

# Editorial

The first issue of the *SEER Journal for Labour and Social Affairs in Eastern Europe* for 2017 addresses 'Future labour market challenges: digitalisation and Brexit' with two articles that reflect on the potential effects of digitalisation; while another discusses the impact of Brexit on the region. We continue our series on labour market transitions for young people, covering in this issue FYR Macedonia. One further article provides an analysis of labour market developments in Bulgaria in the last decade.

In the second bloc of this issue, we carry three further articles on a range of issues from the heritage of self-management to human rights.

In the focus topic, the article by *Dalibor Miletić, Anka Vojvodić* and *Marko Vojvodić* introduces the basic characteristics of the information technology sector in Serbia and draws a balance on how far the country is prepared for the digital age. The indicators discussed in the article show that Serbia is at the beginning of the development of the information society and that it needs to overcome a number of obstacles, from the development of the infrastructure, via a greater availability of hardware and software potential, to the necessary level of educational development.

In a related article, *Miodrag Komarčević, Milovan Dimić* and *Petar Čelik* address the main challenges and impacts of digital transformation on society and on the labour market.

*Ela Golemi* seeks to identify and evaluate the risks to which the south-east European region is exposed as a result of Brexit. Her main conclusions are that the exit of the UK from the EU will have a marginal direct impact on the economy, trade and financial sector of south-east Europe but that the region will be more exposed to Brexit's indirect effects. In the longer-term, the region stands to lose if Brexit weakens the EU integration processes that are an important policy anchor for south-east Europe.

The third article in our series based on the ILO's School-to-Work Transitions Survey sees an overview by *Nikica Mojsoska-Blazevski* offering insights into the more recent political framework for youth employment policies in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. The country has a very high youth unemployment rate and the urgency of addressing the issue is greater than in many countries. After identifying several weaknesses in the National Action Plan for Youth Employment 2012-2015, the author makes detailed political recommendations for the future.

Based on an econometric model, *Lyuboslav Kostov* examines the impact of economic growth on inflation and unemployment in Bulgaria for the period 2006-2016. The author finds that the impact of economic growth on the unemployment rate continues to have a negative effect, although the relationship between the two variables has become weakened. Based on this result, and comparing it with research by authors who have verified 'Okun's Law' in recent years in different economies, there are signs of some change in the relationship between growth and unemployment in the long-term. Under the influence of technological shocks and digitalisation, there is a risk that the economy moves towards a rate of growth which does not amend, or

which otherwise positively correlates with, unemployment. This would put a serious amount of stress on the labour market.

In the open section of this issue, *Kathrin Jurkat* looks at the erosion of self-management via the example of a former Yugoslav factory undergoing its transformation process in post-socialist Serbia.

*Remzije Istrefi* and *Iliriana Islami* examine the incorporation of international human rights into national legislation in Kosovo. The interaction between international and national law has, so far, mostly been established by states with old legal traditions; in the case of Kosovo, however, this relationship is still in its infant stage. In examining two separate phases of the establishment of Kosovo's legal infrastructure – namely: the period of the UNMIK regime; and the post-independence period – this article concludes that Kosovo's interaction with international law could be described as a work in progress.

Finally, *Mirlinda Batalli* examines a less known, but frequent, problem in public administration: the consequences of administrative silence. This is the situation when a citizen or legal entity has filed a submission with an administrative body which has then not issued an administrative act within a reasonable time. This article reviews the problem of administrative silence that has significant negative consequences regarding the fulfilment of the basic principles of administrative procedures related to citizens' rights.

**Béla Galgóczi**  
**Calvin Allen**

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