


From the Editor

The South East European Journal of Economics and Business has recently faced a rather large increase in submissions. Thanks to our referees' efforts and selections we are in a position to introduce a new issue of this international journal specifically focusing on the South East European (SEE) region (Volume 8, Issue 2). The new issue introduces five new papers, of which four come from the business sector and are generally focused on leadership, corporate environment and business climate. Moreover, all of these papers treat samples that include countries from the SEE region and new data coming from tailored surveys. The fifth paper investigates the effect of political instability on savings, having a more economic background and rather general implications.

The first paper is by Rašković, M., and is entitled "Measuring Culture Effect Size Differences in Slovenian and Portuguese Leadership Practices: Cross-cultural Leadership Universality or Contingency?" This paper explores the relationship between national culture and the use of particular leadership practices identified between Slovenia and Portugal, which are the two countries in focus. This comparison is based on survey data from 211 MBA students from these two "East-West" European countries. The paper reports evidence supporting the universalist perspective over the contingency perspective, which can be attributed to the cultural similarity of the two countries. The author identifies power distance as the key cultural dimension in the research, arguing that this finding has important implications for leadership practices in general.

The second paper is by Markovič-Hribernik, T. and Jarc, B., and is entitled "The Importance and Prevalence of Modern Forms of Staff Training in the Corporate Environments of Transition Countries: the Case of Slovenia". The modern form of learning addressed in the context of this article is e-learning, which has increasing importance in academic as well as corporate environments. This paper investigates the modern concept of learning by relying on a targeted questionnaire implemented in a sample of small-medium-large

companies in Slovenia. The survey focuses on current as well as possible future trends of corporate e-learning methodology. The authors report on extensive descriptive statistics as well as in-depth qualitative interpretation of their findings. The main message of this article is that there is an increasing rate of acceptance of the e-learning education model within the local corporate environment in Slovenia. Interestingly, although the companies identify the e-learning concept as a cost-efficient and flexible method, the findings suggest that traditional methods still seem to be perceived as the means of delivering higher quality staff training.

The third paper is written by Pejić Bach, M., Juković, S., Dumičić, K. and Šarlija, N. and is entitled "Business Climate Segmentation in Baking Using Self-organizing Maps". The research focuses on data gathered from Croatian companies through a questionnaire survey and a stratified sample of 850 firms. The aim of the paper is to explain business customer segmentation in the Croatian banking industry using self-organizing maps. The authors report that self-organizing maps extend the pool of possible criteria for segmentation of the business client market, including other relevant criteria. The research shows that important segmentation characteristics are based on the performance of the corporate sector itself and the given bank's characteristics. One of the important implications of this research is that different strategies should be tailored not just according to what customers want but also according to their characteristics.

The fourth paper, written by Žabkar, V. and Arslanagić-Kalajdžić, M., is entitled "The Impact of Corporate Reputation and Information Sharing on Value Creation for Organizational Customers". Their research aims to investigate the impact of corporate reputation and information sharing on value creation, and is based on survey data from companies from different industries in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The empirical test of the presented model focuses on the banking industry. Using structural equation modelling, the authors identify that corporate reputation positively and significantly influences customer perceived

value. An additional finding is that the effect of information sharing on customers' perceived value is not direct but mediated by corporate reputation. The paper ends with useful policy implications.

Finally, the fifth paper, by Abu, N., Abd Karim, M. Z. and Azman Aziz, M. I., is entitled "Low Savings Rates in the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS): The Role of the Political Instability-Income Interaction". The paper is based on panel data of the ECOWAS countries and aims to investigate potential determinants that might explain the scant success in savings mobilization this region has seen over the period 1996-2012. The obtained findings suggest that higher political stability is associated with higher savings. The income effect, on the other hand, moderates the adverse effect of political stability on savings. In short, the identified negative impact of political instability on savings is higher in low income ECOWAS countries, but smaller in high income countries. The paper implies that the promotion of political stability combined with an increase in income will raise savings in the ECOWAS region. Although the paper is not focused on the South East European region, which is the primary focus of this Journal, the obtained findings and messages seem to be very relevant for this region as well.

We hope that you will gain new interesting insights, motivations, knowledge and references from this issue and will be further motivated to conduct and submit your own research to the SEE Journal. As always, we would also like to extend our gratitude to the journal's referees, who helped us to select and improve the papers we accepted and who supported our continued publishing of high-quality research.

On behalf of the Editorial Board
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