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**PROBLEMS OF ECONOMIC THEORY
AND POLICY IN THE TRANSITION
PERIOD**

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PREFACE

EDS is planned to be a forum for Ph.D. students in economics coming from several European universities to present their theses, parts of their work or only the basic problem to be solved in the following years of research. While these workshops provide ample opportunities to discuss ideas, methods and solutions of chosen economic problems, the aim of EDS from the organisers point of view ought to be a much more complex one.

Europe – expected to be united some decades from now – is presently going through a double transition process. First of all, Central- and East-European Countries will either return to a market-based economic systems or introduce such a system for the first time in their history, with consequences for every field of social life. This process is embedded in the wider process of global unification of Europe, implying an intensive change not only of commodities and services, but also of cultures and nations, of knowledge and experiences, and so forth all over the Continent. Contemporary problems will have to be solved by participation of all inhabitants and past, generally accepted solutions have to be questioned. Thereby, deep-rooted opinions and – maybe also – ingrown prejudices will have to be re-evaluated.

The successful establishment of the new Europe will eventually depend upon the co-ordinated activities of its millions of people. EDS could be considered as one of such activities, an attempt to encourage students of different countries to come together to start their own scientific cooperation. A first step may be to introduce the respective countries' situations and problems in a way that enables colleagues with different social, national and mental background to understand what is going on. The next steps may be to foster the understanding of the different approaches applied to solves the problems in question. Only much more later it seems to be reasonable to expect the problems to be solved altogether.

The results achieved at the first EDS workshop held in September 2001 in Budapest, Hungary, proved to be a promising start. Participants from Germany, Hungary and Albania presented their papers in lectures followed by interesting discussions, more often than not continued during dinner. Thus, if we speak about a successful conference in Hungary, first of all, we have to thank the students for their contributions and for their willingness to complete their papers at their respective home universities, thereby incorporating their colleagues' comments and suggestions from the conference.

Organisers are indebted to *Gábor Halász, Margit Árkos, Holger Kächelein and Volker Treier* for fabricating the final form of this issue. Last, but not least, we would like to express our thanks to DAAD for financial support of the conference.

*Heinz-Dieter Wenzel
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