

## WORD FROM THE EDITOR

The breakdown of Communism represented the starting point for creating new or reforming old political institutions in post-Communist states. The research undertaken so far shows that the institutional arrangements influenced the paths of transition, the economic and democratic performances of the countries, and the development of particular political behaviors and attitudes. After approximately one and a half decade of transition, most of the post-Communist states have managed to finalize the transition process, have consolidated political institutions and, as a result of these two factors, have the benefit of a significant level of democratic development.

Moreover, political institutions represent an important criterion of evaluation regarding the democratic performance of the post-Communist states. The difficulties faced during the transition period were reflected at the level of political institutions. In this respect, a close look at the international reports over time reveals the wave-like track of institutional development in these states. Furthermore, the continuous necessity of changing political institutions is reflected by the repeated constitutional modifications in these states, an element tackled in two of the articles from the current issue.

The above mentioned aspects represent many reasons to dedicate a special issue to the analysis of political institutions in post-Communist states. 15 years of political transformations, combined with the tradition in institutions research, provide the groundwork for a coherent analysis regarding the dynamic of post-Communist political institutions.

The features of post-Communist political institutions are hard to be captured only by performing a separate institutional, neo-institutional, or behavioral analysis. Therefore, the current issue of the *CEU Political Science Journal. The Graduate Student Review* combines different approaches in order to provide a better picture of transition processes, the outcomes registered at its end, and possible predictions for future ways of development.

The division of power between the president and legislatures, a constant research topic in the Political Science literature, is analyzed in this issue from two different perspectives and for two country clusters in the post-Communist space. The issue brings, at the same time, the first analysis of the powers vested in president in post-Communist states, research that can

be further developed in the future. In *Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation*, Juan J. Linz and Alfred Stepan mentioned that an important indicator for democratic performance is the attitudinal one. In this respect, another approach from the current issue is oriented in that direction. Furthermore, political parties, considered to be one main tool for the success of democracy, are closely examined.

This initiative has four main goals. First, it tries to clarify several concepts related to political institutions from a theoretical perspective and to create new models for analysis or to test models developed for the post-Communist world in other regions. Second, it attempts to bring new approaches to the debate regarding the functions and roles of political institutions in transition countries. Third, and strictly related with the second goal, this aims to challenge the research topic, bring new elements into discussion, and to challenge the research. Fourth, it tries to provide a detailed study on certain aspects of political institutions that have not been sufficiently developed in the literature until the present.

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