
Preface

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Biographical notes: Ruth Rios-Morales is the Director of the Department of Research at the Swiss School of Economics. She is also the Country Director for Switzerland of the EuroMed Research Business Institute and Research Associate at the Institute of International Integration Studies, Trinity College Dublin. She holds a BSc in Economics, MSc in International Economics and PhD in Politics of International Business from the University of Ulster, UK. She taught international business at the School of Business Studies, Trinity College Dublin. She has also taught international business and finance in Universidad de Zaragoza, Spain. She has conducted advanced research in international business and finance, and her research has been acknowledged by UNCTAD and the World Bank.

Stefano Bresciani received his PhD in Business Administration in 2003 and worked as a Research Scholar in the ESCP-EAP, London. He is currently a researcher in Business Management at the Department of Management, University of Torino, where he teaches Business Management and Innovation Management. He undertakes research integrated with the Department of Management of the Faculty of Economics of the University of Torino, and his main areas of research include business, innovation and strategic management. He is also the Country Director for Italy of the EuroMed Research Business Institute (EMRBI) and Chairman of the EMRBI Research Group on Multinational Enterprises and Corporate Governance.

International business and entrepreneurship development share a common interest in the study of firms that need to perform in an environment highly characterised by unprecedented integration, rapid market change and high competitiveness. The ability to identify new international markets, recognise and exploit untaken opportunities and keep ahead of competition through innovation are the means to firms' success. The topics of international business and entrepreneurship development have impelled much interest

among policy makers, market players and academics, as these seem central to economic development and growth. The large and growing body of academic literature developed in recent years echoes the significance of these subjects and the prominence that these topics are occupying in economic and business research. This special issue of the *Journal of International Business and Entrepreneurship Development* consists of a selection of three papers. The purpose of this special issue is to contribute towards the knowledge and understanding of some of the recent developments and changes taken place in the global business scenario.

The issue is opened by the paper entitled 'Entrepreneurial orientation and export performance: the mediating effect of organisational resources and dynamic capabilities' written by Monteiro, Soares and Rua; the paper analyses the relationships among entrepreneurial orientation, organisational resources, dynamic capabilities, and export performance. This study proposes that entrepreneurial orientation enhances the attraction of organisational resources, such as financial, informational and relational resources. The authors of this study empirically test a model with data collected from 265 managers of exporting companies in Portugal. The results of this study validate ten out of 11 direct relationships of the model and confirm the mediating effect of organisational resources and dynamic capabilities on export performance.

The next paper, entitled 'Emerging-economy firms' FDI motivations: the case of Indian pharmaceutical MNEs in Ireland' developed by Verma and Brennan, explains the phenomenon of emerging-economy firms investing abroad, particularly in the developed world. The authors of this paper highlight that foreign direct investment outflows from emerging economies into developed countries has become one of the most important features of the present global scenario. This study focuses on Indian investment into Ireland considering the assessment of the motivations of new entrants, ownership advantages, aspects related to elements of difference, and considerations of resources and capabilities. Likewise, the challenges and opportunities for the Irish economy stemming from Indian investment are addressed.

The final paper is entitled 'The requirements of different user groups on an online accounting platform'. This study has been developed by Venieris, Cohen, Vlismas, Naoum and Karatzimas and aims at recording how potential users evaluate the usefulness of a web-based accounting platform that operates as both an educational accounting platform and a job-seeking environment. The study examines the possible characteristics of such a platform and explores differences in the perceptions of four target groups: students, academics, accountants and persons interested in vocational training. The results of this study confirm that there is an actual need for such an online accounting platform in the Greek market. The authors suggest that this platform should possess the relevant characteristics found in existing literature as they are all considered to be useful at a level that is above average. This study also points out that different user groups seem to prioritise in a different way the elements included in such a tool, indicating that the groups interested in e-learning in accounting are not unanimous about their needs.

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