

# Spitzenforschung in Bayern



Research Cooperation: Eastern and Southeastern Europe

## THE INTEGRATION OF EASTERN EUROPE: BETWEEN DEMANDS AND REALITY



**M**ay 2004 the EU was enlarged with eight former socialist nations – together with Cyprus and Malta – to a total of 25 member-states. During the years 2001-2003 the main focus of forost lay on the economic and social transformation of these countries. Since 2003 the research concentrates on chances and risks for these countries connected to their integration in the European Union. This mainly concerns the subject of the differences in self perspective, the views on others and the cultural and social stan-

dards between the new and the old EU members. For example one topic of interest is the work attitude towards employees on both sides of the former "Iron curtain".

A successful integration opens great possibilities for the Europe's economical, political and cultural aspects: A true integration of Eastern Europe also ensures peace and wealth of the entire continent.

The mostly irrational fears and prejudices which exist on both sides can only be overcome by

trust in and communication with each other. Knowledge is the first step: Economic, legal, cultural, ethnologic and political

knowledge are equally as important as detailed know-how of (South-) Eastern European countries and their languages. Forost has access to many different competences and offers lingual, specialized and regional knowledge as a service for anybody.

40 scientists from many different disciplines and countries offer their help parallel to their own research on topics of politics, economy and society in order to highlight the chances and risks of these historical processes. The three Bavarian universities (Bayreuth, Munich and Regensburg) as well as five university independent research institutes (Collegium Carolinum, Institute for Eastern European Law, Eastern Europe Institute, South-East Institute and the Hungarian Institute) take part in the research community in Munich.

### Spokesperson:

Prof. Dr. Klaus Roth, LMU Munich

### Managing Director:

Helga Schubert  
Güllstrasse 7, 80336 Munich, Germany  
Phone +49 (0)89 7461 33-21  
Fax +49 (0)89 7461 33-33  
E-Mail [forost@lrz.uni-muenchen.de](mailto:forost@lrz.uni-muenchen.de)  
Internet [www.abayfor.de/forost](http://www.abayfor.de/forost)

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# FIELDS OF WORK WITHIN THE COOPERATION:

The target of Forst is to be a supporting consultant to politicians, the industry and social groups as to deliver answers to the following questions:

- Which effect do the opening up and the transformation of the former plan-economies and the expected increase in competition and migration have on the businesses and population of Bavaria?
- Which legal and financial systems and which social or cultural context do Bavarian economists have to consider, if they get involved and/or invest in the new member states?
- How can Bavarian foreign policies support the new member states in their transformation and reform efforts?

The interdisciplinary teamwork makes it possible to construct a picture of a given situation from different factors – containing “hard facts” as well as questions of perception and non reflected behaviour – in order to solve any problem arising from this situation in a highly effective and efficient way.

**Group 1:** Economic, legal and lingual factors und conditions of the European integration.  
Speaker: Hermann Clement, OEI, Munich

**Group 2:** Trust as basic condition for economical and social integration  
Speaker: Rainer Arnold, University of Regensburg



**Group 3:** Civil community as vital factor for integration  
Speaker: Daniel Drascek, University of Regensburg

**Group 4:** Ethnological pluralism and nation identity politics in the European context

**Speaker:** Gerhard Seewann, SOI, Munich

