

# SOS, SOEs!

In a perfect world, the state would not find it necessary to interfere in market activities nor have a mandate to do so. However, since we are far from an ideal situation, we must make do with what we have. And what we still have in Eastern Europe are state-owned enterprises (SOEs).

Being the advocates of a free market unhindered by state actions, we come with a heavy heart to see how governments try to get involved in market economy when it is not a necessity but rather the will to satisfy its own needs. It is therefore our belief that any endeavors that may limit business operations in the private sector shall be carefully followed to prevent the potentially negative effects of regulation.

Any attempts of the state to sustain the existing SOEs at all costs or create new ones when they are not needed are likely to lead to pathologies – from governments seeking power or leverage, or serving as a safety net for politicians seeking refuge from the political center stage.

Thus, although not envisaging a seventh heaven any time soon, the seventh issue of *4liberty.eu Review* is an attempt to give an overview of the existing practices employed by governments in SOEs and find possible solutions to make their operation less inconvenient for businesses and less prone to abuse of power by the ruling politicians. It is therefore our hope that by giving you these 10 articles written from various perspectives, the reader will have a chance to see why it is crucial to open a wider debate on the issue on an international level. And to do it now.

Olga Łabendowicz  
Editor-in-Chief of *4liberty.eu Review*  
Coordinator of 4liberty.eu network