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**SUSTAINABLE BUSINESS MANAGEMENT AND  
DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION: CHALLENGES AND  
OPPORTUNITIES IN THE POST-COVID ERA**

**BOOK OF ABSTRACTS**

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# FOREWORD

We are very pleased to present the Book of Abstracts of the XVIII International Symposium of Organizational Sciences – SymOrg 2022.

With 140 contributions by authors from 19 different countries, XVIII International Symposium of Organizational Sciences – SymOrg 2022 successfully sets the high level for future conferences. The topic of SymOrg 2020, “Sustainable Business Management and Digital Transformation: Challenges and Opportunities in the Post-COVID Era”, attracted researchers from different institutions, both in Serbia and abroad. This year, more than 300 scholars and practitioners authored and co-authored scientific and research articles that had been accepted for publication in the Book of Abstracts.

All the contributions to the Book of Abstracts are classified into the following 13 key topics:

- Blockchain Technology in Business and Information Systems
- Business Analytics
- Creativity, Innovation and Sustainable Management
- Digital Operations and Logistics Management
- Digital Transformation of Financial Industry
- Digital Transformation of Public Administration
- E-Business Ecosystems
- Evidence-Based Public Policy Making in the Post-COVID Environment
- LEAN Business Systems – Structures, Processes and Models
- Managing Digital Transformation Projects under Discontinuity
- Managing Human Resources in the Post-COVID Era
- Rethinking Marketing and Communication in the Post-COVID Era
- Quality Management and Standardization in Digital Transformation Era.

The participation of numerous domestic and international authors and the diversity of topics justify our efforts to organize the Symposium. As SymOrg is traditionally at the intersection of academy and business, we believe that this year’s meeting will bring about many in-depth discussions, contribute to prospective partnerships, and build stronger business and academic networks. We also believe that meeting will contribute to the exchange of knowledge, research results and experience among industry experts, research institutions and faculties, which all share a common interest in contemporary organizational sciences.

We are very grateful to our distinguished keynote and plenary speakers: Ana Draskovic, Aleksander Aristovnik, Manuel Mazzara, Basant Agarwa and Priyanka Harjule. Also, special thanks to moderators for organizing the panels and workshops in the fields of higher education, business, supply chain, doctoral research studies and student engagement and sustainability.

The Faculty of Organizational Sciences would like to express its gratitude to the Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development and all the partners and individuals who have supported and contributed to the organization of the Symposium. We are particularly grateful to the contributors and reviewers who made this issue possible. But above all, we are especially thankful to the authors and presenters for making SymOrg 2022 a success!

Belgrade, June 6, 2022

Marko Mihić, Ph.D.  
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## TABLE OF CONTENT

FOREWORD.....	vii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT.....	viii
<b>INVITED LECTURES – SHORT ABSTRACTS .....</b>	<b>1</b>
SUSTAINABILITY AND DIGITAL AFTER COVID – WHAT IS THE DIRECTION AND THE PACE OF THE CHANGE .....	2
DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION DURING AND AFTER COVID-19 PANDEMIC: SOME THEORETICAL AND EMPIRICAL INSIGHTS .....	3
EDUCATION AFTER COVID-19 (“HUMANITY AND MACHINES: THE FUTURE OF EDUCATION”) .....	4
THE ROLE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE FOR THE SUSTAINABLE BUSINESS IN THE POST COVID-19 WORLD.....	5
APPLICATIONS OF INTELLIGENT OPTIMIZATION TECHNIQUES IN SUSTAINABILITY .....	6
<b>BLOCKCHAIN TECHNOLOGY IN BUSINESS AND INFORMATION SYSTEMS .....</b>	<b>7</b>
SMART CONTRACTS AND THEIR IMPACT ON SUPPLY CHAIN MANAGEMENT .....	8
ETHEREUM REQUEST FOR COMMENT FOR FRACTIONAL OWNERSHIP OF NON-FUNGIBLE TOKENS .....	10
MANAGING CONSISTENCY LEVELS IN DISTRIBUTED SYSTEMS .....	13
IMPLEMENTATION OF SMART CONTRACTS FOR PAYMENT TRANSACTIONS ON THE ETHEREUM PLATFORM .....	15
THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE CURRENCIES OF OLD AND MODERN TIMES.....	18
BLOCKCHAIN-BASED SOLUTIONS FOR IOT: A SURVEY .....	20
ON THE USE OF SCHEDULED CONSENSUS IN BUSINESS APPLICATIONS .....	22
BIOMETRIC AUTHENTICATION MODEL IN ELECTRONIC PAYMENT SYSTEM BASED ON BLOCKCHAIN TRANSACTIONS .....	24
A METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH FOR CONVERTING RELATIONAL TO GRAPH DATABASES .....	26
OVERVIEW OF NON-FUNGIBLE TOKEN SYSTEMS .....	29
A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF THE HUMAN RESOURCES MODULE IN OPEN-SOURCE ERP SYSTEMS .....	31
BLOCKCHAIN IN IDENTITY MANAGEMENT - A SURVEY .....	34
ANALYZING THE IMPACT OF PHYSICAL OPTIMIZATION ON DATABASE QUERIES .....	38
<b>BUSINESS ANALYTICS .....</b>	<b>41</b>
ENVY-FREE FAIR STUDENT DROPOUT PREDICTION.....	42
CREDIT RATING PREDICTION USING MACHINE LEARNING ALGORITHMS: S&P500 COMPANIES .....	44
SALES FORECASTING IN RESTAURANTS USING COMPUTATIONAL INTELLIGENCE.....	46
THE IMPACT OF MISSING VALUES ON CORPORATE CREDIT RATING PREDICTION PERFORMANCE.....	48
DATA-CENTRIC MACHINE LEARNING IN CRYPTO MINING DETECTION.....	50
GENERALIZATION CAPABILITIES OF ARTIFICIAL NEURAL NETWORKS AS AN INDICATOR OF A CRISIS .....	52
DEVELOPMENT OF THE STRATEGIC GAMES SIMULATIONS PLATFORM.....	55
DOES OWNERSHIP STRUCTURE AFFECT BANK PERFORMANCE IN THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC PERIOD? EVIDENCE FROM CROATIA .....	57
BUSINESS PERFORMANCE OF POSTAL OPERATORS .....	60
ANALYTICAL MODELING OF GRADUATED ECONOMISTS' EMPLOYMENT .....	64
ANALYSIS OF THE DETERMINANTS OF GRADUATES EMPLOYABILITY .....	67
SIMULATION MODELS IN THE FUNCTION OF CENSORED DEMAND MANAGEMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION PROCESSES IN THE ERA OF DIGITALIZATION.....	70
ONLINE VS HYBRID TEACHING - COMPARISON OF STUDENTS' PERFORMANCE ON PRE-EXAM OBLIGATIONS .....	72

FUZZY LINEAR FRACTIONAL PROGRAM STRICTLY BASED ON EXTENSION PRINCIPLE USING LINEAR MODELS .....	74
BLOCKCHAIN: APPLICATION OF MACBETH METHOD FOR RANKING CRYPTO PROJECT FACTORS .....	76
<b>CREATIVITY, INNOVATION AND SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT .....</b>	<b>79</b>
THE ROLE OF SMES IN THE SUSTAINABLE ENERGY TRANSITION .....	80
SUSTAINABLE COST MANAGEMENT OF RENEWABLE ENERGY COMPANIES .....	82
IS PROFIT IMPORTANT TO THE SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT OF SOCIAL ENTERPRISE? CASE OF CROATIA .....	84
USING SAP ACTIVATE METHODOLOGY IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF S/4 HANA TECHNOLOGY .....	86
POSSIBILITIES OF APPLICATION OF PROCESS INNOVATIONS IN THE CUSTOMS SYSTEM .....	88
SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT OF SERBIAN AGRICULTURAL FAMILY HOLDINGS .....	90
A MODEL FOR FINANCING INNOVATION IN SMART COMMUNITIES .....	92
DIGITALIZATION AND SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN EUROPEAN COUNTRIES.....	94
FRAMEWORK FOR INNOVATION AND SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT- SYSTEMS THINKING MODELS.....	96
DRIVING INNOVATION THROUGH INTRA-ORGANIZATIONAL CO-CREATION PLATFORM.....	100
DOCUMENTATION AND CONFIGURATION MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS FOR R&D PROJECTS .....	103
APPLYING THE FUZZY ANALYTIC HIERARCHY PROCESS TO EVALUATION OF THE R&D PROJECTS .....	106
PRODUCT-SERVICE SYSTEM IN TELECOMMUNICATIONS INDUSTRY.....	110
IMPROVING THE METHODOLOGY OF INNOVATION PROJECTS PORTFOLIO MANAGEMENT .....	112
SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT THROUGH DIGITAL SERVICITIZATION.....	114
DEVELOPING SMART TOURISM AS A STRATEGIC APPROACH TO TOURISM CHALLENGES IN THE POST-COVID ERA.....	116
DEVELOPMENT OF FLOOD RISK ASSESMENT MODEL.....	118
SHARING ECONOMY AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS.....	120
<b>DIGITAL OPERATIONS AND LOGISTIC MANAGEMENT .....</b>	<b>123</b>
DIGITALIZATION OF AUTOMATED GUIDED VEHICLES KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS .....	124
AN APPROACH TO SUPPORT SMALL MEDIUM-SIZE COMPANIES IN PLANNING AND MANAGING DISTRIBUTION ROUTES .....	126
SPREADSHEET-BASED SHADOW IT: CASE OF SERBIA.....	128
MOTIVATIONAL ELEMENTS OF INTRODUCTION AND USE OF INTELLIGENT SYSTEMS THROUGH THE PARADIGM OF NEW ELECTRIC MOBILITY IN EUROPE AND BEYOND .....	131
WATER TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS IN PORTS FOR THE NEEDS OF MANAGEMENT IN PORT LOGISTICS .....	134
CONSTRUCTIVE HEURISTIC FOR OPEN SHOP PROBLEM WITH RECIRCULATION .....	136
TOWARDS A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK OF LOGISTICS 4.0 .....	139
WOMEN'S ENTREPRENEURSHIP - MEASURES FOR THE DEVELOPMENT: CASE STUDY OF REPUBLIC OF SERBIA.....	142
<b>DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION OF FINANCIAL INDUSTRY .....</b>	<b>145</b>
GREEN BONDS.....	146
TRADITIONAL VERSUS CONDITIONAL EVALUATION OF PORTFOLIO PERFORMANCE: LITERATURE REVIEW .....	149
INFLUENCE OF DIGITAL SKILLS AND AUTOMATION ON DIGITISATION IN RETABVIL BANKING .....	151
DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION OF BANKING BUSINESS IN SERBIA CAUSED BY COVID-19 PANDEMIC .....	153
CUSTOMER PREFERENCES TOWARDS DIGITAL BANKING SERVICES IN SERBIA.....	155
DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION IN CAR INSURANCE – INSURTECH AS A NEW MARKET TREND .....	157

VALUE OF DIGITAL SUSTAINABILITY .....	160
MICROFINANCE FOR THE SMEE SECTOR: A BIBLIOMETRIC REVIEW .....	162
NON-FINANCIAL REPORTING AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN PUBLIC SECTOR ORGANIZATIONS .....	164
<b>DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION.....</b>	<b>167</b>
THE CHALLENGES OF E-GOVERNMENT IN (POST) COVID CRISIS IN SERBIA .....	168
USE VALUE OF OPEN DATA IN SERBIA.....	170
REFORM OF TAX ADMINISTRATION IN SERBIA – THE ROADMAP FOR THE EFFECTIVE DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION THROUGH THE PARADIGM SWITCH .....	173
IMPACT OF DIGITALIZATION ON PUBLIC PROCUREMENT PERFORMANCES IN SLOVENIA.....	175
DIGITALIZATION OF THE FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT AND CONTROL SYSTEM IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR: THE CASE OF WESTERN BALKAN COUNTRIES .....	177
<b>E-BUSINESS ECOSYSTEMS .....</b>	<b>179</b>
REINFORCING SMALL-SCALE PRODUCERS VIA INNOVATIVE BUSINESS MODELS: A CASE OF NATURAL FOOD AND DRINKS PRODUCTS IN SERBIA .....	180
DESIGNING A BLOCKCHAIN-BASED E-BUSINESS SYSTEM FOR TRACKING HONEY PRODUCTION .....	184
E- FISCALIZATION- EXPERIENCES AND ANALYSIS IN SMALLER COMPANIES.....	186
DIGITAL MARKETING IN THE PROMOTION OF A NEW FASHION BRAND .....	188
CROWDSOURCING AND IOT-BASED OPEN INNOVATIONS IN INCREASING SAFETY ON RAILWAYS.....	190
TESTING READINESS FOR THE INTRODUCTION OF CROWDSOURCING SERVICES IN SECONDARY HEALTHCARE INSTITUTIONS .....	192
STUDENTS' PERCEPTION OF MANUAL AND AUTOMATED GRADING OF PROGRAMMING ASSIGNMENTS.....	194
A SILABBIZ DSL FOR BUSINESS LOGIC SPECIFICATION.....	196
QUALITY-BASED ANALYSIS OF SHIFTING TO NATIVE MICROSERVICE SOFTWARE ARCHITECTURE.....	199
TESTING AS A VALIDATION METHOD FOR FUNCTIONAL REQUIREMENTS OF A SOFTWARE SYSTEM .....	203
<b>EVIDENCE-BASED PUBLIC POLICY MAKING IN POST-COVID ENVIRONMENT.....</b>	<b>207</b>
DOES EQUAL PAY WORK FOR WOMEN IN SERBIA? THE EXPERIENCE DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC....	208
DID COVID-19 RELIEF PROGRAMS REANIMATE ZOMBIE COMPANIES? .....	211
THE IMPACT OF THE COVID CRISIS ON MACROECONOMIC INDICATORS OF EU MEMBER STATES .....	213
DEMOGRAPHIC CHANGES IN THE CONTEXT OF THE CROATIAN PENSION SYSTEM .....	215
SHRINKING POPULATIONS AND SUSTAINABLE SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT: IS THERE A WAY OUT FROM THE PITFALL? .....	217
<b>LEAN BUSINESS SYSTEMS – STRUCTURES, PROCESSES AND MODELS .....</b>	<b>221</b>
KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS IN INDUSTRIAL HUMAN-ROBOT COLLABORATION.....	222
IMPLEMENTING LEAN MANUFACTURING TOOLS: THEORY AND PRACTICE.....	224
IMPLICATIONS OF LEAN IN CONTEXT OF NON-REPETITIVE MANUFACTURING ON LENSES OF LEAN: A REVIEW .....	226
MEASURING THE SUCCESS OF LEAN ORGANIZATIONS THROUGH TRIPLE BOTTOM LINE FRAMEWORK.....	228
LEAN PLANNING - THE IMPORTANCE OF CHOOSING THE ESTIMATION TECHNIQUE THAT WILL FIT PROJECT NEEDS.....	230
MANAGEMENT AND EMPLOYEE INFLUENCE ON LEAN TRANSFORMATION.....	232
IMPROVING PROFITABILITY WITH CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT .....	234
COMPARATIVE STUDY OF SPECIAL EVENT SPONSORSHIP IN PRE-COVID-19 AND POST-COVID-19 ERA.....	237
THE INFLUENCE OF ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS CHANGE ON THE DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION PROCESS .....	239

THE IMPORTANCE OF EMPLOYEES FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGES DURING THE PANDEMIC .....	241
TELEWORK AFTER THE COVID-19: PERCEPTIONS IN RELATION TO OWNERSHIP, INDUSTRY AND SUPPORT .....	243
<b>MANAGING DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION PROJECTS UNDER DISCONTINUITY .....</b>	<b>245</b>
KEY ROLE OF HIGH-TECH BUSINESS INCUBATORS SUSTAINABLE GOVERNANCE IN THE POST-COVID ERA	246
THE FUTURE IS ALREADY HERE: DO WE NEED TO UPSKILL DIGITAL PROJECT MANAGERS? .....	248
DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION LEADING THE WAY .....	250
FEASIBILITY ASSESSMENT OF DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION PROJECTS IN AGRICULTURE .....	252
EDTECH PROJECTS: DISRUPTIVE INNOVATION IN HIGHER EDUCATION .....	254
MEASURING THE SUCCESS OF DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION PROJECTS.....	256
DIGITAL TRANSFORMATIONS AND SOFTWARE SOLUTIONS IN THE FIGHT AGAINST THE CORONA VIRUS IN THE DEFENSE SYSTEM .....	258
DIGITALISATION OF CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY IN SERBIA – NEW BUILDING OF THE FACULTY OF ORGANISATIONAL SCIENCES CASE STUDY .....	260
<b>MANAGING HUMAN RESOURCES IN POST-COVID ERA .....</b>	<b>263</b>
WORKING FROM HOME, WORK-RELATED ATTITUDES, WORK-LIFE BALANCE AND EMPLOYEE WELL-BEING – IMPLICATIONS FOR HRM IN THE POST-COVID ERA .....	264
THE EFFECTS OF PERCEIVED ORGANIZATIONAL SUPPORT ON EMPLOYEES WELL-BEING IN POST COVID ERA .....	266
BURNOUT SYNDROME AMONG PRIMARY HEALTH CARE EMPLOYEES DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC.....	268
STUDENTS DIGITAL COMPETENCIES DURING ONLINE LEARNING: ARE THEY READY FOR THE POST-COVID ERA? .....	270
STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF PERSONAL BRANDING IN GREECE: IMPACTS ON CAREER ACHIEVEMENT ASPIRATIONS .....	272
THE IMPACT OF PERCEIVED JOB INSECURITY ON MILLENNIAL WORKERS' ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT .....	274
ENHANCEMENT OF THE ACTIVITY EFFECTIVENESS IN THE PRODUCTION WORKSTATIONS THROUGH HUMAN RISK FACTORS ANALYSIS .....	276
THE IMPORTANCE OF CANDIDATES 'ATTITUDES TOWARDS THE FAIR IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SELECTION PROCESS FOR EMPLOYER BRANDING .....	278
DEVELOPING FRAMEWORK FOR MEASURING CAREER TRANSITION READINESS .....	280
PERSONAL ETHICS PERCEPTION AND ITS RELATION TO THE EXPECTED PROPERTIES OF A GOOD LEADER .....	282
BOARDS' INVOLVEMENT IN CEO SUCCESSION: A CASE STUDY ANALYSIS .....	285
„EVERYTHING IS A PROJECT“: PROJECTIFICATION IN WORK-LIFE CONTEXT OF WOMEN TOP MANAGERS ..	287
THE ROLE OF HR IN ORGANISING HACKATHON AS AN EMPLOYER BRANDING TOOL .....	288
AUDITOR'S PERCEPTION OF STRESS DURING THE COVID19 IN THE REPUBLIC OF SERBIA .....	290
<b>QUALITY MANAGEMENT AND STANDARDIZATION IN DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION ERA .....</b>	<b>293</b>
MEASURING PERCEIVED SERVICE QUALITY USING SERVQUAL IN HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY .....	294
IMPLEMENTATION OF ISO 22301 STANDARD FOR BUSINESS CONTINUITY AND QUALITY ASSURANCE IN FOOD INDUSTRY .....	296
QUALITY MANAGEMENT PERCEPTION IN STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS .....	300
ADVANTAGES AND EFFECTS ON QUALITY OF THE ONLINE MODEL OF EDUCATION IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS.	302
INTERNATIONALIZATION AS THE FOUNDATION FOR SUSTAINABLE BUSINESS MANAGEMENT .....	304

ASSESSMENT OF ENTREPRENEURIAL COMPETENCES OF INDUSTRIAL ENGINEERING STUDENTS: POST-COVID19 RESULTS .....	306
<b>RETHINKING MARKETING AND COMMUNICATION IN POST-COVID ERA .....</b>	<b>309</b>
EMPLOYER BRANDING STRATEGY: UNIVERSITY AND INDUSTRY COLLABORATION .....	310
DIGITAL PERFORMANCE OF LEADING FASHION BRANDS .....	312
THE APPLICATION OF SOCIAL MARKETING IN ART INSTITUTIONS COMMUNICATION .....	314
THE EFFECTS OF COMMUNICATION DURING THE PANDEMIC ON PUBLIC OPINION AND TRUST IN THE INSTITUTIONS OF THE SYSTEM .....	316
CHANGES IN MARKETING PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT DUE TO THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC – EVIDENCE FROM CEE .....	318
CHALLENGE MANAGEMENT IN FILM INDUSTRY CAUSED BY COVID-19: OVERCOMING SOLUTIONS .....	320
COMMUNICATION PERSPECTIVE OF LOBBYING FOR PRE-SCHOOL EDUCATION: CASE OF SERBIA .....	322
THE INFLUENCE OF AUGMENTED REALITY TECHNOLOGIES IN POST-COVID BUSINESS COMMUNICATION .....	324
THE IMPORTANCE OF MARKETING ACTIVITIES IN CREATIVE INDUSTRIES IN POST COVID ERA .....	326
VISIBILITY, FAVORABILITY AND EFFECTIVENESS OF SOCIAL MARKETING CAMPAIGNS – WHAT DRIVES BEHAVIOR CHANGE? .....	328
DATA-DRIVEN CHANGES IN CORPORATE COMMUNICATION IN THE POST-COVID ERA .....	330
RESHAPING THE COMMUNICATION STRATEGY OF ENERGY COMPANIES IN THE POST-COVID TIME - CASE STUDY "ELEKTROMREŽA SRBIJE AD" .....	332
POST-CRISIS REPUTATION MANAGEMENT – THE EFFECT OF DIFFERENT CRISIS COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES .....	334
RETHINKING GLOBAL RETAIL STRATEGY IN POST COVID ERA .....	336
COMMUNICATIONS MANAGEMENT IN HEALTHCARE INSTITUTIONS: ANALYSIS OF INTERNAL PUBLIC ATTITUDES BEFORE AND AFTER THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC .....	338
CONSUMERS' BEHAVIOR ACCORDING TO GENERATION SEGMENTS .....	340
THE IMPACT OF GENERATION Z CONSUMER LIFESTYLES ON ONLINE SHOPPING DURING CORONA CRISIS .....	342
PRO-ENVIRONMENTAL PURCHASING BEHAVIOR: EXPLORING MOTIVATION DRIVING GEN Y AND GEN Z .....	344
<b>AUTHOR INDEX .....</b>	<b>346</b>



Sustainable Business Management and Digital Transformation:  
Challenges and Opportunities in the Post-COVID Era

# ANALYSIS OF THE DETERMINANTS OF GRADUATES EMPLOYABILITY

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## OBJECTIVE

Having a university degree does not guarantee employment, hence finding and then keeping a job, especially for young people is a major issue in most economies. In the segment of Higher education institutions (HEI) everywhere around the globe pressure is growing to produce employable graduates (Grotkowska et al, 2015; Mok et al., 2016). Obtaining a complete and integrated picture of the conditions and tendencies in the labor market should inevitably be accompanied by an analysis of employability of the young, highly educated workforce. Considering that, analyse of the characteristics of graduates (young students who are in their final year of studies), as well as the factors that affect their integration in the labor market, are gaining importance as a result of increased mobility and competitiveness in the labor market. They have raised great research interest and therefore have been included in this research paper. Employability is about being capable of getting and keeping fulfilling work (Hillage & Pollard, 1998). In this context higher education institutions (HEI) worldwide have been under pressure to produce employable graduates (Grotkowska et al, 2015; Mok et al., 2016). Higher education institutions (HEI) contribute to external benefits by providing young workers with an opportunity to invest in human capital rather than being unemployed, stimulate the local economy and drive productivity spillovers (Hermannsson, Rosario, & Marcello, 2021). The objective of this paper is to determine the basic factors that affect the employability of students before graduation. Research is based upon the sample consisted of the students of Faculty of Economics – Skopje, who are in their final year of studies. The questionnaire distributed includes well designed and structured questions, so that it provided solid foundation for information to be obtained related to their demographic, economic characteristics, as well as their average grade, and their opinion about their future goals. Most of the information is based on the student's own perception, so student self-perceived employability is considered.

In this light employability of graduates has taken more importance in recent years due to the grim economic situation, growth, and an increasingly competitive global labor market. The self-perception is a critical component of employability; to comprehend the term employability, an assessment of this vital component and its elements is required. Apart from examining and understanding the students' perceptions of their prospect of success in the graduate labour market the objective of this paper is to examine the main influence of various factors related to this field of study considering the Macedonian economy.

## METHODOLOGY

For the purpose of this research, direct and indirect methods have been applied. In order to collect primary data, for the needs of the research, a questionnaire was created which was distributed to fourth year students. The questionnaire consists of 25 questions that are divided into several logical areas: First, demographic and economic characteristics of students; Second, questions related to the choice of the study program and the achieved success in studying; Third, questions about their views on the introduction of practical teaching in the educational process; Fourth, questions related to their goals; Fifth, issues related to continuing the study within the postgraduate studies; Sixth, questions related to choosing a job. The total number of respondents who answered the questionnaire is 200 students.

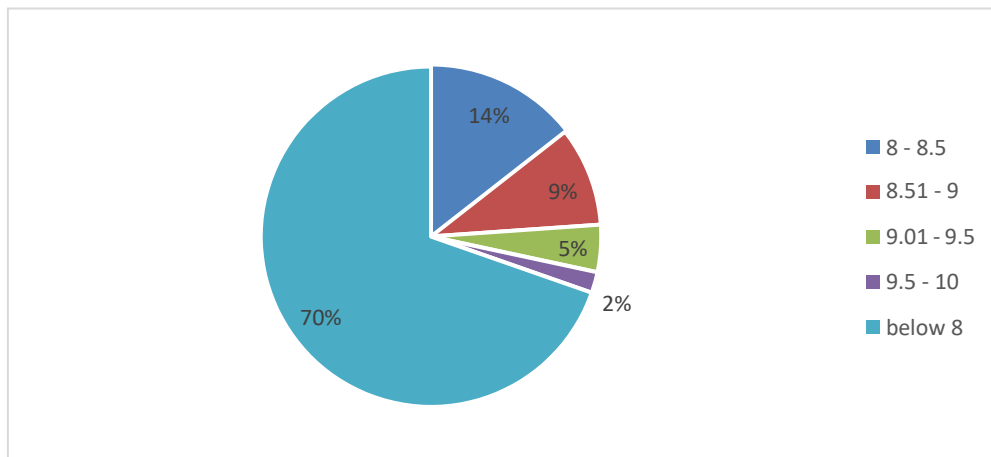
Additionally, in order to examine the integration in the labor market, ie the probability of their employment after graduation, as a function of the average success, family income, place of residence, and whether during the studies they had any form of employment applied is an econometric analysis using Binary Logistic Regression.



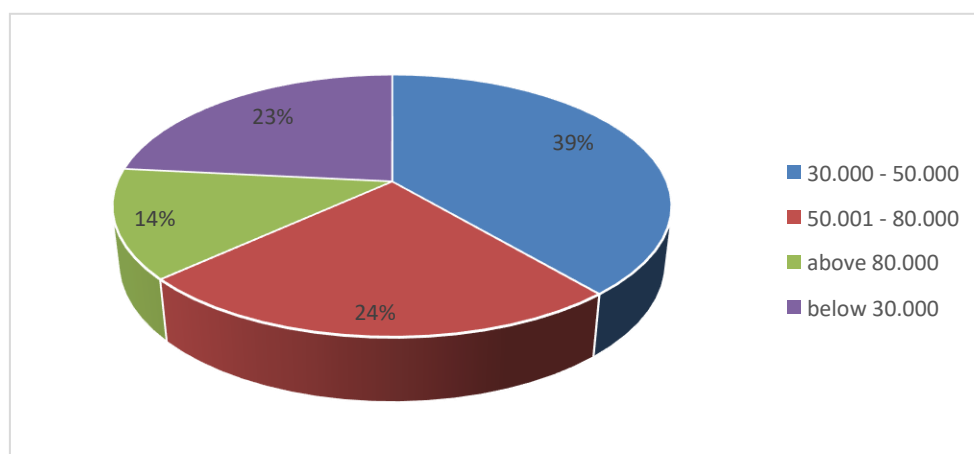
## RESULTS

Most of the respondents come from families with a monthly income between 30,000 - 50,000 MKD - 39%, while 24% of students emphasized that their family has an income of 50,000 - 80,000 MKD. It should be noted that about 23% of fourth year students come from families with a monthly income lower than 30,000 mkd. In terms of the success that students have achieved during their studies, 70% of students have achieved an average success of below 8, while only 7% of students have achieved an average success above 9.

The basic research findings indicate the fact that there is a statistically significant positive relationship between employability after graduation and the realization of some form of employment during the study. Hence, the basic hypothesis is confirmed that students who during their studies have achieved some kind of integration in the labor market, are significantly more likely to be employed immediately after graduation. The level of income in the student's family also has a statistically significant positive correlation on their likelihood of employment after graduation. The place of residence, although it increases the probability of employment of students, still does not show a statistically significant relationship. Given the fact that about 53% of students come from Skopje, but also the increased mobility among the population are part of the factors that lead to the statistically insignificant coefficient of residence.



**Figure 1.** Distribution of 4th year students according to the achieved average success (%)



**Figure 2.** Distribution of 4th year students according to family income (in MKD denars, %)

## CONCLUSION

At a time of increasing labor mobility, Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) have the task of producing employable graduates, on which to base the growth of human capital in developing countries. In this context, based on the sample of the students who are the subject of analysis in this paper, it can be concluded that about 50% of them have established some kind of work engagement in parallel with their studies. Hence, the



integration of the labor market during the studies, in addition to providing financial benefit for students, allows them to gain the necessary experience and skills, which facilitates the employment process after graduation. This statement is confirmed by the fact that students who had some form of employment during their studies are more likely to be employed immediately after graduation. Student family income is also one of the factors that have a statistically significant, positive impact on the likelihood of employment immediately after graduation. Regarding the place of residence, it can be concluded that it does not show a statistically significant relationship. However, such a coefficient is considered justified given the increased mobility of the population, as well as the small geographical distance.

**Table 1:** Results form Binary Logistic Regression model

Variable	Coefficient	Std. Error	z-Statistic	Prob.
C	0.837680	0.604901	1.384822	0.1661
Average grade	-0.974985	0.490678	-1.987016	0.0469
Employment	0.973888	0.397149	2.452202	0.0142
Income	1.93E-05	8.34E-06	2.309099	0.0209
Residence	0.232592	0.415704	0.559515	0.5758

The results of the research are an initial direction, based on which it is optimal to conduct additional research.

**Keywords:** labor market, graduation students, possibility of employment, determinants of employability

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