



Paper: “Hétérogénéité structurelle et effets potentiels de la ZLECAf sur les économies de l’UEMOA : une analyse par le modèle SMART”

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Peer review:

Reviewer 1: Luca Scaini
Coventry University, Kazakhstan

Reviewer 2: Olga Mbang
Université de Yaoundé II, IRIC, Cameroun

Reviewer 3: Blinded

ESJ Manuscript Evaluation Form 2025

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Reviewer Name: Luca Scaini	
University/Country: Coventry University/Kazakhstan	
Date Manuscript Received: 20/08	Date Review Report Submitted: 21/08
Manuscript Title: Structural Heterogeneity and the Potential Effects of the AfCFTA on WAEMU Economies: An Analysis Using the SMART Model	
ESJ Manuscript Number: 15	
You agree your name is revealed to the author of the paper: Yes	
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You approve, this review report is available in the “review history” of the paper: YES	

Evaluation Criteria:

Please give each evaluation item a numeric rating on a 5-point scale, along with a thorough explanation for each point rating.

<i>Questions</i>	<i>Rating Result</i> [Poor] 1-5 [Excellent]
1. The title is clear and it is adequate to the content of the article.	3
Clear scope (AfCFTA × WAEMU using SMART). Consider tightening length and expand the first use of “WAEMU” for non-specialists.	
2. The abstract presents objects, methods, and results.	2
Objectives present, but abstract/front matter duplicated; methods/results generic. Specify base year, HS level, partners, elasticities, and tariff-cut scenario.	
3. There are a few grammatical errors and spelling mistakes in this article.	2
Multiple language/format inconsistencies (repeated abstract blocks; punctuation/capitalization in references). A professional language pass is recommended.	
4. The study methods are explained clearly.	2

Key SMART components missing or truncated (equations, elasticity values, scenario design), limiting transparency and replication.	
5. The results are clear and do not contain errors.	2
Results under-specified; several figures/tables referenced are absent; one integration table has incomplete entries, impairing interpretation.	
6. The conclusions or summary are accurate and supported by the content.	2
Policy claims outpace documented analysis given missing figures/equations and limited sensitivity checks.	
7. The references are comprehensive and appropriate.	2
Coverage is relevant but formatting is inconsistent (journal titles, page ranges, diacritics). Standardize to one style and verify entries.	

Overall Recommendation (mark an X with your recommendation) :

Accepted, no revision needed	
Accepted, minor revision needed	
Return for major revision and resubmission	
Reject	

Comments and Suggestions to the Author(s):

- 1) Consolidate the front matter and abstract. Remove duplicates and present a single, clean abstract with concise objectives, precise methods, and headline findings.
- 2) Fully specify the SMART model. Include complete utility and trade-diversion equations with variable definitions and units; ensure equation numbering is sequential.
- 3) Document the simulation design for reproducibility. Report: base year and data source (e.g., WITS 2023), HS version/level, partner mapping (AfCFTA scope), elasticity values and their sources, and the exact tariff-cut/phase-out schedule. Provide these in a reproducibility appendix with a parameter table.
- 4) Insert all referenced figures/tables. Add the missing “Graphique 1/2” with captions (units, sources, notes) or remove the call-outs. Ensure all tables are complete (e.g., fill in missing 2021 values and country rows in the integration indicators table).
- 5) Heterogeneity narrative: tie each country-level claim to a specific table/figure cell; ensure underlying data are complete and labeled.
- 6) Add robustness/sensitivity analyses: (i) vary substitution elasticities; (ii) test an alternative tariff-cut path; (iii) check baseline year sensitivity.
- 7) Language/formatting pass: standardize English (or French) consistently across the text; align punctuation, capitalization, and italics in the reference list.
- 8) Data & materials availability: provide a supplemental package (WITS extracts/CSV, SMART parameter file, and codebook) in an open repository and link it in the article.

Comments and Suggestions to the Editors Only:

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Please respond within the appointed time so that we can give the authors timely responses and feedback.

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Reviewer Name: MBANG Marthe Olga	
University/Country: University of Yaounde II/Cameroon	
Date Manuscript Received: 02 August 2025	Date Review Report Submitted: 28 August 2025
Manuscript Title: Hétérogénéité structurelle et effets potentiels de la ZLECAf sur les économies de l'UEMOA : une analyse par le modèle SMART	
ESJ Manuscript Number: 0826/25	
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You approve, this review report is available in the "review history" of the paper: yes	

Evaluation Criteria:

Please give each evaluation item a numeric rating on a 5-point scale, along with a thorough explanation for each point rating.

<i>Questions</i>	<i>Rating Result</i> [Poor] 1-5 [Excellent]
1. The title is clear and it is adequate to the content of the article.	4
<i>The title is acceptable</i>	
2. The abstract presents objects, methods, and results.	2
<i>The hook is long. The results of the study are not clearly presented, let alone the recommendations.</i>	
3. There are a few grammatical errors and spelling mistakes in this article.	4
<i>Not many mistakes</i>	
4. The study methods are explained clearly.	3

<i>The equations need to be reviewed with an appropriate editor. They must also be numbered from the first one.</i>	
The origins of the equations used must be given.. Seminal authors are not mentioned.	
5. The results are clear and do not contain errors.	2
<i>We do not understand how Togo can be at the top of the rankings in terms of commercial creation., Togo and Niger in terms of welfare gains and Niger in the lead in terms of trade diversion over the three years and that the author concludes at the end that it is Côte d'Ivoire and Senegal which are in the best position to benefit from intra-WAEMU trade. His data do not seem to confirm this.</i>	
<i>The tables in the appendix should be included in the results for better readability. The results are poorly discussed.</i>	
6. The conclusions or summary are accurate and supported by the content.	3
<i>Ensure that the conclusions are consistent with the results.</i>	
7. The references are comprehensive and appropriate.	4
<i>Some references to be adjusted to the most recent APA standard.</i>	

Overall Recommendation (mark an X with your recommendation) :

Accepted, no revision needed	
Accepted, minor revision needed	X
Return for major revision and resubmission	
Reject	

Comments and Suggestions to the Author(s):

Match the results with the tables in the appendix. Discuss them better by comparing them with similar work done elsewhere in the same area at different times or over different periods.

Comments and Suggestions to the Editors Only: