

Foreword

Dear Reader

As President of the European Council for Small Business (ECSB), I take great pleasure in introducing the latest volume in the 'Frontiers in European Entrepreneurship Research' series. This volume contains papers selected from among the 139 papers presented at the 27th Research in Entrepreneurship and Small Business (RENT) Conference held in Vilnius, Lithuania. The RENT Conference, which is jointly organized by ECSB and EIASM (The European Institute for Advanced Studies in Management), is the most important pan-European conference for entrepreneurship scholars and experts. We are very proud of how ECSB and EIASM have been able to transform this event into one of the best entrepreneurship conferences worldwide. While ECSB also runs the 3E Conference and co-brands numerous other activities all year round, the life of our association still culminates in our annual meeting at the RENT conference, which is also the ECSB signature event and has been run successfully for almost 30 years. This is the crucible where our members have the opportunity to connect with those from their existing and new networks and to make new friends.

ECSB is a non-profit organization whose mission it is to contribute to developing the understanding of entrepreneurship and consequently to improve the competitiveness of European small- and medium-sized enterprises. With more than 400 full members and a growing network presently counting in excess of 2000 friends from 38 European countries, ECSB remains the largest European association of researchers, educators and practitioners in entrepreneurship. However, ECSB is a not only a professional community; it also constitutes an intellectual home for its members, a setting in which they can meet likeminded colleagues and link up with potential research partners.

The Board of ECSB works hard at making the RENT conference more attractive to its members. Today, the conference is surrounded by several pre-conference activities and more are planned for the future. Among other things, we hope to introduce Professional Development Workshops (PDWs) to our members. Our current pre-conference activities include a doctoral and a post-doctoral workshop, the former assisting doctoral

students with improving their research, the latter providing post-docs with an opportunity to improve a selected publication. We also continue to offer the policy forum themes around topical issues and linking up with the local organizers of the conference. In addition, we offer special interest groups (SIGs) for our members and a mentoring programme to assist in career development which links up seasoned scholars with junior members who can benefit from the experience and advice of their peers.

The RENT Frontiers series, now in its 10th edition, is an important means of acknowledging the scientific achievements of our community and of leaving a tangible legacy for our current and future members. The Frontiers series offers a representative but selected overview into the latest and cutting-edge developments in entrepreneurship and small business research in Europe. The chapters presented in this book were selected from the best papers presented at the conference upon nomination from the Scientific Committee and the session Chairs. The chosen papers then go through a review process of at least two stages until they have achieved the high-quality standard required to be included in the final publication.

The aim of the series is to disseminate the latest research insight to the benefit of a larger community of stakeholders that extends well beyond the academic network. The Frontiers series has become a key resource for all those interested in expanding what we know about entrepreneurship and how this knowledge can be exploited to create a more entrepreneurial Europe.

Last but not least, I would like to extend my appreciation to those on the editorial board, who have given up their precious time and expertise to make this 10th edition of 'Frontiers in European Entrepreneurship Research' a reality.

Helle Neergaard
ECSB President
2015