

USER SURVEY OF THE DICE DATABASE

Recently, the DICE Database introduced a user survey in order to better know what the main interest of the users are. Before entering the database the user is asked to fill out a questionnaire. Participation is voluntary. The questionnaire can be filled before and after a search session. We would be pleased about active participation (www.cesifo.de/DICE).

OECD HEALTH DATA 2002

End of 2002 the latest release of OECD Health Data on CD-ROM has been published. The database consists of about 8000 health market related variables which cover – in principle – all OECD countries and extend – again in principle – over the period of 1960 to 1999 or 2000. Some time series start at 1980 and some show estimates for 2001.

The main focus of this database is on the input and the output side of the health market – all what can be more or less easily described in time series. Causes of mortality, measures of morbidity, average length of stay in hospitals by cause of mortality as well as many measures for health related expenditures are reported in great detail.

The way the health market is governed, the rules of the game, the institutional framework, however, is considerably less intensely covered – although this is the information health policy makers and researchers should dispose of in the ongoing reform debate about national health systems in Europe and elsewhere.

The database comes with an easy to handle querying software which allows to construct quickly the tables one wants to have.

STEVEN SHAVELL, FOUNDATIONS OF ECONOMIC ANALYSIS OF LAW

This book, forthcoming in 2003, Harvard University Press, partly pre-published in several NBER Working Papers, is on a very important aspect of institutions and regulations. In seven parts and 29 chapters it covers the following topics: Accident Law; Property Law; Contract Law;

Litigation and the Legal Process; Public Law Enforcement and Criminal Law; General Structure of the Law; Welfare Economics, Morality, and the Law.

The character of the book is of an analytical-theoretical and normative nature. But it is not too difficult to read. The text of the book is nearly free of any mathematics (which is mainly put into footnotes) and many examples illustrate the points the author wants to make.

However, the book does not describe systematically in a country-comparative way how the existing national (and international) laws on accidents, property, contracts etc. are structured, how they have developed and how they have been reformed in the course of time.

CONFERENCES

Norwegian-German Seminar on Public Economics

The Seminar is held in Munich at the CESifo Conference Centre, 20–21 June, 2003. Speakers are David Wildasin, Kjetil Bjorvatn, Thomas Stratmann and others. (www.cesifo.de)

CESifo Conference on Health and Economic Policy

The Conference is held in Munich, 27–28 June, 2003. The scientific organisers are Robert Fogel (Chicago) and John Komlos (Munich). Speakers are William Nordhaus, T. Paul Schulz, Axel Boersch-Supan and others. (www.cesifo.de)

International Institute of Public Finance, 59th Congress

The Congress is held in Prague, Czech Republic, August 25–28, 2003. The central topic is about “Public Finance and Financial Markets”. (www.iipf.net/call.htm)

The Ronald Coase Institute, Workshop

The Institute holds a workshop in Budapest, 6–11 September, 2003. The subject is “Institutional

Analysis”. Among the speakers will be Douglass C. North, John Nye, Mary Shirley and others. (www.coase.org)

International Society for New Institutional Economics, 7th Annual Conference

The Conference is held in Budapest, Hungary, September 11–13, 2003. The central topic is “Institutions and Change”. Keynote speakers are Douglass C. North and Vernon L. Smith. (www.isnie.org)

DICE
Database for Institutional Comparisons in Europe
www.cesifo.de/DICE

The database DICE was created to stimulate the political and academic discussion on institutional and economic policy reforms. For this purpose, DICE provides country-comparative information on institutions, regulations and the conduct of economic policy.

To date, the following main topics are covered: Labour Market, Public Finances, Social Policy, Pensions, Health, Business Environment, Capital Market and Education. Information about Basic Macro Indicators is added for the convenience of the user.

The information provided comes mainly in the form of tables – with countries as the first column –, but DICE contains also several graphs and short reports.

In most tables all 15 EU and some important non-EU countries are covered. Many topics already contain information on the EU accession countries.

DICE consists mainly of information which is – in principle – also available elsewhere. But we think that the access we provide is very convenient for the user, the presentation is systematic and the main focus is truly on institutions, regulations and economic policy conduct. However, some tables are based on empirical institutional research by ifo and CESifo colleagues as well as the DICE staff.

DICE is a free access database.

Critical remarks and recommendations are always welcome.
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