

PARALLEL STORIES. THE DEVELOPMENT AND TREATMENT OF HOUSEHOLD FOREIGN-CURRENCY LENDING IN POLAND, ROMANIA AND HUNGARY

András Hudecz

The analysis of household foreign-currency lending begins with a short review of the theoretical and empirical literature. The author investigates the factors that have helped or hindered such lending, particularly in Central and Eastern Europe and the Baltic region. The study goes on to look at the experiences in Poland, Romania and Hungary. The choice is based on the fact that all three countries operate a flexible exchange-rate regime, and in all of them household foreign-currency lending is prevalent. The analysis of each country touches upon the factors that have contributed to the development of foreign-currency borrowing there. However, the study focuses on the regulatory measures taken to curb such lending. The author concludes with a review and assessment of the policies that have been adopted with an eye to solving social and economic difficulties that arise from foreign-currency indebtedness.

INSTITUTIONAL CONFIDENCE AND THE TIME LINE OF DECISION-MAKING

Dóra Györffy

The main question addressed in the study is why, when basic uncertainty appears, long-term decision-making may appear in some societies while a short-term approach comes to dominate in others. Based on a review of the theoretical history of thinking about social-science institutions, the study develops a frame of ideas for describing the relations between lack of confidence in institutions, evasion of regulations, uncertainty, and short-term decision-making.

WHAT ECONOMICS OF SHORTAGE AND THE SOCIALIST SYSTEM HAVE TO SAY TO PRESENT-DAY READERS. AN INTRODUCTORY STUDY TO THE FIRST TWO VOLUMES OF A NEW EDITION OF THE AUTHOR'S LIFE'S WORKS

János Kornai

The Bratislava company Kalligram Kiadó is publishing a ten-volume series of the selected works of János Kornai. The first volume contains Economics of Shortage,

which first appeared in 1980, and the imminent second volume will consist of *The Socialist System*, which came out in 1992. The latter will include the following study, in which the author makes comments on both these works. He covers in these three main issues: 1. a more thorough understanding of the socialist system assists in overcoming a false evaluation of the past; 2. some elements of the socialist system have crept in various ways into capitalism; 3. the paradigm, concept system and methodology used in examining the socialist system can be applied also to analysing capitalism.