

Introduction

According to the decision of the Senate of the University of Miskolc, the Department of Regional Economics was established on 1 September, 1996 within the framework of the Faculty of Economics, which is the legal predecessor of the Institute of World and Regional Economics.

Although the last 15 years cannot be considered to be of historical scale (in the life of the Alma Mater, which started its 277th academic year in September 2011), it is a scale in the life of the former and current staff of the faculty, the department and the institute, which, hopefully, worth mentioning and reckoning in many ways.

In the last 15 years, research in the Institute of World and Regional Economics has been concentrated in the following three areas:

- econometric modelling of regional economic development and growth taking into account human and environmental potential as well; development of the methodology of the quantification of the effects;
- comparative analysis of mezzo economic competitiveness and development paths;
- life cycle assessments, relations determining regional labour market and migration movements.

The second issue of our paper in this year published a selection of the works of the staff of our institute. The bulk of the studies give an insight to the empirical research related to the Northern Hungarian region, which is not by the chance.

The region where we live, with its own issues, social and economic problems, provides an almost inexhaustible store for further researches. In the hope that we have the chance for further creative years, *lectori solutem!*

Miskolc, October 2011

Prof. Dr. György Kocziszky

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György Kocziszky:

Contributions to the issue of regional economic growth and equilibrium

The geopolitical reverse after 1989 (like in other post socialist countries) has induced several positive and negative social and economic changes in Hungary. Maybe the most depressing one out of the latter ones is that economic growth has not been able to create sustainable equilibrium economic growth either on the short, or on the long run, and to handle the problems resulting from the lack of it. Inside and outside (macro and mezzo level) imbalance can generate severe stress. The paper tries to reveal the role of regional policy in the creation of local and areal economic equilibrium and to start relative convergence.

Levente Kovács, Zsolt Pál:

Domestic clearing in the past one and a half decades

The past one and a half decades have been of decisive importance in the formation and development of clearing service, which is one of the most important background systems serving as the base of the economy. The period since November 1994 is the period of automatic clearing in Hungary, which has been characterized by balanced operation, continuous development and more or less unbroken expansion of turnover. The paper presents the events of this period, the changes – probably of great effect – of the present and the near future.

Klára Tóthné Szita:

Environmental globalization and its domestic counterpart

The globalisation is generating radical changes in the economic and social environment that affects the natural environment and a series of the global problems triggered by climate change, air, water and soil pollution, biodiversity loss, health problems, waste mountains, etc. These are danger challenges and the old institutional framework do not able to solve those and do not able to give an adequately respond. Need to renew the institutions but before it need to know the driving forces of changes in a more accurate need understanding of the relationship and to explore a holistic approach. As the global problems appear on the all world they have get impact in the global institutional framework and the national environmental institutions too. This study examining the global forces driving (problems) which require a new institutional framework, and examines their domestic renderings and investigates the management strategies and scenarios developed, which seek to prevent more tragedies.

Éva G. Fekete:

Elements of solidarity and social economy in the Hungarian local economic development

Solidarity and social economy (SSE) and local economic development (LED) have strengthened both in developed and developing world as an answer to the challenges of the economic globalization concerning environmental problems, employment, social cohesion and democracy. The joint segment of the two fields is the local communal economic development, including local social enterprises, production and sales of local products, the satisfaction of local service needs and the local fair financing. This paper examines the history and the current position of the Hungarian appearance of these forms. While

investigating the possibilities of moving forward, it highlights the specificities resulting from social and economic transition. It is to contribute to the better understanding of the geographical differences of the social enterprises and of the foundation of European and global cooperation.

Zsuzsanna Dabasi Halász:

The effect of economic crisis on the regional differences of the labour market between 2008 and 2011 in Hungary

The paper tries to reveal the causes of labour market inequalities in Hungary after the system change, with special regard to the changes caused by the financial crisis. Besides general employment relations, it focuses on the changes of the social position and on the migration processes and examines what kind of possibilities the crisis and the period afterwards ensure to develop lagging regions.

Ágnes Hegyi-Kéri:

Chances to realize the Europe 2020 economic development strategy in the Northern Hungarian region

The European Commission proposed the Europe 2020 strategy in March 2010, the aim of which is to get out of the crisis and to prepare the European economy to the next decade. The employment crisis of the Northern Hungarian region, induced with the system change was compounded by the economic recession after 2008. The region has to adapt the national targets necessary to meet the Europe 2020 program from this position. The paper presents the human capital and its system of conditions related to the innovation potential, in light of the target values defined at the national level emphasizing that priorities that contribute to regional economic growth have to be accepted at national level. In the Northern Hungarian region, a potential way to put brownfields to a new growth path is to form a system of institutions that is based on top-down innovation, to improve the human resource background and to underlie long term financing.

Zoltán Nagy, Tekla Szép:

United States and China: changing in world economic positions?

Trends in the last decades, such as rapidly development and rising of China, convergence of the Chinese absolute economic indicators to the USA, are significant elements of today world economy. In our article we analyze the foreign trade of these two economic powers: the focus of research is the trade openness, the import and export structure and furthermore the economic dependence. The main question is whether we can talk about interdependence of foreign trade in case of the two examined countries and to what extent the Chinese economic growth is sustainable.

Dániel Kuttor:

Spatial Effects of Industrial Restructuring in the Visegrád Countries

During the transition period the Visegrád Countries (Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Slovakia) had to be integrated not only into the international political, legal, defence systems, but also the European and global production structures, chains. This rapid integration (or rather reintegration) process made significant effects on the production activities, which

influenced the role of industry in the national economies, the structural distribution, the environmental emission and the geographical extent.

József Benedek – Ibolya Kurkó:

Evolution and Characteristics of Territorial Economic Disparities in Romania

The territorial disparities of Romania, as well as of other states, are a fundamental characteristic of the society's spatiality, the changes thereof being conditional upon multiple factors. The economy and the society are unequally distributed spatially, this phenomenon being also accentuated by the regional and local specificities, by the different spatial way of manifestation of the natural, cultural economic and social factors. The unequal spatial distribution of the economic activities, transport infrastructures, settlements and population imprints paths of territorial development, sometimes strongly locally and regionally differentiated. Further on, we shall subject to attention focus on the analysis of the territorial disparities in Romania, from the geographic and economic perspectives.

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