

University of Bergen in cooperation with European Business History Association

**1st World Congress on Business History /
20th Congress of the European Business History Association**

“Business History around the World”

Thursday 25 – Saturday 27 August 2016, Bergen, Norway

Today business and globalization are under fire. Both multinational and local businesses are challenged by a combination of an insecure macroeconomic environment and expectations about commerce’s social role. Recent economic data has called into question the inevitability of high growth rates in even the most dynamic emerging markets, such as China and Brazil, and raised questions about the viability of old and new business models. Much of Europe has not completely recovered from the 2008 Crisis and its aftershocks. In contrast to many other downturns, US growth does not seem large enough to compensate for weaknesses in other regions. Inconsistent financial flows to and from OECD countries have added to the volatility and extent of economic growth in developing countries. To what extent is business responsible? The historical origins of this development deserve revisiting existing theoretical frameworks and empirical research. Are the visible hands of enterprise responsible for “great leaps forward” as well as economic crisis?

The joint Congress on Business History invites scholars to submit papers. The Congress’s mission is to capture current best practice, encourage new innovative ideas and to compare content, approaches, and methodology across the world. The organizers are particularly interested in attracting contributions with cross-border implications, rather than national case studies. As historians, our research interests and methodologies go beyond comparative statistical data, focusing rather on historical contextualization, institutional development as well as individual contributions to business over time. The program committee welcomes papers on a wide-range of topics, but our special interest is in the various dimensions of cross-border business. These include but are not limited to the following attitudinal, institutional, and methodological research questions:

- 1) How do regions, cultures, and individuals shape commercial competencies?
- 2) Are successful international businesses global or regional? What defines the differences?
- 3) How do firms from emerging markets enter foreign markets?
- 4) Are businesses of similar size and in similar sectors the same or different across cultures?

- 5) What are the different patterns of internationalization? Do sectors such as automotive or chemical behave differently?
- 6) What models for international business serve as alternatives to multinationals?
- 7) How do macroeconomic and political environments shape the form and content of international business?
- 8) What are the effects of foreign direct investment on home and host countries?
- 9) How do small- and medium-sized firms get a global reach?
- 10) What factors help or hinder internationalization?
- 11) Do First-Movers control markets or do markets adapt?
- 12) What firms are good at adaptation, and why?
- 13) What is the impact of illegal and “grey areas”, such as crony capitalism, on international business activities?
- 14) How do bubbles, competition, and regulation affect internationalization?
- 15) To what extent are national, firm, or sectoral patterns of development path dependent?
- 16) How do firms decide international entry strategies and target markets?
- 17) How has technology affected internationalization?
- 18) How can international and other business theory be best combined with historical methodology? Are new technologies in business history changing its agenda, methods, and goals?
- 19) How do government policies affect globalization?
- 20) How does cross-border business affect corporate social responsibility?

The organizers invite scholars working on different national and regional patterns of business development, especially research that deals with comparative topics and cross-border flows reflecting more than one destination, not work with purely national scope and implications. We particularly want to attract research on international business and comparative research, reflecting worldwide diversity of business models, sectors, and actors. Our global meeting provides a forum for broadening our approaches to opening the discipline to a new generation of scholars.

In addition to proposals for individual papers, scholars are particularly invited to propose entire panel sessions. For full panel sessions, we strongly recommend integrating a variety of comparative national or regional differences.

Our goal is to maximize the program’s capability to highlight global comparisons of firms, industries, entrepreneurial families, markets, actors, business organizations, industrial clusters, and other dimensions of business. Consequently, single papers which are not international in scope will be merged into sessions with a comparative approach along supranational, industrial, market or other categories. Despite our

specific orientation, the Program Committee will also consider submissions not directly related to the conference theme.

The congress fees for attendees from OECD countries who register early will be Norwegian crowns (NOK) 1700 (about Euro 185, US-dollars 208), regular registration NOK 2000. For NON OECD attendees and students, the early-bird rate will be NOK 750 (Euro 105) and regular NOK 900 (Euro 120). In addition, the local organizer will have a travel fund for colleagues coming from non-OECD countries. Another committee is looking into further funding. Please contact the local organizers for assistance.

Session proposals and single paper proposals can be submitted online through the congress website or the EBHA-website beginning on October 1. (www.ebha.org). An explanation will guide applicants about the format of the proposals (length of abstract, cv, etc.). Please use that platform for submissions.

Deadline of all proposals is 31 December 2015.

All applicants will receive a mail recognizing the reception of the proposal.

E-mails concerning acceptances will be sent by the end of February 2016.

The program-committee consists of Andrea Lluch (National Scientific and Technical Research Council, Buenos Aires, Argentina, alluch@conicet.gov.ar), Christopher Kobrak (EBHA / University of Toronto, Rotman School of Management, Canada, email Chris.Kobrak@rotman.utoronto.ca), Andrea H. Schneider (EBHA / GUG, Germany, ahschneider@unternehmensgeschichte.de) and Takashi Shimizu (BHSJ / University of Tokyo, Japan, tshimizu@waka.c.u-tokyo.ac.jp).

Local organizer:

Harm Schröter (harm.schroter@ahkr.uib.no)

University of Bergen

Visit Address: Øysteinsgate 1

Postal Address: Postboks 7805

5020 Bergen, Norway

<http://www.uib.no/en/bhbergen2016>

<http://www.ebha.org>