

## Interactive Ideas

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### Abstract

*This issue presents a successful project entitled “Strategic directions for added value growth in Romanian SMEs in the knowledge management based context” coordinated by full professor PhD Ovidiu Nicolescu from Bucharest Academy of Economic Studies. We have included an important international event that took place in October: “Innovations pour assurer la qualité de la formation dans les conditions d’intégration européenne” organized by l’Agence universitaire de la Francophonie, a presentation of one of the most important international conference “International Business Information Management Association (IBIMA)”, and a national event that will take place in our university: National Olympiad of Students in Economics. The editorial event presents a review of a book “Foreign direct investments between theory and economic practice. Comparative analysis” written by lecturer PhD Viorela Iacovoiu.*

**Key words:** *project, international conference, editorial event*

### Successful Project

#### Project identification

**Project name:** Strategic directions for added value growth in Romanian SMEs in the knowledge management based context

**Project type:** Idei - CNCSIS

**Period:** 2009-2011

**Project manager:** Full Professor PhD Ovidiu Nicolescu, Bucharest Academy of Economic Studies

#### Project description

Mankind is rapidly heading towards a new type of economy, organization and management – generically called the economy of knowledge, a company also learning the management of knowledge (O. Nicolescu and L. Nicolescu, *The economy, the company and the management based on knowledge*, Ed. Economica, Bucharest, 2005, Daniele Archibugi, B.A. Lundwal, *The Globalizing Learning Economy*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2001). Its set up is a priority in the European Union, reflected in the adoption and implementation of the Lisbon Strategy in 2000. The report of the team led by the English professor R. Sapir (*An Agenda for Growing*

*Europe – Making the New System Deliver*, Report of an Independent High Level Study Group, Bruxelles, 2003), realized by request of the European Union Commission, stressed the stage of process of putting the Lisbon strategy into practice and proposed substantial perfections of the acceleration of processes and of amplifying the performances. In Romania a study was conducted, which revealed that at 10 out of 20 indicators taken into account, we are on the last place among the European and the candidate countries (D. Daianu, Bianca Panco, D. Paslaru, Geanina Turlea, L. Voinea, *Romania – an evaluation of fulfilling the Lisbon agenda*, in the Romanian Economy Society, Bucharest, 2004). The economy of knowledge needs a new type of management and – in the first place – new strategies, based on a scientific conceptual device. The strategies specific to the management of knowledge are based on – as Smith Zack (*Developing Knowing Strategy*, in *California Management Review*, vol.41, nr.3, 1999) shows – two new elements, which are not found, usually, in classical strategies: knowledge becomes the most important strategic resource of the organization, and learning represents the most important ability of any system. Professors M. Nohia and T. Tierney (*What is Your Strategy for Managing Knowledge*, in *Harvard Business Review*, nr.2, 1999) from Harvard Business School recommend two types of strategies – codification, personalization – in addition to the ones based on vision, based on professional or on emergent studies, which are capable of producing solutions with a competitive advantage at national and international level. Towards Enterprise Europe (Towards Enterprise Europe working program for company policy 2000-2005. COM (2000) 771) presented his strategy for the period 2000-2005 in the light of the conclusions of the Lisbon conference. Adopting the *European Charter for small enterprises* (adopted by the Council for General Issues, on 13 July 2000 and welcome by the Feira European Council, 19/20 June 2000) strengthened and developed the policy of the Commission of thinking first on a small scale. The role of small and medium size companies was underlined as a moving force for the European economy. The degree to which one can meet the necessities of small and medium size companies will represent a measure of the success of the new enterprise policy. The decision of creating a Group for the Policy of Enterprises (the Decision of the Commission on 8 November 2000 founded the Group for the Enterprise Policy (notified through document number C(2000)3089), (2000/690/EC), OJ L285, 10.11.2000, page 24), which can ensure for the Commission high level consultancy both on the part of Member States and from the ones with first class experience in enterprise problems, trying at the same time to increase transparency. Founding this group, at the beginning of 2001 will help the voice of small and medium size companies to be heard, and the real needs of the business to be addressed to the real policy of development and coordination of enterprises. Adopting a new Multi-year Program regarding enterprises and entrepreneurialism (Multi-year Program for Enterprises and Entrepreneurialism, and in particular for small and medium size companies 2001-2005 (2000/819/CE), OJ L 333, 29.12.2000, page 84) ensures the means to support work related to the enterprise policy, in the period up to 2005.

The European Parliament allotted a substantial increase of resources in support of this activity, especially for financial instruments in favor of small and medium size companies which will be administered by the European Investment Fund (317 million Euros).

During 2001, the World Bank launched the idea of doing work related to the strategy of the economy based on knowledge for Romania, which should be presented at the Forum of the economy of Knowledge for the countries in the course of joining the EU, held in Paris in February 2002. The initiative of the World Bank put together in an Integrated Work Group the representatives of the Romanian Government, of the civil society, of the academic community as well as of donors.

This represents the first coherent step of becoming aware of the emergence of the New Economy in Romania and has led to the creation of the first adequate project of implementation.

More importantly, the National Plan for Technology and Innovation Development includes new programs, classified in three categories, one of these 43 being the creation of an economy based

on knowledge. The same program announces a new orientation of policies in Romania: the sector orientation of programs and stimuli, having as main target the high-tech sector, in line of the EU political orientation. Also, a number of other political works have been prepared for supporting Romania's position regarding the emergence of the New Economy.

In the case of Romania, the situation of informational underdevelopment at the end of the last decade (Draganescu, 1999) legitimizes the option for fulfilling the objectives of the informational society in the manner of an evolution of the 'leap' type, which can lead directly to the manifestation of the characteristics of the society of knowledge (Draganescu, 2001). The Delphi investigation, done in 2001, in the priority project Informational society – the society of knowledge of the Romanian Academy, showed that a delay of actions strategically oriented in this direction would attract the major risk of situating our country outside the international trends (Filip and Dragomirescu, 2001).

Since innovation and learning become endogenous factors of economic growth (Carlsson and Eliasson, 2003), the intellectual-intensive processes and products continuously increase their importance in developed economies (McKeon and Weir, 2001), and the performances of organizations depend, to a decisive extent, on the way of using their intangible actives (Lang, 2001).

Regarding this last aspect, the Romanian context now is characterized by neutralizing intangible actives as strategic economic actives, due to the inertia of some organizational perceptions and practices in the industrial society, the still fragile regime of intellectual property and of the incipient maturity stage of the mentalities belonging to the society of knowledge.

Stimulating the emergence of the economy based on knowledge in our country is the main means for ensuring an adjustment of the way in which the national economy will compete on global markets, since world prices of classical industrial and agricultural products will continue to fall. This implies the need to adopt a new dynamic balance between the international competition based on costs (reduced salaries, economic stimuli, products and services of reduced added value, based on existent natural resources) and the one based on knowledge (high qualification of the workforce, research-innovation, projection, products and services with high added value).

Emergency of the analysis based on knowledge in Romania, takes to 4 major interests:

1. knowledge of production (searching-innovation);
2. knowledge of discrimination (development and technology information and);
3. human factor (producer and consumer of knowledge);
4. economy based on knowledge (legal, institutional and macro economical framework).

Evaluating the current situation and the development takes us to identifications of some major blocks, grouped in 4 pillars of fundamental remembers. From the functional point of view are:

- aggregate blocks (information);
- dissemination blocks (political, macroeconomical and in parallel with the grow the poorness and the grow of qualification of the human factor).

In SMEs domain is necessary an approach from a point of view orientated to knowledge and it is a big for his character in society.

This implicated strategies and approaches based on knowledge to add value at high innovating level aspects from SMEs. Because we don't have statistic dates we can't evaluate the innovating process of Romania. Innovation in Romania is an expression of the process of recuperating the technology or modification of organization nature. It is very possible that innovation is in the present the canal of investments.

Romania has one of the most reduced levels on the resources allocated for region searching and despite of political decision his PIB ponder is very low. An example of calculation a Innovation Scoreboard for Romania, it shows that we have a high point in education of the work force and a low point in efficient the finance resource.

Like we saw in SMEs management and knowledge management it is in a large way in many books important in Europe because it concerned Europe very much. This problem was intense analyzed in many scientifically book international (Drucker P., *The new society of organizations*. Harvard Business Review, 1992, Gordon R.J., *Does the 'New Economy' measure up to the great inventions of the past?*, NBER, Working Paper 7833, Cambridge, 2000, Hedlund G., *A model of knowledge management and the N-form corporation*. Strategic Management Journal, 1994, Stewart Th.A., *Intellectual Capital. The New Wealth of Organizations*, Nicholas Brealey Publishing, London, 1998, Duchene G., Rusin P., Turlea G., (2002, *Entrepreneurship and Institutions in Transition*, ACE Discussion Papers) that very interest in didactic activity and searching activity.

In Romanian literature was some preoccupation for SMEs management (Ovidiu Nicolescu, *Managementul IMM-urilor*, Editura Economica, Bucharest, 2002, *Managementul, societatea si firma bazate pe cunostinte*, Editura Economica, Bucharest, 2005, Mihai Draganescu, *Societatea Informationala si a Cunoasterii. Vectorii Societatii Cunoasterii*, Academia Romana, Bucharest, 9 July 2001, *Societatea informationala-Societatea cunoasterii. Concepte, solutii si strategii pentru Romania*, Academia Romana, Mihai Draganescu, *Economia Natională si Societatea Informatională*, Academia Romană, Studiu pentru Grupul de reflectie Evaluarea Stării Economiei Nationale (ESEN I), November 1999, Dragomirescu H., *Organizatii bazate pe cunoastere, Studiu tematic elaborat in cadrul proiectului prioritar Societatea informationala – societatea cunoasterii* al Academiei Romane, Bucharest, 2001, Sabau G., *Societatea cunoasterii, o perspectiva romaneasca*, Editura Economica, Bucharest, 2001)

In conclusion knowledge management in SMEs sector represents in actual process of Romania the economical reform.

This project wants to elaborate alternative strategy for SMEs sector from Romania for the necessity after the integration in UE and for a society based on knowledge .

The fundamental objective of the Strategic directions for added value growth in Romanian SMEs in the knowledge management based context project is to realize the first native managerial tool for Romanian SMES, a organizational change models for knowledge based management, considering world and especially European Union trends, for the first time in a rigorous and complex approach. Through this type of project is targeted the knowledge development, both fundamental and advanced research for solving complex issues, which require an interdisciplinary approach, which made it eligible for the programme. The general objectives of *Strategic directions for added value growth in Romanian SMEs in the knowledge management based context* are:

Objective	Knowledge stage
1. Assesement of transformations in SMES management in the knowledge based management transition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Nicolescu, O., Nicolescu, L., <i>Economia, firma și managementul bazate pe cunostințe</i>, Editura Economică, București, 2005, Archibugi, D., Lundwal, B.A., <i>The Globalizing Learning Economy</i>, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2001)</li> <li>○ Saphir, R. (<i>An Agenda for Growing Europe – Making the New System Deliver</i>, Report of an Independent High Level Stuy Group, Bruxelles, 2003)</li> <li>○ Daianu, D., Panco, B., Pâslaru, D, Turlea, G, Voinea, L. <i>Romania – o evaluare a îndeplinirii Agendei Lisabona, din cadrul Societății Române de Economie</i>, Bucharest, 2004).</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Smith, Z. (Developing Knowing Strategy, in California Management Review, vol.41, nr.3, 1999)</li> <li>○ Nohia, M., Tierney, T. (What is Your Strategy for Managing Knowledge, in Harvard Business Review, nr.2, 1999)</li> <li>○ Towards Enterprise Europe (program de lucru pentru politica de intreprindere 2000-2005. COM (2000) 771)</li> <li>○ Drăgănescu, M., Perspectivele societății cunoașterii în România, societatea informațională și a cunoașterii. Vectorii societății cunoașterii, study for SI-SC project (Societatea Informațională - Societatea Cunoașterii) of Romanian Academy, Bucharest</li> <li>○ Filip, F. Gh., Societatea informațională-Societatea cunoașterii. Concepte, soluții și strategii pentru România, Academia Română, 2002,</li> <li>○ Nica, D., Guvern, Cetățean, Societate informațională, Editura SEMNE, 2001, Banciu, D., Cartea Electronică, Editura AGER, Bucharest, 2001</li> </ul>
2. Romanian companies knowledge based management implementation diagnosis	Although there are several papers regarding Romanian SMEs sector, there are not, both national and international, regarding a co-relative approach with knowledge based management.
3. Establishment of know-how and good practices regarding knowledge based management identified in SMES from European Union, able to be transferred in health units in Romania	Champy J (Reengineering the Corporation, Edition Dunod, Paris, 1998), Buckingham M, Manager contra curentului, Ed. Alfa, Bucharest, 2004, Hammer M, Reengineeringul companiei, Ed. Teora, Bucharest, 1997, Coates Ch, Managerul total, Editura Teora, Bucharest, 1997, Harison B. (How to Fail at Reengineering, in Directors & Boards) Verboncu I, (Management si performante, Ed. Universitara, 2005), Dan V, Isaic Maniu R, Mitran D, Stan E (Strategii si structuri industriale competitive, Ed. All Educational, Bucuresti, 1997), Dumitrescu M, (Managementul performantei, Ed. Fundatia de Maine, Bucharest, 1999)
4. Organisational change models elaboration for Romanian SMES in knowledge based management context.	Although there are many papers and works regarding model elaboration in many areas, our project is the first to propose change models for the Romanian SMEs in the knowledge based management context.
5. Organisational change models operationalization and dissemination	There are any.

The impact of the project *Strategic directions for added value growth in Romanian SMEs in the knowledge management based context* is direct, through activities implemented and results obtained and indirect by applying these in different sectors: economic, social, technical, scientific.

*Impact to the environment:*

- the results of the project will give for the first time an global image of the knowledge management in Romanian SMES sector;
- there will be an evaluation of the managerial factors which influence the competitiveness of the Romanian SMES;

- it will contribute to an favorable environment or to development of the know how management, by transferring good practices models identified in EU, and utilizing the organizational change models and the implementation guide of the model.

*Economic impact:* increase the potential of the SMEs sector ; Romanian SMES will benefit directly from the research outputs, SMES will be able to elaborate and implement change and development strategies focused on knowledge ; they can adopt measures to guide actions in those directions with an higher vulnerability at risk ; they will be efficient in using the investment funds through an realistic planning of the investment by ranking those fields with strong points and weak points of the implementation of the know how management ; it will increase the level of the revenue to the state budget following the incensement of the economical and financial performance of the SMEs .

*Social impact:* it will create a know how base for interdisciplinary education and training in knowledge based management, change management and entrepreneurial management; amplifying the know how transfer by using the EU know how management model in Romania, and by disseminating the best practices in different fields identified by the specialists from the project and disseminated in articles, studies, workshops, international conferences, study visits; it will create new opportunities for learning by consolidating the Romanian scientific research school system and focusing on know how management; it will increase the efficacy of the social partners by utilizing the model, the guide, know how etc - resulted from the project.

The impact of the *Strategic directions for added value growth in Romanian SMEs in the knowledge management based context* project is both direct, by the achieved activities and the results in which they have materialized and indirect by their use in economic, social, technical and scientific field. As a synthesis, the project impact can be emphasized in the following way:

- Contributes to the achievement in Romania of a *favorable environment* in its overall or to the following the valuable know-how transfer identified in EU, to the use of organizational change models and of the strategy type implementation for the development of the knowledge based management, resulted from the project. It will also accelerate the development of the knowledge based management, at the same time with its accomplishment at high level from the point of view of functionality and performances.
- Amplify the *know-how transfer* targeting the knowledge based management, from EU to Romania, based on dissemination of the best practices in the field of knowledge based management, organization and management, identified by project specialists and disseminated through articles, studies, regional seminars and national conference.
- Many SMEs will take advantage of the research results, directly, being able to elaborate and implement *development strategies based on knowledge* for their organizations. Consequently, the potential of SMES will increase.
- Creates new opportunities for learning, by *creating a Romanian school of scientific research* and for training, focused on knowledge based management, including here the master that will be designed, accelerating the training of specialists in this field at EU level

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## International Events

### Conférence internationale “Innovations pour assurer la qualité de la formation dans les conditions d’intégration européenne”

Université d’Etat d’économie et de finances de Saint-Pétersbourg en collaboration avec le Bureau Europe centrale et orientale de l’Agence universitaire de la Francophonie(AUF) et sous le patronage de la Conférence des recteurs des universités membres de l’AUF en Europe centrale et orientale (CONFRECO) ont organisé, du 8 au 10 octobre 2009 la Conférence internationale « Innovations pour assurer la qualité de la formation dans les conditions d’intégration européenne ».



Cette conférence a eu comme objectif de synthétiser l’expérience et les bonnes pratiques d’universités des pays européens dans le domaine de l’innovation pour assurer et garantir la qualité de la formation dans le cadre de la réalisation du processus de Bologne.

L’ouverture de la Conférence a été marquée par les allocutions du Président de l’Université hôte, de la Présidente du Comité pour la science et l’école supérieure du Gouvernement de Saint-Pétersbourg, par le message du

Recteur de l’AUF (délivré par la Directrice régionale) et par le message de la Présidente du Comité de Pilotage (délivré par une des vice-présidentes). L’allocution du Directeur de l’Institut Français de Saint-Pétersbourg au nom du Consulat français, a clôturé la cérémonie d’ouverture.

La partie scientifique a comporté une plénière et trois « Sections ».

En ouverture de la plénière, la Directrice régionale a fait un bref rappel sur les appuis de l’Agence à la gouvernance universitaire et sur le programme d’activités de la CONFRECO.

Les exposés successifs ont porté sur les stratégies et méthodes assurant la qualité de la formation développées dans différents pays (Russie, Roumanie, Espagne, Ukraine, France, Finlande, Suède, Canada). Les expériences ont été, dans leur majeure partie, rapportées par des responsables d’institutions publiques et privées en charge de l’assurance de la qualité mais aussi par des responsables du domaine dans leurs universités.

Dans les sections, ce sont surtout des responsables universitaires qui ont rapporté les expériences développées par leurs institutions sur les thèmes :

- Qualité de la formation : expertise externe, modèles de gestion et innovations dans les établissements de l’enseignement supérieur;
- Approches innovatrices pour assurer la qualité de l’enseignement des langues étrangères et des relations interculturelles;
- Programmes internationaux de formation en vue d’une meilleure compétitivité des étudiants sur le marché du travail. Interaction novatrice des universités et des milieux des affaires en économie.

Les exposés en sections ont été suivis de débats et donné lieu à des propositions de projets en partenariats, notamment dans les Sections 2 et 3.

A l'issue de la journée du 9 octobre, les membres du Comité de Pilotage de la CONFRECO et les trois experts invités ont tenu une réunion en vue d'identifier les projets éventuels faisant suite à ce colloque.

Les propositions suivantes ont été avancées :

1. Claude Mailhot, responsable de l'évaluation des programmes de l'Université de Montréal, a informé que son institution serait disposée à accueillir pour une mission de prospection sur l'évaluation des programmes, la Présidente du Comité de Pilotage et deux autres responsables universitaires de la région en charge de la question.
2. La vice-présidente Elena Gorbashko a informé d'une invitation d'une collègue de l'Université de Bordeaux IV, pour jeter les bases d'un projet de comparaison de la gestion de la qualité en Europe Centrale et Orientale/ Europe Occidentale/ Amérique.
3. Jacqueline Guibal a informé de l'opportunité d'un Master Qualité de l'Université de Aix Marseille pour assurer la « relève » des experts pour la région. Elle a promis de mettre le Bureau régional en contact avec la responsable de cette formation.
4. Balint Kiss, de l'Université des sciences techniques et économiques de Budapest, informe de la disponibilité de son université à accueillir des responsables universitaires de la région pour s'informer des méthodes et outils de mesure de l'insertion professionnelle comme indicateur de la qualité de la formation. Il évoque aussi la possibilité d'associer des universités de la région à leur projet de création d'un observatoire de la qualité et transfert technologique.
5. M. Guennady KLIAGUINE de l'Université nationale technique de Donetsk, a confirmé la motivation de son université pour deux résolutions de la Section 2 : le programme de formation de formateurs des enseignants de français et le séminaire sur la politique linguistique universitaire à l'attention de responsables d'universités.



Il a été décidé que les modalités de mise en œuvre de ces projets seraient précisées dans les meilleurs délais par le Bureau régional, après consultation avec les directions de programmes concernées.

Roxana Țurcanu  
Assistante de direction, Chargée des relations extérieures  
L'Agence universitaire de la Francophonie  
Bureau Europe centrale et orientale

### **What means and what represents IBIMA?**

In the next pages there will be useful information for anyone who is interested in academic research and practice businesses international networks.

**International Business Information Management Association**

IBIMA (International Business Information Management Association) is an academic association dedicated to promote the careful examination and dissemination of IT management solutions in today's business environment and to bridge the gap between research and practice. IBIMA invites research efforts, solutions, papers, and case studies to be published and shared with academics and practitioners worldwide.

Anyone that wants to know more about IBIMA could access the website [www.ibima.org](http://www.ibima.org).

Concern the management of the association you have to meet Dr. Khalid Soliman. Dr. Soliman is the General Chair for the International Business Information Management Association (IBIMA) International Conferences during the period 2003 - 2009. Dr. Khalid S. Soliman is an Educator, Publisher, Consultant, and Trainer. He is Associate Professor of Management Information Systems, New York, USA. Dr. Soliman is the President and CEO of IBIMA Publishing [www.ibimapublishing.com](http://www.ibimapublishing.com) and the Chairman of International Business Information Management Association IBIMA [www.ibima.org](http://www.ibima.org). Dr. Soliman has worked and consulted in the past 20 years for several corporations in the United States and around the world. His research and consulting interest include electronic commerce, electronic services, cycle time reduction, interorganizational information systems, strategic use of information technology to transform organizations and governments, and self improvement and Organizational development.

- Starting with 2003 under IBIMA are organized international conferences at least one per year. Each time the conferences had various and interesting general topics and were organized in different places as it follows:
- The 2003 International Business Information Management Conference, General Theme: e-business and organizations in the 21st Century, which was held in Cairo, Egypt, in period 16 - 18 December 2003;
- The 2004 International Business Information Management Conference, General Theme: Information Technology & Organizations in the 21st Century, in Amman, Jordan, from 4 - 6 July 2004. The conference meeting was held at the Royal Scientific Society in Amman. The conference addressed to a range of important themes with respect to Information Technology and its impact on organizations in the 21st century. The phenomenal growth in communications technologies has lead businesses around the globe to conduct business globally. The 2004 International Business Information Management Conference aims at exploring the role of computers and advancements in communication and information technologies and their impact on organizations in the 21st century. This conference brings together all business functional areas such as logistics and distributions, marketing, sales, accounting, finance, and management to assess the impact of e-business on these areas and to coordinate efforts among different business functions in transforming organizations;
- The 3rd International Business Information Management (IBIMA) Conference, General Theme: E-Business & Organizations in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, was held in Cozumel, Mexico, between 14 - 16 December 2004. The growth of the Internet has lead businesses around the globe to believe in the promise of utilizing the Internet to conduct business. The 3rd IBIMA Conference aims at exploring the role of e-business and its impact on organizations in the 21st century;
- The 2005 International Business Information Management Conference, General Theme: Information Management in Modern Enterprise, was in Lisbon, Portugal, in period 5-7 July 2005. The IBIMA 2005 conference on information management in modern enterprise addressed to a range of important themes with respect to Information Technology and its impact on organizations;
- The 5<sup>th</sup> International Business Information Management (IBIMA) Conference, General Theme: The Internet & Information Technology in Modern Organizations, which had take place in Cairo, Egypt, between 13-15 December 2005;

- The 6<sup>th</sup> International Business Information Management (IBIMA) Conference, General Theme: Managing Information in Digital Economy, which was held in Bonn, Germany, in period 19-21 June 2006;
- The 7<sup>th</sup> International Business Information Management (IBIMA) Conference, General Theme: Internet & Information Systems in the Digital Age, was in Brescia, Italy, between 14-16 December 2006;
- The 8<sup>th</sup> International Business Information Management (IBIMA) Conference, General Theme: Information Management in the Networked Economy, which had take place in Dublin, Ireland, in period 20-22 June 2007;
- The 9<sup>th</sup> International Business Information Management (IBIMA) Conference, General Theme: Information Management in Modern Organizations, was in Marrakesh, Morocco, between 4-6 January 2008. Maybe, in your efforts to participate to any of these conferences, sometimes is better to find out something about the hosting city of the conference. For instance, Marrakech "Red City or Al Hamra," founded the city in 1062 AD, is a city in southwestern Morocco in the foothills of the Atlas Mountains. The famous town square of Marrakech, Jemaa l-Fna, owes little of its fame to its own beauty, but to the continuous day and night life. During most of the days, performers of every kind put up their shows, continuing until the food stalls start to move in. Oukaimden Ski resort (Jabal Oukaïmeden), 3268 metres above sea level, is another famous attraction lies at the southern outskirts of Marrakech. Oukaimden Mountain is an excellent destination for skiers and for those who would like to have a first-hand experience of Moroccan barbers daily life;
- The 10<sup>th</sup> International Business Information Management (IBIMA) Conference, General Theme: Innovation and Knowledge Management in Business Globalization, which was held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, in period 30 June – 2 July 2008. Kuala Lumpur is the capital and the largest city of Malaysia. Kuala Lumpur was founded in 1857 as a tin-mining camp. Today, Kuala Lumpur combines the old with the present in a charming way. This is observed in how the Sultan Abdul Samad building blends with very well with the tallest twin buildings in the world, the Petronas Twin Towers. Still, there is more in Kuala Lumpur to see and enjoy: The old railway station, Masjid Jamek, the headquarters of Telekom Malaysia, and China Town. Come and see for yourself why *Malaysia is truly Asia*;
- The 11<sup>th</sup> International Business Information Management (IBIMA) Conference, General Theme: Innovation and Knowledge Management in Twin Track Economies, which had take place in Cairo, Egypt, between 4-6 January 2009;
- The 12<sup>th</sup> International Business Information Management (IBIMA) Conference, General Theme: Creating Global Economies through Innovation and Knowledge Management, which was held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, in period 29-30 June 2009.

The next IBIMA Conference, the 13th IBIMA conference on Knowledge Management and Innovation in Advancing Economies will be held in Marrakech, Morocco, 9-10 November 2009.

Is also important to know that each conference was included numerous papers and workshop presentations by academics and researchers from around the globe. Here is worthwhile to find out that Romanian people from academia and researchers as well are very present in any IBIMA Conference. Academic staff from University of Petroleum and Gas Ploiesti is participated with papers in the last six IBIMA conferences and every year the number of participants from UPG Ploiesti is increasing, explaining the interest of academic staff in these kinds of events. Each participant has to know that people from around the globe are welcomed to submit presentation full papers, extended abstracts, paper drafts, or invited session proposals. Presentations submitted for publication will be fully refereed and published in electronic formats. For those

unable to attend the conference in person, virtual presentations are available. Virtual presentations allow participants to submit papers for refereeing and publication in the conference proceedings. Virtual participants will receive a full copy of the conference proceedings on a CD. Also, other useful information referring to the publishing policy of IBIMA reveal that IBIMA conference proceedings are indexed by ISI Thomson Index and Full accepted and published papers in IBIMA conference proceedings volume (please note that Conference proceedings will be published as an e-book on a CD with an ISBN) will be fast tracked for consideration for one of 20+ IBIMA Publishing journals (see <http://www.ibimapublishing.com>). Some of the journals are already indexed and cited in international databases.

Anyway, in order to be included in the IBIMA conference proceedings there are four types of submissions:

1. Research papers: complete papers (5000 words max.) with complete references section;
2. Short papers or abstracts;
3. Organized sessions: you can also submit a proposal to organize a session/workshop. A 100-word description of the topic of the session along with your information;
4. Virtual presentation: Those who are unable to attend the conference in person but wish to participate in this major international event, virtual presentation is available. Virtual Presentation allows participants to submit papers for refereeing and publication in the conference proceedings, just like a regular paper. Virtual participants will receive a full copy of the conference proceedings.

On the other hand, besides organizing conferences IBIMA developed in the last couple of years an entire list of journals which are now available to everyone is interested to publish, at <http://www.ibimapublishing.com/>.



There are more 20 journals, each one with a certain topic, as it follows:





Also is important that some of the journals have some current calls for special issues:

- Journal of Enterprise Resources Planning Studies
  - Special Issue: *Creating competitive advantage: The role of information systems in small medium businesses*
- Journal of e-Health Management

- Special Issue: *The evaluation of ICT Application in healthcare organizations and practitioners*
- Journal of Innovation and Business Best Practices
  - Special Issue: *R&D, Innovation and Management: The Road to Organizational Success*
- Journal of Mobile Technologies, Knowledge and Society
  - Special Issue: *Evaluating the Growth of Mobile Technology in Society Today*

You could apply for any of these calls but I recommend you to take a look on: *Journal of Innovation and Best Business Practices (JIBBP)*, <http://www.ibimapublishing.com/journals/JIBBP/jibbp.html>.

### **Call for a Special Issue**

Innovation has become a critical success factor to many organizations that want to stay competitive. Firms undertake R&D for a variety of reasons, to establish new business developments, facilitate related business diversification, and create future options through new knowledge and technology.

Although many companies in this critical period cut important amount related to R&D activities other firms spent a lot of money to maintain operations in the R&D area.

However, R&D and innovation provoke several forces in any company. These forces can range from management support, available resources, and talented workforce to resistance to change. R&D management practice links closely to innovation performance. Many companies uphold by the universities are invested capital and human resources in innovation performance in order to improve the overall performances of these firms. These partnerships and also any other experience in this domain are welcome to be shared with the academic community and business area as well.

Topics to be discussed in this special issue include (but are not limited to) the following:

- overview of R&D and its Role in Industry, Government, and Academia;
- creativity and Innovation in R&D;
- strategies for the Management of R&D People;
- strategies for the Management of R&D Resources;
- strategies for Managing R&D Environments;
- the Future of R&D and the R&D of the Future;
- regulatory issues involved in the Management of R&D;
- management of new product development;
- challenges of technological innovation;
- case studies of projects based on R&D.

### **Manuscript Submission and Review Process**

- Deadline for manuscript submission: December 15, 2009;
- Review and return to authors: February 1, 2010;
- Deadline for revised papers: March 1, 2010;
- Notification of final acceptances: April 1, 2010;
- Deadline for final versions: May 1, 2010;

- Tentative Publication Date: May 30, 2010.

All submissions and inquiries should be directed to the attention of:

Prof. Catalin Popescu  
Editor-in-Chief

Journal of Innovation and Best Business Practices

Email: catalin\_nicolae@yahoo.com

or Submissions may be sent by email to: submit@ibimapublishing.com.

In the email, please indicate the journal name for greater processing efficiency.

Full Profesor Cătălin Popescu  
Deputy Dean of Faculty of Economic Studies  
Petroleum-Gas University of Ploiești

## National Events

### National Olympiad of Students in Economics

From 5 to 7 November 2009, the Faculty of Economic Sciences from Petroleum and Gas University of Ploiesti organizes the National Olympiad of Students in Economics, Economy and Sustainable Development section.

The event will be held under the aegis of AFER (the Association of Romanian Economic Faculties) and it aims to promote and value students' professional and scientific training and the development of scientific research competence in the field.

The programme of the event will be as follows:

- September 25 – October 15, 2009 – registration in the competition;
- 15 – 25 October 2009 – electronic submission of papers;
- 25 – 31 October 2009 – paper acceptance and presentation schedule;
- 5 – 7 November 2009 – competition in progress.

The competition is organized under the following subsections: the complexity of economic systems and crisis management; business economy and communication; international business and economy; economic globalization; regional development.

According to AFER regulations, the eligible candidates for the Olympiad are:

- students who have been selected by Faculties during the local Olympiad. The Faculty is the body to certify students' registration in the National Olympiad, by mentioning the title of the paper, specialization, degree (Bachelor or Master) and the year of study;
- other students of AFER member Faculties that express their intention for participation individually and that obtain the agreement of the organizer;
- students of AFER non-member Faculties, only if the respective Faculty expresses its written commitment to become an AFER member, before the competition;
- students of similar Faculties from abroad who submit papers appropriate to section profile, on condition that they pay a participation fee.

The competition itself consists in submitting a research article that will be presented in front of a Board of teachers and students selected by AFER, as follows:

- one president for each section of the Olympiad;

- three members for each subsection of which one must be a student from the organizing Faculty, especially a favorite laureate of previous editions/sections of the Olympiad;
- one secretary for each subsection.

In order to be shortlisted for the competition, the papers must follow certain editing criteria.

The evaluation of the papers presented during the competition will take place according to a set of criteria established by the Managing Board and published on the Internet (on the web site [www.afer.ase.ro](http://www.afer.ase.ro)), consisting in:

1. Content assessment (before the presentation): paper elaboration (individual or team project), structure and style, theory, applied research;
2. Presentation assessment: paper delivery, clarity and answer accuracy, participation in debates on the basis of other competitors' presentations.

As a result of paper and presentation evaluation according to the criteria set through AFER Regulation, the Board will award:

1. "Nicolae N. Constantinescu" Prize of 2000 RON (one prize per section);
2. First, Second and Third Prizes of 1300, 1000 and 700 RON respectively (for each subsection);
3. Special Mention of 500 RON (one in each subsection).

The papers presented during the Olympiad will be published in an electronic volume.

There have been registered more than 70 papers (both Bachelor and Master) for the competition from students coordinated by teachers from various national and international Universities, as follows:

- BI Norwegian School of Management;
- Babes-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca, Faculty of Economic Sciences and Business Administration, the Business Faculty;
- The Bucharest Academy of Economic Studies, Faculty of Agroalimentary Economy and of Environment, Faculty of International Economic Relations, Faculty of Commerce, Faculty of Business Administration in foreign languages;
- The Alexandru Ioan Cuza University of Iasi, Faculty of Economy and Business Administration;
- „Lucian Blaga” University of Sibiu, Faculty of Economic Sciences;
- West University of Timisoara, Faculty of Economy and Business Administration;
- “Ștefan cel Mare” University of Suceava, Faculty of Economic Sciences and Public Administration;
- Petroleum-Gas University of Ploiești, Faculty of Economic Sciences;
- Bucharest University, Faculty of Business and Administration;
- University of Oradea, Faculty of Economic Sciences;
- Transylvania University of Brașov, Faculty of Economic Sciences;
- Valahia University of Târgoviște, Faculty of Economic Sciences;
- “Ovidius” University of Constanta, Faculty of Economic Sciences;
- University of Petrosani, Faculty of Sciences;

- “Dimitrie Cantemir” Christian University of Bucharest, Faculty of Economic Sciences Cluj-Napoca;
- University of Craiova, Faculty of Economy and Business Administration;
- „Eftimie Murgu” University of Reșița, Faculty of Economic and Administrative Sciences.

We consider that this competition will facilitate the development of team work and communication competences, and it will also stimulate students' competitive spirit, as a good occasion to turn their abilities and scientific activities to the best account.

We express the conviction that, on this occasion, again, the students will confirm their value by obtaining very good results as at the previous similar competition, enjoying the support provided by the University Governance. According to the structure and the duration of the activities accomplished by attendees, teachers and especially students, we hope the event will be memorable.

Lecturer PhD Ene Corina  
Petroleum-Gas University of Ploiești

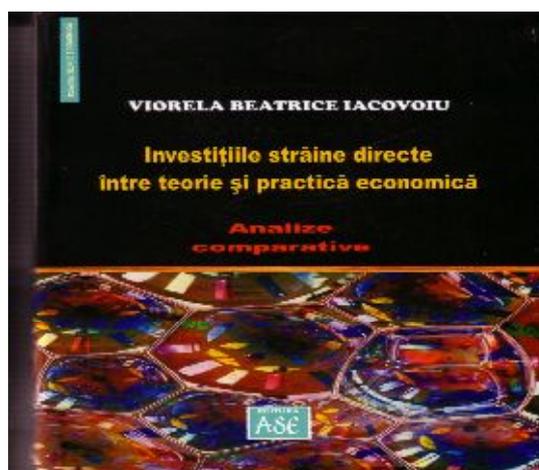
## Editorial Event

### Foreign direct investments between theory and economic practice. Comparative analysis

by Viorela Beatrice Iacovoiu

The paperwork “*Foreign direct investments between theory and economic practice. Comparative analysis*” imposes and holds the attention due to the high scientific bearing, the elevated economic language, the manner chosen to approach the addresses issue, the scientific accuracy and rigor. The subject of this book bears importance for its complexity, theoretical significance, economic and social dimension, due to the comparative analysis drafted for Romania and the European Union - mainly for the Central and Eastern European countries that have recently joined the EU.

The profoundness and exigency that characterize this scientific approach enabled the author to seize the essence of the investment processes, to put accent on the foreign direct investment concept having in view the new evolutions, conceived as an integrant approach and draft a broad study of the foreign direct investments based on the regional and global mutations. The foreign direct investments issue is addressed to in a modern, innovating, interdisciplinary manner, based on a perfect combination of the economic theory with ecology, environmental protection, statistics and mathematic calculus.



It is to mention that, due to the thorough analyses, the presentation of various theories, views of prestigious authors in the field, the clarity in formulating the own points of view, the conclusions and solutions, the author forecasted the research development perspectives and is now asking for reflection on the foreign direct investments. For this reason, the paperwork is conceived as an extremely useful tool for researchers and students, as well as for specialists in

the real economy, for all those who survey the foreign direct investments significance and dynamics at world level, within the European Union and in Romania.

Full Professor Coralia Angelescu  
The Bucharest Academy of Economic Studies

## Opinii interactive

### Rezumat

*Acest număr prezintă un proiect de succes intitulat „Direcții strategice pentru creșterea valorii adăugate în IMM-urile românești în contextul managementului cunoașterii” coordonat de profesor universitar Ovidiu Nicolescu de la Academia de Studii Economice din București. Am inclus un eveniment internațional care a avut loc în luna octombrie: “Innovations pour assurer la qualité de la formation dans les conditions d’intégration européenne”, organizat de Agenția Universităților Francofone, prezentarea uneia dintre cele mai importante conferințe internaționale “International Business Information Management Association (IBIMA)” și un eveniment național care se va desfășura în universitatea noastră: Olimpiada Națională a Studenților Economiști. Evenimentul editorial prezintă recenzia cărții “Investițiile străine directe între teorie și practica economică. Analize comparative” scrisă de lector universitar Viorela Iacovoiu.*