

# “Getting things done”

## The practice of small-scale enterprise between socialism and capitalism in Eastern Europe

“Gray” or “second” economies within socialist societies have been extensively studied. But what happened to these informal economies during the transformation from socialism to capitalism in Eastern Europe at the turn of the 1990s? While liberalization policies greatly increased the scope for private enterprise, learnt modes of “getting things done” in an informal manner did not disappear overnight. Based on Czech, Slovak and Polish examples, the analysis will show how small-scale entrepreneurs transferred previously acquired informal business practices into the capitalist era. The talk will address what this tells us about the perceived legitimacy of the free market and democratic reforms in a social group meant to be one of their main protagonists.

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