

Luka Žakelj

Effects and Consequences of the European Employment Strategy

There are two main messages this article is trying to put forward. The first one speculates that greater flexibility in the EU labour market is unlikely to be achieved without reducing European welfare state in its present form. The second message emphasises that healthy economic growth is more important to improve labour market conditions than employment policy measures, which prove to be rather inefficient in reducing the unemployment rates in times of unfavourable economic conditions.

The article describes the economic and political reasons behind high unemployment rates in the EU and the evolution of the European Employment Strategy as a joint response by the member states and the European Commission to improve the conditions on the European labour market. Here the emphasis is on the four pillars the strategy is based upon and the rising importance of the active employment policy measures. A short summary of the European population ageing effects on labour market policies is also included in the text.

Further, we present in brief the results achieved in the first five years of implementing the European Employment Strategy. Some statistical facts are given on the improvement of different labour market indicators, followed by a short analysis of the changes in public spending on employment policies, which reveals persisting differences between the north and the south of the EU. The article concludes with two questions addressing the efficiency of (active) employment policy measures in unfavourable economic conditions and the speculated effects of reducing passive employment policy measures on the European welfare state.

Richard Sendi, Andreja Cirman

Analysis of the Housing Market in Slovenia

The paper presents part of the results of an extensive research on the housing market in Slovenia, which was conducted in 2003. In the introduction to the analysis, we give a review of the factors which, as described by the stock-flow model, influence housing supply and demand. The analysis of the concrete market situation focuses on the roles of the various housing market actors, especially on the supply side. Special emphasis is laid on the analysis of the market behaviour of property sellers, real estate agencies and construction companies. We also investigate their expectations regarding future market developments.

The paper identifies several deficiencies of the present housing system which, in turn, have resulted in the deformation of the housing market and its consequent inefficiency. It is established in the end that under the given circumstances, the market behaviour of the actors investigated in the research does not have any substantial direct influence on the developments on the present wild and uncontrolled housing market.

Štefan Bojnec, Matjaž Novak

Technological Intensity of Slovenian Merchandise Trade

In this paper we analyse the structure of the Slovenian postindependence merchandise trade and specialisations patterns. The role of the service sector in trade is not considered. Our analysis focuses on the merchandise trade by NACE activities and by activities of technological intensities. The structure of merchandise exports and imports is presented for total Slovenian merchandise trade and separately for the Slovenian merchandise trade with the EU-15 countries. We also consider separately the importance of the Slovenian merchandise trade in the EU-15 internal and external merchandise trade. The manufacturing D activities contribute the majority of the Slovenian merchandise exports and imports. In the merchandise exports, Slovenia is to a greater degree specialised in medium-high technological industries, whose importance is further increasing, and in low-technological industries, whose share is declining. In the Slovenian merchandise imports,

medium-high technological industries are likewise leading and exhibiting an upward trend. The share of medium-low and low technological industries in the Slovenian merchandise imports is declining. High technological industries represent less than 10 % in the Slovenian merchandise imports and even less in the Slovenian merchandise exports. The Slovenian economy has been gradually increasing its merchandise exports to the EU-15 markets, while the most rapid increase in the Slovenian merchandise imports from the EU-15 markets was recorded in the period until 1995, when a substantial share of traditional former Yugoslav markets was substituted for the new EU markets.

Miran Jus

Agreements of the SEC with ECA and Other International Financial Institutions

Due to the specific nature of non-commercial and other non-marketable risks, this insurance cover is provided by officially supported Export Credit Agencies (ECAs). ECAs play an important role in international trade and investment flows but are not in the business of untied finance, i.e. insuring and financing of exports without regard to national origin. Under certain conditions and to a certain extent, they are usually also willing to cover a foreign element, which is sometimes included in the agreements concluded between ECAs (e.g. agreements to treat each other's goods as though they are national goods) and between them and International Financial Institutions (IFIs) in case of multisourcing. The agreements concluded by ECAs with the aim to avoid concentration risk and to increase their insurance capacities (framework co-operation agreements, joint/parallel insurance, (facultative/treaty) reinsurance and co-financing agreements) represent their response to today's globalizing world economy; thus a simplified and fast access to one-stop shop insurance and financing facilities is given to business undertakings in different countries, which enables them to penetrate jointly in third markets. A wide web of different agreements with foreign ECAs and IFIs was knitted also by the SEC, providing different facilities to Slovene exporters and investors for their joint undertakings with foreign partners in third markets.

Jana Javornik

Gender as a Determinant of Social Status - Towards an Androgynous Society?

Due to a number of factors, among others the feminist movement, female and male realities have been changing intensively. The changes benefiting women have been among the greatest social changes seen in the 20th and 21st centuries. Demographic shifts reflected the processes of industrialisation and urbanisation, which also stimulated changes in socio-economic realities. Mortality and fertility rates started falling, while the economic participation rates of women began to increase. The social context, influenced by these trends, became a framework for creating, developing and perceiving the demands of the feminist movement - the right to vote and be elected, the inclusion of women in the labour market on equal grounds as men, education, changed ownership structure, making decisions over one's body etc. Yet despite all these changes the androcentric (male oriented) culture is still prevailing, which through the established societal control mechanisms enables the continuing reproduction of patriarchy. The article discusses some economic aspects of the subordination of women; it challenges the petrification of the mechanisms of regeneration and reproduction of misogynous development patterns and tackles the still dominant androcentric social order.

Miroslav Verbič

Microeconomic Analysis of Retirement Decisions: Slovenia

The article discusses different factors of retirement decisions in Slovenia, based on the Household Expenditure Survey data of 1999, i.e. before the pension reform was implemented. Different individual, financial and institutional factors of labour force participation rate of the elderly are analysed by means of the linear and logit probability models. It has been established that age,

education, salary and unemployment benefits have a relevant and statistically significant effect on retirement decisions of the elderly. In addition, a marked gender differentiation can be observed in the impacts of these factors, which is in part due to the institutional characteristics of the pension system in the analysed year. This article can therefore serve as a methodological and comparative basis for a dynamic microeconomic analysis of efficiency of the pension reform in Slovenia which was implemented in 2000.

Marko Simoneti, Aleksandra Gregorič

Managerial Ownership and Performance of Privatised Companies in Slovenia

While Slovenian post-privatization period has been characterized by a decline in the ownership of non-managerial owners (employees), managers have been increasing their control. Moreover, given that the optimal ownership stake (as stated by the managers) in the year 2002 exceeded their actual share by 10.8 percentage points, we expect the managers to continue consolidating their ownership in the future. The aim of our paper is to describe the main trends in the ownership of Slovenian corporations in the post-privatization period and to explain the impacts of the ongoing consolidation of managerial ownership on the performance of Slovenian firms, which is a fundamental economic question. The empirical analysis testing this relationship is based on a panel of 182 Slovenian firms in the period 1995-99 and does not provide relevant evidence of a positive correlation between the increasing managerial control and the performance of Slovenian firms. If any, a positive incentive effect is observed only in the firms with managers' holdings exceeding 10 percent, however only with regard to the companies' financial performance (but not total factor productivity) and only in firms that are not listed on the capital market. Furthermore, the negative effect of the current gap between the optimal and the actual managerial ownership seems to prevail over any positive incentive effect arising out of managerial ownership.