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## IAI Book of Abstracts

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## **The Albanian economy during Covid-19 and energy crisis. Comparison with Western Balkans countries.**

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### **Abstract**

As we know, the Western Balkans are made up of 6 countries such as Albania, Montenegro, Kosovo, North Macedonia, Serbia and Bosnia Herzegovina. The impact of Covid-19 and the energy crisis put the economies of these countries in front of great difficulties. All the economies of the Western Balkans continue to be very sensitive and facing a very turbulent external environment, placing peoples, businesses and governments under unprecedented difficulties. The pandemic covid-19 and Ukraine war which implied an increase in commodity prices, energy prices, as well as a slowdown in the growth of the Western Balkans as well as the global one. All six economies suffered in their economic performances. Thus, the high prices of energy and the increase in food causes us to have inflation at higher levels unseen for many years before. The purpose of this paper is to taking into comparative analysis, to get the economy of Albania in relation to the economies of the Western Balkan countries during and after the pandemic and the presence of the energy crisis. The economies of this region faced great difficulties in many directions and sectors of the economies. The negative effects in the economy come as a result of the pandemic, the war in Ukraine, the energy crisis, the decrease in remittances due to the pandemic, the increase in inflation and the increase in commodity prices, the blockage and the decrease in energy production in hydropower plants, the reduction of imports and others indicators that this paper aims to demonstrate. This paper will also show the response of the governments of the Western Balkan countries to their countries, as well as the international organizations response to the support of these fragile economies.

***Keywords:* Albania economic growth, Western Balkans challenges, Covid-19 and energy crisis, government responses.**

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# Soft Skills as a Transversal Competence: An Empirical Investigation Based on the ESCO Taxonomy and Literature Review

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## Abstract

A changing market, influenced by different factors such as globalization, digitalization and robotization, toppled by remote work popularity, urges close monitoring. The soft skills needed for individuals in search of jobs and career success have fallen into a new era of interest for numerous actors playing in society.

In the absence of a commonly agreed definition and list of soft skills, we carried out extended research of the existing literature and gathered examples of soft skills given by fellow researchers in 62 scientific works, state official documents and industry reports. We categorized them and compared them to the ESCO taxonomy (up to three digits), counting the number of times each of the skills was mentioned and identified as a soft skill. Furthermore, we charted them from the soft skills most frequently mentioned by the literature to the ones most rarely mentioned. As a result, we identified 4 one-digit skills categories and 5 one-digit skills and competences from the ESCO taxonomy. These split into 62 two-digit skills and competences and further into 388 three-digit skills and competences. Thus, according to the results of our research, 4 out of 7 one-digit skills categories and 5 out of 6 one-digit transversal skills and competences contain, in their subcategories, soft skills.

Our findings represent a solid start in the field of research regarding soft skills and can represent a milestone argument for other scientists to base their research on, as well as for governmental stakeholders to base their policies on.

*Keywords:* soft skills literature review; ESCO taxonomy.

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## Specific challenges for a sustainable nautical tourism

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### Abstract

Aims of the research point out the existence of various external changes, changes in the environment, which have led in a positive or negative way to changes in the impact and trends in nautical tourism, but also to changes in the behaviour of tourists. Purpose of the paper its to identify those changes that have the strongest effect on the impact of nautical tourism. In this paper, nautical tourism will be the focus of the research.

The following theoretical and empirical research goals have been defined: to analyse the economic, environmental and social impacts of nautical tourism and identification, analysis of the exogenous changes that caused but also influenced these impacts and analyse the exogenous changes that are most pronounced in these evolving and very challenging moments, as well as the growing importance of digital technologies, digital business models and smart tourism technology. In addition to analysing the most pronounced exogenous changes, the paper aims to identify those changes that have the strongest effect on the impact of nautical tourism, so that they can be managed in the future and prepare adequately for the consequences. The paper reports on the research, include suggestions for the future research and provide information about any identified limitations during the research process.

The paper will highlight the context in which the exogenous changes have left their mark on nautical tourism and will reveal changes in the impact of nautical tourism. The paper will explore specific challenges for sustainable nautical tourism. Taking into account current exogenous changes, the proposed research will improve theoretical knowledge and provide a deeper understanding of the impacts of nautical tourism, the results of which will serve as a basis for decision-making in tourism management.

*Keywords:* sustainable tourism, sustainable nautical tourism, specific challenges, impacts of nautical tourism.

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## A General Overview of Green Growth in Albania

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### Abstract

Green economy and green growth are two concepts that are gaining a lot of popularity over the last decade, while many international organisations are dealing with these two concepts. Albania is committed to the principles of green economy. On the last years, it is observed a growing body of literature on these topics. The green growth index is analysed by using the OECD database, as a tool used to evaluate the progress towards green growth. According to the Green Growth Index (GGI) for Albania, the overall 2022 score is 60.48, which is higher compared to the 2019-2021 years (ranking at 32 positions). Respectively, the dimensions of efficient and sustainable resource use, natural capital protection, green economic opportunities, and social inclusion in 2022 have the scores 64.72, 82.38, 9.63, and 76.54. These scores indicate that Albania has a strategic position to reach the target of sustainable development, especially in the areas of natural capital protection and social inclusion.

*Keywords:* green economy, green growth index, dimensions of GGI, Albania

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## The influence of television programs

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### **Abstract**

The influence of television on children and adolescents is still strong.

Despite the spread of social networks, where young people spend more time. Parents feel powerless to control what programs their children watch and decide how many hours their children watch television. In social networks and on the Internet, parents find it even more difficult to control their children. Where even the pages they look at are unchecked. And there is no filtering like television. Although children are more at risk when surfing the Internet, the influence of television should not be forgotten and neglected

*Keywords:* television, Albania, violence, children, teenagers.

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# **Binary system of justice, between the positive law and blood feud. The impact on the sustainable development and the EU integration process**

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## **Abstract**

In Albania there are two separate legal systems. In one side there is the positive law and at the opposite side there is the customary law, where both coexist and continuously ignore the presence of each-other. This problem seems not to influence the ongoing integration process of the country, as far as economic development seems to be the most prominent issue so far. But the discrepancies in these terms have negatively influenced the legal and economic sustainability of the country. Many children and men are confined in their residential towers because of the blood feud, without having the possibility to have a normal life and the basic human freedoms. For the state point of view, Blood Feud and Kanun are primitive and the only way to come out from their influence, should be a "struggle" with policemen and general prosecutor' office, in order to make populations suppress the existence of the ancient rules. The proposal wants to suggest the theory of interfering with state policy based on consciousness and integrity awareness. Thus, because the binary system should be considered an imminent problem to be resolved, looking the prospective of a sustainable governance, regional collaboration and EU integration.

*Keywords:* blood feud, sustainable governance, confinement, customary law, regional cooperation, Eu integration

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# Analyzing the financial investment portfolio in Albanian Commercial Banks

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## Abstract

Commercial banks in Albania play a dominant role in the absorption of government instruments both in the primary market conducted by the Central Bank of Albania and in the creation of the OTC secondary market of these securities. The main analysis of the paper is based on the qualitative interpretation of secondary data for the period January 2016- February 2023 of the investment portfolio in government securities by commercial banks in Albania. The analysis spans this time span in order to analyze two crucial economic moments: the Covid-19 pandemic and the War in Ukraine.

The structure of the banking financial portfolio in Albania is dominated by the investment in government bonds conditioned by: the lack of the capital market in Albania; the restrictive framework applied by the Bank of Albania for the risk profile of banking investment; the trading agent role that commercial banks have for government securities in the OTC secondary market.

The study found a continuous increase in the share of investment in government bonds to total banking assets. The upward trend is finalized with the highest value in December 2022 with a weight of 26.57% from 23.1% that was in December 2016. According to the study, there is a stronger correlation between long-term investment securities, compared to the shortest terms. The results showed a more stronger and positive relationship for 7-year government bonds than for other securities types.

*Keywords: government bonds, investment portfolio, commercial banks, interest rate, banking assets*

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## **The statistical models for surveillance activity of the Gura Râului Dam**

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### **Abstract**

The foundation system of the dam is equipped with many monitoring devices, including: 2 inverse pendulums, 7 rockmeters with 3 rods, telepressmeters, 4 direct pendulums, drainage drillings and hydrometers. Using this network of devices, the dam is inspected periodically and monitored for safety purposes. To process this information for predicting the behavior of the dam, statistical models such as Condor, EDF and autoregressive (AR) model are used.

Important aspects concerning the safety of operations are presented in the article. We aim to confirm the fact that the dams behavior is as expected, good performance and safety, using statistical modelling.

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## **Digital television, media literacy education of young people – an emergency in the new era of information (Albanian Case)**

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### **Abstract**

Media literacy serves in a democratic society to people enabling them to develop critical thinking skills and offering a tool to examine several issues as they are represented in the media. People who are media literate can adopt a critical stance when decoding media messages, no matter their views regarding a position. It enables people to make decisions when electing their leaders. In this paper, we will try to examine, to what level Albanian televisions are concerned about media literacy issues, by covering programmes for **young people** and developing policies to educate the **young generation**. The role that the Albanian Media Authority has to play in media literacy education of the general public and especially young people.

We compared the regulations and policies of the Albanian Audiovisual Media Authority with those of the country as UK which is considered a good model in Europe.

We monitored and gathered data about how the issues of young people are covered in the programmes and if Albanian Public vs private broadcasting produces any format dedicated to young people. Our research intended to understand if media literacy education policies are considered from public vs private media and if producing programs dedicated to young people is a priority. Interviewees are developed with directors of programming in public and private programmes well as with young TV moderators and journalists are developed, to get more in-depth of their perception of these issues.

We become to the conclusion that Albanian public and private televisions are far from developing a strategy for media literacy policies, especially with a focus on **young people**. The action plan of the Albanian Media Authority considers media literacy education actions but not giving importance and place that it takes in the new era of information.

This paper will examine the actions of the Albanian Media Authority related to media literacy education and the role it has to play in young people's education through the policies and programmes broadcasted for the youngsters. But till at what extent the Media Authority must be regulated or co-regulated, are there policies that audiovisual media must apply in terms of complaints made regarding programmes, issues warning media literacy, and education of **young people**?

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# Urbanization, foreign direct investments and the moderating role of corruption on entrepreneurship in an emerging economy

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## Abstract

Demographic movements are common as people pursue opportunities for a better life. In the context of entrepreneurial opportunities, research from developed countries shows a positive relationship between urbanization and entrepreneurial activity. However, we know little about this in the more informal economy context of developing countries where foreign direct investments (FDI) also play an important role. Based on evidence from Albania, findings from this study show that there is a negative relationship between urban population and the new business creation rate which is different from what we know about developed countries. This implies that emerging economies are more entrepreneurial when people live in rural areas where they have their own subsistence small farms and businesses. In addition, the negative relationship between FDI and the new business creation rate shows that urbanization presents challenging opportunities for locals to start their businesses in the cities when foreign companies move in at the same time. Corruption plays an important role in the business ecosystem of emerging economies because not only it has a negative relationship with the new business creation rate, but it also strengthens the negative relationships between urbanization and FDI with it. In summary, this study shows that in emerging economies, people moving into big cities have limited entrepreneurship opportunities as they are unable to compete with FDI or deal with corruption barriers. Policies encouraging entrepreneurship in emerging economies need to carefully consider these problems, and build an inclusive environment for FDI to consider the potential of local people not only as cheap labour, but also as entrepreneurs and partners.

*Keywords:* urbanization, foreign direct investments, corruption, entrepreneurship.

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# Using the Pade Approximation for the Transient Analysis of Uniform Lossy Lines

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## Abstract

The analysis of electromagnetic transients in transmission lines, which are characterized as circuits with distributed parameters, is very important from both a theoretical and practical point of view. In this paper is presented an efficient method, based on a combine of the Pade approximation with generalized transmission lines equations. It is used the synthesis in the frequency - domain of the characteristic impedance or admittance and the exponential propagation function, which are realized by classical methods of Foster and Cauer. As a result of the combination of the Pade approximation with general transmission line equations, the problem of transient analysis of the uniform lossy line is brought to the calculation of a lossless line and a lumped-parameters network. So, it allows the analysis in the time-domain of the transients in two-conductor or multi-conductor transmission lines. The presented simulation results demonstrate the validity and the efficiency of the proposed model.

*Keywords:* transmission line, Pade approximation, lossy, transients

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# Metaphoric conceptualization of unhappiness in English and Georgian languages and cultures

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## **Abstract**

Metaphor is an integral part of a speech community as metaphorical expressions are used by members of society to express cultural values and to communicate their worldviews (Lakoff and Johnson, 2008 ). The choice of metaphors to conceptualise emotions (for instance, unhappiness and sorrow) may be determined by the cultural metaphoric models shared by a speech community which arise from global and local contexts (Kövecses, 2015). The social dimensions regarding the variation of metaphors are rooted in “the experiences of the people”. As metaphors represent human experience, then metaphors may vary according to social divisions (Kövecses, 2005: 88).

This paper will explore the universal and cultural-specific, metaphoric models employed while conceptualization of the concept of unhappiness in Georgian and English cultures and languages to identify universal and variant metaphoric cultural models.

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# Integration and cooperation of small NATO member states – the case of Afghanistan

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## Abstract

International relations and the integration of different countries in the pursuit of wider international security often raise the question of whether it is possible for small and large countries to make the same contribution and achieve at least similar, if not identical, effects. This may not seem a logical question, since the NATO member states are, after all, very different countries in terms of geography, history, organisation, military and so on. In the case of Afghanistan, we have been exploring the organisational aspect of small member states and aspirant countries and the evaluation of their (military) contributions within the Alliance and partnership initiatives. A comparative analysis between the six countries showed that each contribution can be evaluated and which of the theoretical approaches to identify their (military) contributions might be the best. There are several criteria for evaluation, which dictates the possible use of several different models.

*Keywords:* international relations, international security, NATO, small states, partnerships, Afghanistan.

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## Extradition as an Effective Tool in the Fight Against Crime

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### Abstract

Fernand de Cardaillac in 1878 defined extradition as “the right of the state in whose territory a convicted or accused person has taken refuge, to deliver him to another state which has requested him and which is competent to judge and punish him”. According to Whiteman, extradition is defined as “the process by which a person charged or convicted of a crime under the law of one state and who is in the territory of another state, is returned from the latter to the former for trial or punishment”. As far as European Union is concerned, criminal norms are produced within the third pillar of the community, which deals precisely with cooperation in the criminal field. The third pillar of the EU aims to offer citizens through criminal law and criminal procedure “a high level of protection, within a space of freedom, security and justice”.

This paper aims to address the main aspects related to the institution of extradition, as one of the main and most effective tools in the fight against crime. European criminal law is that set of criminal norms (material, procedural, and penitentiary) common to several European states in the fight against crime, especially international organized crime.

The paper is structured in five substructures that are focused on the meaning, effects, procedures, legal aspects and several important and most discussed international cases of extradition.

At the end this paper suggests some legal initiatives that can be implemented to strengthen this very important institution of criminal law in the fight against crime.

*Keywords:* extradition; punishment; state sovereignty; International Convention; legal; legislative initiative.

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## An empirical approach in the study of heterogenous Na-tech systems

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### **Abstract**

In this work we have discussed a combination of practical methods in the study of some nonlinear, heterogenous systems with sparse data as case-studies. We used the empirical or descriptive analysis to overcome the nonlinearity of data series and proposed a physics measurement perquisite when applying as determinist model for highly heterogeneous data. In this case we have considered the heterogeneity grade itself as measurable feature. As case study were considered FX series and Covid data for Albanian and a comparative view with respective Balkan system and renormalized a simple model for electricity consumption for Albania. In another application we considered typical distribution properties and some ad hoc modification to analyze electoral links and properties of the political opinion formation.

*Keywords:* heterogenous systems, measurement approach, empirical methods

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# **Foreign Language Teaching and Creating Activities for Non-Native Speakers in the Business Context: Taking an Inside Look at a Comparative Study between English and German**

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## **Abstract**

The main purpose of this study is to provide significant recommendations for teaching foreign languages in the context of business purposes. In this regard, purposive activities were created based on the concept of how second foreign language (L2) and third foreign language (L3) can complement each other to successfully learn in the context of Non-Native Speakers. These activities include the following: 1) Matching: Match the phrases in English with their comparable ones in German; 2) Translation at the Vocabulary Level; 3) Translation at the Sentence Level. In each activity, learners have to apply the knowledge based on a comparative study between the two languages. It is also suggested in this study that comparing the knowledge of German with what learners have learned previously, namely the knowledge of English, can enhance the competence of learners to their fullest potential. Additionally, it is discussed that some practical recommendations for further studies can be provided to foreign language teachers concerning producing others related materials and effective language pedagogy for non-native speakers.

*Keywords:* Language Teaching, Business Context, English, German

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# Therapeutic gardens

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## Abstract

This paper aims to shed light on the influence of therapeutic gardens on individuals with special needs, especially on "different learners." We examine therapeutic gardens through the historical development of garden design and plant use knowledge. Horticultural therapy is an interdisciplinary science that improves individuals' social, cognitive, physical, and psychological well-being through its approaches. Sensory gardens are in the foreground, designed to stimulate the five senses: sight, touch, smell, sound, and taste. We identify pupils with special needs who are "different learners." Different learners, both children and adults, have similar needs. Is there a more suitable place to meet these needs than in a garden? We demonstrate ways to use gardens as therapeutic tools and their impact on various groups of individuals with special needs through examples of good practice.

Therapeutic gardens are designed to provide sensory stimulation, emotional comfort, and physical exercise, making them an ideal environment for horticultural therapy. Therapeutic gardens benefit people with special needs, such as learning disabilities, physical disabilities, or mental health disorders. Research has shown that therapeutic gardens can help improve various symptoms, such as anxiety, depression, aggression, and self-esteem.

Horticultural therapy is a practical approach that can enhance the well-being of individuals with special needs. Using therapeutic gardens as a therapeutic tool can help improve individuals' social, cognitive, physical, and psychological well-being. Sensory gardens are particularly effective as they provide a range of sensory experiences that can be tailored to meet the needs of the individual. Horticultural therapy is a powerful tool that can help individuals with special needs improve their quality of life, and therapeutic gardens are an essential component of this approach.

*Keywords:* gardens, education, inclusion, motivation, sensory gardens, individuals with special needs

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## Projects, great way to study (and teach)

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### Abstract

The aim of this paper is to provide an overview on project-based learning and teaching, focusing on case studies from three universities: the University of Maribor, the University of Ljubljana, and TU Wien.

The paper presents the theoretical foundations of project-based learning and highlights its benefits, such as enhancing student engagement, promoting active learning, and developing critical thinking skills. The case studies illustrate how project-based learning can be implemented in different disciplines and academic levels, from undergraduate to graduate programs.

The presented case studies demonstrate the versatility and effectiveness of project-based learning and teaching and emphasize an interdisciplinary approach. They show how projects can be tailored to meet different learning objectives, disciplines, and academic levels. Additionally, they provide valuable insights into the challenges and benefits of implementing project-based learning in higher education.

*Keywords:* project-based learning, active learning, interdisciplinary projects, inquiry-based learning, student engagement

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## Generalizations of Graded Prime $r$ -Ideals Over Graded Rings

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### **Abstract**

Let  $G$  be an abelian group and  $R$  be a commutative  $G$ -graded ring with unity  $1$ . In this article we introduce the concept of graded weakly prime (resp., almost) graded prime  $r$ -ideals. A proper graded  $r$ -ideal  $P$  of a graded ring  $R$  is said to be graded weakly prime  $r$ -ideal if whenever  $a, b \in h(R)$  such that  $0 \neq ab \in P$  then either  $a \in P$  or  $b \in P$ . Also a proper graded  $r$ -ideal  $P$  of a graded ring  $R$  is said to be almost graded prime  $r$ -ideal if whenever  $a, b \in h(R)$  such that  $ab \in P - P^2$  imply  $a \in P$  or  $b \in P$ . Several properties and characteristics of graded such ideals will be introduced. Also will classify all graded rings for which every proper graded weakly (resp., almost) ideal is graded weakly (resp., almost)  $r$ -ideal.

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