

RECENT NEW ENTRIES TO THE DICE DATABASE

In September, October and November 2003, the DICE Database received about 80 new or updated tables and charts. The main topics have been the following:

- Taxation of labour, wage subsidies
- Public debt
- Corporate finance
- Employment
- Labour force participation
- Unemployment.

TAXING FAMILIES

The OECD Report "Taxing Wages 2001-2002" offers a Special Feature describing the methods used by governments to provide special fiscal treatment to families. There are three major ways in which policy makers take into account family status: by application of a tax schedule that varies according to family-status, by providing tax credits and allowances related to marital status and the presence of dependent children and by supplying cash transfers to families with children, or providing benefits linked to marital status. Generally, these policies imply that the effective tax rates faced by married couples and tax payers with children are lower than those faced by single individuals.

CONFERENCES

CESifo Area Conference on Global Economy

From 30/Jan/2004 to 31/Jan/2004

On 30-31 Jan 2004 CESifo will organise an initial working group meeting for the new Global Economy group. The focus of this group will be to explore how the gains from globalisation differ from the gains from trade (accelerated technical progress, global tournaments, increased speed of transactions), the effects of marginalisation and how it operates, the role of culture and local identity, new forms of global institutions and arrangements, and other matters under the globalisation rubric. The scientific organiser is John Whalley.

Fiscal Federalism

From 20/May/2004 to 22/May/2004

CESifo jointly with the National Bureau of Economic Research will sponsor the next Trans-Atlantic Public Economics Seminar, which will focus on the implications of differences in tax and expenditure programs across jurisdictions for the location of real and financial activity, as well as the implications of such migration/mobility for government behaviour. The scientific organisers are Hans-Werner Sinn and Roger Gordon.

EMPLOYMENT IN EUROPE 2003

According to the European Commission's report *Employment in Europe 2003*, an adaptable skilled workforce, with access to training, career development, job mobility, flexible work organisation, and a sense of job security is key to increasing productivity within Europe and encouraging job creation and higher employment rates. Changes in the European labour market since the late 1990s – rising female and youth participation, increasing education levels and greater range and use of flexible working methods – have allowed it to be more resilient in the face of economic slowdown than in the last recession in the early 1990s. Active labour market policies, such as unemployment insurance systems and investment in human capital, can help compensate for increasing employment instability and encourage further labour market flexibility.

THE WORLD BANK GROUP DOING BUSINESS

Doing Business provides objective measures of business regulations and their enforcement. The Doing Business indicators are comparable across more than 130 economies and will soon be comparable over time. They indicate the regulatory costs of business and can be used to analyse specific regulations that enhance or constrain investment, productivity and growth. The topics are:

- Starting a Business
- Hiring & Firing Workers
- Enforcing Contracts
- Getting Credit and
- Closing a Business.

See:

<http://rru.worldbank.org/Doing Business/default.aspx>.