

Editorial

In this issue, we have for the first time applied the rule we would like to follow – one half of the articles are from the 'West' and one half from the 'East'. The Western articles mostly address issues of social capital, social cohesion and welfare systems. We failed to find a parallel text in our region – such research is only emerging in transition countries. The other contributions vary and are all by Czech authors, although there was no intention to represent the 'Eastern' part of the issue by a single country.

Let me now briefly introduce the individual contributions.

Martin Raiser, Christian Haerpfer, Thomas Nowotny and Claire Wallace write about social capital in transition. Using data from the World Values Surveys of 1990 and 1995, they document the degree of trust and civic participation and find that these indicators of social capital are significantly lower in transition countries than in the West. Unlike in established market economies, trust is not positively related to growth in transition countries, while participation in civic organisations does show a positive correlation.

Regina Berger-Schmitt asks whether the social cohesion between EU Member States has increased and responds that it has hardly increased in strength over the past 15 years. The entry of the other candidate countries would probably weaken social cohesion even further, especially owing to limited public approval of their accession among many Member States. Social cohesion could be strengthened through greater solidarity of the prosperous with the backward countries.

Martin Seeleib-Kaiser shows the effects of globalisation on social policy arrangements in the Federal Republic of Germany, Japan and the United States. He starts with the hypothesis that the specific perception of globalisation and the constructed links to social policy arrangements within the political discourse will have to be taken into account. He concludes that the interpretation of globalisation can lead to a redefinition of the economic costs and benefits of social policy within the various welfare systems.

Dana Hamplová uses empirical surveys to test differences between marriage and cohabitation with regard to qualitative differences in partnership arrangements. She finds that although cohabitation likely represents a departure from the traditional pattern, it leads more towards a female breadwinner than towards an egalitarian setting. Moreover, the arrangement does not differ among various social strata. Nevertheless, the hypothesis about less investment and less specialisation among cohabiting persons in comparison with married couples is confirmed to some degree at least.

Zdeněk R. Nešpor presents the first results of his survey of returning Czech emigrants from the communist era. He explains why emigrants decide to return and analyses their (re)integration into Czech society. He concludes that economic and work characteristics have played the most important role in the (re)emigration process. Paradoxically, their social acceptance has developed in sharp contrast to their successfulness, partly as a result of envy on the part of Czechs, and partly owing to a significant difference in their

attitudes regarding the choice between individualism and collectivism. To ease the access to Czech social survey data, Jindřich Krejčí presents information about the content of the Sociological Data Archive at the Institute of Sociology of the Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic. It is a continuation and technical specification of the article on social reporting in the previous issue of the CSR.

In the information section, we highlight the commemoration of the 70th birthday of Professor Ivo Možný, an outstanding personality in contemporary Czech sociology. Alongside a review of his most recent book on Czech society, written by Andrew Roberts of Princeton University, we also present a brief interview with Professor Možný and a list of some of the main books by our distinguished colleague.

The next volume of CSR will contain a block of papers addressing equity in higher education. Growing tension between the rapidly increasing demand for tertiary education and the gradually deepening financial crisis in institutions serving tertiary education is becoming a worldwide problem. This problem requires a truly interdisciplinary approach, as was clearly demonstrated in the most recent reports of the OECD and the World Bank. We shall contribute to this analysis in connection with an important event to be held in the Czech Republic.

Sociologists addressing inequality in access to higher education, economists designing new models of financing higher education, and policy-makers who are expected to come up with consistent reforms of higher education will meet in Prague in June 2003 to discuss the most recent developments in this area. The conference is titled 'Cost-sharing and Equity in Access to Higher Education: Conflicting or Compatible Goals?' and the CSR will publish some of its most important contributions.

Last but not least, I am happy to say that Professor Stein Ringen has joined the Editorial Board. Professor Ringen is an outstanding Norwegian scholar in social policy working in Green College at the University of Oxford, and is the author of the books *The Possibility of Politics* (Oxford 1987) and *Citizens, Families, and Reform* (Oxford 1997). He is familiar with the Czech/Moravian sociological community, and has good knowledge of its people as well as its problems. His willingness to help us is therefore more than welcome.

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