

Abstracts

Ferge, Zsuzsa: Why are Hungarian Inequalities Unusually Large?

The paper first recalls the state of inequalities in Hungary. Inequalities that strongly influence physical and social life chances are systematically rather large, relegating Hungary in this respect to the wrong end in the rank-order of developed countries. Most of these inequalities have continued to grow in recent years. The phenomenon calls for some explanation. The author mentions three factors, all related to the stifled character of the former system. The explanatory role of these factors is not proven, they are conjectures rather than verified facts. The first is the special Hungarian variant of nationalism which has reappeared in its pre-war form and shows uncanny similarities with its extreme-right historical antecedent. It divides (formally and legally) Hungarian citizens in two groups, the „real” Hungarians and the „others”. This divide masks all important social problems, and makes unmanageable the problem of inequalities. Another particular factor is Hungarian exceptionalism regarding local authorities. On the rebound from total subordination they obtained full freedom in managing their affairs, giving also free way to stronger interests. The third factor mentioned is (exceptionally) rigid Hungarian neo-conservatism and the weakness of social democratic thought.

Scharle, Ágota: Can Employment Increase without GDP Growth?

The level of employment is jointly determined by the demand and supply of labour, both of which may change independently of economic growth. In the Hungarian labour market, employment has increased very little since 2000 despite rising GDP; at the same time, job creation has been very strong in some sectors and regions. Part of the explanation is that firms' labour demand depends on labour costs as well as productivity. Empirical estimates show the labour demand of Hungarian firms to be quite flexible, especially for unskilled labour. An important implication is that, for welfare to work reform to be successful in Hungary, it must be accompanied by restraint in minimum wage policy and tax measures to reduce labour costs.

Szalai, Júlia: Diverging Prospects

Based on results of a recent survey, the paper discusses certain aspects of inequalities by race/ethnicity as they manifest themselves in interpersonal relations at schools. It introduces those mechanisms that assist to internalise the marked departures that Roma and non-Roma pupils have to accept as unchangeably diverging tracks of their future careers and general prospects. The study of school attainments reveals that, beyond the impact of socio-economic, gender and regional differences, it is the relating of the teachers to their Roma students that strongly influences how performance is perceived: lower marks for the Roma are unintentionally turned into downgrading „otherness” and giving a „value” to the stigma. By analysing the students' essays on how they imagine their future in 20 years, further aspects of strong ethnic imprinting could be revealed. The discussion shows that there is a remarkable historic gap by ethnicity on all „public scenes” (continued education, occupations, housing, geographic mobility, etc.), while no such differences can be detected concerning the „private matters” of family life and intimate personal relations.

Babusik, Ferenc: The Labour Market Discrimination of Roma

The main aims of the study are the analysis of the employers attitude to the disadvantaged groups of employees especially to Roma and respectively what are the main differences among enterprises in consideration of employing Roma without reference to their educational level or skill. The focus of the study is to give a casual analysis of employers attitudes with special regard to the dispreference of Roma employees.

The bulk of enterprises do not employ Roma moreover do not willing to employ them yet in that case if the qualification is suitable. Investigating the employers' attitude we find that the main reason of the labor market exclusion of Roma (if their qualification is suitable) is the discrimination. Roma are not employed with a higher qualification yet in top or executive positions. In the case of Roma the suitable educational level is not enough; the bulk of enterprises do not employ graduated Roma yet onto physical work. In the background of this symptom the analysis demonstrated the hard discrimination, the discriminative and anti Roma attitude of the leaders and entrepreneurs.

The main goal of the workplace related governmental subsidies of the enterprises it the job creation with special regard to Roma and unemployed people. The description of the relation between the discriminative practice of employers and the workplace related subsidies is the other main result of the study.

Cahnman, Werner J. – Schmitt, Carl M.: The Concept of Social Policy (Sozialpolitik)

The concept of Sozialpolitik (social policy) has rarely been considered in the English-language literature thus far. The present article surveys the pertinent English, American and German literature which led to the initiation of the *Verein für Sozialpolitik* (Social Policy Association) in 1873. All these efforts culminated in Otto von Zwiédineck's classic book, *Sozialpolitik* (1911). A chapter of this book, not printed in Zwiédineck's collected essays, *Mensch und Wirtschaft*, is offered in English translation for the first time. The article presents and clarifies the concept of *Sozialpolitik* in terms of social action directed toward problems affecting society as a whole and the continued attainment of society's goals. However, the definition of these goals remains subject to change. A theoretical foundation for the integration of scientific and normative perspectives in the social sciences is thereby provided.

Józsa, László: ... et circenses. Mass entertainment in the Byzantine Empire

The phrase came about during the height of ancient Rome and followed to the Byzantine Empire. The underclass lived purely on handouts of food from state (the bread part) and circuses meaning entertainment. Bread and circus games were the essential elements which kept the Byzantine plebs quiet. The amusing forms were the circus games, sport games, races, theatre and professional singers, musicians and dancers performances, magicians and jugglers. The paper describes and discusses these forms of entertainment in detail.

Szirbik, Dorottya: Is Contemporary Literature a Good Way of Learning about Equality?

In England, besides the work of educational institutions, there has been a recent tendency to teach about tolerance in literary works of art. The British Isles has always been at the spearhead of the plight of equality, such as the desperate fight of the suffragette movement. Tolerance can be a good method towards equality. In this

study, I intend to present the British approach to this question with J. K. Rowling's *Harry Potter* series, whose impact is immense worldwide. Rowling's didactic novels all try to affect the reader concerning the points below: the world of the novels is one of stereotypes similarly to our world; seven books mirroring social intolerance with more and more emphasis; a world of dualities: man and woman; wizards and magical creatures; differentiation between people with different abilities; the greatest force of discord in society: racial conflicts.