



ENTREPRENEURSHIP DEVELOPMENT IN THE BALKANS

PERSPECTIVE FROM DIVERSE CONTEXTS

VELAND RAMADANI • SASHO KJOSEV • BRUNO S. SERGI

EDITORS

Entrepreneurship Development in the Balkans

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Entrepreneurship Development in the Balkans: Perspective from Diverse Contexts

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Emerald Publishing Limited
Emerald Publishing, Floor 5, Northspring, 21-23 Wellington Street, Leeds LS1 4DL.

First edition 2023

Editorial matter and selection © 2023 Veland Ramadani, Sasho Kjosev and
Bruno S. Sergi.

Individual chapters © 2023 The authors.

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British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

ISBN: 978-1-83753-455-5 (Print)

ISBN: 978-1-83753-454-8 (Online)

ISBN: 978-1-83753-456-2 (Epub)



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

To professor Domingo Ribeiro-Soriano, for his outstanding support in making my research gain meaning and purpose and reaching a global audience.

Veland Ramadani

To my parents, Divna and Aleksandar, for their invaluable sacrifices; and to my son Vojdan and my wife Nina, for their continuous support.

Sasho Kjosev

To my brother Enzo and my sisters Nunziatella and Fiorenza.

Bruno S. Sergi

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Foreword

My mother grew up in Egypt, where – at the time – it was the dream of many girls to marry King Farouk, a highly respected leader whose origins were Balkan. Eventually, she married my father, and she got to meet Farouk, who happened to be a friend of his. Not surprisingly, I grew up constantly reminded that the Balkan people are among the kindest in the world, the most trustworthy, and the warmest friends one could imagine.

Hence, I have insufficient words to describe my delight in writing the *Foreword* of this important book about wonderful people from an area that has throughout history been of great importance. It is assembled by dedicated editors bringing together a variety of authors who specialize in different topics, and the volume is worth much more than the sum of its parts.

The Balkans was the area where the Austro-Hungarian Empire met the mighty Ottoman Empire. This in itself is exciting for me, being the nephew of my mother's brother – whose documents stated the Ottoman Empire as his country of birth. More importantly, the meeting of empires enriched this area with the cross-fertilization of ideas and a unique blend of worldly architectures.

I first visited the Balkans during the 1970s. The Soviet Union had considerable influence over the Warsaw Pact countries at the time. Meanwhile, in what was then Yugoslavia, Tito had much power. Entrepreneurship was obviously not the flavor of the day. Of course, Greece and Turkey had many small firms, but entrepreneurship development was not yet a priority.

In 1982, in Bulgaria, I learned that merely speaking about entrepreneurship could lead to trouble. Later that decade I spent much time in the Yugoslav republics.

As the Berlin Wall fell, the world changed, and I was invited to teach in 1995 at the Academy of Economic Sciences in Romania. The following year I spent much time in Albania, writing an article that appeared in the *Journal of Small Business Management*. My love for the Balkans and its people increased and I authored a book as well as several articles about the transition in the region. Now I am happy to see this present volume and I commend the editors for their genius in putting it together.

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