

Editorial

The current issue (2007-2) of the South-East Europe Review (SEER) focuses on macroeconomic stability, economic reforms and restructuring in south-east Europe.

Macroeconomic stability is a basis for economic and thus social development. Economies in transition often display a 'boom and bust' development character, with cyclically-changing priorities and a contested economic policy in which reforms take place and are then withdrawn due to periodic alterations in the political arena. What are the sources of economic growth and what are the major trends? What structural processes in the economy can be observed? What is the driving force behind structural change: government policies; privatisation; or foreign direct investment? What sectors of the economy benefit from the changes and where are the greatest losses? Are there government policies which may be recognised and what are the contours of industrial policy? What is the assessment so far and what are the social impacts, particularly as regards trade union policies? Progress of the European integration process of individual countries is in itself an important development factor to which attention will be paid in these pages as well.

Manfred Wannöffel, Josef Le and Julia Kramer examine the development of economic structures in south-eastern Europe and Turkey based on a comparative analysis of macroeconomic development. Beside macroeconomic indicators, they pay special attention to the role of foreign direct investment in the restructuring and modernisation of these economies, showing also detailed characteristics of the economic engagement of foreign companies. The authors also show some of the social impacts of this engagement concerning the development of employment, wages and unit labour costs using the example of the metalworking industry. We will be continuing a look at their work, focusing on the changes in industrial relations structures, in a later issue.

Marija Obradović provides a historically-inspired critical analysis of the privatisation process in the context of the break-up of Yugoslavia, highlighting the massive social consequences of the process.

Bruno S. Sergi and Qerim Qerimi analyse the process of EU enlargement towards south-eastern Europe in regard to current challenges and perspectives. The article addresses the most fundamental issues such as the unresolved political disputes in the region and the question of economic and political co-operation between the countries of the region.

Christophe Solioz puts south-eastern Europe into a pan-European perspective, examining the different stages of the European integration process, taking into account also the transformation achievements of the particular countries of the region.

Bruno S. Sergi and Qerim Qerimi, in their second article of this issue, analyse the fight against corruption and organised crime in the context of socio-economic development in south-east Europe. They examine the correlation between corruptive behaviours and developments in the theoretical approach, taking account of current trends in corruption and organised crime in south-east Europe. The authors also offer some strategies as to how to dismantle the political-criminal power structures in play throughout the region.

Ninucia-Maria Pilat describes the Europeanisation of trade unions in post-communist Romania by exploring the responses that trade unions have provided in re-

sponse to the pressures of the EU for adaptation. She also shows how trade unions have been learning to face the challenges of European integration.

Yosif Yosifov gives a thorough analysis of the Bulgarian health care system and its management, and calls for radical, market-based reforms.

Wolfgang Tiede and Sabina Krispenz analyse the harmonisation of the Albanian public accounting system with International Public Sector Accounting Standards within the framework of the new public accounting law. They see this act as an important step in creating the preconditions for sustainable economic growth and development.

Finally, Albrecht Rothacher critically examines the destructive effect of ethnic conflicts on the transition achievements of seven countries in south-east Europe, and draws conclusions for the EU's political approach to enlargement not least from the recent experiences of the accession of Romania and Bulgaria.

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