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INTERDISCIPLINARY MANAGEMENT RESEARCH CONFERENCE – IMR 2019

The IMR 2019:15th International Conference on Interdisciplinary Management Research aims to bring together academic scientists, research scholars, and practitioners to exchange and share their research results and (business) experiences on all aspects of Management and related fields. It is an interdisciplinary platform for academic scholars, practitioners, and educators to present and discuss the most recent trends and concerns, as well as practical challenges encountered and solutions adopted in the field of Management as well as in the areas such as Economics, Financial Economics, Industrial Organization, Law & Economics, etc. The IMR 2019 particularly welcomes the PhD students in order to provide them an opportunity to present and discuss their research as well as to get a reaction on the work they are doing by fellow PhD students, as well as academic scholars and practitioners. The conference's environment is friendly and relaxed and offers a chance for PhD students to network with academics and practitioners to develop their professional relationships.

This year, the Jubilee 15th Conference was held, which had special significance. The Faculty of Economics in Osijek awarded 36 excellent students by

traveling to the conference based on achieving academic success (average rating) and recommendations of student associations working at the Faculty with the support of the Ministry of Regional Development and EU Funds of the Republic of Croatia.

As part of this conference, an additional program is organized each year in the form of a scientific and expert thematic discussion focusing on current topics in cooperation with the academic and business community and public sector institutions. In 2019, the focus was on the usability of EU funds and of macroeconomic indicators that have improved significantly since Croatia's accession to the European Union.

1st day of the Conference

The Conference began on Thursday (16th May 2019) at 5.00 PM with the presentation of two European Union projects - INTERREG MED MITOMED+ and Intense - INternational Entrepreneurship Skills Europe. The first project was presented by Kristina Brščić and PhD, Tina Šugar, PhD Student (Institute of Agriculture and Tourism Poreč, INTERREG MED MITOMED+, Models of Integrated Tourism

in the MEDiterranean Plus), and the second project was presented by Aleksandar Erceg, PhD, Assistant Professor, Faculty of Economics in Osijek (Intense – INternational Entrepreneurship Skills Europe, Intro to the project). On the same evening of the first day of the conference, the participants enjoyed the networking entitled Wine and Music, where they could enjoy the Pinkert wine selection and finger food by “Dobro”, as well as the music by Dominik Heštera. Coffee breaks were filled with Cocta products – a donation from Atlantic Grupa, as well as Kanaan and Mentos products, in terms of refreshment for the participants on each day of the Conference.

2nd day of the Conference

The second day of the conference started at 10.00 AM with the opening ceremony of the Interdisciplinary Management Research XV. The program was hosted by Frano Ridjan from Croatian Radio and Television. The speakers were distinguished leaders of the doctoral study and conference, the Faculty of Economics, as well as essential statesmen: Željko Turkalj, PhD, Full Professor, President of Programme Committee and Head of Doctoral Programme „Management“, Boris Crnković, PhD, Full Professor, Dean, Faculty of Economics in Osijek, Josip Juraj Strossmayer University of Osijek, Academician Vlasta Piližota, F.C.A., Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts, Gabrijele Žalac, Ministry of Regional Development and EU Funds (former Minister).

As an introduction to the panel discussion, two lectures were held at NAVA hall: Zoran Jašić, PhD, talked about Croatia and the EU: Building Institutions Introduction to the thematic discussion, and Branko Baričević, PhD, as a keynote speaker, introduced the Commission representation office in Croatia – Croatia and the EU 2019 – New Crossroad? Along with them, it was a pleasure to open the conference with the presentation by Branko Baričević, head of the European Commission Representative in Croatia, born in Osijek. After the successful introduction of the first day of the conference, a complimentary word was rounded by academician Vlasta Piližota. Baričević, welcoming her, emphasized she was the first Croatian expert in the bodies of the European Union!

After the welcome speeches and brief thematic introductions, two panel discussions were held.

In the first panel discussion, senior representatives of the domestic public sector participated: **Gabrijele Žalac** (former Minister of Regional Development and EU Funds), **Luka Burilović**, PhD Candidate (President of Croatian Chamber of Economy), **Ljubo Jurčić**, PhD (Croatian Society of Economists), **Vesna Škare Ožbolt** (Ph. D.), **Mladen Vedriš**, PhD (Faculty of Law, University of Zagreb), **Željko Lovrinčević**, PhD (The Institute of Economics Zagreb). The panel was moderated by HRT's **Eliana Čandrlić Glibota**. The coffee break was attributed to Atlantic Grupa as a donor with its Cedevita products. By opening the first panel on Croatia's membership in the EU, former Minister of Regional Development and European Union Funds Gabrijele Žalac pointed out that from the European Structural and Investment Funds for the period 2014-2020, with Croatia available 10.7 billion, to date, worth € 7.2 billion, or 67 percent of the funds allocated, have been contracted to date and EUR 2.3 billion has been paid up to now, i.e., 22 percent of the funds allocated. Former Minister Gabrijele Žalac, as a participant of the first panel, recalled that 80 percent of public investment in our country comes from the European Union, but also stressed that membership has led to higher GDP and higher employment. It is commonly argued whether Croatia is a «net» loser or winner, and Luka Burilović, the president of the Croatian Chamber of Commerce, has stated that a part of the youth will decide to leave Croatia even if there is no Erasmus exchange program.

In the second panel, high-level representatives of the domestic public and private sectors participated in the discussion: **Jurica Pavičić**, PhD (Dean, Faculty of Economics and Business, University of Zagreb), **Alen Host**, PhD (Dean, Faculty of Economics and Business, University of Rijeka), **Gordana Deranja** (Croatian Employers Association/Tehnomont d.d.), **Dragan Kovačević**, PhD (JANAF d.d.), **Josip Budimir**, MSc (Franck d.d.), **Ivan Miloloža**, PhD (Vice Dean, Faculty of Dental Medicine and Health Osijek/Munja d.d.), **Krešimir Bubalo**, BSc Econ, (Pevec d.d.), **Mato Škojo** (Mlinar d.d.), Jako Andabak (Sunce Konzern d.d.), and it was moderated by **Marina Šunjerga** from Večernji list. In the second panel, the main point was led by representatives of the real sector, including **Mato Škojo** of Mlinar and **Krešimir Bubalo** - financial director of Pevec. The fundamental question was whether a part of the public sector employees could be re-

qualified in the real sector. Bubalo, who has experience in both public administration and the real sector, points out that it is almost equally “difficult to find a real man, but it is difficult to dismiss him.”

From 3.00 PM, parallel sessions were held in different halls divided into the thematic areas that were mentioned above. Also, our doctoral students were able to expose their own doctoral dissertation topics (5.00 PM) as well as to conduct workshops with mentors related to the dissertation itself (6.00 PM).

3rd day of the Conference

The third day of the conference (Saturday, 18th May 2019, Liburnia HALL) was scheduled/reserved for presentation of Project INTENSE teaching materials (9.00 AM) as well as presenting the Competences during the INTENSE module (10.00 AM). Also, PhD Workshop was held at 10.00 AM at LEUT B HALL.

It is essential to emphasize the **social part** of the conference, which includes different collaborations every year: the first day of the Conference, successful cooperation from last year's conference with Pinkert Winery and Žito Group (finger food) was repeated. On the second day of the Conference, all participants had the pleasure of attending dinner at the Remisens Admiral hotel, who hosted the Conference.

The Conference has been supported by Ministry of Science and Education of the Republic of Croatia, Ministry of Regional Development and EU Funds of the Republic of Croatia, Ministry of Economy, Entrepreneurship and Crafts, Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs, as well as various donors: ADRIATIC Osiguranje d.d., Association PRO HOMINE Vukovar, Atlantic Grupa, Barjak, Cedevita i Cockta, Dobro (Žito Grupa), Drvo – trgovina d.o.o. Slatina, Glas Slavonije, Housing department Osijek, KANAAN, Lider, Mentos, Pinkert Winery, Večernji list.

The latest edition of the Conference Proceedings, i.e., “Interdisciplinary Management Research XV” (ISSN 1847-0408), encompasses 104 papers written by 257 authors from different countries. The Proceedings sections and the articles were divided into the fourteen thematic areas such as: General Management, Operations Management, Finance Management, Marketing Management, Strategy Management, Human Resources Management, Information Technology Management - Geographic Information System, Microeconomics, Macroeconomics and Monetary Economic, Public Economics, Urban, Rural and Regional Economics, Accounting, Economic Development, Technological Change, and Growth, Health, Education and Welfare and Law & Economics; and it has been divided into two parts (two books). Proceedings were published by Josip Juraj Strossmayer University of Osijek, Faculty of Economics in Osijek, Croatia, Postgraduate doctoral Study Program in Management, Hochschule Pforzheim University, Germany, Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts; for the Publishers: Thomas Cleff, PhD (Dean, Hochschule Pforzheim University, Germany), Boris Crnković, PhD (Dean, Josip Juraj Strossmayer University of Osijek, Faculty of Economics in Osijek, Croatia), with the following editors: Dražen Barković, PhD (Faculty of Economics in Osijek), Boris Crnković, PhD (Faculty of Economics in Osijek), Marijana Zekić Sušac, PhD (Faculty of Economics in Osijek), Karl – Heinz Dernoscheg, PhD (International Business School Styria, Austria), Norbert Pap, PhD (University of Pecs, Hungary), Bodo Runzheimer, PhD (Pforzheim University, Business School, Germany), and Dirk Wentzel, PhD (Hochschule Pforzheim University, Germany). IMR Conferences' proceedings are listed in the following databases: Web of Science, RePEc, EconPapers and Socionet, ECONBIZ, Clarivate Analytics, National and university library in Zagreb, which makes the IMR Conference even more important and exciting to a large number of scientists, entrepreneurs, business people, researchers, and visitors.

