

## WELCOME TO READER

The Faculty of Natural and Social Sciences, the youngest faculty of the Technical University of Budapest, was established in 1986. The social sciences and humanities taught here serve as a 'complement' to engineering training. Their aim is to introduce students not simply into these disciplines but into their special application to engineering. This activity is supported by research. Economics, management, ergonomics, environmental economics, philosophy, history of science and technology along with engineering pedagogy are the obvious fields of immediate contact to engineering. Some may question the role of philosophy. However philosophy is partly focusing on engineering ethics and philosophy of science and technology. Sociology at this faculty is also devoted partly to the sociology of science and technology and industrial sociology.

Cross-disciplinary teaching and research is quite well at home at the Faculty already. The majority of faculty members are of double qualification, having not only roots in social sciences and humanities, but also in natural sciences, maths and engineering studies. Moreover, some engineers and natural scientists from other faculties are involved in common teaching or research with social sciences and humanities. This can be the pledge of good perspectives in the future.

The beginning of full-time doctoral studies at the Faculty (from 1991) has attracted overwhelming recruitment from engineering faculties. These are people who feel the need for deeper studies in various social sciences and humanities and try to get specialized in these disciplines. (Their generation may already develop a view of the disciplinary boundaries as highly permeable between engineering and natural sciences on the one hand and social sciences and humanities on the other regarding cross-disciplinarity and an integrative view as natural.)

Some articles in this first issue demonstrate already the interest of engineers in the various social aspects of engineering work witnessing their professional explorative approach as equal to their narrower engineering research activity.

A type of cross-disciplinary approach can be realized in the field of Science – Technology – Society studies. The overall articles from an international meeting to introduce this new type of perspective are also subject to this volume now.

The series *Social Sciences and Humanities* will be published twice yearly. It is our intention to provide a systematic overview of the research done at the Faculty. The series will inform you on the most important research in the field of social sciences and humanities including applied linguistics. It is hoped that this new series will open a forum for international discussion as well.