

TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY OF LODZ

**Influence of Socio-Economic  
Environment on the Development  
of Small and Medium-Sized  
Enterprises**

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# INTRODUCTION

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Modern enterprises operate in a more and more turbulent business environment. On one hand it is the said environment that constantly creates new opportunities, and on the other poses continuously increasing demands. Such situation applies to all of its levels. It is visible both on the macro-, mezzos- as well as microeconomic level. Its influence can be felt in the economic, social, legal, institutional, technological, financial, international and ecological sphere, as well as many other. Unfortunately such state significantly complicates the processes of effective management and development of many organizations. It is small and medium-sized enterprises that are affected in a particular way.

Due to the specificity and development barriers, characteristic to this group of enterprises and widely discussed in the literature, as well as increasing intensity of external influence on SMEs, many of the small and medium-sized enterprises do not cope with the day-to-day interaction with the wide range of environmental relations. This monograph has been prepared in order to support businesses in this sphere.

The monograph consists of twenty three papers. The paper authors are active researchers, belonging not only to the Polish academia but also the international one (five of the papers present results of research conducted by authors from Great Britain, Egypt, Latvia, Slovakia). The papers have been divided into four, thematically consistent parts.

**Part one** contains the papers attempting to characterise the influence of modern business environment on the development of small and medium-sized enterprises. In five of the included papers one can find tips on effective operating, both in the knowledge economy, in the conditions of interorganisational cooperation, with the support of the national investment fund, in post-accession economy and in the environment of widely understood external support.

**Part two** consists of seven papers discussing the problems of SMEs' functioning in the modern market environment. It raises the issues of the analysis of relationships small and medium-sized enterprises have with the business environment, the influence of environment changes on corporate communication and reputation, the possibility of creating competitive advantage by creating brands and reputation management. Substantial part of this section is

devoted to the issues of euromarketing of SMEs as well as their competitiveness and social responsibility.

**Part three** is the attempt to fit the issues of SMEs' functioning in the institutional and legal environment. Included are five papers discussing selected topics in this area. These papers discuss the legal aspects and problems of public-private partnership, the role of the local government in establishing conditions for the business development, legal aspects of civil liability insurance of company board members, NGOs activities on national or international market oraz an approach towards integration of architectural design and economic dimension.

Finally **part four** is a synthetic review of SMEs' functioning in the financial environment. It consists of six papers raising the issues that are the most common problem experienced by SMEs: financial statement, capital cost and funding sources, fiscal solutions for small firms, impact of goods and services tax, banking innovation and chosen issues on their support.

The expressed hope is that the discussions presented in the monograph, be it theoretical or resulting from complex empirical research, would not only substantially widen and organise the knowledge base on SMEs as far as the perception of their position and relation to the environment is concerned, but also become an inspiration for the representatives of this group of businesses to make more of the opportunities generated by the modern business environment.

Hence it seems that the hereby monograph may become a valuable addition to the process of exploring and enhancing the functioning of SMEs.