

The paradox of economic growth and development level in the East-Central-European transition

Antónia Hüttl–Bálint Surányi–László Vita

The study analyses some particular phenomena of the East-Central-European transition. The former socialist countries of the area are generally characterized by their having inherited a relatively developed non-market sector from the era of management based on state ownership, and perhaps even from the historical era preceding it. The non-market sectors are here relatively “more competitive” than the other market branches. This particular feature is strongly reflected by the indicators showing the development level of the macroeconomy and its changes, that is, by their paradoxical behaviour. But the traditional macroeconomic statistical methods are unable to treat this structural heritage with satisfactory subtlety. This, however, invokes the danger that those managing economic policy, foreign analysts and capital investors judge the situation of the region erroneously and that may lead to mistaken conclusions and decisions. The authors prove their statements with the aid of the economic policy events and numerical data of the past period.

State debt and economic growth

István Dedák

The author investigates the questions of budget deficit and state debt by using the growth theory interrelations and seeks an answer to the question whether it is the achievement of a balanced budget that helps economic development the best. He analyses the burden of state debt in the framework of the so-called new growth theory forging ahead in professional literature in recent years. He reaches the conclusion that from the aspect of economic closing up it is not decisive whether the state debt relative to the GDP becomes settled on a low or a relatively high level. By linking the results of growth theory and the dynamic debt interrelations the author shows why it is that no interrelation can be found between the development level of individual national economies and the indebtedness of the state.

Structural changes in foreign trade, 1995–1997

Katalin Páldi

The size, structure and balance of Hungary’s foreign trade have spectacularly changed after the change of system. The tracing of this process and its presentation with the aid of statistical data may also highlight the changes in the structure of the economy itself. The article analyses

the development of exports and imports by relying on foreign trade statistics and extends to the off-shore turnover having become significant in recent years. The evaluation of economic policy and of the period preceding 1995 is not a subject of the analysis, the article touches on these questions only insofar as they may serve as explanation for the changes in certain tendencies.

The extended openness theory of the eighties and the current real processes in Hungary

László Práger

With her accession to the European Union Hungary also joins – both symbolically and in reality – the four principles of freedom and their practice as well (free flow of commodities, services, capital and persons). She enters an area which is at least as much a cultural, human and social community as an economic one. The author looks back on the development of Hungarian economic thought, within it of the concept of openness in the last one or one and a half decades, and then examines to what extent the real processes approximated to the conditions developed in the EU and at which points a departure from them occurred. While emphasizing the structural approximation, the author is of the opinion that the assessment of the yields and burdens, of the economic and social impacts of our joining the EU has by far not been done, although the Hungarian socio-economic policy and practice can only build on their knowledge.

Validity of the data on earnings based on tax returns

Gábor Kézdi

The study analyses, through a survey based on questionnaires, the interrelations between the earnings declared by those questioned and the real earnings. The subject has become highly important in our days when several household budget surveys attempt to assess the earnings by directly addressing exclusively the active earners. With the change of social system, because of the fragmentation of pieces of information and the protection of data, surveys aiming at a simultaneous assessment of earnings against family background and those based on reliable information given by employers involves high costs and high degrees of failure.