

# List of Projects

## Mario Holzner

### **How can economic instruments of climate policy be directed through foreign direct investment?**

*Anniversary Fund of the Oesterreichische Nationalbank*

*October 2022 - March 2025*

The mechanism through which the policy maker can foster novel green and environmental technologies via FDI is the main focus of the project. It comprehensively studies this by analysing in three work packages how FDI is determined in the EU and how it can help to diffuse technology. The first work package analyses which factors at the three levels of region, industry and firm determine FDI in firms located in the EU. The second work package analyses how FDI affects productivity growth and employment growth at both the firm level and the regional sector level. In the third work package the diffusion of knowledge, technology and know-how of FDI is analysed, which could lead to green and environmental innovation and finally patenting of these technologies. In both the second and the third work package the indirect impact of FDI on domestically owned firms is analysed separately from the impact of FDI on the whole regional sector, including foreign-owned firms.

Funded by the [Anniversary Fund of the Oesterreichische Nationalbank](#) (Project No. 18800).

### **Capacity building for Central, East and Southeast Europe: Joint Vienna Institute** (*wiiw Team Leader*)

*Oesterreichische Nationalbank/Austrian Ministry of Finance*

*January 2024 - December 2024*

For more than two decades, wiiw has been designing and organising courses within the framework of the Joint Vienna Institute (JVI). These courses are aimed at decision-makers in the public sector and policy-makers from transition countries in South-Eastern Europe and the CIS. In the year 2024, courses will be held on the following topics: Competitiveness, Growth and Crisis, Public Governance and Structural Reforms, Public-Private Cooperation for the Green and Digital Transition, Foreign Direct Investment Policies, Crisis and Resilience Course and a segment on Austrian political and economic issues within the Applied Economic Policy Course.

### **Tobacco taxation in Eastern Europe**

*Bloomberg Philanthropies*

*October 2023 - December 2024*

The aim of this project, funded by the Bloomberg Initiative to Reduce Tobacco Use, is to establish a regional service and research hub to conduct analysis of tobacco taxation and related issues in Central East and Southeastern Europe (CESEE). wiiw looks to identify and build the capacity of policy think tanks in selected countries, in order to create local evidence and support country-level tax reforms. The focus lies on (lower-) middle-income countries (MICs) in the region.

### **Eastern Europe Before Transition: Digitisation of data and analysis of CESEE's command economies**

*Anniversary Fund of the Oesterreichische Nationalbank*

*May 2021 - September 2024*

In order to better understand the industrialisation spurt and later the (financial) crisis and collapse of the command economies of Central, East and Southeast Europe (CESEE) as well as the applied economic policy mix before and during their transition to market economies, including the decisive role of initial conditions, we will digitise and publish online wiiw's economic statistics for Central, East and Southeast Europe for the period 1944-1992; harmonise the historical data with current statistical classifications; digitise and publish online wiiw's research

reports for 1972–1992; and produce a series of working papers describing the data, summarising the literature and providing economic analysis on the key research areas related to the development and demise of the command economies. The activities in this project will be coordinated in close cooperation with our partners in the Research Centre for the History of Transformations (RECET) research network of the University of Vienna.

Funded by the [Anniversary Fund of the Oesterreichische Nationalbank](#) (Project No. 18666).

### **Industry 4.0, migration and the labour market adjustment: an intra-European perspective**

*Anniversary Fund of the Oesterreichische Nationalbank*

*October 2021 - March 2024*

The mechanism through which novel technologies including patents granted, robot adoption, and digitalization affect the labour market, skill composition and wage levels, and consequently the pull and push factors of migration, is the main focus of the study. The project will comprehensively study this phenomenon by analysing various interactions between innovation, adoption of robots, digitalization, and wages, and migration patterns in four work packages. First, the impact of novel technologies on wages by across countries and sectors will be studied. Second, the impact of novel technologies on migration flows by sectors and skills in selected EU countries will be analysed, also controlling for other factors. Third, the impact of the gap in technologies defined by the difference in robot intensity (i.e. robot stocks per employee) and the extent of digitalisation between the origin and destination countries on bilateral migration flows will be analysed. Fourth, push and pull factors affecting the intention to migrate will be studied at the individual level.

Funded by the [Anniversary Fund of the Oesterreichische Nationalbank](#) (Project No. 18737).

### **A stronger CEE for a stronger Europe - Policy Note**

*Erste Group Bank AG*

*December 2023 - February 2024*

The performance of CEE economies over the last three decades has been a success story, with more ups than downs. However, in the aftermath of the pandemic, amidst rising geopolitical challenges and faced with a continuing demographic decline, countries in the region need to question whether a growth model still largely based on imported technology, cheap labour and fossil fuel imports can continue to be the main driver of convergence. In this context, the European Union needs to strengthen its focus on competitiveness, growth and social inclusion in the CEE member states. And beyond. The purpose of this project – a collaboration between wiiw and Thomas Wieser – was to look at which specific policies need to be addressed, in order to have a stronger CEE for a stronger Europe.

### **Entwicklung, Organisation, Durchführung und Evaluierung von Seminaren am Joint Vienna Institut (JVI)**

*(wiiw Team Leader)*

*Oesterreichische Nationalbank/Austrian Ministry of Finance*

*January 2023 - December 2023*

Das wiiw hat im Rahmen des Joint Vienna Institute (JVI) mehrere Kurse konzipiert und durchgeführt. Diese Kurse richten sich an Entscheidungsträger des öffentlichen Sektors aus den Transformationsländern Südosteuropas und der GUS und haben zum Ziel, aktuelle wirtschaftspolitische Themen zu vermitteln.

### **GROW Fellowships 2023**

*European Commission, DG Grow*

*January 2023 - December 2023*

This fellowship programme aimed to support DG GROW in its analysis and policy making in the areas of industrial, trade and innovation policy, as well as policies related to market integration and, more generally, mission-oriented policy design.

### **Political economy of public debt, growth and interest rates in the context of the Corona crisis**

*Anniversary Fund of the Oesterreichische Nationalbank*

*October 2021 - September 2023*

The macroeconomic consequences of the Corona crisis have triggered an increase in public debt in the EU's Member States. This research project makes two contributions to a better understanding of the implications for economic policy. First, we develop the first quantitative analysis of the literature concerning the effect of public

debt on economic growth. Using the statistical and econometric toolbox of meta-analysis and meta-regression analysis, we investigate whether there is evidence for a threshold effect of the public-debt-to-GDP ratio, whereby economic growth could decline significantly if such a threshold is exceeded. Second, the project develops an analysis of government debt against the background of changes in the interest rate environment. Specifically, we analyse the role of the difference between long-term interest rates on government bonds and GDP growth rates for the dynamics of government debt and fiscal policy.

Funded by the [Anniversary Fund of the Oesterreichische Nationalbank](#) (Project No. 18699).

### **EU Recovery Watch** (*wiiw Team Leader*)

*Foundation for European Progressive Studies (FEPS)*

*April 2022 - July 2023*

The Recovery Watch is an expert network that monitors the implementation of National Recovery and Resilience Plans (NRRP) and NextGeneration EU and assesses their impact on key social outcomes. It was established by the Foundation for European Progressive Studies (FEPS), the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (FES) and the Institut Emile Vandervelde (IEV), in partnership with leading European think tanks. wiiw contributed analysis and peer-review of project publications, participated in policy dialogues and public events and reported on the Austrian NRRP.

### **Three short national case studies on inflation, price controls and incomes policies for Croatia, Hungary and Poland** (*wiiw Team Leader*)

*AK - Wien*

*August 2022 - December 2022*

After a series of crises – most recently an energy and food price crisis – the resilience of the economies of the European Union is at stake. The challenges to policymakers, particularly the European Central Bank, but also to national governments and to the social partners who determine collective nominal wage developments are substantial. Economic recovery is at risk, as a recession might be looming. In an environment of rising interest rates, the stability of the (European Monetary) Union (EMU) is at stake, as economic divergence increases. Also, peripheral EU Member States, which have not yet introduced the Euro, are affected and prone to extended financial and economic crisis. Three short national case studies for Croatia, Hungary and Poland were conducted. Each of these cases are interesting in their own way. Poland is the biggest EU economy in Central, East and Southeast Europe. Hungary has a tradition of applying idiosyncratic economic policy measures. Croatia joined the Euro in January 2023.

### **Capacity building for Central, East and Southeast Europe: Joint Vienna Institute**

*Oesterreichische Nationalbank/Austrian Ministry of Finance*

*January 2014 - December 2022*

For more than two decades, wiiw has been organising courses within the framework of the Joint Vienna Institute (JVI). These courses are aimed at decision-makers in the public sector and policy-makers from transition countries in Southeastern Europe and the CIS. wiiw organised six courses in 2022 and was responsible for the entire conception and implementation of these seminars as well as for the selection of the participants.

### **Wirtschaftliche Auswirkungen des Russisch-Ukrainischen Krieges auf Wien**

*City of Vienna*

*March 2022 - December 2022*

Die Invasion Russlands in der Ukraine führt neben den geopolitischen auch zu einer Reihe von geoökonomischen Auswirkungen, deren Intensität sowohl in der kurzen als auch in der mittleren und längeren Frist sehr hoch sein wird. Die akuten Effekte betreffen die globalen und insbesondere europäischen Märkte für Energie, sowie für landwirtschaftliche Güter und Nahrungsmittel. Millionen von Flüchtenden haben sich auf den Weg gemacht. Grundzüge der Nachkriegsordnung, insbesondere in den Bereichen Sicherheitspolitik, Energiepolitik und das damit einhergehende Wachstumsmodell werden aktuell überdacht. Diese Kurzstudie gab einen ersten Überblick vor allem über die potentiellen kurzfristigen wirtschaftlichen Effekte des Krieges auf die Stadt Wien.

### **Economic and Social Impacts of FDI in CSEE**

*Ost-Ausschuss der Deutschen Wirtschaft e.V.*

*January 2022 - November 2022*

The study analysed the economic impact FDI had on the economies of Central, East and Southeast Europe and discusses pros and cons of FDI inflows. The analysis was conducted at the aggregate level as well as at the level of broad industry categories (according to available NACE industries) such as for instance manufacturing, finance, trade or information and communication, over the longer run.

### **Regional Cooperation in EU-CEE and Lessons for the Western Balkans**

*Bertelsmann Stiftung*

*June 2021 - May 2022*

In our previous study “Pushing on a String? An evaluation of regional economic cooperation in the Western Balkans”, we concluded that a change in the EU’s strategy towards the Western Balkans is needed. The current strategy has failed to deliver regional economic integration and development, has resulted in very meagre progress towards full EU accession, and has generated huge disappointment and frustration in the region. With these conclusions as a starting point, in the current study we ask whether and how the successful example from the formerly communist countries that joined the EU between 2004 and 2013 (EU-CEE) can be replicated in the Western Balkans. More specifically, we investigate to what extent regional economic integration improved in EU-CEE after EU accession, identify the suspected reasons for this, and determine which lessons can be drawn from this experience for the Western Balkan economies. Our main finding is that the best way to foster regional economic integration and development in the Western Balkans would be through policies aimed at raising incomes. One way in which this can be achieved is by increasing the EU transfers for the region, for example, through full access to the EU budget, with the necessary conditionality attached.

### **Systematische Untersuchung der möglichen mittel- und langfristigen Auswirkungen von Covid-19 auf Personen- und Gütermobilität (wiiw Team Leader)**

*ÖBB-Infrastruktur AG/Austrian Railway*

*February 2021 - March 2022*

Die Ergebnisse dieses Vorhabens sollen eine wesentliche Referenz für die strategische Netzentwicklung der Verkehrsinfrastruktur und ein gemeinsamer Bezugsrahmen für BMK, ASFINAG und ÖBB-Infrastruktur AG darstellen. Mit Hilfe von Szenariotechniken soll dem hohen Grad an Unsicherheit Rechnung getragen werden. Die systematische Erarbeitung dieser gemeinsamen Referenz auf Grundlage aktueller wissenschaftlicher Erkenntnisse stellt den wesentlichen Mehrwert der Studie dar. wiiw erarbeitet die Studie gemeinsam mit Rosinak & Partner.

### **15 years CEFTA 2006 agreement - a stock-taking (wiiw Team Leader)**

*Central European Free Trade Agreement (CEFTA)*

*October 2021 - December 2021*

Assessment study on the economic effects of CEFTA on the occasion of the 15th Anniversary of the CEFTA 2006 agreement. Various indicators showed in a descriptive way how trade has evolved in the present CEFTA countries around the years 2006-2007 and the period before (e.g. from 2000) up until the latest available figures (typically 2020). A number of econometric models were employed in order to detect potential growth effects.

### **New Insights into the Relationship Between Taxation and Trade**

*Anniversary Fund of the Oesterreichische Nationalbank*

*May 2020 - September 2021*

This project dealt with two questions from the fields of taxation and international trade. The first one revisited the relationship between labour taxation and international trade, focusing on the role of domestic labour value added. The second one referred to the relationship between corporate taxes and international trade, focusing on the role of the multinational enterprises. The project also assessed whether the decline in labour and corporate taxes from the past decades had contributed to the expansion of international trade. The research project used industry level data, for EU and OECD countries, and Two Stage Least Squares estimator, to account for potential endogeneity. The project contributed to the recent policy discussion on fiscal devaluation, and the ongoing policy debate on the global minimum corporate income tax.

Funded by the [Anniversary Fund of the Oesterreichische Nationalbank](#) (Project No. 18310).

### **New EU own resources: possibilities and limitations of steering effects and sectoral policy co-benefits (wiiw Team Leader)**

*European Parliament  
March 2021 - August 2021*

The European Parliament had demanded a more autonomous budget financed by own resources which are linked to policy goals. The purpose of this study was to prepare the European Parliament's Committee on Budgets for making recommendations ahead of the Commission legislative proposals and to analyse the proposals submitted by the Commission and preparing the committee for adopting an opinion. The first stage analysed each of the four new own resources to be proposed in June 2021. The second stage of the study dealt with several aspects related to the implementation of the roadmap stipulated in the interinstitutional agreement. wiiw contributed to this study as a subcontractor of Blomeyer&Sanz and in cooperation with WIFO.

**MAP REA trade pillar diagnostic report** (*wiiw Team Leader*)  
*Central European Free Trade Agreement (CEFTA)*  
*October 2020 - December 2020*

The main objective of the research was to support the CEFTA Secretariat to prepare a diagnostic report to analyse the progress and conduct an evaluation of results related to the Multi-annual Action Plan for a Regional Economic Area (MAP REA) in the Western Balkans. The consultancy aimed to provide a fully informed diagnostics of measures along of the trade pillar and their corresponding activities, as well as proposals for an economic development agenda beyond MAP REA. The overall objective of the Action Grant programme was to contribute to enhancing competitiveness of the CEFTA parties by supporting regional economic integration as envisaged in the MAP REA and CEFTA.

**Quality of goods imports: Which role for non-tariff measures?**  
*Anniversary Fund of the Oesterreichische Nationalbank*  
*January 2019 - December 2020*

One major feature of non-tariff measures (NTMs) is their opacity and complexity of their effects. Regulatory standards embedded within NTMs might cause significant trade frictions, while some could stimulate trade due to positive externalities. When NTMs become very trade restrictive and discriminatory, trade disputes may arise. Specifically, when technical NTMs are not improving the quality of the imported product but mostly act as an unnecessary obstacle to trade, the implications of those NTMs might be regarded as protectionism. The study will provide information for trade policy makers to have a better understanding of the current stocks of technical barriers to trade (TBT) and Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) measures and their effects with a focus on quality. In fact, by knowing how these trade policy measures affect quality differently from price and quantity of trade, the study will provide insights on motives behind their implementation.

**Support the RCC Secretariat to prepare a diagnostic report to analyse the progress and conduct an evaluation of results related to the Multi-annual Action Plan for a Regional Economic Area (MAP REA) in the Western Balkans** (*wiiw Team Leader*)  
*Regional Cooperation Council (RCC)*  
*March 2020 - July 2020*

The purpose of the consultancy was to support RCC Secretariat in assessing the results within the Multi-annual Action Plan for a Regional Economic Area (MAP REA) components, namely Investment, Mobility and Digital Integration. The consultancy aimed to provide a fully informed diagnostics of measures along each of the respective components and their corresponding activities, as well as proposals for an economic development agenda beyond MAP REA.

**Studie 'Vom Nutzen in einer gut organisierten Stadt zu wohnen'**  
*Büro für Daseinsvorsorge und Kommunalwirtschaft der Stadt Wien und Österreichischer Städtebund*  
*April 2020 - July 2020*

Der Megatrend Urbanisierung hält ungehalten weiter an. Folgende Forschungsschwerpunkte wurden in dieser Studie erarbeitet: a) Zuspitzung des Gewinns des Einzelnen im gut organisierten urbanen Raum (im Vergleich zu anderen Räumen) zu leben auf eine Nutzenkennzahl im Europavergleich. b) Ausbildungs-, Gesundheitsausgaben, sowie Ausgaben für Wohnen. c) Europavergleich der städtischen Lebensqualität: u.a. Zufriedenheit mit dem öffentlichen Verkehr und anderen öffentlichen Dienstleistungen. Aus gegebenem Anlass wurde die Qualität der städtischen Gesundheitsinfrastruktur anhand der jüngsten Geschehnisse in Zusammenhang mit der Coronavirus-Krise evaluiert.

## **Western Balkan Regional Cooperation**

*Bertelsmann Stiftung*

*June 2018 - July 2020*

Regional cooperation has been the main instrument of EU intervention in the post-conflict Balkans. The overall goal of this policy has been to increase economic and social connectivity in order to achieve political stability and enhance security, as a precondition for EU accession. This process has now lasted for about two decades. This study evaluates the success of the EU's strategy of regional cooperation in the Western Balkans over the last two decades from an economic perspective. It defines the prerequisites for successful regional cooperation in an institutional, political and economic sense, and assess the extent to which they existed in the Western Balkans at the start of the 2000s. It identifies the key facets of the EU's strategy to deepen trade, investment and infrastructure connectivity in the Western Balkans, and establishes the impact that this has had. Finally, it assesses the state of play in 2020, and makes suggestions for the way forward.

## **ArBeEi International - Grundlagen- und angewandte Arbeitsmarktanalysen**

*Federal Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Consumer Protection (BMASGK)*

*July 2017 - June 2020*

Der Prozess der Globalisierung sowie die zunehmende Integration Europas stellen den Arbeitsmarkt in Österreich vor große Herausforderungen. Zunehmende wirtschaftliche Verflechtungen (v.a. über Handel, Direktinvestitionen, Offshoring, Migration) haben erhebliche Auswirkungen auf die Bedingungen am Arbeitsmarkt, auf Lohn- und Einkommensentwicklungen und Beschäftigungsstrukturen. Evidenzbasierte Handlungsempfehlungen für die Wirtschaftspolitik im Allgemeinen und die Arbeitsmarktpolitik im Besonderen erfordern daher eine Analyse mit einer internationalen und vergleichenden Perspektive. Für Österreich bedeutet das, die arbeitsmarktrelevanten Entwicklungen seiner Nachbarländer, v.a. der mittel- und osteuropäischen Nachbarn, der Beitrittskandidaten und der EU Nachbarregionen genau zu analysieren, und natürlich auch eine globale Perspektive zu entwickeln. Dieses vom österreichischen Sozialministerium beauftragte Forschungsprojekt beschäftigt sich mit diesen Themen. Es ist auf drei Jahre angelegt und in vier Teilbereiche gegliedert: (1) Technologie, Globalisierung und Konvergenz in der EU, (2) Mobilität von Arbeitskräften und Migrationstrends, (3) Konjunktur, Beschäftigung und Arbeitslosigkeit und (4) institutionelle Rahmenbedingungen und deren Effekte auf Wachstum, Beschäftigung und Ungleichheit.

## **Framework contract for the implementation of external aid 2018 (FWC SIEA 2018) - Lot 5 'Budget Support'** (wiiw Team Leader)

*EuropeAid*

*June 2018 - May 2020*

This Framework contract is supposed to provide services for the benefit of third countries receiving EU external aid. Lot 5 covers 'Budget support', which includes public policies, macroeconomic stability, public finance management, domestic revenue mobilisation, and statistics and indicators. wiiw is part of a consortium led by Pohl Consulting.

## **Framework contract for the implementation of external aid 2018 (FWC SIEA 2018) - Lot 6 'Innovative financing for development'** (wiiw Team Leader)

*EuropeAid*

*June 2018 - May 2020*

This Framework contract is supposed to provide services for the benefit of third countries receiving EU external aid. Lot 6 covers 'Innovative financing for Development', which includes finance products and structures, financiers/risk takers, markets and financing needs/gaps, policy issues, and legal, institutional and procedural issues. wiiw is part of a consortium led by BKP Development.

## **Linkages between Vienna and other European cities**

*City of Vienna*

*January 2020 - May 2020*

In this study, we introduce a measure of linkage for the relationship between cities/regions, based on time series features of search engine queries. The used features are backed by time series decomposition using STL, i.e. seasonal and trend decomposition using Loess, precisely the strength of the trend and the linearity of a time series. The combination of these two features for both sides of search interest, e.g. the search interest for a certain topic in the city of Berlin based on search queries posed in Vienna, allows for the analysis of the development of this computed measure of linkage for the period 2004-2020 in various search engine categories provided by Google

Trends between cities/regions in Europe. We then present examples based on the city of Vienna as a point-of-interest for selected topics and propose a dashboard for policy decisions.

### **How EU funds tackle economic divide in the European Union** (*wiiw Team Leader*)

*European Parliament*

*January 2020 - April 2020*

This analytical study aims to provide data and related analysis on the topic of operating budgetary balance, its failures and limitations and to deliver evidence of the positive outcomes that Member States' experience from belonging to the EU, notwithstanding the status of their operating budget balance. wiiw is collaborating in this study with WIFO and Blomeyer&Sanz.

### **Macroeconomic Forecast**

*Sberbank*

*October 2019 - March 2020*

Countries - Macro-Economic Forecast: The wiiw statistics and country monitoring team provided on macro-economic indicators as well as forecasts for seven countries in Central, East and Southeast Europe to Sberbank Europe AG.

### **Framework contract: Evaluations and impact assessments of EU macro-financial assistance and balance of payment support operations**

*European Commission, DG Economic and Financial Affairs*

*January 2016 - December 2019*

European Commission, DG Economic and Financial Affairs established a multiple framework service contracts that allows it to obtain evaluation services and impact assessments of its own activities. Under this Framework Contract, the consortium partners assess the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, utility, sustainability, coherence, European Union Added Value, and governance of the macro-financial assistance and balance of payment support operations granted by the EU and the IMF to third countries. wiiw is part of a consortium under the leadership of Ecorys.

### **Convergence of non-EU countries in the CESEE region** (*wiiw Team Leader*)

*European Commission, DG Economic and Financial Affairs*

*March 2019 - October 2019*

This study assessed convergence of non-EU countries in CESEE over the past 30 years. It analysed current developments and plot convergence scenarios for the future. It was commissioned by the European Commission, DG ECFIN, in the course of a conference and a volume commemorating the 15 years of the 2004 enlargement of the EU.

### **Macroeconomic Forecast**

*Sberbank*

*January 2018 - May 2019*

Countries Macroeconomic Forecast The wiiw statistics and country monitoring team provided macro-economic indicators as well as forecasts for seven countries in Central, East and Southeast Europe to Sberbank Europe AG.

### **De-Regulierung und Re-Regulierung im Bereich der Europäischen Schieneninfrastruktur**

*ÖBB-Infrastruktur AG/Austrian Railway*

*April 2018 - December 2018*

The European domestic market in the railway sector was established from 2001 to 2016 on the basis of a comprehensive legal framework (the so-called "railway package"). The aim of this project is (1) to analyse the developments and the legal framework in European rail transport; (2) to give a detailed overview of the theoretical advantages and disadvantages as well as the practical experience with deregulation of rail transport in Europe; (3) to analyse the experience with deregulation of Californian electricity sector and its policy implications for rail transport. The study will be written in German.

### **Demographic and economic development in Central and East European countries (CEECs)**

*City of Vienna*

*December 2017 - December 2018*

The influx from Central and East European countries (CEECs) played an important role in the population development of Austria and Vienna between 2000 and 2016. This has also led to a significant change in the employment structure in Vienna, which has partly resulted in the displacement of both domestic and other foreign workers. In this context the study assesses the current and future migration potential to Austria and Vienna from the Central and Eastern European countries and the two Western Balkan countries Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia. Economic development in the CEECs has been very positive for some years now and forecasts also point to steady economic growth with significantly higher growth rates than the EU average. In line with this, the labour market situation in these countries generally improved. This and the general demographic developments in the region lead to a general slowdown in mobility flows from CEECs. Nonetheless, demographic developments in the region and the Western Balkans remain worrying as population is shrinking and the working-age population even more so. Demographic long-term scenarios even suggest that the population in the region will continue to shrink sharply in the coming decades. Summarising, these developments point towards a flattening of trends, if not a weakening of existing mobility flows to Austria and Vienna in the medium term. Finally, there are no indications that the patterns of mobility flows to Austrian regions (i.e. with respect to individual provinces) will shift significantly.

### **Externalities of Cohesion Policy**

*European Parliament*

*January 2018 - October 2018*

The study investigates the effects of Cohesion Policy (CP) which occur in a country other than the one in which CP resources were actually spent. The study estimates that macroeconomic spillovers significantly contribute to the impact of CP. Spillovers directed to EU countries represent around 9% of the total annual CP expenditure. Other spillovers to non-EU countries are around 8% of the CP expenditure. Macro and micro spillovers together arrive at 21% of the annual CP expenditure, 67% of which is distributed among EU countries. Around 20% of the CP expenditure can trigger sectoral spillover effects in the environment, transport and higher education sectors. The analysis demonstrates that externalities reinforce EU growth and competitiveness without CP deserting its convergence objective.

### **Risikoanalyse zur wirtschaftlichen Entwicklung der Türkei**

*Österreichische Post AG/Austrian Post Office*

*June 2018 - September 2018*

The project aimed to assess current economic conditions and business risks in Turkey, and to make projections for how these could develop in the next ten years under three scenarios (baseline, negative, positive). In particular, indicators were assessed which are relevant for the valuation of a business and for due diligence. These included trends in domestic consumption, inflation, the labour market, the institutional framework and political risk factors. A risk matrix was also included, identifying key business risks over the next ten years, and ranking them based on likelihood and impact. The study is written in German.

### **Austria's Economic Competitiveness in a Neighbourhood Context** *(wiiw Team Leader)*

*Anniversary Fund of the Oesterreichische Nationalbank*

*August 2016 - July 2018*

Since the Eastern enlargement of the EU in 2004, Austria has lost global export market shares. At the same time exports to Central, East and Southeast Europe have gained a significant portion of Austria's total exports. Moreover, in recent years Austrian GDP growth has slowed down and unemployment increased. In this context our main research question is whether the opening to the East had a structural lock-in effect for Austria's economy. In a novel approach on the territorial lock-in effect we will apply a multi-perspective view from a microeconomic (firm-level), mesoeconomic (industry-level) and macroeconomic (country-level) perspective. As regards data, we will have exclusive access to an update of the world input-output database including data for the Western Balkans. The new data will add substantially to the project, the current discussion on Austria's competitiveness and the development of policy recommendations.

### **Investitionspotentiale österreichischer Unternehmen in Bosnien-Herzegowina, Montenegro und Serbien**

*(wiiw Team Leader)*

*Federal Chancellery of the Republic of Austria*

*May 2018 - July 2018*



Austrian companies are among the most important investors in the Western Balkans. Much of the investment was made before the onset of the global financial crisis. For the selected countries of Bosnia-Herzegovina, Montenegro and Serbia the project aimed: (1) to give a detailed overview of Austrian direct investment; (2) to map the economic environment for Austrian companies locally and (3) to formulate policy recommendations to support Austrian companies in these countries. The study is written in German.

### **Studies in the Areas of European Competitiveness**

*European Commission, DG Grow*

*August 2014 - July 2018*

The purpose of this framework contract is to provide the European Commission, DG Enterprise and Industry, with background studies concerning the competitiveness of European industries. These background studies are mainly used for the preparation of the Commission's European Competitiveness Report which is published annually in order to provide analytical input to the policy debate on issues related to competitiveness and to underpin proposals and recommendations regarding the Europe 2020 strategy and future enterprise policy.

### **Infrastructure Investment in the Western Balkans: a First Analysis (wiiw Team Leader)**

*European Investment Bank (EIB)*

*February 2018 - June 2018*

The study provided a first analysis of the recent development in infrastructure investment in the Western Balkans, identified key infrastructure initiatives in the region, outlined the political dimension, and proposed a blueprint for potential initiatives in other parts of the EU neighbourhood. It also provided national accounts infrastructure investment data collected from Western Balkan statistical offices.

### **Economic policy implications of the Belt and Road Initiative for CESEE and Austria**

*Embassy of the Peoples Republic of China*

*October 2017 - March 2018*

The Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), a vision to revive the ancient 'Silk Road', was first presented by the Chinese President Xi Jinping in 2013. This initiative will affect more than forty countries throughout Eurasia and Africa. For Austria, it is particularly interesting, due to the country's strong economic relations with Eastern Europe and the Western Balkans. China has identified this region as the gateway to Western European markets, and emphasised its strategic importance with the initiation of a diplomatic initiative titled '16+1'. Furthermore, this region has a particularly high need for infrastructure investment, which form the core of the BRI. An analysis of developments in trade and investment, accompanied by the evaluation of the need for infrastructure investment in sixteen countries in Central, East, and Southeast Europe (CESEE), should allow for the identification of potential fields of cooperation between China and Austria in the context of the 'new Silk Road'.

### **Wage developments in Central and East European EU Member States**

*Austrian Chamber of Labour*

*January 2018 - March 2018*

The aim of the project is to describe the wage developments in eight EU countries of Central and Eastern Europe that are of major importance for Austria (EU-CEE-8: Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia), to analyse their determinants and to derive policy recommendations. These are to assist in providing a positive stimulus to the EU-CEE-8 economies and to offer a long-term perspective for the population. Particular focus is put on the wage share in the EU-CEE-8 countries, which has recently started to rise again. Nevertheless, the question arises why wage growth has not been even stronger in view of the tightening labour market in the region, with most countries recording shortages of labour/skilled workers. This is the central research question of the project.

### **Wirtschaftliche Perspektiven für Kroatien - Eine Analyse der kroatischen Wirtschaft und abgeleitete Politikempfehlungen auf nationaler und EU Ebene (wiiw Team Leader)**

*Austrian Chamber of Labour*

*June 2017 - December 2017*

The aim of the study is to develop policy recommendations to improve the economic conditions of the Croatian economy and the future perspectives of its population. A special focus of the analysis is on possible Austrian and EU assistance for absorbing potential effects on the Croatian and Austrian labour markets stemming from the

expiration of the transitional arrangements concerning the employment of Croats in Austria. These are set to expire by the end of June 2020, at the latest.

### **Fiscal policies in Europe I.**

*Austrian Chamber of Labour*

*January 2016 - December 2017*

This project analysed Austrian fiscal policy in a European context. Against the background of the most recent academic literature, it delivered new empirical results on macroeconomic outcomes of fiscal policy measures. In particular, the research focused on fiscal policy coordination problems in the EU's fiscal regulation framework, which relies on model-based estimates of the structural deficit. Further topics were the analysis of government expenditure structures in European countries as well as the effects of changes in discretionary fiscal policy on the income distribution.

### **Durchführung einer Analyse zu volkswirtschaftlichen Aspekten von Infrastrukturinvestitionen (wiiw Team Leader)**

*Ministry for Transport, Innovation and Technology (BMVIT)*

*February 2017 - September 2017*

The aim of the project is on the one hand to calculate a possible lack of investment for Austria and other EU member states in the area of strategic important infrastructure like for example street, rail or broadband internet connection. And on the other hand to develop a concrete suggestion for a "golden rule" for infrastructure investment on EU level. The project is based on actual research, is broadening it and puts a focus on the macroeconomic approach of infrastructure investments, whereas structural, cyclical and regional aspects of the topic will be treated.

### **Falling Behind and Catching Up in Southeast Europe (GDN)**

*Oesterreichische Nationalbank/Austrian Ministry of Finance*

*January 2014 - May 2017*

Southeast Europe holds a long record of being one of Europe's least developed regions. Sporadic growth spurts are regularly followed by strong fall-backs. Neither firms, nor banks or states were able to make broad industrialization happen in a sustainable way. The proposed research analysed the determinants and effects of backwardness in Southeast Europe. The analysis included inter alia issues of long-run development, industrialization, infrastructure, the role of cities, migration, state building and financial crisis. The results yielded important policy recommendations.

### **Support of European Structural and Investment Funds (ESI Funds) to the implementation of the Country Specific Recommendations and to structural reforms in Member States**

*European Commission, DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion*

*December 2015 - February 2017*

The study aims to produce evidence which can be used to support the implementation of the current programmes as well as the preparation of post-2020 ESIF programming. The study will focus on the relationships between structural reforms, linked to Country Specific Recommendations (CSRs) proposed as part of the European Semester, and the strategic design and implementation of the ESI Funds. The role of the ESI Funds in promoting and supporting the reforms will be examined in depth, with particular attention on the impact of two of the novelties introduced in 2014-2020: the ex-ante conditionalities and thematic objective 11 on Enhancing Institutional Capacity of Public Authorities and Efficient Public Administration.

### **Tradability of Output and the Current Account in Europe**

*Anniversary Fund of the Oesterreichische Nationalbank*

*July 2015 - December 2016*

One aspect in the debate about current account imbalances in Europe is the consequence of 'de-industrialisation' observable in several European countries. This project highlights the role of tradability of output as a key determinant of the current account balance. The relationship between a country's specialisation in the production of tradables will be investigated empirically for 46 European countries over the period 1995-2014. To this end a tradability index is developed which can be understood as a country's expected degree of openness given its economic structure. The tradability hypothesis to be tested in this project suggests that countries specialising in the

production of relatively more tradable output have a tendency to run current account surpluses. It is shown that this relationship is also predicted by intertemporal models of the current account. The tradability hypothesis is tested using both panel regressions and cross-country regression techniques.

### **Global Development Network Southeast Europe (GDN\_SEE)**

*Oesterreichische Nationalbank/Austrian Ministry of Finance*

*February 2009 - July 2016*

wiiw acts as regional hub for SEE within the Global Development Network (GDN) in providing capacity building for research and policy advice in the areas of labour markets, migration, trade, etc. wiiw initiated several research competitions in the region and also performs own research in this context. The topics of the most recent project phase were labour market developments, inequality, migration and fiscal systems in SEE.

<http://balkan-observatory.net>

### **Socio-economic assessment of the Danube Region: state of the region, challenges and strategy development**

*Ministerium für Finanzen und Wirtschaft Baden-Württemberg*

*July 2013 - October 2015*

The main objective of this project was an analysis of potential opportunities, requirements, challenges, and recommendations, in order to enhance the competitiveness, the innovative strength, the attractiveness, and the prosperity of the entire region of the Danube riparian countries and regions, and to develop strategic orientations in view of transnational and interregional cooperation for the period 2014-2020. wiiw developed this assessment in cooperation with two German partners, the Centre for European Economic Research (ZEW) - which was also the leader of the project - and the Institut für Angewandte Wirtschaftsforschung (IAW). The focus on wiiw's contribution was on labour markets, regional development, cluster development and cooperation in the Danube Region.

### **Recent patterns of labour mobility in the European Union (wiiw Team Leader)**

*Anniversary Fund of the Oesterreichische Nationalbank*

*July 2013 - March 2015*

In the EU the level of labour mobility is comparably low, but rising due to intensified labour market flexibility and increasing migration flows. The project analysed changing patterns of labour mobility in a detailed manner in the countries, regions and economic sectors of the EU by applying a descriptive and an econometric approach. A specific focus was put on whether international migrants respond more flexibly to labour market demands. Moreover, the effects of external shocks during the financial and economic crisis on the scale and structure of labour mobility was analysed. The project drew on two micro-datasets: the EU labour force survey for performing a worker flow analysis and the MICRO-DYN database, which provides data based on EU-wide firm-level data to perform a job flow analysis. In the econometric approach we applied regional, country, sectoral and workers characteristics to detect the reasons for differences in the European wide map of labour mobility.

### **Increasing competitiveness in the Western Balkans region - opportunities and limits (wiiw Team Leader)**

*German Federal Ministry of Finance*

*July 2013 - January 2015*

This study was written in German, original title: 'Steigerung der Wettbewerbsfähigkeit in der Westbalkanregion - Möglichkeiten und Grenzen'. The European Union as well as international and bilateral players increasingly consider higher competitiveness as a key factor for economic development in the Western Balkans region that is to be more and more autonomous and resilient in the long term. Against this background, the project aims to identify the potential for (further) structural reforms and their implementation and efficient realisation, as well as the potential for growth and strategies to exploit it. The project is carried out in cooperation with the Halle Institute for Economic Research.

### **Auswertung der HFCS Daten im Europavergleich. Immobilienvermögen, Verschuldung, nettovermögenslose und eigenheimbesitzende Haushalte**

*The Chamber of Labour (AK Wien)*

*December 2013 - November 2014*

The aim of the study is to describe the situation of household asset and debt holdings and the distribution thereof in the countries of the eurozone and to provide a comparison between those. The analysis is based on data from the

Household Finance and Consumption Survey (HFCS). The analysis focuses particularly on two groups of households, those without or with negative net wealth holdings and those households being proprietor of their home. Recent research on the topic has first and foremost dealt with the situation in the US. Moreover, the study discusses the relevance of real estate assets for households in a broader sense.

### **International conference 'The 2004 EU Enlargement – Ten Years After: Achievements and Next Steps'**

*Austrian Ministry of Finance*

*June 2014 - June 2014*

The conference celebrated the 10th anniversary of the accession of ten Central, Eastern and Southeastern European countries to the European Union. It reflected on achievements and lessons learned and discussed possible future political and economic developments in Europe.

### **Support to the Development of the South East Europe 2020 Strategy**

*Regional Cooperation Council (RCC)*

*June 2013 - September 2013*

The Regional Cooperation Council (RCC) Secretariat was requested by the countries of the Southeast Europe Cooperation Process (SEEC) as well as the European Commission (EC) to advance the preparation of a regional development and growth strategy - SEE 2020. In course of this process, eleven specific targets have been identified that span convergence with EU, trade, investment, employment, education and governance. All in all, the SEE 2020 encompasses 14 policy dimensions. In the framework of this consultancy assignment, wiiw coordinated a group of experts who compiled and synthesized the various inputs from regional initiatives, platforms and other relevant stakeholders into the Strategy document. Last but not least, wiiw experts ensured the internal consistency of the proposed targets and measures and provided contextual analysis and advice. In November 2013, the SEE 2020 strategy was finally approved by the Ministerial Conference of the South East Europe Investment Committee.

### **A manufacturing imperative in the EU - Europe's position in global manufacturing and the role of industrial policy (Competitiveness Report 2013)**

*European Commission, DG Enterprise and Industry*

*November 2012 - June 2013*

This study served as a background report for the annual European Competitiveness Report of the European Commission (DG ENTR). The objective was (i) to detect the structural changes that have occurred in the European economy in order to identify the major challenges that lie ahead European manufacturing and (ii) to analyse and evaluate past and current approaches to industrial policies (and instruments) at the European and the EU Member State level. Based on the structural challenges for the EU economy and experiences with industrial policies the study formulated suggestions for potential elements of a renewed European industrial policy. The policy conclusions took into account the interaction of industrial policy with related policies such as competition rules, innovation policies and trade policies. The study contains both qualitative and quantitative analyses, including cluster analysis and various econometric techniques and made use of numerous data sources such as the World Input-Output Database (WIOD), OECD ANBERD, Eurostat, European Commission State Aid Scoreboard database and the Community Innovation Survey (CIS).

### **Crisis effects: growth prospect, social impact and policy responses in SEE and CIS**

*Oesterreichische Nationalbank/Austrian Ministry of Finance*

*July 2011 - June 2013*

The main objective of the project is to establish economic research capacities throughout Southeast Europe (SEE) and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), to promote knowledge transfer into the regions, to facilitate networking between researchers and to assist in securing knowledge transfer from researchers to policy makers. Activities to achieve this include research calls, mentoring, workshops, conferences and policy dialogues. The project is structured into bi-annual research cycles focusing on a specific research theme of particular importance. During this phase, research aims at analysing whether the international crisis shock introduces structural breaks in the distribution of income and other welfare dimensions, conditional on the change in the potential speed of growth, the quality of development, and the induced or adopted policy changes in SEE and CIS. The project is part of the Global Development Network (GDN), a multilateral organisation founded by the World Bank in which wiiw acts as a hub for SEE.

## **Ex-post evaluation of Macro Financial Assistance operations to Kosovo**

*European Commission, DG Economic and Financial Affairs*

*March 2012 - October 2012*

Under its Financial regulation, the EC is legally obliged to evaluate its main programmes, including Macro Financial Assurances (MFA). The main objective of this ex-post evaluation was to learn key lessons which can be applied to future interventions and/or to identify a possible need for a reorientation of the present EC approach. The evaluation focused on three core areas of economic effects: (1) macroeconomic effects; (2) structural effects and (3) effects on the sustainability of the external financial situation. Each area focused on the effects over specific time horizons: macroeconomic developments were assessed on short-term effects (up to 2 years after the initial disbursement), the structural effects on the economy and institutions on short- and medium- term effects (up to 4 years after the initial disbursement) and the external financial situation on medium- to long-term effects (3 years or more).

## **Multidimensional inequality and poverty in the EU considering polarisation and social mobility**

*Anniversary Fund of the Oesterreichische Nationalbank*

*September 2010 - July 2012*

The project contributes to cross-country inequality and poverty research on income and well-being as well as on income polarisation. Part 1 provides a regression-based decomposition analysis of income inequality and poverty in the EU. The research, based on EU-SILC data, allows identifying micro- and macro-level determinants of social stratification. In Part 2 the analysis is broadened to multidimensional inequality and poverty, detecting sources of dispersion of well-being. Part 3 goes beyond the static examination of poverty and inequality by looking at intergenerational mobility and inequality and poverty persistence. Part 4 presents a multi-level analysis of macro- and microeconomic determinants of income polarisation in the EU, which is also based on EU-SILC data.

## **Study in the context of Croatia's EU accession**

*Federal Chancellery of the Republic of Austria*

*December 2011 - July 2012*

The study provides background information for the Austrian Chancellery in the context of Croatia's accession to the EU. It describes the economic development of Croatia in a comparative perspective, analyses Austria's relations with Croatia and discusses potential future developments as a result of EU membership.

## **The European neighbourhood - challenges and opportunities for EU competitiveness (Competitiveness Report 2012)**

*European Commission, DG Enterprise and Industry*

*November 2011 - May 2012*

This study serves as a background report for the yearly Competitiveness Report of the EC. In order to assess the differences between neighbouring countries with respect to their importance for EU competitiveness, the study first maps the economic situation and competitiveness of each of the Eastern and Southern ENP partner countries, non-candidate EFTA countries, potential candidate countries as well as Russia. The study describes and analysed the economic importance of institutional arrangements and instruments for cooperation between the EU and the above countries. It also explores the economic and trade impact of bilateral agreements and related trade and investment flows including energy, raw materials and other resources between EU Member States. The final part of the study contains a discussion of the challenges and opportunities for EU competitiveness resulting from its different economic relations, institutional arrangements and instruments with its immediate neighbours, as well as the bilateral relations between EU member states and neighbouring countries. The prospects for EU SMEs to expand their activities into neighbouring countries are discussed and conclusions drawn on the basis thereof. The study concludes with policy recommendations stemming from the discussion of challenges and opportunities. wiiw coordinated the study.

[http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/industrial-competitiveness/competitiveness-analysis/european-competitiveness-report/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/industrial-competitiveness/competitiveness-analysis/european-competitiveness-report/index_en.htm)

## **Country risk analysis (wiiw Team Leader)**

*Erste Group Bank AG*

*November 2011 - April 2012*

Country studies are performed for Austria, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Romania, Russia, Serbia,

Slovakia and Ukraine, analysing the political and institutional, economic and social situation on a qualitative and quantitative basis.

### **Developing efficient activation approaches and identifying elements for regional cooperation in the Western Balkans**

*European Commission, DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion*

*March 2010 - April 2012*

The main objective of this project was the assessment of employment policies in the Western Balkan countries, their distance from the European Employment Strategies (EES), and the capacity and effectiveness of the Public Employment Services (PES) to implement modern labour market services. The general approach of the research was to assess the existing policies against the background of labour market developments in the Western Balkan countries. wiiw coordinated this project, in cooperation with ÖSB and with support of some local experts.

### **Workshop: MENA transition and international responses**

*Austrian Ministry of Finance*

*August 2011 - December 2011*

In December 2011, wiiw organised a workshop with high-level experts to discuss the current economic, political and social situation in MENA countries, the challenges they face and the challenges posed for the EU neighbourhood policy. The workshop took as a vantage point the experiences from Central and Eastern European countries and the lessons the transformation of these countries may hold for future developments of the MENA region. wiiw produced a background paper for this workshop.

### **Strategic partnership in support of the integrated regional development plan of the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina**

*Austrian Development Agency (ADA)*

*January 2008 - June 2011*

The main objective of this project was to strengthen and support the socio-economic development process of the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina by implementing specific measures, which are combined in a multi-sectoral action plan. The specific role of wiiw in this project was to support a regional economic research institute in capacity building, e.g. by setting up an economic model, a business barometer methodology and implementation, training in mathematics and statistics, mentored research, scientific dissemination and networking as well as general management skills.

### **The revival of NMS mutual trade after their EU accession: in search of the reasons behind (wiiw Team Leader)**

*Anniversary Fund of the Oesterreichische Nationalbank*

*August 2009 - March 2011*

Since their EU accession, mutual trade of the Central European new members has been expanding more dynamically than before 2004 and much faster than these countries' trade with the 'old' EU members. The project's target was to identify the reasons behind this phenomenon. First, changes in the structural features of these countries' mutual trade before and after the 2004 EU enlargement were analysed; revealed comparative advantage, marginal intra-industry trade and intensive and extensive margins of trade indicators were calculated and interpreted. Second, the significance of foreign-owned enterprises' presence in various industries and bilateral trade relations was investigated. Third, trade and FDI in services were scrutinised. Fourth, the potential of mutual trade was addressed with the help of a gravity model. Policy lessons for EU candidate countries and possible effects on Austria were discussed.

### **Employment in the gas and electricity sectors in the Western Balkan contracting parties of the Energy Community**

*European Commission, DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion*

*November 2009 - February 2011*

The aim of this study was to analyse the employment development in the gas and electricity sectors in seven countries of the Western Balkans. In doing so, the impact of liberalisation and of the resulting restructuring processes on the number and quality of jobs is investigated and likely trends were presented. The study was based on quantitative analysis as well as on qualitative analysis in the form of stakeholder interviews.

### **Serbia: medium to long term economic development**

*Telekom Austria Group*

*November 2010 - January 2011*

The study analysed current economic developments in Serbia, the country's perspective of EU accession and provided a medium-term forecast of main economic indicators. The authors diagnosed short-term risks to economic recovery due to social and political instability as well as lacking institutional, structural, and policy reforms. In case the planned process of EU integration was realised, more reforms and rather sustainable development was expected after the elections in 2012. This was also considered to be supportive to the macroeconomic stability, which was mainly anchored in the exchange rate policy. Under these assumptions, a GDP growth rate of around 4% per year and a relatively stable currency and inflation was expected, albeit at a somewhat higher level. The alternative scenario was that the whole process stalls and the traditional muddling through strategy prevailed with rather disappointing and unpredictable results due to the changed international environment.

### **Inequality and fiscal policy in transition countries**

*Oesterreichische Nationalbank/Austrian Ministry of Finance*

*January 2009 - December 2010*

The main objective of the project is to establish economic research capacities throughout Southeast Europe (SEE) and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), to promote knowledge transfer into the regions, to facilitate networking between researchers and to assist in securing knowledge transfer from researchers to policy makers. Activities to achieve this include research calls, mentoring, workshops, conferences and policy dialogues. The project is structured into bi-annual research cycles focusing on a specific research theme of particular importance. During this phase, research dealt with inequality and fiscal policy in transition countries of Southeast Europe (SEE) and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). Research aimed to analyse issues of income and other distributions (e.g., wealth, wage, skills, opportunities) in transition countries with special interest in the role of market liberalisation and fiscal redistribution. The project is part of the Global Development Network (GDN), a multilateral organisation founded by the World Bank in which wiiw acts as a hub for SEE.

### **Austrian linkages to the European economy and the transmission mechanisms of economic crisis**

*Austrian Ministry of Economy, Family and Youth*

*June 2010 - November 2010*

The goal of this project was to develop a new concept called 'strategic fragmentation' which is used to explore how stronger interconnectedness between EU Member States could lead to lower vulnerability and hence to more freedom of action in economic and foreign policy. The economic value of energy solidarity mechanisms and more interconnection capacity between Member States was assessed and simulated numerically. For this purpose a model of strategic fragmentation has been developed which yields costs and benefits of various policy concentration options for EU Member States.

### **Three contributions to exchange rate economics**

*Anniversary Fund of the Oesterreichische Nationalbank*

*July 2008 - June 2010*

The project constructively contributes to the literature on some well-known puzzles in international economics. Part 1 offers a demand-side alternative to the Balassa-Samuelson Effect which is commonly invoked to explain the presence of exchange rate/purchasing power parities gaps. The alternative is tested against the recent ECP data. The same set of data underlies Part 2, concerned with specification of neoclassical general equilibrium models of pan-European trade. Analyses of the models' solutions shows that the ER-PPP gaps can persist even if the "Law of One Price" operates perfectly. Part 3 studies the ECP data with the means of advanced dynamic econometrics to test hypotheses on movements of relative price and GDP levels across Europe. It is hypothesised that these movements are not disconnected. Part 3 has important implications for the policy (e.g. on euro adoption) debates.