

Editorial

This second number of the *SEER Journal for Labour and Social Affairs in Eastern Europe* for 2015 is an open issue framed as *Social and economic challenges in the western Balkans*.

We have two blocks of articles focusing on this broad theme from different angles, taking a look at various countries of the region in a comparative way. Our articles examine access to health care and the case of equal treatment; as well as economic modernisation at enterprise level in terms of skills, human resource management and research and development. Three further articles take up political and geopolitical issues, with a link to previous articles in past issues of the *SEER Journal*, and we also have a book review examining experiences of the neo-liberal transition in the region.

In his article, *Gabriele Medas* addresses the social determinants of health, in terms of the access of the Roma population to health care services in Hungary, an issue which has lessons applying right across the entire western Balkans region.

Zhivko Minkov takes a look at the ongoing reform of the Bulgarian hospital care system, putting at the centre of his investigation the accessibility of hospital care services and the efficient use of resources.

Dimitar Nikoloski and *Ljupcho Pechijareski* examine skills supply and demand in Macedonia and draw lessons for future policy interventions. Here, policy recommendations are made to improve the match between the supply of and demand for skills as a strategy for fighting persistent unemployment in Macedonia.

Vanja Šušnjar Čanković analyses the impact of employee selection on organisational performance, based on empirical studies conducted in 250 firms in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The second article in this issue by *Dimitar Nikoloski* and *Ljupcho Pechijareski* is based on a comparative case study of western Balkans countries, focusing on the contribution of research and development to the transformation and development of the economies of the region.

In the last block, we pick up on some of the broader political themes that we have traditionally covered in the *SEER Journal* in the past.

Ajla Škrbić looks at the legacy of the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia and reviews its operation taking both its positive and negative legacy into account.

Bruno Sergi, *Vittorio D'Aleo* and *Giacomo Morabito* conduct a comparison between two economic regions, Eurasia and the Balkans, analysing data drawn from two macroeconomic variables – remittances and trade.

And, finally, *Dalibor Milić*, *Vladimir Mićić* and *Krunislav Sović* examine the issue of poverty and social exclusion in Serbia – an issue whose major importance calls for co-operation around a fresh strategy to address the impact of these problems on the continued development of the Serbian economy.

We hope that our readers find something of interest in the articles that we have featured in this edition – as well as something which may challenge findings from

their own research programmes. If we have stimulated your thought processes, why not drop us a line with an idea for an article in response? We are always open to new approaches to established themes of study and would be happy to talk to you about how your work can fit within our themes.

Béla Galgócz

January 2016

Calvin Allen