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A CHARACTERIZATION OF PORTUGUESE SME COMPARING EUROPEAN UNION Case Study about Setúbal Region

Jorge José Martins Rodrigues¹,
Maria Teresa Gomes Valente da Costa²,
Henrique Manuel Pimentel Reis³

ABSTRACT

Considering the European Union definition for Small and Medium Enterprises and their importance in EU economy we refer the most relevant matters of this kind of companies in the European development. Next step broaches the importance of Portuguese SME for the domestic economy, referring their social and economic role, as well its weight in Gross Domestic Product and employment.

The main goal of this study is to characterize Setúbal region concerning its small and medium enterprises (SME) comparing its performance indicators with the reference indicators of EU's SME.

The higher education institution where we are lecturing stays in Setúbal. Most of our students come from this region, so we thought it would be interesting to analyse an important stakeholder cluster of our community – the SME.

We work with a significant sample of regional SME trying also to understand if there are activity sectors or companies' characteristics we can refer as relevant for regional development.

Key words: *SME; EU; Economy; Regional Development; Employment.*

JEL: M10; M21; M50.

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SMEs BENEFITS FOR ECONOMY OF REGION

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Jiří Kraft²

Abstract:

The integration processes in the European Union framework are achieved in the context of the worldwide globalization process. Surely, both types of complex processes determine the behaviour of economic subjects; it means the behaviour of small and medium enterprises as well. In accordance with the rate of the total number of enterprises in an economy, as well as other macroeconomic indicators, it is necessary to pay more attention to them.

Successful SMEs functioning is affected by the economic environment, which they operate in, their economic position in the framework of market structures, and their support, which is given to them from the EU and single national government.

On the other hand, benefits of SMEs stand not only for national economy – and for EU economy led in the spirit of the Lisbon Strategy as a whole - , but namely for a single region, which a SME operates in.

The aim of the paper is to point out the SMEs importance for EU economy (for “Europe of regions”), at their position in the EU framework, as well as in the framework of the Czech economy.

The paper presents chosen types of SMEs benefits for the region, and their theoretical fundament; it deals with the model, which illustrates benefits for a region (NUTS V – municipalities, NUTS III – regions) in connection with budget determination of taxes in the Czech Republic. It changed twice in the last 10 years; nevertheless, the situation is not stabilised. It is once more a discussed topic among political representants for 2007; it is a prevision of possible changes of the economic policy of the Czech government with direct impact of the regional policy, and thereby on the economic environment that is relevant for SMEs.

Key words: *Economic position of SME; economic environment for SME; policy of SME development, innovation support programmes; SME benefits for region*

JEL classification: D43, R58, H25

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THE NEED FOR ENTREPRENEURSHIP DEVELOPMENT: THE CASE OF THE CITY OF OSIJEK

Djula Borozan¹

ABSTRACT

There is growing understanding that entrepreneurship is a fruitful strategic development option for local economic development, especially in the rural areas. This strategy being also known as homegrown development refers to a process of supporting and encouraging people to become entrepreneurs in order to enhance the economic prosperity of a community, by: first, creating the environment being favorable for creativity and innovativeness; second, encouraging entrepreneurship as an eligible career option through entrepreneurial education, facilitation and recognition, and third, developing institutional support system to entrepreneurs.

The main aim of this paper is to discuss the economic strength of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in the economic development of the city of Osijek, and to explore the perception of the Osijek's entrepreneurs about the role of institutions in entrepreneurship development. The analysis indicates the SMEs have had a weak economic power. Small and medium-sized enterprises, although numerically overwhelming, employ approximately half of the total employed in the City, operate continuously with financial losses, and are oriented mostly to doing business locally. According to the perception of Osijek's entrepreneurs, the biggest business challenges are caused by problems connected to entrepreneurial environment conditions, i.e. institutional infrastructural conditions, and the least to inappropriate profiles and inefficiency of local work force. Drown from these findings, lessons considering the process of entrepreneurship development in the City of Osijek are discussed as well.

Key words: *entrepreneurship development, the City of Osijek, entrepreneurial framework conditions, institutions*

JEL classification: M13

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NETWORKING OF SMALL AND MEDIUM SIZED ENTERPRISES IN THE COUNTRYSIDE AND LOCAL DEVELOPMENT: The Case of Agricultural Cooperative of Episkopi, Greece

Dr. Electra Pitoska¹

Abstract

In all European Union countries and in particular, South Eastern European countries, the countryside is undergoing significant modification, as a consequence of amendments that are taking place in the frame of CAP (the Common Agricultural Policy) reforms, the European Union's enlargement, globalisation and the need to bring the population's living standards closer to those of urban areas. It is widely acknowledged that, in the last decades, the countryside is being deserted on a continuous basis in search of better working conditions and a higher quality of life. The creation of conditions aimed at attracting people, and especially young people, to remain in rural areas can be supported by increasing the effectiveness of E. U. funds, local regional policy and development. Furthermore, SMEs that operate in these zones can exploit the innovative model of "flexible specialisation" and the networking strategy in order to increase their competitiveness and maintain their potential and as a consequence of this, contribute to the growth of regional economies that are at a point of crisis and restructuring.

Agricultural cooperatives have a determinant role on the Greek agriculture and the rural society and economy. 6.350 Greek agricultural cooperative are regrouped to 118 unions of agricultural cooperatives.

Agricultural cooperative is asked to manage the local agricultural production. Its social and economic role becomes much more important if the local economy is based essentially to the agricultural production managed by the cooperative.

The paper examines the case of Agricultural Cooperative "ASOP EPISKOPIS". This cooperative, created at 1924, has a determinant role in the local community since 90% of the local population is occupied on the agriculture.

The cooperative's examination is focused on its economic and financial results and on its influence on the local economy.

Key words: *Networking, small- medium enterprises, countryside, agriculture cooperatives, regional economies*

JEL Classification System : M,R.

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INFLUENCE OF THE EUROPEAN ENLARGEMENT PROCESS ON ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN POLAND

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Abstract:

Integration processes in Europe as well as globalization trends create new possibilities for enterprises. The accession of ten new Member States in 2004 and additional two in 2007 create new possibilities for enterprises, especially as far as foreign trade is concerned. The paper elaborates on entrepreneurship including internationalizing of exchange sphere of enterprises in Poland, which is mainly realized by foreign trade. The paper discusses the changes in the number of companies in Poland in the years 1993-2006 as well as its dynamics. The authors analyse also on the one hand the number of withdrawn companies as well as the number of new registered companies in the same period. Finally the paper focuses on the foreign trade figures in the context of the enlargement of the European Union.

Key words: *entrepreneurship, economic integration, economic development*

JEL classification: L25, F15, O10

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THE COMPETITION ROLE ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE ROMANIA'S INTERNATIONAL RELATIONSHIPS

Magdalena Platis¹
Alina Hagi²

Abstract:

Under various aspects - geographical position, traditions, culture, religion Romania has always been part of the European arena, but once we joined European Union, the Romanian market has "officially" become a component of the unique European market.

The business market, on national and international level, represents a very complex frame that can be capitalized. The condition is for the economic agents to correctly infer the characteristics of this environment, the risks and its development perspective. Is true that production represents the ground of the whole commercial relation system, but the growth of national production competitiveness means at first, quality, as well as the development of marketing capacity.

Nowadays production methods, the characteristics of commercial politics on national level, the tendencies on business market on a global level are only a few of the meanings imposed by the development of international relations.

Moreover, national companies are in direct competition with those of the EU member states and the growth of their competitiveness is a major vector of the effective integration process.

The environment based on competition suffers continuously structural changes and the economic agents must be aware of the competition discipline that suppose pursuing the balance between the orientation toward customer and toward competition, by promoting a modern management and marketing, while the maximization profit actions do not generate practices against competition.

It is imperative to comply with common "aquis" in the competition area and with the national settlements in domain as well, which implies additional expenses for companies, that will be definitely included in the final price of Romanian products, and which will point more obviously, the competition pressure exerted by common products.

This paper analyzes the complexity of the correlation between competition and international commercial relationship, in the context of the exigency that the external market implies.

Key words: *competitiveness, appropriateness, quality, strategy, success.*

JEL classification: F2.

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DOES INNOVATION MATTER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT? AN EMPIRICAL STUDY OF SMALL AND MEDIUM-SIZED ENTERPRISES IN THE CITY OF KUMBA - CAMEROON

Ngoasong Michael Zisuh¹

Abstract

In recent years, the development priorities of African countries have centred on private sector development to build a strong market economy that gives a more dynamic role to indigenous entrepreneurs and their innovative small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). This paper investigates the potential for indigenous SMEs in Cameroon to successfully emerge as agents of economic development through innovation. The analysis includes the personal characteristics that make up an indigenous entrepreneur as well as the contemporary environments in which SMEs operate. Building on Schumpeter's notion that entrepreneurship contributes to economic development through the interplay of new firm creation, innovation and competition, questionnaires and interviews were conducted with indigenous entrepreneurs of selected SMEs in the city of Kumba, one of the most important concentrations of economic activity in the English-Speaking region of Cameroon. The results reveal that while economic profit is a priority for most entrepreneurs, SMEs exist mainly to alleviate poverty through income generating activities and contribute to economic development by providing employment and income for the poor. The SMEs studied focused on adapting, imitating and modifying existing innovations rather than pursuing genuine Schumpeterian innovation. This suggests that innovation is not a priority for the SME sector and therefore policies aimed at catching up with modern technology should be the central focus in providing assistance for indigenous entrepreneurs and these are suggested in this paper.

Key words: *Indigenous entrepreneurship, innovation, economic development, small and medium-sized enterprises, Cameroon.*

JEL Classification: O31 - Innovation and Invention: Processes and Incentives

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ASPECTS REGARDING SMEs' STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT

Magdalena Vorzsák¹
Monica Maria Coros²

ABSTRACT: The main objective of the present research is to formulate a set of pertinent recommendations regarding the efficient adjustment of the principles and instruments of strategic management to the particularities of the SMEs. Thus, the authors intend to clarify the aspects referring to matters such as: the manner of defining the organizational vision and objectives; the drawing up of the strategic options regarding the needed resources (financial, material, human); the understanding of the clients and also of the market extension; the evaluating of the performances, etc. Another field of interest that is also going to be discussed refers to aspects related to the implementation of the strategic plan and to its control.

The authors' suggestions are described through practical or hypothetical examples that are meant to illustrate the manner how these proposals may be implemented most efficiently in the practice of the SMEs.

Key Words: *strategic management, vision, strategy, principles, practice.*

JEL classification: M19, L19, L29

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MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS FOR TOURISM SMES IN THE CONTEXT OF EUROPEAN INTEGRATION: THE CASE OF BRAȘOV

Nicolae Marinescu¹

Abstract:

This paper examines the economic and managerial impact of Romania's accession to the European Union for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) active in the field of tourism. First, a brief description of the tourism sector in the European Union is given, stressing the fact that this sector is dominated by SMEs. Then, a short comparison is made between EU and Romanian tourism SMEs. Following the main characteristics and tendencies of the tourism sector, a SWOT analysis is developed for Romanian tourism SMEs in the context of European integration. Selected factors of the SWOT analysis are chosen as a starting point for outlining the managerial implications that Romania's integration into the European Union brings about for tourism SMEs. A particular focus is put on the tourism SMEs in Brasov city, one of Romania's most important tourist destinations.

Furthermore, the managerial features of these SMEs are investigated based upon statistical data and own findings by means of empirical research. Finally, some suggestions concerning the improvement of management of tourism SMEs are made, with a special emphasis on the strategic option to be chosen.

Key words: *SMEs, tourism, management, European integration, Brașov*

JEL classification: L8

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AN OVER VIEW OF THE BOOK INDUSTRY IN ROMANIA

Felicia Cornelia Macarie¹

Abstract

The strength and stability of a national economy are guaranteed by the existence of a large number of small and medium enterprises (SME). This contemporary truth is accepted by the majority of economics specialists.

In a recent research "The socio-economic environment from Romania in the perspective of the integration in the European Union" made in the period 22nd February -22nd March 2006 by The Gallup Organization Romania, at the request of the National Union of the Romanian Employers, it can be seen that the main problem that SMEs have to tackle with is the lack of investments which brings as consequences the impossibility of renewing their technology and thus effects in the work productivity and in the costs but also difficulties in complying with the norms and standards of the European Community. The conclusion of the research is that the surveyed people (428 persons from the SME leadership with employees from 0 to 250) are aware of the fact that the SMEs are not ready to cope with the bitter competition of the market after the integration of Romania in the European Union.

The European Commission (EC) initiated a new policy document of the SME published in 11.11.2005 named "The Implementation of the Common Program Lisbon, Modern Politics for the Development and Employment of the Work Force" (2005)551 final, which has the role of integrating the company's existing policy instruments, that is the European Book of the Small Enterprises and the Action Plan for the Contractors, and of assuring the transparency of the European policies regarding the SMEs and the synergy with the other policies of the Community [www.mimmc.ro].

The book industry from Romania has to cope with two major issues nowadays: the assimilation of the integration shock felt by the Romanian economy and the solving of a crucial problem that all the book industry is confronted with nowadays, namely the dramatic drop of customers. The predictable effect will be the rise of the average price of books, which will result in a decrease of the book demand.

Key words: *book industry, SME, Think small first, SME observatory, book market*

JEL classification:L26

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ROLE OF PAKISTANI WOMEN IN SME COMPARE WITH DEVELOPED COUNTRIES. A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

F.M.Shaikh¹

Abstract: This research investigates the performance of western women in Small and Medium enterprises business compare with Pakistani women. The western women are playing a very important role in economic development through SMEs in comparison with the South Asia and specially in Pakistan where women is not free to develop their own business but only few visible cases has been studies and it was observed that despite of many obstacles our women is playing a vital role in developing countries in SME and their impact on economic development. The research reveals that women Play s significant role in the developed of business through SMEs. Using simple random technique collected the data and randomly selected 90 women from all over Pakistan who's involve in small and medium enterprises business in Pakistan. The result findings of the research is that Women is facing lot more difficulties in running independent businesses specially a rural women who is not easy to own the business opportunities in Pakistan. It was revealed that differences exist when comparing men and women entrepreneurs as separate groups in Western comparison to Pakistan When comparing men and women in the same business sector, however, differences diminish; a man and a woman in the same business are more alike than women working in different lines of business. Men who account for 75% of the total number of self employed in the EU countries dominate self-employment. When it comes to family workers, the situation is the opposite, with women accounting for 70% of the total. Although it is difficult to distinguish any consistent pattern in the development of gender shares in self-employment, women have clearly increased their share between 1999 and 2005-06 in the tertiary sector in western countries but in Pakistan the share is bit increase from 1999-2006, slow over rate. The gender distribution of new enterprises or new registrations varies between countries. However, accounting for different statistical sources, they seem to pivot round a 70%: 30% male to female ratio in Western countries and 02% women and 98% man ratio in SME business in Pakistan. Enterprises started by women seem to have a lower survival rate in Pakistan compare to high survival rate in Western women. However, this is not necessarily a gender issue but rather a reflection of choice of sector. In most countries the area where women reportedly encounter difficulties is that of capital and finance. Studies have found that women often wish to borrow smaller amounts than men, and are denied loans due to this, rather than to the fact that they are women. In Pakistan women's are not even thinking of those job, which leave them out of the home. The results showed that Pakistani' SME using only small portion in the export of the SMEs products where as other developed countries like Malaysia, USA, U.K, Germany, Japan they develop their economy through SMEs and there was significant contribution of women.

Key words: SMEs, Performance, Development, Comparative analysis, Western, SMEs, Asia, Pakistan.

JEL classification: O10, O20, M10

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THE ANALYSIS OF ROMANIAN MICRO-ENTITIES: FROM ONE-MAN BUSINESSES TO DRUM-BEATS ENTITIES

Lucian Hancu¹

Abstract: The rapid evolution of the Internet in the recent years has become a huge opportunity for businesses around the world, especially for the small ones, who do not have the strength and experience of the multinational corporations. The availability of a large amount of online information on the existing and acting entities is a fundamental step to the creation of more complex online services which are based on the raw material. In this article, we present a five-year analysis we have performed on the Romanian Micro entities, based on their available financial statements. We have conducted our analysis on the last five financial years to investigate the source of their growth or fall and also their potential in the coming post integration years.

Keywords: *financial statements mining, micro-entities, taxation impact*

JEL Classification: C81

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THE IMPACT OF INFLATION EXPECTATIONS ON TRANSYLVANIAN SMES' ACTIVITY

Valentin Toader¹
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Abstract Due to its negative effects on economy, across the time, the inflation process always represented a problem of actuality, in the economic debates. Among all of the inflation's social costs, the effects on the companies' activity will represent the main aspect of our research: the rise of production costs and the reduction of real incomes.

The economic experience showed us that the inflation level depends in a great measure on the economic agents' expectations about the evolution of inflation in the future. Because inflation's evolution influences their activity's results, the economic agents pay more attention on the inflation's evolution and try to anticipate its future evolution in order to avoid possible losses. Consequently, in this paper we will emphasize the inflation expectation influence on the Transylvanian small and medium sized companies' activity. We will study the impact of the inflation expectations on the wages paid to the employees, on the production costs and on the products' prices.

The information necessary for this research will be collected using a questionnaire. The survey will be applied on a group of companies, randomly selected. In order to draw up our conclusions, the gathered data will be processed using statistical methods and procedures.

Key words: *inflation, inflation expectations, wage, cost, price*

JEL classification: E31, E37

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NEW WAYS OF FINANCING SMEs AFTER ROMANIA'S INTEGRATION IN THE EU

Cristina Curutiu¹

ABSTRACT: SMEs represent the overwhelming majority from the total number of enterprises in the developed countries, and in Romania the situation presents itself in a similar way. SMEs are also considered to be the ground stone of the market's solid economies.

The paper is structured in three parts. In the first one, the SMEs evolution in the EU will be briefly observed, concentrating on the hotel sector. The second part will cover the issue of the Romanian situation regarding the existent SMEs but also the particularities of these enterprises (especially those from the hotel sector). Finally, some new financing programs available for the SMEs will be presented, programs which became closer to the European ones, after Romania's integration in the EU.

Key Words: *SMEs, financing programs, tourist sector.*

JEL classification: F36

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THE EMPLOYMENT SITUATION IN SME IN THE ROMANIAN TEXTILE AND CLOTHING INDUSTRY

Marius Bota¹
Carmen Gut²

Abstract

It is well-known that the development of a country, the improvement of man's material and moral well-being, in one word his freedom and happiness depends on work.

This problem is more urgent for the Romania, because of the fact that the adherence to EU structures supposes to create an efficient framework of approach the problems of the labour market, according to the predictable evolutions of the national and European economic area.

In present, a very important issue is the employment problem in manufacture industry, especially in textile and clothing industry. This sector is very important for our country because it contributes almost with 20% from the Romanian total export and absorbs 1/5 from the total employment in Romanian industry.

Keeping in mind the above-mentioned facts, the present paper aims to analyze the matter of Romania's employment in textile and clothing industry for the time span of 1991-2005, attempting to observe the dimensions and evolutions of the problems our country faces under these aspects. The paper is structured as it follows:

In the first part, we are going to analyze the changes that have appeared in Romania's employed population structure throughout the country's transition period towards the market economy.

The second part covers the matter of employment in textile and clothing industry, analyzing the main causes that have lead to the decrease of the employment in that sector. In the same time, we are going to analyze the structure of employment both in textile and clothing sector by size of enterprises and time periods.

At the end of the paper, we are going to analyze the perspectives of the employment in these sectors in the context of the European Integration.

Key words: *employment, textile and clothing industry, labour force.*

JEL classification: J21, L67, M12.

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THE DISTRIBUTION OF GOODS – AN OPPORTUNITY FOR SMALL AND MEDIUM ENTERPRISES

Dr. Ioan Pop¹

Abstract

The distribution of goods will have a strategic significance in obtaining a competitive advantage by firms in the competition on the global market. In order to respond to these challenges, the management of manufacturing firms must choose the distribution channel which is not only cost efficient but which best satisfies the needs of the end consumer.

In the case of beverage manufacturers, the most suitable solution is to externalize this activity to specialized firms.

Key words: *manufacturer, distributor, distribution channel, economic opportunity*

JEL classification L81

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