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## Editorial: Special Edition of the Central European Economic Journal to Mark the 70<sup>th</sup> Birthday of Prof. Jan Jakub Michałek

### Letter from the Guest Editor

This special edition of the Central European Economic Journal is dedicated to recognising Professor Jan Michałek's career as he celebrated his 70th birthday in 2023.

Professor Michałek is Poland's top expert in international trade and trade policy in particular. He has been associated with the Faculty of Economic Sciences at the University of Warsaw since completing his master's course in Econometrics in 1977. He earned his PhD in 1981 and habilitation in 1989. Eventually, he became a full professor in 2003. Additionally, he graduated from the College of Europe in Belgium and participated in several research stays abroad, including the University of Bern, the University of Amsterdam, and the University of Sussex.

Professor Michalek has pioneered the field of modern international economics in Poland as it transformed its academic sector after the democratic reforms in 1989. He has shaped the academic curriculum of teaching in international economics at the faculty and is an author contributing to the faculty's success in the field. His academic contributions were invaluable during the progressing reforms in the Polish economy: trade liberalization and the subsequent stages of Polish accession to the EU.

His immense knowledge of trade policy has also an important applied dimension: in the 1990s he served as the Deputy Permanent Representative of Poland to the World Trade Organization (WTO) and was the Vice-Chairman of the Committee on Import Licensing of the WTO. This unique mix of experience enabled him to be published in renowned academic journals, obtain numerous grants and research projects, provide policy advice to numerous national and international institutions, and, last but not least, introduce the topic

of international trade and trade policy, European integration, and the WTO to thousands of students.

His publications include books and articles on trade and trade policy. He is an author of a widely used textbook in this field and was an editor of translation of several international textbooks to Polish. Early research works focus on the functioning of the world trading framework under the umbrella of the GATT including the effects of Uruguay Round, the functioning of the dispute settlement mechanisms, and the Polish accession to the WTO. The empirical works from the period of economic transition also include the studies on the effects of trade liberalization in Central and Eastern Europe and the resulting changes in the pattern of trade, concerning the emergence of intra-industry trade in particular. Later studies concentrate on the topic of European integration, the political economy of trade policy, effects of free trade areas, issues related to non-tariff barriers and technical barriers to trade, trade in services, as well as trade effects of the euro. Professor Michałek is one of the authors pioneering the use of micro-level firm data in the analysis of international trade in Poland. He has also been involved in studies devoted to firm-level innovation.

Professor Michałek has also contributed to the success of the University of Warsaw (UW) at the management front. He served as the Vice Dean (1990–1992) and then later as the Dean of the Faculty of Economic Sciences (2012–2020). He also, for many years, served as the head of the Division of Macroeconomics and International Trade Theory at the faculty. In the past, he was also involved as a Vice Director of UW's Centre of Europe. Currently, he serves as the head of the doctoral program at the faculty.

Professor Michałek's teaching and advice have convinced me to pursue an academic and professional

career related to international trade and economic modelling. I had the opportunity to attend his excellent course in International Trade Theory during my studies at the faculty. Later, I joined his Master's seminars where he encouraged me to engage in simulation modelling, something that I am involved in to this day. He also became my PhD advisor and, subsequently, a frequent co-author and collaborator in research projects and policy advice. It has been a great privilege to work alongside Professor Michałek.

Turning attention to the content of the special issue of the Central European Economic Journal, it features a diverse array of articles contributed by Professor Michałek's former students and selected collaborators. These articles span the spectrum from international trade theory to trade policy, encompassing both empirical studies and opinion papers. The thematic breadth of the issue aptly aligns with Professor Michałek's multifaceted contributions to economic literature. I sincerely hope that the reader will find the articles included in the special issue interesting.

The issue features four opinion papers related to current issues in international trade, economic integration, and trade policy. The article by Pawlak (2024) is devoted to a highly relevant concern—the growing trend of protectionism in global trade. Through an analysis of various trade measures, Pawlak brings to light a significant surge in the number of policies adversely affecting trade, particularly observed after the year 2020. What stands out prominently in the findings is that a substantial portion of these newly implemented measures takes the form of non-tariff barriers, with subsidies emerging as a noteworthy component. This noteworthy increase in protectionist measures shows the evolving landscape of international trade, prompting a closer look at the implications and dynamics of these changes on the global economic stage.

Lewkowicz (2024) takes on the interesting subject of the political economy in international trade and analyses the recent shift of focus of the economic literature, in particular towards the new drivers of decision making in the world economy, i.e., digitisation, climate change, and the environment as well as turning away from the liberal approach. The author discusses these issues in the context of future research.

Tovias (2024) examines the variety of challenges associated with the freedom of movement of people in integrated Europe. This examination involves an

analysis of the evolution of approaches to the problem from the inception of the European Integration process to the present day. Tovias delves into the intricacies of the freedom of movement, providing a nuanced perspective within the broader context of the original aspirations laid out in the Treaty of Rome. Furthermore, the author analyses the shifting economic and political landscape, including the significant impact of events such as Brexit. The author sheds light on the dynamic interplay between historical objectives and contemporary challenges, offering a profound understanding of the complexities surrounding the freedom of movement within the integrated European framework.

In Togan's study (2024), the focus is on how developing countries can attain satisfactory food safety levels economically and ensure access of their exports to high-income countries. The author highlights three potential strategies: developing their own regulations, following international guidelines, or adopting a regional approach akin to the EU's periphery by implementing EU food safety standards. Togan evaluates the pros and cons of each method, underscoring the intricate nature of achieving food safety. The recommendation is to entrust this responsibility to a new public institution with sufficient financial and technical capabilities.

The series of four scientific articles kicks off with an interesting text by Cieślík (2024), introducing a heterogeneous firm model based on the Cournot competition. This alternative framework of firms in international trade offers predictions similar to the well-known Melitz (2003) framework, potentially serving as a compelling case for teaching heterogeneous firm models.

Two empirical studies delve into the complexities surrounding non-tariff measures. In the work of Hagemeyer and Matuszczak (2024), the authors revisit the earlier findings of Hagemeyer and Michałek (2007) regarding the impacts of the European standardisation policy on EU accession countries. Their estimated gravity model reveals that the harmonisation of EU standards has proven effective in dismantling technical barriers to trade among EU nations. Notably, this harmonisation has been particularly advantageous for exporters from the Visegrad Group Countries.

On the other hand, for Ghodsi (2024), the focus is on investigating technical barriers to trade in the realm of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) goods. While regulations have the potential to hinder

trade and transform into technical barriers (TBT), Ghodsi's study demonstrates a nuanced perspective. It reveals that regulations may indeed stimulate trade if they succeed in reducing asymmetry of information and mitigating consumer risks. This phenomenon is especially observed in numerous non-tariff measures within the ICT goods trade domain.

Ronen (2024) scrutinises the trade performance of Poland's exporters in the Western Balkans using survival analysis. The author examines the stability of Poland's revealed comparative advantage compared to the rest of the EU, coupled with the effects of tariff liberalisation, providing intriguing sectoral insights.

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