

## NAVIGATING DIVERSE FRONTIERS IN ECONOMICS AND BUSINESS OF SEE REGION - EDITORIAL

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The current issue of the South East European Journal of Economics and Business publishes thirteen contributions from diverse economic and business empirical studies focusing primarily on South East European region. We categorize published papers into five groups to help readers identify fields and papers of interest more easily, although these borders are sometimes challenging to establish. In doing so, we recognize two papers that address the themes of organizational behaviour and management, including *Taborosi et al. (2023)* and *Krasniqi, Kotorri, and Aliu (2023)*. Five papers deal with public finance and general economics, where we include papers by *Mourão, Bronić, and*

*Stanić (2023)*, *Paleka, Karanović, and Štambuk (2023)*, *Hunady et al. (2023)*, *Muminović (2023)* and *Stanić, Cita, and Stanić Šulentić (2023)*. Three papers contribute to the field of marketing and consumer behaviour, including *Torma, Barbić, and Ivanov (2023)*, *Užar and Filipović (2023)*, and *Cuic Tankovic, Perišić Prodan, and Benazić (2023)*. A study by *Škrinjarić (2023)* focuses on labour market, while *Lushi et al. (2023)* address issues in agricultural development. Finally, one study is in the field of tourism (*Karma, 2023*). We provide a summary table with basic information on the papers published in this issue, while a more detailed overview of each contribution is below.

Authors	Unit of analysis and sample size	Data source
Taborosi et al. (2023)	Employees (313)	B&H, Croatia, Montenegro, North Macedonia, and Serbia
Mourão, Bronić, and Stanić (2023)	Cities and municipalities (556)	Croatia
Paleka, Karanović, and Štambuk (2023)	Taxpayers (862)	Croatia
Krasniqi, Kotorri, and Aliu (2023)	SME loans granted by the bank (2,320)	Kosovo
Torma, Barbić, and Ivanov (2023)	Students (890)	Croatia
Užar and Filipović (2023)	Consumers (806)	Serbia
Hunady et al. (2023)	Panel data with countries (23)	EU countries
Muminović (2023)	Business students (146)	Bosnia and Herzegovina
Stanić, Cita, and Stanić Šulentić (2023)	Large companies (124)	Croatia
Škrinjarić (2023)	Economics and business graduates (1,009) and firms (112)	Croatia
Cuic Tankovic, Perišić Prodan, and Benazić (2023)	Users (934)	Croatia
Lushi et al. (2023)	Farmers (640)	Albania
Karma (2023)	Panel data with countries (20)	Albania and EU countries

## Organizational behaviour and management

The research conducted by *Taborosi et al. (2023)* on the sample of teleworkers from the Western Balkan's countries (Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Montenegro, North Macedonia, and Serbia) finds that national culture and emotional intelligence have a greater impact on job performance and organizational commitment for employees in conventional working arrangements than teleworkers. *Krasniqi, Kotorri, and Aliu (2023)* examine the role of relationship banking, i.e., building trust between firm and bank, as an effective tool to mitigate credit risks (loan default). The authors use a sample of 2,320 SME loans stemming from a bank in Kosovo. The results indicate that stronger firm-bank relationships reduce the probability of default and tighter credit policies regarding higher collateral requirements, while interest rates have the opposite effect.

## Public finance and general economics

*Mourão, Bronić, and Stanić (2023)* empirically analyse a panel dataset of 556 Croatian cities and municipalities over the 2014–2021 period and find that local governments with higher budget transparency have higher revenues since budget transparency reduces information asymmetry between incumbents and citizens. This suggests that budget transparency can help local governments to achieve better control of opportunistic borrowing as well as increase revenues. *Paleka, Karanović, and Štambuk (2023)* examine the role of age, gender, and educational level with the taxpayers' compliance behaviour, confirming the statistically significant relationship between these socioeconomic variables and their level of compliance on the sample of 862 taxpayers in Croatia. These sociodemographic variables are also found to moderate the relationship between tax rates, tax morale, and tax compliance. Such results are beneficial for policy-decision makers to create efficient fiscal strategies.

*Hunady et al. (2023)* investigate whether government and business funding sources for university research and development represent complements or substitutes. The results of the panel data analysis suggest that government funding of R&D complements business funding, indicating that rising government financial support for research in higher education can lead to higher funding from the business sector. These results provide important implications for the SEE region, which typically needs to invest more in R&D.

*Muminović (2023)* explores the consequences of war by using primary data collected through a controlled experiment amongst business students at three universities dominated by three ethnicities across Bosnia and Herzegovina. The author finds that those students who were exposed to fictional media reports discussing the possibility of a new war reported lower entrepreneurial intentions than other business students. As such, the author argues that permanent warmongering is not just an empty rhetoric but can cause severe economic consequences in this society.

*Stanić, Cita, and Stanić Šulentić (2023)* analyze the impact of receivables, inventories, payables, sales growth, and GDP growth on the profitability of companies. The authors use panel data between 2018 and 2021 on the sample of large companies in Croatia. Among other conclusions, the results of this paper indicate that payment in the agreed term will not create additional costs such as default interest.

## Marketing and consumer behaviour

*Torma, Barbić, and Ivanov (2023)* examine students' financial literacy levels in Croatia by using a randomized field experiment. While students' financial literacy is generally perceived to be low and different between male and female students, factors such as age, student's GPA, whether students took some form of personal finance course, a proxy for numeracy, and place of birth in terms of a capital city might influence financial literacy, as well as a training intervention. However, education is considered insufficient for making better financial decisions since students did not report less impulsive buying or higher hypothetical saving. By applying the extended model of the theory of planned behaviour to the sample of 806 consumers across Serbia, the results of *Užar and Filipović (2023)* show that attitude, subjective norms, perceived behavioural control, trust, loyalty, education, and monthly income have significant impacts on intention to purchase cheeses with geographical indications of origins. As such, the study contributes to a better theoretical understanding of individuals' intentions regarding food with geographical indications of origins.

*Cuic Tankovic, Perišić Prodan, and Benazić (2023)* analyse 934 questionnaires to identify user segments concerning blockchain technology adoption, and a total of four segments were identified with the use of hierarchical and K-Means cluster analysis and contingency analysis. As such, the findings offer valuable

insights for comprehending behavioural intentions, laying a foundation for future research endeavours.

### **Labour market**

Škrinjarić (2023) analyse the mismatch in the labour market between the competencies that employers require and those that graduates acquire by using primary data collected from 1,009 students and 112 firms. The results show the existence of a mismatch between the competencies required and those acquired, with motivation and organization competence and project management and professional competence showing the greatest mismatch. The consequence of such a mismatch is represented in lower employability and wage penalties.

### **Agricultural development**

Lushi et al. (2023) explore the link between farmers' bargaining power in trade and their future economic plans. After utilizing data from questionnaire with 640 Albanian farmers, the findings reveal that those with investment plans demonstrate higher trading power, emphasizing the link between increased farm activity and enhanced bargaining power. This study contributes to the agribusiness field, particularly from the perspective of a transition and developing country.

### **Tourism**

The study by Karma (2023) assesses the determinants of international tourism demand in Albania through a dynamic panel data analysis from 2011 to 2019. Utilizing the Two-Step GMM Model on a sample of 20 countries, the study underscores the significance of word-of-mouth effects and the dual nature of inferior goods and services in the Albanian tourism sector. It emphasizes the social cohesion role of tourism while highlighting its potential for general economic development. Furthermore, the study stresses the relative importance of government spending, suggesting that the national tourism strategy must prioritize sustainable and high-value tourism segments.

On behalf of Editorial Board

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