

Dragan Šagovnović\*



Instead of Editorial:  
A look at 60-year old Belgrade's  
Economic Institute

# Serbia's Think Tank

**T**he Economics Institute was and continues to be the backbone of the development of economic consciousness in Serbia. In our six-decade history, we have always tried to be a step ahead of the actual economic climate – far enough away not to be swallowed by time, yet close enough to be followed by followers.

Belgrade's Economic  
Institute

Faith in economic science has given us the courage to persevere in our core activity, scientific research, and develop it on the principles of a market economy. How have we achieved this? Economic science has been the measure of the commercialization of our operation. The possibility of its practical application was the measure of the justification of scientific research work. By doing business in a measured way, we have made



the Economics Institute what it is today – the leading Serbian scientific research and consultancy house.

The Economics Institute's key strengths are its reputation and profitable operations. The Institute's reputation rests on its long-standing tradition, excellent references, the experts it has developed and the staff that make it up today. Without its profitable operations, it could not have held a leadership position in the market of scientific research and consultancy services for several decades. While honoring tradition, we have not feared change. It's only thanks to such an approach that we have managed to adjust successfully to changes in the market (the change of the political system, disintegration of the former Yugoslavia, years of transition, years of sanctions, opening up of the Serbian economy, regional integration, changes in the nature of competition, and so on).

As the leading Serbian think tank, the Economics Institute has always been a permanent source of ideas for the economy (the real and financial sectors) and public administration. This has been enabled by its flexible and market-oriented structure of activities made up of the following basic segments:

- Consulting/advisory services (transactions and corporate finances, strategies and evaluations, tax consulting, corporate management, etc.)
- Economic and social research (macroeconomic analysis and prognosis, economic development strategies, economic and industrial policies, sector studies, institution building, privatization, economic deregulation and entrepreneurial development, development of the private sector, small and medium-size enterprises, financial and banking sector re-form, etc.)
- Publishing
- Professional training services, organization of conferences, round tables and seminars.

The Economics Institute's biggest assets have always been its staff and associates. Bearing in mind the nature of SEE Business, we have tried to present particular topics significant for Serbia's economic profile from the point of view of the Institute's staff and associates.

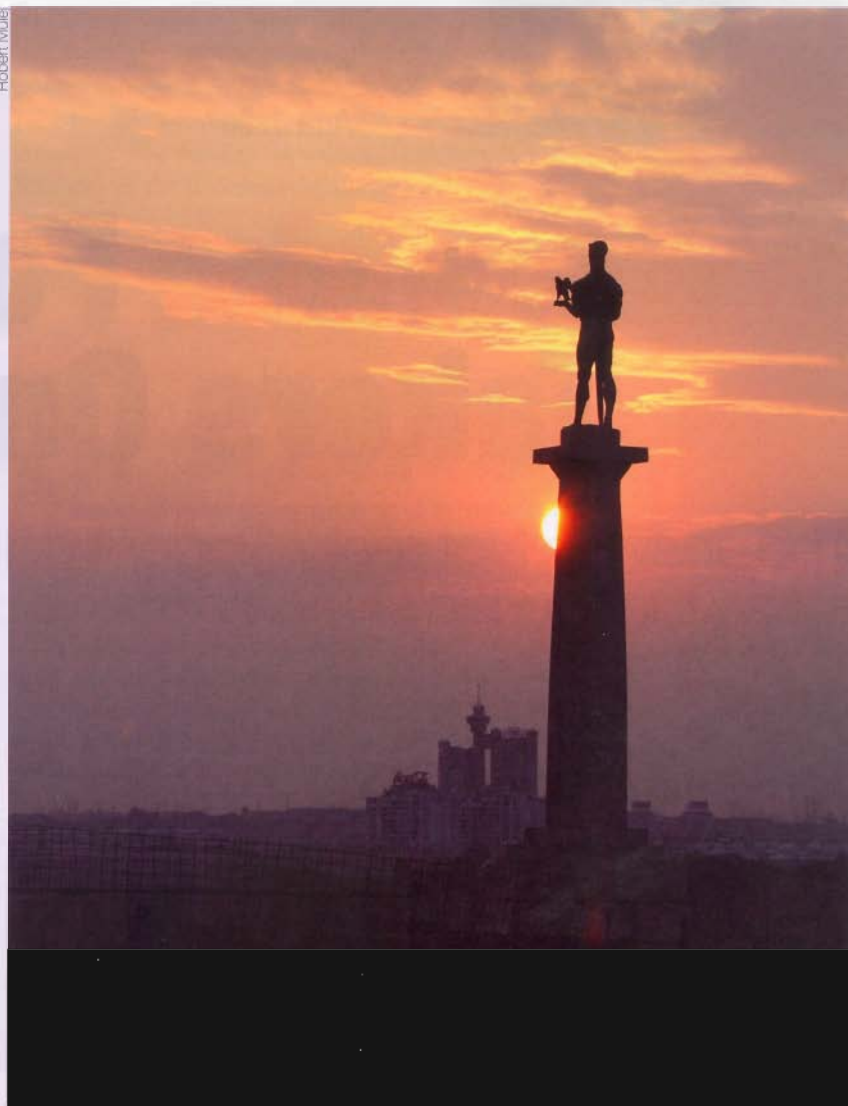
- A general overview of Serbia's economy is provided by Ivan Nikolić, a research fellow at the Economics Institute and MAT's (Mesečne analize i trendovi) editorial board secretary. MAT is a unique monthly barometer of macroeconomic trends published by the Economics Institute.
- After years of transition, Serbian companies have regained their regional stature (including in the energy sector, agriculture, car industry, trade, telecommunications, pharmacy, infrastructure and other sectors). In this supplement we present three sectors. First, the energy sector, which represents a big development opportunity for Serbia. An overview of this sector is provided by Sanja Filipović, senior research

fellow at the Economics Institute and one of the most promising young experts in the field of energy. Agriculture and agribusiness is the subject of a contribution by Miladin Ševarlić, a special advisor to the Economics Institute in these fields. We have also paid special attention to the newly formed (or renewed) partnership between Zastava and Fiat, a project of great potential benefit for the entire region. Milan Mekić, a member of the Institute's executive board and head of the Zastava Group's restructuring program between 2001 and 2005 presents the history and significance of this partnership.

o Last but not least, Serbia represents one of the most interesting investment destinations in the region. Serbia's fiscal environment is by all means of huge significance for potential investors. This is the subject of a special contribution, "Corporate Profit Tax in the Republic of Serbia – Matters of Interest to Potential Investors" by Marija Drča Ugren, a special advisor to the Economics Institute.

The experts of the Economics Institute cover many other areas. We are available for consultation and additional analyses. ■

The Victory Monument in Belgrade's Kalemegdan Fortress faces west



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