

EDITORIAL IE-2023-1

Artificial intelligence (AI) is currently at the top of many research agendas, including that of *Intellectual Economics*. However, our portfolio is waiting for this wave to become more widespread. Instead, the metaeconomic approach focuses on understanding how intellectual property (IP) can be used to promote efficiency in production and distribution to encourage the development of significant human talents and creative competencies. This can be achieved through a variety of means, including the use of sophisticated technologies such as the metaverse which integrate AI, virtual reality platforms, machine learning, and blockchain-based secure authentication systems. Ultimately, by effectively leveraging these tools and approaches, we can create an innovative economy that benefits all participants of the social system. For example, cutting-edge technologies such as AI and machine learning can be used to analyze and optimize the impact of fintech and the allocation of IP, helping to ensure that these complex systems are being used in the most effective and efficient manner possible.

This issue – IE-2023:1 – begins with three studies focusing on the SME sector, each highlighting and exploring various aspects and challenges relevant to its success and sustainability. They utilize empirical research methods, employing surveys and statistical analyses to gather data and draw conclusions. These studies recognize the importance of specific factors for SMEs, such as digital talent, sustainable competitive advantage, and business ethics. The first study (Lutz Sommer – Germany) investigates the challenge of acquiring and identifying digital talents, and proposes a solution-based approach involving AI tools in procuring them due to the limited resources and high demand faced by SMEs in terms of the digitalization of corporate processes. It proposes a solution that involves using AI algorithms to identify potential digital talents within existing employee resources, suggesting that AI tools can help to overcome these challenges. The study finds that these tools are affordable and user-friendly for SMEs, challenging the belief that only larger companies can afford them. The second study (Ni Suryantini et al. – Indonesia) examines sustainable competitive advantage in the SME sector, focusing on intellectual capital, technology adoption, and strategic flexibility. It confirms that intellectual capital plays a significant role in gaining sustainable competitive advantage, while technology adoption and strategic flexibility are factors that reinforce intellectual capital. It notes the need for SME managers to foster innovation and knowledge creation within their teams. The third study (Katarina Zvarikova et al. – Slovakia, Poland) examines the role of business ethics in the SME sector, considering the influence of firm size as well as the gender and education of entrepreneurs on the practice of business ethics in the countries of the Visegrad Group. All three findings affirm the importance of internal resources and capabilities in SMEs management – whether by leveraging technology and digital talents, nurturing intellectual capital, or promoting ethical conduct. By incorporating these valuable insights into intellectual property-related strategies and policies, SMEs can foster innovation, sustainable growth, and ethical practices within their organizations.

Ilze Zumente et al. (Latvia) analyze environmental, social, and governance (ESG) dis-

closure levels and board diversity metrics in the Baltic region between 2020 and 2022. Their study finds an increase in ESG disclosure scores over this period, particularly in relation to corporate governance topics. The positive correlation between board diversity, particularly gender diversity, and ESG disclosure levels – suggesting that diverse boards may contribute to increased corporate transparency – is revealed.

Avtandil Liluashvili (Georgia) aims to establish an analytical investment framework for the Georgian economy to assist investors in analyzing the medium-term implications of different macroeconomic scenarios. Their study presents a forecast of macroeconomic variables and applies them to asset price developments, suggesting optimized investment decisions. The study demonstrates that this approach can lower risk and yield better returns compared to standard efficient frontier optimization. From the perspective of larger corporations, particularly those in the Baltic region, ESG disclosures and board diversity play a significant role in corporate transparency. Meanwhile, for investors, particularly in emerging economies like Georgia, an effective analytical framework that forecasts macroeconomic variables can be beneficial for medium-term investment decisions. There is a clear focus on leveraging technology, particularly AI, to solve challenges and optimize processes in SMEs, and both intellectual capital and strategic flexibility are becoming increasingly important for sustainable competitive advantage. Meanwhile, particularly in the context of corporate governance, the growing importance of advanced econometric techniques when making informed investment decisions in emerging economies is evident.

In the second part of this IE-2023:1 issue, Rafael Bolivar et al. (Colombia) present a study focusing on the role of management in job satisfaction, providing an insight into the importance of leadership and management style in employee well-being. Sladjana Živanović et al. (Montenegro, Ukraine) tackle the issue of sustainable management in businesses, focusing on how organizational learning contributes to this process. Yuriy Bilan et al. (Ukraine, Hungary) discuss the role of tourism in socio-economic situations, with a specific focus on the effects of war on tourism in Ukraine and its attractiveness in light of modern challenges. Thus, this study adds a geopolitical layer to our understanding of economic development, offering a perspective that was not seen elsewhere in the initial set of abstracts and underlining the impact of political stability on economic sectors such as tourism.

Maria Elena Latino examine the economic implications of trust in consumer behavior, particularly as it relates to the spread of *Xylella fastidiosa* in Italy. Their study regarding trust in the agrifood supply chain during critical events contributes a novel perspective on how public sentiment influences consumer behavior. This aligns with the suggestions by Suryantini et al. on the role of consumer trust in securing competitive advantage for SMEs. Maja Nikšić Radić et al. (Croatia, Slovenia) explore the impact of foreign remittances on economic growth, conducting a bibliometric and systematic literature review by providing a quantitative analysis. Their paper brings a global context into the discussion, suggesting how economic growth and stability can be influenced by global financial flows.

The common theme across these articles is the broad focus on how various elements – including management, sustainable practices, socio-economic conditions, trust, and foreign remittances – influence business practices and economic growth. Each paper contributes to our understanding of these multifaceted influences from different perspectives, ranging from job satisfaction and organizational learning to tourism attractiveness, consumer trust, and economic development through remittances.

Overall, the second part of this IE-2023:1 issue dives deeper into specific aspects of economic growth and business management while providing a broader global and geopolitical context. The examination of trust – in terms of consumer behavior, job satisfaction, organizational culture, geopolitical influences, and global financial flows – enriches our understanding of these topics and provides multiple points of departure for future research.

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