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G. Samenvatting

De landen van centraal en Oost-Europa en de voormalige Sovjet-Unie, ook wel “transitielanden” genoemd, hebben transformaties ondergaan die ongeëvenaard zijn in de recente economische geschiedenis. Van die kenmerken, die de transitielanden onderscheiden van de rest van de wereld en die ze tot groep maken, heb ik met name aandacht besteed aan de bepalende factoren voor de groei, het effect van buitenlands kapitaal op de productiviteit, en de verandering van het economisch raamwerk.

Transitie wordt gekenmerkt door diepgaande veranderingen in het functioneren van de economie. Er kunnen dan ook krachten aan het werk zijn die behoorlijk verschillen van die van “normale” markteconomieën. De post-communistische landen begonnen hun transitie met verschillende verdraaiingen in het systeem, aangezien hun economische ontwikkeling niet het resultaat was van conventionele economische logica maar van centrale planning, die een heel ander soort logica gebruikt. Dit suggereert dat er een aanzienlijke ruimte was voor verbetering en verhoogde output, alléén al door herallocatie en reorganisatie, en zonder de inputs te verhogen.

Onze resultaten tonen inderdaad aan, dat de transitieperiode tot en met 2002 eigenlijk uit twee periodes bestaat: een beginfase, om de eerste inefficiënties te verwijderen en de fundamenteën van een markteconomie te ontwikkelen, en een tweede fase, waarin het groeipatroon van transitielanden begint te lijken op dat van een gevestigde markteconomie. De twee factoren die van belang blijken gedurende het gehele transitieproces zijn het opleidingsniveau en de erfenis van de voormalige Sovjet-Unie. Als voorlopige maatstaf gebruiken we het jaar 1995. De meeste transitielanden hebben dan ten minste één jaar van positieve groei doorgemaakt.

De factoren die groei lijken te beïnvloeden in de eerste fase zijn of het land deelgenomen heeft aan een oorlog of gewapend conflict, welk deel van zijn handel viel onder het CMEA-handelsverbond onder het communisme, of het land behoorde tot de voormalige Sovjet-Unie en hoe hoog het opleidingsniveau is. In de tweede periode hangt de groei af van de hoeveelheid fysiek en menselijk kapitaal dat in de productie wordt gebruikt. Of het land tot de voormalige Sovjet-Unie behoorde of niet blijft een rol spelen. Ten slotte heeft het economisch raamwerk (een groep kenmerken die het nivo van corruptie beschrijft, de kwaliteit van het legale raamwerk, de reikwijdte van de politieke en economische vrijheid) een positief effect.

Daarbij besteden we aandacht aan ruimtegebonden afhankelijkheid, dat wil zeggen aan de situatie waarin de kenmerken van economieën van buurlanden stelselmatig samenhangen. In de eerste fase was dat het geval bij Armenië, Georgië en Azerbeidzjan, hoogst-