



EXPECTED MACROECONOMIC DEVELOPMENTS IN SLOVAKIA

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The June forecast was prepared when expectations in the euro area stabilised. Therefore, it was supposed that the trough in the euro area economic activity was reached at the end of 2011 and the beginning of 2012 and activity should improve afterwards. These expectations, as well as the previous forecast, were based on the anticipation that the financial crisis would not further intensify and that global trade and external demand would recover, while domestic demand would gradually improve in the prediction horizon. As technical preconditions hardly changed, it was not necessary to substantially review expected developments of fundamental macroeconomic indicators for the prediction horizon. Owing to better condition of the Slovak economy and employment in the first quarter of 2012 than expected in the March forecast, these indicators were reviewed slightly upwards for the whole of 2012. Similarly, expected inflation for 2012 was also increased as a result of the current acceleration in price developments. (p. 2)

THE ANALYSIS OF CONSUMER PRICE RIGIDITY IN SLOVAKIA

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The modern macroeconomics considers price inelasticity an important source of money neutrality in the short run, which significantly affects inflation and possibilities of monetary policy by influencing real variables. On this backdrop, the main reason behind our research was to examine the levels, as well as sources and effects of the occurrence of consumer price rigidity in Slovakia. The article describes basic patterns and characteristics of price behaviour in relation to specified levels of consumer price inelasticity in the economy, both on the aggregated and disaggregated levels. We analyse the frequency and way in which consumer prices change as a result of setting prices on the basis of the analysis of individual micro-prices entering the calculation of CPI. (p. 4)

SILVER COLLECTOR COIN – THE 250TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE BIRTH OF CHATAM SOFER

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In June of this year, Národná banka Slovenska prepared the issue of a silver collector coin commemorating the 250th anniversary of the birth of Chatam Sofer, a distinguished Orthodox rabbi, teacher, judge and scholar who is among the most leading authorities of the Jewish orthodox community all over the world. On the obverse side of the coin the design is set in a triangular field and depicts a part of the townscape of Bratislava at the time of Chatam Sofer.

To the left there is the denomination 10 EURO in two lines, and to the right the national emblem and the year 2012. The country name SLOVENSKO is written in the upper part. At the bottom of the townscape are the stylized initials of the coin's designer, Pavel Károly, and the mintmark of the Kremnica Mint. The reverse side features a portrait of Chatam Sofer, again in a triangular field, together with a Torah scroll and a seven-branched candelabrum. The name CHATAM SOFER is written on the left-hand side and its Hebrew version on the right-hand side. The dates of his birth and death, 1762 and 1836, appear in the lower part of the field. (p. 16)

CHANGES IN 1989 AND THE WEALTH OF HOUSEHOLDS

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This article focuses on human capital and housing wealth in Slovakia during the economic reforms of the last two decades. We compare households that entered the labour market before and after the economic reforms of 1990. On the one hand, we study the returns to education in different labour market cohorts using household consumption surveys. On the other hand, we analyse the determinants of housing wealth and its impact on consumption. We show that old cohorts are characterised by lower returns to human capital and consumption levels, but higher housing wealth. Thus, we do not identify a clear pattern of winners and losers from transition. (p. 18)

ACCESS TO FINANCING AS A KEY BARRIER TO SMEs DEVELOPMENT, PART 3 HOW TO FILL THE FINANCE GAP FOR SMALL AND MEDIUM-SIZED ENTERPRISES

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The article explores the possibilities which small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) may use to fill gaps in their financing. The underlying reasons behind lacking resources of SMEs seem to be persistent shortages in their supporting environment. Attention should thus be directed to its individual components (such as financial infrastructure, legislative and regulatory frameworks for financial institutions and their instruments) and their improvement. The shortages in this supporting financing environment might be partially alleviated by internal procedures for lending that would reduce information imbalance. The important role in assisting SMEs is played by governments that should ensure the functioning supporting environment and so help to fill the finance gap for SMEs. Government measures to promote SMEs should be clearly directed and targeted at efficient functioning of markets and should stimulate the private sector to actively engage in SMEs' financing. (p. 24)