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Preface

Although this book has my name on the title page, many people have contributed to the research it contains. In the acknowledgements near the end of this study, I try give due credit to all my co-authors and collaborators, but I would like take the opportunity here to thank them all for the pleasant and productive interaction. More in general, the Faculty of Economics at the University of Groningen is a very collegial place with many colleagues willing to discuss research or just about any other topic. In addition, during the past years, I have enjoyed the hospitality of The Conference Board in New York and the National Institute of Economic and Social Research in London. Specifically, I would like to thank my supervisors, Bart and Jakob, who got me interested in a research career in the first place and who subsequently gave me all the space I could wish for to do the research I wanted to. In addition, many thanks go to Ward Romp, Marcel Timmer, Bob McGuckin, Jan Jacobs, Edwin Stuivenwold, Gerard Ypma and Mary O'Mahony for the good research and good times shared. Finally, I am also very grateful for the support of my family and friends, especially during the months where this dissertation actually had to be written. I promise I will not do it again.

Robert Inklaar
New York, November 2005

