and new ones emerge
- RRF funding most welcome, but - alone - it will not provide the solutions
- Risk: perpetuate fragmentation and division between ‘winners and losers’
- Worst case scenario:
  - Waste, duplication of resources
  - Deterioration of conditions in vulnerable areas
  - Political instability

**A multi-level and multi-faceted approach is necessary to support a green recovery for the EU's least advantaged regions**



# THANK YOU!

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