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**International Balkan and Near Eastern Social Sciences
Congress ***

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Abstract. International Balkan and Near Eastern Social Sciences Congress Series (IBANESS) Congress series are held in different Balkan countries with hosting Universities in Balkan countries. The organization committee includes respected scientists from all over the world. The main aim of the congress is to bring together scientists from Balkan countries in order to disseminate the knowledge and mutual understanding. IBANESS include four meetings in 2017, namely Edirne/Turkey, Russe/Bulgaria, Kırklareli/Turkey and Ohrid/Macedonia..

Keywords. Balkan economies, Near Eastern economies, Social sciences.

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Conference Notes

This year, International Balkan and Near Eastern Social Sciences Conference Series started in Edirne, TURKEY on March 4-5, 2017. The congress is initiated by the opening speeches of Rector of Agribusiness and Rural Development, Bulgaria Prof. Dr. Eng. Dimtar Kirilov Dimitriov and Vice Dean of University St. Kliment Ohridski-Bitola, Macedonia Assoc. Prof.Dr. Tatjana Spaseska. The opening presentation of the congress was made by Mahmut Şahin who is the general secretary of Trace Development Agency. Mr. Şahin's presentation is centered on the social and economic development of Trace Region of Turkey. During the congress, more than 200 papers were presented by the participants from about 60 universities.

There were many fruitful sessions during the conference. One of the main topics centered during the conference was Rural Development. The presentation by Ekaterina Arabska and Maria Velikova focused on the sustainable rural development through organic production encouragement. On the other hand, Stefka Timareva discussed rural tourism as an important factor in rural development. Bülent Gürbüz attempted to explore the level of abuse towards women in rural areas. Emel Gönenç-Güler empirically studied eco tourism marketing by analyzing promo-river project with perspectives from university students in Edirne, Turkey. Harun Hurma, M. Ömer Azabağaoğlu and Çağdaş İnan evaluated green marketing approaches to the development of sustainable rural tourism activities.

The other main topic centered during the conference was Tourism. Zlatka Grigorova, Ivanka Shopova and Stefka Timareva studied the impact of culture and history on tourism on the context of Trace Tourism. Julijana Siljanoska, Katerina Bojkovska and Monika Angeloska-Dichovska presented the international tourism potential of Macedonia and emphasized managing of integrated marketing communication as a key factor in creating competitive international tourist offer.

* Edirne, Turkey on March 4-5, 2017.

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İbrahim Çetin proposed branding strategies for cities in tourism industry. Adnan Duygun analyzed Pokémon Go example as a marketing strategy. Radka Tosheva examined the role of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) in tourism education and their applications in tourism practice.

Participants from different countries presented their current research on the firm performance. The study by Ljupce Markusheski and Aleksandra Jovanoska offered modern systems for decision support in Macedonian companies. Ilija Hristoski, Olivera Kostoska, Zoran Kotevski and Tome Dimovski critically investigated factors affecting the competitiveness of e-commerce firms. Margarita Janeska, Dejan Zdraveski and Suzana Taleska analyzed autonomic computing systems as perspective for integration of business processes. The study of Aneta Risteska-Jankuloska, Tatjana Spaseska, Fanka Risteska and Miroslav Gveroski focused on entrepreneurship and SMEs in Republic of Macedonia. Nikolina Mareva evaluated the investment performance of Bulgarian Pension Funds by using risk-adjusted measures. Natally Mihova-Stoyanova investigated investment in the human resource management.

Thus, participants of the congress found opportunities for presenting their new research, exchanging information, and discussing current issues. They shared their experience and knowledge with each other. Hence, the congress helped dissemination of knowledge, mutual understanding, and cooperation among participants.

Presented articles of the conference are published in a conference flash disk, proceeding book with ISBN number and on conference web site. Selected papers are also published in KSP journals and Balkan and Near Eastern Journal of Social Sciences which is the official journal of IBANESS Congress Series.



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