

About the maturity for union of Central Europe

László Csaba

The paper analyses merely one half of the EU expansion process, the preparedness of the Central European candidates. It reviews the common counter-arguments voiced against admission and then examines how the Copenhagen criteria of maturity – published in 1993 – have been met. The second part of the article deals with the contradictions because of which true EU standards can only be attained after the admission. Interpreting the decennial process of becoming member in the framework of the neo-institutional theory there arise new key problems for the economic strategies of the pioneers in systemic change.

Contractual wage policies in Hungary

Lajos Héthy

Hungary played a pioneering role in Central East-Europe in abolishing the administrative determination of wages and in applying wage policies relying on agreements, on contracts. Their gradual introduction was based both on theoretical and practical considerations. By our days, however, the institutions of national wage negotiations need corrections.

Institutional guarantees have to be brought about in the Interest Conciliation Council so that the circle of those participating in national wage negotiations should be directly interested as well as adequately supported and – if necessary – renewed from time to time. The choreography of negotiations has to be adapted to the realities of the evolving market economy, the main point of bargaining has to be shifted into the system of relations of employees, while the burden of representing public interest and of the public policy serving it devolves on the government. In contrast with this, in the wage negotiations of the fiscal sphere – where the determining role of the government has necessarily remained – the problems of financing and the guarantees of financing have to be solved satisfactorily.

Environmental protection amidst privatisation

Mária Csanádi – Erzsébet Pácz

The party-state has not passed away without leaving traces. Its effect on the transformation following its collapse continues to endure in our very days. Its remnants are vanishing only slowly. The tensions having come about because of the rapid collapse and the relatively slow institutionalisation have proved to be lasting. Also the cumulated uncertainty characteristic of the post-socialist transformation, caused by frequent changes in several dimensions and

affecting vast masses, is only gradually diminishing. Until the coming into being and stabilization of the new economic and institutional structure decisions are random, their implementation is uncertain, the decision-making process is often irrational and because of all these a strategic behaviour runs into difficulties.

The article first reviews the institutional conditions of the coming about and assertion of laws, and then it describes the situation of environmental protection and the changes in individual phases of regulation related to privatisation.

Hungary's EU admission and the sector of small and medium-size firms

Zoltán Román

The official EU opinion about the admission of Hungary related to Agenda 2000 indicates in several places that our joining the EU brings about a more advantageous situation for small and medium-size firms. At the same time, it does not mention that studies analysing earlier admissions pointed to particular difficulties, frequently difficult to bridge, precisely in this sphere. The study offers a comparison of the spheres of small and medium-size firms in the EU member countries and in the Hungarian economy, and then formulates recommendations for small and medium-size firms, their organizations and the related policies in connection with the preparations for joining the EU.

From the Marshall plan to the new equilibrium situations

Gusztáv Báger – Miklós Szabó-Pelsőczy

It was half a century ago that – in his speech held at Harvard University – the Secretary of State of the USA made public the plan in whose framework up to then unprecedented amounts of aid began to flow from the leading great power into the the Western European countries. The realization of the Marshall aid was made possible and necessary by particular historical circumstances. The European reconstruction program solved its task successfully: it not only modernized the economies of the beneficiary countries but also shaped their development according to the security requirements of those financing it. This study is not merely an “anniversary” retrospection: the authors make an attempt at disclosing the common elements of the then prevailing and the present world political and world economic situation and urge for a similar global aid program.