

**Varazdin Development and Entrepreneurship Agency and University North**  
in cooperation with  
**Universidade Lusofona - Centro Universitario do Porto**  
**CPES - Center for Research and Social Studies**  
**Necmettin Erbakan University**  
**Faculty of Management University of Warsaw**  
**Faculty of Law, Economics and Social Sciences Sale - Mohammed V University in Rabat**  
**ENCGT - Ecole Nationale de Commerce et de Gestion de Tanger - Abdelmalek Essaadi University**  
**Polytechnic of Medimurje in Cakovec**



# **Economic and Social Development**

98<sup>th</sup> International Scientific Conference on Economic and Social Development

## **Book of Abstracts**

Editors:

**Elisabete Pinto da Costa, Maria do Rosario Anjos, Lana Lovrencic Butkovic**

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# **A SYSTEMATIC REVIEW OF THE IMPACT OF FOREIGN DIRECT INVESTMENT (FDI) ON LOCAL INVESTMENT IN HOST COUNTRIES**

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## **ABSTRACT**

*The debate has always focused on the impact of the installation of foreign direct investment on domestic investment. In other words, does the installation of FDI in a territory crowd out or encourage domestic investment activity? In this article, we have developed a systematic review of the literature that brings together a set of empirical studies that have focused on the impact of FDI on domestic investment. PRISMA (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses) is the methodology used to present this systematic review. The results show that the body of work studied can be divided into three approaches, one of which endorses the existence of a crowding-out effect provided by foreign investors to benefit local investments. On the other hand, the second synthesis approves that the installation of foreign investors in a territory favors domestic investment. And the last group of studies whose results show the absence of a relationship between FDI and local investment.*

**Keywords:** *Crowd, FDI, Investment, Impact, Spillovers*

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## CONSUMERS' ATTITUDE TOWARDS PRIVACY IN THE CONTEXT OF BIG DATA MARKETING IN LATVIA

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### **ABSTRACT**

*Companies obtain results from big data analysis that can positively influence business processes and development. However, one of the most significant obstacles that runs through all stages of the big data analysis process is consumer privacy and attitudes towards it. Despite the rapid development of technology, a large number of companies avoid the big ones of data use, consumer interest in the use and processing of their data is also growing. The aim of the study is, by evaluating the scientific and practical problems of big data use and privacy, to identify modern trends in privacy and its implementation in companies, as well as to determine whether privacy is one of the factors affecting consumer behaviour and attitude. Qualitative semi-structured expert interviews were conducted with 6 participants from leading companies in Latvia and a consumer survey was conducted with 443 respondents from April to May 2022. Quantitative and qualitative methods of secondary and primary data processing have been used. Paper results lead to understanding that consumer knowledge of big data use and processing technologies is relatively low, thus there is low interest in privacy compliance and violations and there is no statistically significant positive correlation between high or average consumer digital skills and knowledge about privacy and big data collection on the Internet, suggesting that consumers with high technological skills are less concerned about their privacy than consumers with low digital skills.*

**Keywords:** *big data analysis, marketing, consumer privacy, privacy paradox, consumer trust*

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## **THE SHARING ECONOMY RESULTING FROM NEW DIGITAL PLATFORMS IS DISRUPTING THE ENTREPRENEURIAL ECOSYSTEM**

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### **ABSTRACT**

*The sharing economy has recently encouraged a new type of entrepreneur to change conventional entrepreneurial ecosystems. This conceptual research project seeks to examine the impact of digital sharing platforms on the entrepreneurial ecosystem, including its characteristics, theoretical approaches, and the motivations of individuals to participate as entrepreneurs. Through an analysis of relevant literature, this study aims to explore how social, ecological, and economic values associated with the sharing economy shape both society and the entrepreneurial ecosystem. The findings of this research will identify promising avenues for further investigation.*

**Keywords:** *sharing economy, entrepreneurial ecosystem, alternative economic model, sustainability, digital platforms*

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## **ASSESSMENT DESIGN IN MOROCCAN TERTIARY EDUCATION: CURRENT PRACTICES AND FUTURE PERSPECTIVES**

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### **ABSTRACT**

*Assessment design is an important component of instruction; therefore, any future reform in the Moroccan educational system should reconsider the current assessment design practices in the Moroccan tertiary education. The present study seeks to explore assessment design*

*practices in Moroccan faculties of letters and humanities in three state Moroccan universities (Moulay Ismail University, Meknes; Ibn Tofail University, Kenitra; and Hassan II University, Ain Chock, Casablanca). To collect the necessary data for the present study, document analysis method was used. The spoken English, grammar and paragraph writing tests designed for S1 students during the fall semester of the academic year 2020/ 2021 were described and analysed to find out the techniques adopted by Moroccan Professors in designing assessment tasks for their students. In addition, the validity and authenticity of the tests were investigated using Brown's principles of language assessment. The findings have shown that professors at Moroccan Universities used different techniques to design tests for their students except one university whose professors used only multiple-choice questions to design all the tests. Besides, the findings have shown that most tests designed for Moroccan students at the faculties of letters and humanities lack both validity and authenticity, two of the main criteria of language assessment.*

**Keywords:** *authenticity, assessment design, assessment tasks, validity*

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## **ECONOMIC VS. POLITICAL POWER; HISTORICAL OVERVIEW OF THE WORLD POWER INDEX**

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### **ABSTRACT**

*Economists have traditionally been elusive to the concept of political power, as they typically treat political power as an area reserved just for political scientists. Some academics go that far stating that political power is the power to expropriate, while economic power is the power to create. Some academics treat both powers as equal, whereas some instigate that political power often has economic origin. On the other hand, shocks in political power do affect the long-term economic perspective of one country. Thus, it is not easy to grasp the severity of the nexus between economic and political power. The technical problem of measuring and identifying variables released of the interdependence of economic and political background is immanent. The World power index represents a quantitative technique that tries to overcome distinct hermeneutics problems of subjective interpretation of power on an international level, thus contributing to a more accurate comparison of national power. The goal of this paper is to examine the common social construct of power by evaluating the relevance of the World power index within the economic and political interdependence for the period 1975-2017.*

*The outcome of the research indicates that the World power index could be seen as an important assessment tool for measuring and monitoring complex multidimensional phenomena of power with all its political, economic and social weights, but should not be assimilated to just one type of power.*

**Keywords:** *economic power, political power, World power index, GDP, panel cointegration*

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## **COUNTRY-OF-ORIGIN: LITERATURE REVIEW**

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### **ABSTRACT**

*Ever since the publication of the first study about the concept “country-of-origin” in 1965 up to the present day, it has attracted a high level of interest among scholars and practitioners alike. This paper reviews the country-of-origin literature and the relating key terms to show the conceptual development of the “country-of-origin” as a construct. The value and benefit of such Literature Review is to provide scholars and practitioners with a critical appraisal of the existing research on this topic in a chronological perspective. By classifying and evaluating the extant knowledge base of the country-of-origin area and the related key terms, this literature review delineates not only the major themes and issues in the field but identifies and develop avenues for future research as well.*

**Keywords:** *country-of-origin, conceptual development of key terms, brand image, consumer ethnocentrism*

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## **CONFESSION RADIO PROGRAMS: WHAT UTILITY FOR THE MOROCCAN AUDIENCE (“STUDIES IN LANGUAGE & SOCIETY”)**

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### **ABSTRACT**

*In the era of globalization, social media seems to be the outstanding reflection of social reality and change. Social networks have become wildly used by the growing population of young urban, rural, and non-literate demographic groups in the developing world. This qualitative shift also shows a strong ability to amplify the voice of marginalised and excluded groups. It likewise contributes in the spectacular regression of the notion of privacy among people.*

*Thus, most users of social media including journalists find no harm in probing in a number of issues that have been deemed sacred or tabooed. Journalism ethics seem to be changing and newcomers seem to be able to introduce new normative even audacious values. This development is not only concerned with social media, it also pierced the radio realm. The present paper therefore sheds light on the radio capacity to accede realities often taken as exclusively restricted and private. Observers of the Moroccan radio landscape commonly agree that most Moroccan radio stations tend to favor social programs in comparison with, not to say to the detriment of other program types; the issue of what is now called “Confession Programs” which stand for the archetype of stations’ aura have become mostly solicited among listeners. The present study seeks to study this rising trend by unraveling the religious, psychological and sociological implications. It attempts to explore the Moroccan audience’ perceptions in relation to these programs and their impact on listeners’ behaviour. The three angles stated above find premise on a number of radio programs pretending, or at least aim to bring solution to purely psychological crises. The research design is ethnographic; it focuses on collecting data basing on respondents’ personal views and experiences aloof from any convincing or orienting acts. In this respect, the study makes use of the semi-structured interviews as the main data collection instrument. The population sample comprises 50 respondents divided into two categories namely (i) the direct contact sample and (ii) the facebook sample. The study seeks to answer two research questions: (i) Do respondents have the same perception of confession programs. (ii) What are the religious, psychological and sociological implications of their prevalence?*

**Keywords:** *Confession, Catharsis, Audience Rate, Social Awareness, Media Success*

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## **BIBLIOMETRIC RESEARCH ON DEVELOPMENTS AND TRENDS ON THE MARKET OF TRADITIONAL FOOD PRODUCTS**

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### **ABSTRACT**

*Traditional food products are a component of the agri-food system that covers all aspects of the food production chain from land/sea to table, from raw materials handling, storage and transport through processing, control, distribution and marketing for consumption. The main objective of this study is to carry out a bibliometric study of traditional products. The research of the database of WOS indexed articles, related to the market of traditional products was done*

*for ten years (2012 – 2022) on the trends regarding the concept of traditional product. In recent years, there has been a growing interest in the ethical, health, environmental and cultural implications of food production and consumption. This study offers the opportunity to identify the evolution of research, major trends and issues in the field of traditional food market.*

**Keywords:** *bibliometric study, traditional food, VOSviewer*

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## **BIBLIOMETRIC RESEARCH ON THE IMPACT OF PESTICIDE USE ON FOOD SAFETY**

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### **ABSTRACT**

*The food safety represent the main objective of agricultural policy. Food security requires a quantitative, qualitative and social approach. The use of pesticides contributes to ensuring food security from a quantitative point of view, but negatively influences food security from a qualitative point of view. The main objective of this study is to carry out a bibliometric study of the impact of pesticides on food security. The data used in this analysis were obtained by querying the Web of Science database. In last years, there has been a growing interest regarding the impact of pesticides on food safety. This study offer opportunity to identify the evolution of research, major trends and issues in the field of the pesticides impact on the food safety.*

**Keywords:** *bibliometric study, food safety, pesticides, VOSviewer*

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## FARM PERFORMANCE THROUGH DIGITIZATION IN ROMANIA

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### **ABSTRACT**

*Smart and modern agriculture makes a substantial contribution to the progress of today's economy, and Romania's agricultural potential has a major influence on the management of these rich resources. By introducing new technologies required by digitization, digital agriculture will ensure a shift towards efficiency, productivity, and sustainability at the farm level and across the sector. In view of these aspects, this research aims to investigate the phenomenon of digitization of agriculture in terms of the need for its implementation, opportunities, benefits, and implications for the Romanian economy. With this in mind, a 2020 survey of farmers in Romania's SE region on digitization in agriculture was analyzed and the majority of respondents agreed that the use of smart farming can help them increase productivity and that crop production needs smart farming technologies.*

**Keywords:** *digital transformation, smart agriculture, digitization, digital tools, IoT*

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## **IMPROVING MOROCCAN SCHOOLS' EDUCATION QUALITY THROUGH RBM APPROACH IN SOCIAL INNOVATION PROGRAMS THAT TEACH THE 21ST CENTURY SKILLS**

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*This research paper investigates the application of Results-Based Management (RBM) in social innovation programs, specifically those aimed at fostering 21st century skills to enhance the quality of education in Moroccan schools. The study aims to comprehend the impact and effectiveness of RBM in delivering the intended results of social innovation programs, that address the fourth sustainable development goal which is quality education. The paper provides a comprehensive literature review on social innovation, RBM, the theory of change, and education, emphasizing the importance of 21st century skills as important life skills for students. Furthermore, it explores the connection between social innovation and quality education, as well as the influence of RBM implementation in social innovation programs. The study incorporates a case study of Bina', a Moroccan social innovation program led by Educ'Ride and NOBOXLab, that employs RBM to enhance educational quality in eight primary and secondary Moroccan schools. This process involves the planning, monitoring, and evaluation of various activities designed to generate a range of outputs and outcomes, ultimately achieving the program's primary objectives.*

**Keywords:** *Social innovation, Quality Education, 21st Century Skills, Results-based management, Theory of Change*

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## **THE ROLE AND SIGNIFICANCE OF MINERAL RAW MATERIALS IN THE DEVELOPMENT ECONOMY OF KRAPINA-ZAGORJE COUNTY**

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*Mining has been developing rapidly in the world in recent years, following the global trends of economic development. The demand for certain mineral raw materials is growing rapidly, but natural, technological, legal and social conditions can greatly limit the capacities. The purpose of the study is based on the research of spatial planning documents and data on exploitation fields and exploration areas of mineral resources in the Krapina-Zagorje County. Research results are based on the previous knowledge about the exploration areas/exploitation fields and data, which were determined on the basis of the resource base of mineral raw materials (mining-geological study that serves as a basis for creating spatial plans in the part that deals with the management of mineral raw materials). In conclusion, in the Krapina-Zagorje County, mineral raw materials can be planned and produced only in places where they exist, because the locations for exploration and exploitation depend on the geological composition of the area. In this paper, the authors will elaborate a list of current active, planned, inactive, deleted exploitation fields and exploration areas in the Krapina-Zagorje County in relation to the territory of the Republic of Croatia.*

**Keywords:** *exploitation fields, economy, exploration areas, Krapina-Zagorje County, mineral resources*

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## THE IMPORTANCE OF BUSINESS CONTINUITY IN LABORATORIES

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### **ABSTRACT**

*Today's laboratories are very complex and depend on different equipment, substances necessary for laboratory research, support services, and highly qualified people. Collapse or interruptions in any of these segments can induce serious harm to on-going research. If malfunctions in some of these areas last too long, that may lead to irreversible damage to equipment and the loss of samples and specimens. A Business Continuity Plan (BCP) as a collection of resources, actions, procedures, and information that is developed, tested, and held in readiness for use in the event of a major disruption of operations, helps prepare laboratories to maintain essential functions after a disaster or other major disruption. Namely, business continuity plan will help reduce and perhaps even prevent serious consequences.*

**Keywords:** *Laboratories, Disaster, Business continuity plan*

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## A SYSTEMATIC REVIEW FOR FINANCIAL CRIMES IN WESTERN BALKAN COUNTRIES

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*Financial crimes are a major concern for law enforcement agencies and policymakers in Western Balkan countries due to their potential to cause significant harm to individuals, businesses, and economies. This systematic review aims to provide a comprehensive analysis of the existing literature on financial crimes in Western Balkan countries, including the nature, scope, and impact of these crimes, as well as the measures taken to address them. The review finds that financial crimes, including money laundering, tax evasion, fraud, corruption, and bribery, are prevalent in the region, with varying degrees of severity across different countries. The weak regulatory environment in some Western Balkan countries is identified as a contributing factor to the prevalence of financial crimes. The impact of these crimes on the region's economies can be significant, leading to reduced foreign investment, decreased economic growth, and increased poverty. The findings have significant implications for policymakers and other stakeholders involved in addressing financial crimes in the region. Measures to address financial crimes, including anti-money laundering laws, financial intelligence units, and the strengthening of law enforcement agencies, have been implemented, but their effectiveness varies.*

*Further research is needed to understand the nature and extent of financial crimes in the region, as well as the effectiveness of measures taken to address them, to inform policy and law enforcement efforts in the fight against financial crimes in Western Balkan countries.*

**Keywords:** *Financial Crimes, Money Laundering, Fraud, Corruption, Tax Evasion, Organized Crime, Western Balkans, Regulatory Frameworks, Law Enforcement Agencies, International Cooperation*

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## **MAPPING THE LITERATURE ON INTERNATIONAL STUDENT MIGRATION**

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### **ABSTRACT**

*This research reviews the literature on international student migration. It analyses 717 papers registered in the Web of Science database. Key research themes, authors and influential papers are of prime interest. The literature on international student mobility boomed in recent years. The number of scientific papers with the keywords ‘international student migration/mobility’ increased from 70 in the period 1988–2010 to 647 in the period 2011–April 2023. The increase is related to both the growth in overall numbers of international students and structural changes in the global network, such as the emergence of major new sending and destination countries, and government policies aimed at attracting global talent. The patterns of the co-authorship network generally tend to mirror structures of the major senders and destinations in global student migration, with the notable dominance of UK- and USA-based authors. British researchers were authors of the most influential/trend-setting papers in terms of citations. Network science was used to identify the overall structure and the major components of the co-authorship network. Some 60 countries produced at least one international co-authorship, but strikingly, some large sending countries produced quite a few international co-authorships (China, India, Russia and Kazakhstan). This is quite surprising, as international student migration is, by definition, an international subject.*

**Keywords:** *international student migration, literature review, bibliometric analysis, network science*

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## THE ROLE OF GASTRONOMY IN CREATING AND IMPROVING THE EXPERIENCE ECONOMY IN TOURISM

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### ABSTRACT

*Food and tourism play a major role in the modern economy. Food is a key part of all cultures, a major element of global intangible heritage and an increasingly important attraction for tourists. The connection between food and tourism also provides a platform for local economic development, and food experiences help to brand tourist destinations, as well as support local culture that is thus more attractive to tourists. Gastro tourism in most regions of the world has been and must be integrated into traditional tourist activities, although in some regions, for example in France and Italy, it becomes the main reason for visiting the destination. This paper aims to determine and analyze the factors that influence the demand for local food in tourism in order to determine which tourists are interested in local traditional food as an attraction and manifestation form of gastro tourists. Despite the obvious need, many, if not most, destinations struggle to turn local food into a resource in tourism development. Transferring local food into the tourism offer requires local food experiences - specific products or culinary practices - that are available (organised, produced, packaged, communicated) for catering and wider consumer consumption - and, of course, such food experiences must be sought after by tourists as would be economically sustainable from a long-term perspective.*

**Keywords:** *food, tourism, tourism destination branding, gastro tourism*

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## THE REGULATION OF THE SHARING ECONOMY AND THE ROLE OF GOVERNMENTS

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### ABSTRACT

*The rise of the sharing economy as a component of the digital economy is significant, and its importance will continue to grow. In addition, the pandemic has increased its spread. Recently, regulation has emerged as a vital concern. Moreover, the government's role and its intervention are under discussion. This study investigates the government's involvement in previous economies and the sharing economy of today. The study also examines the relationship between previous and present economic activities.*

*The research takes extensive use of the author's thesis by reinterpreting crucial parts of comparisons, especially for fundamental economic approaches such as classical economics and comparative economics. Our research reveals that government involvement in the sharing economy is essential and that governments must adopt a global approach.*

**Keywords:** *government role, policies, regulations, sharing economy, traditional economy*

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## **DIAGNOSTIC ANALYSES REGARDING POVERTY RISKS AND QUALITY OF LIFE AMONG THE ELDERLY IN ROMANIA**

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### **ABSTRACT**

*Ageing is an overall global trend affecting the entire population at different rates and levels. The elderly are often considered a vulnerable group, with specific particular needs due to the physiological limitations and fragility characteristic of the ageing phenomenon. Elderly face many social risks and among them is poverty which affects their quality of life and which takes many forms and facets: income poverty, severe and extreme poverty, persistent poverty, material and social deprivation, social marginalization, social exclusion, social inequality, etc. The purpose of this paper is to analyse and disseminate an up-to-date and dynamic picture of poverty among the elderly in Romania. Analyses of relevant indicators, based on current statistical data and in dynamics, will highlight a certain profile of elderly vulnerabilities, useful to support policies in the field. The dynamic analyses will highlight the precariousness and magnitude, but also the persistence of the risk of poverty faced by the elderly in Romania. The relevant indicators highlight the risk of poverty, severe material and social deprivation, persistent poverty, poverty or social exclusion, even if at national level it is not the elderly who face the highest poverty rates, but especially young people and children. But, nevertheless, the segment of the elderly population must be actively and continuously considered and supported in order to reduce poverty and social exclusion and to increase their quality of life.*

**Keywords:** *Elderly, Indicators, Persistent Poverty, Poverty Risk, Poverty or/and Social Exclusion, Severe Material and Social Deprivation*

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## **THE IMPORTANCE OF CIRCULAR ECONOMY FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

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### **ABSTRACT**

*Given the intensive population growth and increased usage of natural resources with severe environmental consequences, economies are searching for ways to increase resource efficiency and reduce waste, thus enabling a transition from the linear to the circular economy model. A circular economy has been viewed by researchers as a multidimensional concept that has significant benefits to the economy and society as a whole. It represents an economic model that emphasizes the importance of reducing waste, keeping resources in use for as long as possible, and recovering and regenerating materials at the end of their useful life. A circular economy is a key concept for sustainable development, as it promotes the efficient use of natural resources and the reduction of waste, pollution, and greenhouse gas emissions. Therefore, the aim of this paper is to explore the importance of a circular economy for sustainable development. The data employed in the study are from the European Union Monitoring Framework database. The obtained results point to the fact that the circular economy is a core concept for sustainable development as it promotes resource efficiency, reduces waste, fosters economic growth, promotes social development, and combats climate change. Adopting circular economy principles is essential for building a sustainable future for current and future generations.*

**Keywords:** *circular economy, sustainable development, waste reduction, resource efficiency, performance indicators*

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## **DETERMINANTS OF RESIDENTIAL ENERGY CONSUMPTION: A CASE STUDY OF THE EUROPEAN COUNTRIES**

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### **ABSTRACT**

*Urban landscape has faced with substantial social, economic and environmental challenges due to uncontrolled growth of cities and regions during the past century. The unprecedented demographic growth and the consequent changes in the landscape give rise to extensive sustainability challenges such as ecosystem degradation, loss of agricultural and natural land resources, and shortage or unequal distribution of water resources and associated infrastructure. Cities and urban regions can be considered as one of the key sources of energy resources consumption and significant contributors to greenhouse gases emissions due to inefficiency of built environment and transportation activities.*

*Energy consumption reduction and the use of renewable energy sources are recognized as governmental priorities in the context of green economy and sustainable development. In the recent decades, research and policy analysis are mainly centered on reduction of energy consumption and mitigation of environmental degradation. However, the literature on socio-economic and spatial determinants of non-renewable energy consumption in the European Union (EU) countries is scarce. The literature focuses on either non-spatial determinants of energy consumption or spatial determinants were considered at the country level and there are few studies utilizing the regions as the unit of analysis. Therefore, the study aims at quantifying and analyzing the spatial determinants of non-renewable residential energy consumption at the NUTS3 (nomenclature of territorial units for statistics) regional level in the EU countries (<https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/nuts/history>) for a better understanding of the determinants of energy consumption and its policy implications.*

**Keywords:** Residential energy consumption, Random Forest (RF) classification, Spatial econometric models, NUTS3 regions, Europe

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## **HYBRID CORPORATE REALITY SUPPORTED BY AI**

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### **ABSTRACT**

*This research aims to investigate the attention phenomenon in real life in Hybrid Corporate Reality. The contribution of the present paper is a conceptual framework to examine the relationship between the human mindset and artificial intelligence. To inspect this problem in the real world, we consider transdisciplinary research essential. Based on the examined publications, we recognized that expert systems have a crucial role in connecting Mixed or Hybrid Reality and the phenomenon of attention. An examination of the publications matching our keyword combination demonstrated, that no research article matching our search has appeared in the last two decades. Therefore, the publications available from the results list also indicate a research gap. Further research with a different perspective is needed to identify the research gap accurately. This research gap was formulated from the ignorance of the element of the human mindset, primarily the phenomenon of attention in the research related to artificial intelligence.*

**Keywords:** Transdisciplinary, Mixed Reality, Hybrid Corporate Reality, Human mindset, Attention, Perception, Memory, Context, AI, Expert System

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## DATA ENVELOPMENT ANALYSIS OF MUNICIPAL SERVICES IN CROATIA

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### ABSTRACT

*The efficiency of municipal services in Croatia was measured in 2021 with inputs and outputs determined by methods of Data Envelopment Analysis (DEA). The work quality of Croatian municipal services is going to be shown in detail in this paper. Municipal services are defined as basic services provided to citizens in exchange for the fees and taxes they pay. These services include waste disposal, public and green areas, parking places, cemeteries, sanitation, water management and public transport. While *lex specialis*, the Utility Management Act, governs all important principles in the field of utility services, individual activities can also be regulated by special laws. In addition to other principles regulated by the legal framework, the paper will place special emphasis on the principles of quality of performing utility services, as well as economy and efficiency. The results of this analysis can be used to create future company guidelines for improving its efficiency and change practices in order to raise the quality of workmanship. DEA calculates the amount and type of cost and resource savings that can be achieved by making each inefficient unit as efficient as the most efficient – best practice – units. Identifying specific changes in the inefficient service units using DEA enables the management to implement and achieve potential savings. These changes would enhance the level of performance of efficient units and approach the best practice unit performance. The used DEA method was based on economic indicators to create an efficient municipal services management in the Republic of Croatia. The paper aims at exemplifying efficient municipal services management as well as determining sources of inefficiency for each inefficient municipal service and suggesting measures for potential improvement/rationalization.*

**Keywords:** *Data Envelopment Analysis, municipal services, efficiency*

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## HOW TO SOLVE CONFLICT SITUATIONS BETTER WITH THE MODEL OF THOMAS AND KILMANN

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### ABSTRACT

*Conflict management is essential to modern management, particularly in light of the Covid-19 pandemic and global crises like inflation and war. Conflict arises when the interests of different parties are not aligned, but it can be a catalyst for new perspectives and solutions. While conflicts are natural within organizations, they can hinder productivity and job satisfaction. Constructive conflict management, which emphasizes collaboration and minimizing conflict avoidance, is crucial for enhancing productivity. Thomas and Kilmann propose a model that identifies five conflict-handling modes: competing, collaborating, compromising, avoiding, and accommodating. This model shares similarities with Blake and Mouton's framework, which also outlines five modes for managing conflicts. However, Thomas and Kilmann's model distinguishes itself by incorporating two key dimensions—assertiveness and cooperation - and categorizing conflict-handling styles accordingly. The collaborating style is regarded as the most effective approach. By employing effective conflict management strategies, organizations can navigate conflicts successfully and promote employee productivity and satisfaction. The primary objective of this research is to simulate a conflict situation in which participants are tasked with resolving the conflict. Prior to the simulation, participants, primarily consisting of students, complete a questionnaire. The study then compares the questionnaire results with the actual behaviors and assumptions observed during a specialized decision-making business game.*

**Keywords:** *Conflict management, Conflict handling style, Business decision simulation game*

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## HRCITY SMART CITY SYSTEM AS SUPPORT IN BUSINESS DECISION MAKING FOR WASTE DISPOSAL

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### ABSTRACT

*The future of the world depends on a healthy and green planet. The European Green Plan package is an EU initiative to ensure the EU's green transition. The green plan clearly highlights the link between the circular economy, environmental protection and efficient waste*



*disposal. HRcity, as part of the smart city system, provides support for advanced business decision-making related to waste disposal. This paper presents the architecture of the E-waste module, its functionality and the way of using modern technologies to support all activities. The technologies used in the implementation of the entire ICT system are emphasized. Internal processes are described in detail, with the use of AI, that helps the company management to make quick and high-quality decisions. It also presentation the connection between actors in the process of waste disposal and the data flow between them. The article highlights the benefits that the use of this business model brings to the implementation of the green plan.*

**Keywords:** Business decision, Environmental protection, ICT system, Smart city

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## **ORGANIZATIONAL CITIZENSHIP BEHAVIOR FOR THE ENVIRONMENT - A PILOT STUDY IN PORTUGUESE ORGANIZATIONS**

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### **ABSTRACT**

*Human Resources Management (HRM) acts to respond to market challenges by implementing and supporting strategies that combine the needs of employees and the objectives of companies, in a perspective of a long-term strategic vision, aligned with the principles of sustainability. In this context, this study investigates the organizational citizenship behavior for the environment, in Portuguese organizations. This is a pilot study that aims to validate a questionnaire answered by employees in organizations, about their Organizational Citizenship Behavior for the Environment (OCBE). This survey is an adaptation from the validated and published work from Paille et. al (2014). In this pilot test, the sample is composed by respondents from organizations in Porto district, with activities branches mainly within the E code as defined in the Portuguese Classification of Economic Activities as “collection, treatment and distribution of water, sanitation, waste management and depollution”. Almost all organizations are medium and large sized and have already implemented at least one system of environmental and quality management and sustainability. Two thirds of this sample are female, mainly with higher education studies in the engineering area, with 30-49 years old. The respondents are mostly environmentally aware, and their organizations are well sustainable. The reward systems for employees and managers were the less positive issues among all. The adaptation of this survey to Portuguese has resulted in reliable and valid questionnaires, which can be used to evaluate the environmental performance of organizations and the impact of Human Resources management. The results indicate that, in general, the employees who participated in the study internalize and promote the Organizational Citizenship Behavior for the Environment.*

*The results indicate that, in general, the employees who participated in the study internalize and promote the Organizational Citizenship Behavior for the Environment.*

**Keywords:** *Environment, Human Resource Management, Organizational Citizenship Behavior for the Environment, Sustainability Practices*

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## **THE QUALITY IN HIGHER EDUCATION IN PORTUGAL: IMBALANCE BETWEEN TEACHING AND RESEARCH**

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### **ABSTRACT**

*The major changes experienced in higher education in recent years, due to globalization and internationalization, require a thorough study on models of the evaluation procedures of higher education institutions (HEI's) especially in pedagogical issues and quality management models. An important factor concerns the expectations and perceptions of the various stakeholders involved, especially the student and teachers. In the present study we developed an exploratory study from the point of view of the teachers-researchers. It also aims to get the perception of the students about the quality of teaching in this model. As methodology we developed this exploratory study, using bibliographic research and application of a structured questionnaire, seeking to identify the expectations and perceptions of teachers regarding the impact of the model based on the model of the teacher/researcher on the quality of higher education.*

**Keywords:** *Higher Education, Teaching and Researcher model, Quality of Higher Education*

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# **INSIGHTS ON THE MAIN DRIVERS OF BUSINESS RESILIENCE, ON THE CONTEXT OF GLOBAL CRISIS - A SURVIVAL ANALYSIS MODEL PERSPECTIVE WITHIN EX-COMMUNIST EUROPEAN ECONOMIES**

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## **ABSTRACT**

*The dynamics on the economic environment has suffered significant downwards, especially under the negative impact of the recent COVID 19 pandemic. Even if this period is not yet perceived similar with the global financial crisis from 2008-2009, we raise the concern on the higher risks of firms' bankruptcy. For this purpose, we proceed in this study to analyze main factors that could influence firms to reach high probability of bankruptcy, both firm level and public policy related ones. The analysis is focused along the period 2018-2022, considering mainly financial ratios as input data for estimation of a survival analysis model and designed econometric models. Several tests of robustness are performed to understand countries' and industries' specific, on the equation of firms' business models resilience. The focus on the analysis is directed to the ex-communist European countries. With this study we bring insights on future lessons learn, both within public and firm level decision-making stakeholders, showing how important is the revision of current business models into more resilient ones, with focus not only on earnings management topics, but attention given to sustainability perspectives as well. We emphasize as well that such transition to ESG based business models should be properly supported by public authorities, through various forms of incentives and strength of the institutional framework.*

**Keywords:** *financial distress, financial resilience, COVID 19, sustainability*

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## **THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CRISES IN THE WORLD OF FINANCE AND NEUROECONOMICS**

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### **ABSTRACT**

*The Relationship between Crises in the World of Finance and Neuroeconomics, which has a very important place in terms of the sustainability of economics, is closely related to all actors playing a role in the economy in terms of sustainable growth. In order to deal with the relationship between the Crises in the Financial World and Neuroeconomics, certain topics should be addressed first and the study should be handled holistically after these topics are completed. Because the integrity of the subject is provided by synthesizing and bringing together two economically different concepts and by means of the discipline of economics, psychology and sociology, in terms of cause and effect relationship. The crisis group, which we describe as financial crises today, is one of the most important factors in terms of macroeconomic indicators. The relationship between the Crises in the World of Finance and Neuroeconomics is based on not neglecting the psychological aspects of this recent development. Because in a globalizing world, sustainability includes an economic system that includes sociology and psychology. This situation emerges as an issue that should not hinder Turkey's mostly taking precautions, developing policies and even economic freedom. As a result, the economic structure should be carefully examined, the globalizing world should be kept up, and economic evaluations and measures should be based on these principles.*

**Keywords:** *Financial World, Crises, Neuroeconomics, Türkiye, World*

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## **E-GOVERNMENT, DIGITIZATION AND STATE MODERNIZATION: POLICY DILEMMAS FOR ARAB COUNTRIES IN THE TWENTY- FIRST CENTURY**

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### **ABSTRACT**

*This paper examines the challenges faced by Arab countries in implementing e-government initiatives and highlights how e-government can be a strategic solution to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and promote effective governance. The adoption of e-*

*government varies across the Arab countries, depending on factors such as awareness and budget allocation. While some countries, such as the United Arab Emirates Saudi Arabia, Oman, Bahrain, or Morocco have made significant progress with good quality technical implementation and clear political vision, others may face limitations due to lack of resources, political instability, or weak government vision. It is imperative to acknowledge these differences and tailor e-government initiatives to the specific contexts and needs of each country. Indeed, this success story leads us to conclude the need for robust legislation to ensure that e-government initiatives are conducted transparently, securely, and in compliance with legal principles, rights, and responsibilities. Despite the growing body of literature on this topic, there is still no universally accepted definition or conceptualization of e-government. The paper underlines the importance of comprehensive legislation in the success of e-government projects, focusing on key areas such as data protection and privacy, cybersecurity, electronic transactions, and accessibility.*

**Keywords:** *E-government, Arab countries, Digitization, Democracy, Public service, Public Law, Comparative law, Governance, Political Science, Administration policy, Reform & Modernization, Digital Gap, Data, cybersecurity, Artificial Intelligence*

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## **ON THE WAY TO A NEW MODEL FOR DECISION-MAKING REGARDING CAPACITY EXPANSION IN SMALL AND MEDIUM SIZED FAMILY BUSINESSES: A SYSTEMATIC LITERATURE REVIEW**

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### **ABSTRACT**

*In this article, the authors examine the factors involved in the decision-making process of small and medium-sized family businesses regarding capacity expansion. The study presents the results of a systematic literature review to show which factors influence decision-making in such businesses according to the authors of the selected papers. Additionally, the study investigates whether special factors unique to small and medium-sized family businesses influence any of the decision-making in connection with capacity expansion.*

**Keywords:** *family business, decision-making, capacity expansion, influencing factors, family business*

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## **DARK TOURISM IN INDIA: SIGNIFICANCE AND CHALLENGES**

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### **ABSTRACT**

*Dark tourism, a strand of tourism related to suffering, bloodshed, war zones, cemetery sites, international tragedy, death and moribund places related to history, cultural and heritage tourism. This type of leisure, that one can somewhat relate to morbid curiosity, presents, nevertheless, a huge growth potential, even if it is understood that educating people is needed, in order to avoid the building of a wrong set of perceptions towards these particular sites. Visitors know India for its best touristic sites, like Taj Mahal, Qutub Minar, Rajasthan desert and many other beautiful sites, which many tourists across the globe aim to visit. However, there is little information regarding dark and grief touristic sites, where people who are fascinated by this segment, can visit and enhance their dark experience, consequently allowing adding value to India socio-economic status. The main purpose of this paper is to evaluate the perception of local communities towards dark tourism. Furthermore, as there is a great need of further research with this regard, this research looks to find out ways how India can benefit from dark tourism for its own. For this purpose, authorities and populations should be aware of the importance of promoting this segment, in order to improve the lives of their communities, especially in rural areas of the country.*

**Keywords:** *Dark Tourism, Local Communities Development, Business Growth, India*

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## **EMPIRICAL ANALYSIS OF DIGITALIZATION'S IMPACT ON THE ALBANIAN LABOR MARKET**

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### **ABSTRACT**

*The use of digital technology in the economy to generate goods and services is referred to as job digitalization, also known as Industry 4.0. This is a cutting-edge technology that is only recently becoming popular. The benefits include not only increasing the speed and precision of future services but also dramatically changing the economy's marketplaces, particularly the market for human resources. Albania is a developing country that sought EU membership in June 2014. In this study, we will examine some of the Albanian labor market factors and how they have changed because of digitalization. We'll analyze the challenges, benefits, and drawbacks of new technological breakthroughs. Our results following an empirical analysis using linear regression showed that the use of fourth-generation technology increased employment.*

**Keywords:** *Digitalization, labor market, Industry 4, employment, factors*

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## **THE INFLUENCE OF THE APPLICATION OF MICROBIAL BIOAGENTS ON THE REDUCTION OF MINERAL FERTILIZERS COSTS**

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*Soil fertility plays a crucial role in agricultural production, and maintaining soil fertility is essential for efficient and economically secure agriculture. In soils with insufficient fertility, integrating microbiological agents with conventional agronomy practices offers a promising approach to improve fertility and enhance plant growth. Microorganisms such as beneficial bacteria and fungi can enhance plant growth, seed germination, seedling emergence, stress tolerance, disease resistance, and root growth. The shift towards sustainable agriculture involves reducing mineral fertilizer use and incorporating organic fertilizers and microbial bioagents. The aim of this study was to investigate the economic feasibility of using microbial bioagents in optimal or reduced fertilization for maize, wheat, and Italian ryegrass.*



*Field experiments were conducted to evaluate the effects of microbial bioagents and fertilization on crop yields. The experimental treatments included higher, optimal fertilization (HF) and lower, reduced fertilization (LF), both with and without the addition of microbial bioagents. The results indicated that microbial bioagents increased yields for maize, wheat, and Italian ryegrass compared to the control groups. The achieved results demonstrate the successful utilization of microbial bioagents as a partial substitute for mineral nitrogen fertilizers with savings of mineral fertilizers in amounts of 32-48 kg/ha N in the cultivation of ryegrass, 57-74 in the cultivation of corn and 101-124 kg/ha N in the cultivation of wheat. These three production seasons are a sure proof of the effective replacement of a significant amount of mineral fertilizer with microbial bioagents without reducing the yield and with yearly savings of 21-241 EUR/ha. These findings emphasize the potential of microbial bioagents as a partial substitute for mineral fertilizers in sustainable agriculture, and it is possible to achieve even higher yields.*

**Keywords:** *reduced fertilization, nitrogen, soil fertility, profitability, microbial bioagents*

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## **CURRICULUM CONTRIBUTIONS TO PRIMARY PREVENTION OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE: FROM BASIC EDUCATION TO SECONDARY EDUCATION**

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### **ABSTRACT**

*Violence, such as domestic violence, constitutes dilemmas, contradictions and complexities that characterize the notions of citizenship and human rights in society. It is becoming increasingly difficult to build an inclusive school in a society where inequalities and exclusion persist. It is essential to know how the school can reverse this situation, from primary to secondary education. With regard to prevention, Primary Prevention Programs must focus on education for citizenship in all educational cycles. In this multilevel and intergenerational intervention, knowledge constitutes the possibility for all students to access enabling and empowering knowledge. It is in this sense that the curriculum, based on a disciplinary matrix and the same for all, must be rethought. An inclusive and socializing school must generate possibilities for education for citizenship to be consubstantiated as education for the prevention of violence. In this sense, the possibility of building the curriculum, as proposed by Critical Theory, as a social practice, directed, in this case, to the problem of domestic violence, is of interest. Based on this issue, a research was carried out with the aim of understanding as to what extent the inclusion of the theme of domestic violence in the curriculum practices contributes to primary prevention of domestic violence. The research was carried out in two Grouping Schools (GE), located in the two largest cities in Portugal: Porto and Lisbon, being that one (Porto) is developing, in its Educational Project, a Prevention Project against Domestic Violence, the other institution (Lisbon) doesn't has any specific project on this issue. The study assumed a qualitative nature, using the methodological strategy of case studies.*

*In the two GE, 8 teachers that teach in the last year in each of the 4 educational cycles answered an online questionnaire using the Google Forms tool. Based on the results obtained from data analysis, it is recognized that it is not enough for the issue of domestic violence to be on the agenda of educational policies. It is crucial that the school adopts the theme as a priority in the curriculum and in the educational practices developed in the classroom and in whole school, through specific programs for this purpose, which make it possible to impregnate the culture of the school community for the primary prevention of domestic violence.*

**Keywords:** Curriculum, Domestic violence, Primary prevention, Primary and secondary education

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## **THIRD SECTOR MANAGEMENT DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC - SOME INDICATORS AND SOME REFLECTIONS**

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### **ABSTRACT**

*As of 2019, the COVID-19 Pandemic in Portugal confronted non-profit organizations with unprecedented challenges precedents, leading to the need to adapt to the new pandemic context., The HRM area was strongly affected and forced to make quick, effective, and efficient adjustments to better respond to the new requirements. This work analyzes and identifies the main changes that non-profit organizations had to make in this area, specifically in recruitment and selection practices within a pandemic context. For this purpose, those responsible for managing people in private institutions of social solidarity and equivalent institutions, with a people management structure, are from two municipalities in the northern region of Portugal. We, therefore, used an exploratory study, consisting of applying a survey by questionnaire. The study population consisted of all IPSS and institutions equivalent to IPSS, in the municipalities of Felgueiras and Lousada. The study sample all IPSS and institutions equivalent to IPSS, with a people management structure – of 27 IPSS. This investigation found that third sector institutions do not ignore people management and it's multiple practices. They have probably not yet reached the desired development and maturity, but there is a progressive concern about “scientifically managing the most important assets” – People.*

**Keywords:** COVID 19 Pandemic, Recruitment, Selection, Third Sector

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## **THE INFLUENCE OF GEOPOLITICAL TENSIONS ON THE ECONOMY OF THE DRUZHBA OIL PIPELINE**

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### **ABSTRACT**

*One of the largest oil pipelines in the world, the Druzhba pipeline carries crude oil from Russia to several European nations. Geopolitical tensions between Russia and other nations, which can have significant economic repercussions, frequently affect its efficient operation. The Druzhba pipeline's economic impact is examined in this research study, which focuses on the pipeline's historical context, the present condition, and prospective future developments. This article offers important insights into the interaction between politics and energy economics by analyzing the impact of geopolitical tensions on the Druzhba pipeline's economy.*

**Keywords:** *Geopolitics, Druzhba pipeline, Energy security, International relations, Geopolitical conflicts, Global economy*

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## **THE ROLE OF A LEADER IN SHAPING EMPLOYEE BEHAVIOUR IN VUCA/BANI WORLD**

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*The challenges of the turbulent VUCA/BANI world, faced by modern organisations, have led to a different perception of the role of a leadership. An organisation is often able to overcome difficulties owing to a leader who does not only make strategic decisions but also supports employees. The aim of this article is to identify the role of a leader in shaping employee behaviour in companies in the VUCA/BANI era. The leadership competencies necessary in crisis situations were identified thanks to an analysis of the literature on the subject and then it*

*was examined how they influence the attitudes and behaviour of contemporary employees. The authors of the study also diagnosed the characteristics and behaviours of leaders shaping both positive and negative attitudes as well as approaches of employees. Furthermore, the relationship between a leadership style and employee commitment was identified, and the dominant communication style in the supervisor-subordinate relationship in situations of uncertainty and threat was determined. In addition, the authors identified the actions taken by leaders who prioritise the development of their team. The research is an attempt to answer the following question: what concept of leadership and what leadership opportunities and threats are present in contemporary organisations? The study used a diagnostic survey method. In the first stage of the research, the questionnaire was filled in by employees of enterprises from various industries. The responses were then supplemented with the information gathered during in-depth interviews with managers of the selected organisations and further empirical analyses were conducted. The presented results may contribute to the popularisation of knowledge about leadership in the VUCA/BANI era, enrich the literature on the subject with practical issues concerning the formation of positive employee behaviour as well as contribute to further research on this issue.*

**Keywords:** leader competencies, leadership, organisational behaviour, VUCA and BANI world

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## **TO SERVE OR TO TRANSFORM? WHEN CULTURE INTERVENES**

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### **ABSTRACT**

*This study seeks to investigate how positive employee outcome can be achieved through leadership styles and trust, and how cultural differences can influence these relationships. The sample consisted of 1647 valid responses from employees working in 128 independent hotels in four countries from two culturally different GLOBE-clusters. A survey questionnaire was designed to examine the conceptual framework presented for this study and a multilevel structural equation modelling used to test the relationships. Our results show that there are significant relationships between leaderships styles, trust, and employee outcomes. These findings have significant implications for both academics and hotel industry managers, specifically independent hotels with their limitations in terms of acquiring resources, show differences exist between clusters in relation with different variables.*

**Keywords:** Leaderships Styles, Trust in Leader, OCB, GLOBE, Job Satisfaction, Organisational Commitment

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