





ICEG European Center is an independent economic research institute, focusing its activities on research, macroeconomic and sectoral analyses and forecasts, policy advice and the dissemination of its research output through conferences and publications. While research in ICEG European Center has European-wide orientation, it is focused on analysing economic developments in Central and Eastern Europe.





RESEARCH AREAS

Economic research in ICEG European Center has five priorities. The first is the analysis of European macroeconomic issues with particular attention to the New Member States (NMS) and Southeast Europe (SEE). The second major topic is empirical and policy oriented research on economic growth, competitiveness and their major determinants. The third area of interest is research on the diffusion of information and communication technologies in the economy and in the society, with particular attention to European, NMS and Southeast European trends. Another key research area is public economics with particular attention to the analysis of tax systems, healthcare and public administration. The fifth area of research is economic geography and regional economics.

MACROECONOMICS

ICEG European Center participates in various international and national research projects dealing with macroeconomic issues. The primary geographical areas of research are the New Member States and the Southeast European economies, but several projects analyse European policy issues. The major research areas include:

- Open economy macroeconomic issues
- Business cycle
- Fiscal deficit and debt sustainability
- Exchange rate regimes, exchange rate and monetary policy
- Inflation and labour markets

ICEG European Center regularly publishes quarterly analyses and forecasts on macroeconomic developments of the Hungarian, Central European, Baltic and Southeast European economies. These country reports are prepared in a unified framework, they provide both country specific and regional assessment of underlying macroeconomic developments.

ICEG European Center has other monthly publications (Southeast European Monitor and News of the Month), which provide brief analyses of current macroeconomic policy issues in Southeast Europe and the New Member States as well as in CIS countries.



ECONOMIC GROWTH AND COMPETITIVENESS

In this area ICEG European Center carries out research on major patterns and factors of economic growth, country and region specific features of growth and convergence. The research programmes cover analyses of factors of competitiveness, experiences of fast catching up economies, and - closely related to these - an assessment of the Lisbon process and its implications for the New Member States. Research in this area also covers various issues as the links between economic growth and macroeconomic factors, financial sector development and capital flows.

ICEG European Center has participated in various international and national projects related to economic growth and competitiveness, including the preparation of a part of the National Lisbon Action Plan, Hungarian investment promotion policies and competitiveness strategy.

ICEG European Center has been involved in international research programmes on the links between financial sector development and economic growth, the growth impact of capital flows and their management and the growth effects of the EU enlargement.

INFORMATION ECONOMY AND SOCIETY

In this area our research and projects focus on the New Member States with an outlook on Southeast Europe. The major research areas include the links between ICT sector and economic growth, the development of broadband connections and ICT infrastructure, the factors affecting the diffusion of ICT in the economy and society, the development of eServices with special emphasis on eGovernment, eHealth and eLearning, and the issues related to digital divide and eInclusion.

Our research activity is supported by a research network called Information Economy and Society Partnership (IESP), which involves several institutions that are regular partners of ICEG European Center in international projects.

ICEG European Center has carried out several research projects (studies, ex ante evaluations, analyses) in this field for various clients, including the European Commission, the Hungarian Ministry of Informatics and Communication, the Ministry of Economy and Transport and also international research and consultancy companies. In many projects ICEG European Center has been the head of a consortium of 10-13 national partner institutes from the New Member States and Candidate Countries.



PUBLIC ECONOMICS

Research on public economics primarily covers issues related to the reform of public finances in the New Member States and Southeast Europe. The major areas of research are tax policy, healthcare and pension systems as well as public governance. ICEG European Center also prepares studies on the features and problems of European social models. The research in the area of public economics is closely linked to macroeconomic issues: it deals with macroeconomic consequences of deficit financing, debt accumulation and their sustainability.

The research of ICEG European Center simultaneously focuses on theoretical work and empirical analysis related to the international experiences in the above-mentioned areas with special focus on the European Union and the economies of our region. ICEG European Center has been involved in research programmes focusing on fiscal policy issues of post-transition countries, development of programme budgeting in Hungary, analysis of the absorption and fiscal implications of the use of EU Structural Funds.

ECONOMIC GEOGRAPHY AND REGIONAL POLICY

Economic geography and regional policy research of ICEG European Center focuses on foreign direct investments, factors influencing localisation decisions of companies and the links between FDI and competitiveness. Research related to regional policy includes assessment of regional developments in Hungary, the analysis of regional policy issues in Europe, and the evaluation of regional policy and planning. ICEG European Center has been an active partner in international and national research programmes focusing on the use of national and European funds for regional development.

A recent example of projects in this area was the preparation of the Competitiveness Strategy for Hungary, which had a regional component determining the major factors of competitiveness of NUTS-II regions and the major priorities for regional development financed from the Structural Funds.

ICEG European Center is also involved in research concerning industrial cluster formation and regional development through the support of cluster initiatives. These studies aim at analysing the factors determining the creation and performance of industrial and other clusters in various regions of Hungary.



ANALYSES AND FORECASTS

ICEG European Center prepares regular analyses and forecasts on Central and Eastern Europe, including:

- Quarterly forecasts on the New Member States, on Southeast Europe and on the Hungarian economy
- Monthly reports on underlying economic developments and policy issues in the NMS and CIS (News of the Month)
- Monthly reports on the economic developments in Southeast Europe (Southeast European Monitor)
- Bi-annual analyses and forecasts on 6 key sectors of the Hungarian economy

POLICY ADVICE

ICEG European Center provides policy advice for the public and private sector at both national and international level. Policy advice for the public sector consists of preparation of macroeconomic analyses and regional studies for ministries, national development agencies and other public institutions. ICEG European Center has participated in the preparation of government strategies (concerning competitiveness, national broadband strategy, investment promotion strategy, and sector strategies), formulation of sectoral strategies and policies, and development of regional policy initiatives.

The policy advice for the private sector includes co-operation with both chambers and representatives of the banking and corporate sectors. In this regard ICEG European Center has prepared sectoral and regional studies, macroeconomic analyses and forecasts. The major geographical orientation is Central and Southeast Europe, while the topics covered include tax policy, investment promotion, SME development and changes in the regulatory framework. The policy advice for the corporate sector is focused on certain sectors including machinery, information and communication technologies, logistics, transport, tourism and the energy sector.

ICEG European Center has also been involved in consultancy work for international organisations on policy issues related to the New Member States and Southeast Europe, including projects among others with OECD, UNDP on investment promotion, SME development and employment policies.



DISSEMINATION

ICEG European Center disseminates its research output through its publications and conferences.

PUBLICATIONS

Some of the publication series of ICEG European Center are published regularly, while others periodically, reflecting the output of ongoing research projects. The major publication series are:

- Trends in the Region – longer, in-depth studies on selected economic issues
- Working Papers (also in Hungarian) – scientific and policy oriented research studies
- ICEG EC Opinion (also in Hungarian) - short studies on economic issues reflecting the opinion of ICEG European Center
- Southeast European Monitor - monthly publication analysing economic trends and policy issues in Southeast Europe
- News of the Month - monthly publication assessing economic developments and policy issues in the EU-8 and the CIS
- Quarterly Forecasts - analyses of macroeconomic developments and forecasts on the New Member States, Southeast Europe and Hungary, published quarterly in January, April, July and October.

CONFERENCES

ICEG European Center regularly organises conferences and workshops on main policy and research issues. These are either parts of a regular series or belong to special research programmes and projects. The Center organises six regular events:



- ICEG EC Annual Conference organised in the Spring on the major research areas of ICEG EC
- ICEG EC Autumn conference in Brussels on issues related to the New Member States
- Krynica Conference: sessions organised together with the Institute of Prospective Technological Studies on Information Society issues within the Krynica Economic Forum in September
- Two conferences with the Hungarian Business Leaders Forum (HBLF) on public finance developments and reforms in Hungary
- Annual ICEG EC – AMCHAM conference on major macroeconomic challenges facing the Hungarian economy

Besides these regular conferences ICEG European Center organises brief seminars, workshops and roundtable discussions related either to its running research projects or to other important policy issues. More information about conferences is available under www.icegec.org/events/htm.

MAJOR CLIENTS AND DONORS

ICEG European Center has participated in various international and national research programmes either as an independent research institute or as a head of a consortium of several research institutions. In international projects major clients of ICEG European Center were international institutions (IMF, OECD, UNDP, World Bank), major international foundations and donors (Ford Foundation, GDNET, USAID), various Directorates General of the European Commission.

In national projects major clients included various ministries (Hungarian Ministry of Informatics and Telecommunications, Ministry of Economy and Transportation), regional and development agencies (National Development Agency, regional development agencies), chambers (AMCHAM, Confederation of Hungarian Employers and Industrialists), consultancy companies (Ernst&Young, KPMG), major international and domestic banks and companies (Siemens, Erste Bank, OTP Bank, ING Bank etc.).



NETWORKS

ICEG European Center is a member of several international research networks, including EPIN (Economic Policy Institutes Network) run by UNDP. ICEG European Center coordinates three thematic networks: ICEG (International Center for Economic Growth), IESP (Information Economy and Society Partnership), and SEEN (South Eastern European Research Network).

ICEG (International Center for Economic Growth) is a worldwide network of research institutions dealing with global and regional aspects of economic growth. The major issues of interest include among others patterns of economic growth, contribution of public policies and technology to growth, and regional differences of the impact of globalisation on growth performance. The worldwide network has members from European, American, Asian, Latin American and African countries. More details about the network are available from www.iceg.org.

IESP (Information Economy and Society Partnership) consists of research institutes working on information economy and society issues. The aim of the Partnership is to share knowledge and experience in these fields, to carry out common research projects and to organise joint conferences, as well as to publish research and conference outputs. The IESP Partnership is based on long-term collaboration and networking of the participating institutions, including various international research programmes coordinated by ICEG European Center. More details about the partnership are available from www.icegec.hu/iesp/index.htm.

SEEN (South Eastern European Network) is based on the cooperation of ICEG European Center and various research institutions from Southeast Europe. The network focuses on the analysis of key issues involving the development of the Southeast European region, its transition, convergence and accession to the European Union. The major purpose of the network is to exchange lessons gained from own research programmes, participate jointly in international research projects, and arrange joint conferences and publications. More details about the network are available from www.icegec.hu/seen/index.htm.



FURTHER INFORMATION

More detailed information about ICEG European Center and its activities is available at the www.icegec.org or www.icegec.hu websites.