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EDITORIAL

Issue 1 of Volume 18, Year 2016 of the *Economic Horizons* scientific journal contains two original scientific papers, three review papers and a book review.

The problem area of the income convergence of the Western Balkan States (WBS) to the level of incomes in the developed European Union member states (EU-15) is relevant in the theoretical, methodological, practical and social senses. After analyzing the economic growth and the growth of the living standard in the WBS, in the period 1993-2015, determining the concepts of the absolute and conditional convergence, and presenting the insights into the results of some of the empirical studies of the income convergence of the new members of the EU (NMS) and the WBS to the income of the EU, *Nenad Stanisic* explores the existence of the *sigma* and the *beta* convergence in the WBS to the level of income in the EU-15, and compares them with the income convergence achieved by the NMS. In addition to the conclusion that the results of the regression analysis suggest that income convergence to the average income in the EU-15 was demonstrated for the NMS and the WBS in the period 1993-2015, and that it was faster in the case of the NMS, the directions for further research relying on the identification of the key factors that have led to the significantly different results of the transition in the NMS and the WBS, as well as on the appreciation of the necessity of evaluating the success of an economy according to what happens to the living standard of the majority of the citizens for a longer period, rather than according to an achieved average gross domestic product *per capita*, have been pointed out.

The identified constraints of the individual use of the systems methodologies in managing complex and multifaceted problems in business economics explicitly point to the scientifically and practically relevant research into the assumptions, ways and achievements of their integrated application. After determining the critically-systemic conceptual framework of combining the systems methodologies, elaborating the key theoretical-methodological features of the interpretive methodology of Strategic Assumptions Surfacing and Testing (SAST), as well as the functionalistic-structural methodology of Organizational Cybernetics (OK), and indicating the important shortcomings of their individual use in structuring management problem situations in organizations, *Dejana Zlatanovic* specifies the conditions of their synergetic employment, and critically examines the manner and results of such a combined use of theirs, in which the application of the SAST methodology precedes the use of the use of the OK methodology. Beside the illustration of the use of the related way of their combination in the process of the formulation and implementation of the company's strategy in the crisis conditions, it has been concluded that - despite certain constraints - the methodologically suitable synergistic use of the methodologies enables the creative improvement of managing problem situations. A necessity to include the dimension of coercion and the use of power in organizations, as well as the resulting dialectic associating of the SAST methodology and the OK methodology with some of the systems methodologies from the emancipatory paradigm has been singled out as an open issue relevant for further research.

Denoting economic growth as a crucial factor in the socio-economic development of developing countries, *Nguyen Duc Thanh* and *Pham Van Dai* apply the growth diagnostic approach to the Vietnamese economy, in

order to determine the binding growth constraints on this economy. After the consideration of the Hausmann-Rodrik-Velasco model and the identification of the four fundamental principles for diagnosing the growth constraints of an economy, the respective diagnostic framework was used in the Vietnamese economy through the examination of the relevant dimensions of the financial constraints and the profitability constraint. The binding growth constraints of the Vietnamese economy were found to refer to the poor business environment, the underdeveloped infrastructure, the failures related to information externalities, learning externalities and the coordination failures. Also, the energy infrastructure, and the inefficiency of financial intermediaries and government's over-investment were identified as the vital constraint in a near future and as a binding constraint when the economy returns to its high growth path.

Anticipating that the concept of shopper marketing represents a promising business initiative, *Zoran Bogetic, Djordje Kalicanin and Dragan Stojkovic* explore the new - in relation to traditional marketing - perspective of marketing, with the shopper in focus. Based on the consideration of the relevant dimensions of the harmonization of the partnership between retailers', suppliers' and shoppers' relationships and interests as well as the fundamental elements of the promising business process of the product category management, a performance measurement model has been constructed, and the institutional and multi-channel aspects of shopper marketing practice have been highlighted. The hypothesis that effective and efficient shopper marketing is based on a balanced partnership between retailers and suppliers, and that this partnership is supported by improvements in the category management and adjustments in the performance metrics has been confirmed through the

research process. The standardization of the shopper marketing approach has been singled out as an open, scientifically and practically important issue for further research.

After pointing out some of the employment of the Analytic Hierarchy Process (AHP) as a technique of multi-criterial decision making, and the Data Envelopment Analysis (DEA) method in different areas of higher education, *Predrag Mimovic and Ana Krstic* consider the DEAHP method as a manner of overcoming the shortcomings of the partial using of the DEA and the AHP methods. The conditions, the way and the results of the use of the AHP model, the DEA model and the DEAHP model have been explored in the case of the twelve faculties in the Republic of Serbia. Along with the conclusion that „the final DEAHP priorities show that the best-ranked faculties are those that were generally rated as excellent or excellent through the individual use of the AHP method and the DEA method”, the directions for future research implying a larger number of the inputs and outputs of the model and the introduction of the relevant scientific research and financial components in the research process have been pointed out.

Also, this issue of the Journal contains a book review: *Boonstra, J. J. (2013). Cultural Change and Leadership in Organization: A Practical Guide to Successful Organizational Change*. Chichester, UK: John Wiley & Sons Ltd., written by *Aleksandra Boskovic*.

On behalf of the Editorial Board and my own behalf, I would, first of all, like to thank the authors of the contributions published in this issue. At the same time, we owe special gratitude to the reviewers for their efforts and constructive and critical comments and guidelines for the authors of the submitted manuscripts.

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