

Abstracts of the Articles

Inquiry on the economic role of the state

In the past three-and-a half years the character and boundaries of the state's economic role has been radically altered by extending its influence. The state as owner and regulator has itself changed: the system of checks and balances has stopped operating. The systemic changes include the followings: The state exercise preferential (or non-preferential) treatment of particular economic branches (or products and services) and groups of asset owners. State ownership has been increased and the influence of the state has been extended towards new economic fields. Decentralized decision-making centres have been eliminated while decision-making competencies have been centralized. A novelty is the alteration of the institutional framework of regulation (the limitation of the power of regulatory bodies); the frequent revisions of the constitutional role of the state, mostly in the direction of extension; the broadening state regulation of prices, as well as – for instance in the financial sector and with respect to public utilities – the deviation of regulations from the norms of market economies.

Based on this, our questions are the following:

1. What specific problems can one identify with respect to the governmental, owner and regulatory role of the state in the 1990–2000s, and what additional difficulties have been encountered as results of the post-2008 global economic developments? While answering this question, one does not have to focus on the most recent developments.

2. What solutions can be proposed to address these problems, similar or dissimilar to the ones being applied? In other words, in which specific fields the rethinking (and the redefinition) of the role of the state is justified and unjustified?

Reorientation of the Hungarian monetary policy

ÉVA VÁRHEGYI

To cushion the impact of the crisis leading central banks pumped large amounts of money into their economies. At first only cautiously to relieve the shortage of liquidity and to restore financial stability, later more and more to stimulate the economy and to increase employment. With a moderate tendency of spending money creation did not threaten with inflation, so central banks reaching zero interest rate applied unconventional monetary easing methods. The renewed leadership of the National Bank of Hungary from the spring of 2013 tries to stimulate economic growth by using similar monetary policy methods. The long term effects of these unconventional means can not be foreseen clearly even in developed countries, and even more difficult to assess the effectiveness and risk of them in Hungary, where the economic situation is different in many ways.

European economic research institutes about year 2014

KATALIN NAGY – PÉTER VAKHAL

The Association of European Conjuncture Institutes (AIECE) publishes two reports in each year regarding the European economic outlook. In their latest report the researchers forecasted moderated economic growth around 1 percentage led by export and investments for 2014. That slight GDP increase is accompanied by low inflation rates. At the same time the growth lags behind the potential rates and long-term sustainability is also uncertain. High sovereign debt ratios and volatile prices of raw materials are the highest risks for the region. According to the researchers the further deepening of the integration is unquestionable and all member states should participate in it.