



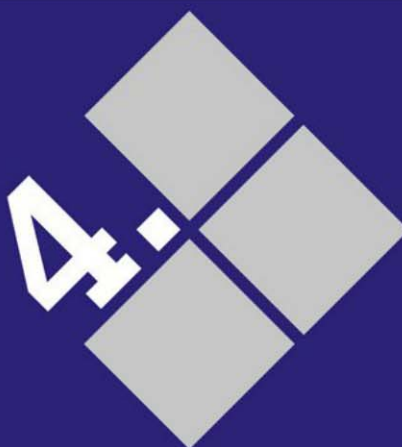
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referatov**

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poslovni izzivi  
globalizacije v letu 2012**

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Celje, 15.-16. november 2012

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in 2012**

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4. mednarodne znanstvene konference  
Znanje in poslovni izzivi globalizacije v letu 2012

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**How to write and publish a paper in ISI journal: A closer look to Eastern European economics, business and management journals**

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Aggressive central bank policy and influence on capital markets



**Photo gallery**



**Conference programme**

**More information about conference**

# Kazalo/Contents

## Vabljeno predavanje na plenarnem zasedanju

Invited plenary lecture

### **Mirjana Pejić Bach**

How to write and publish a paper in ISI journal: A closer look to Eastern European economics, business and management journals

## **Aktualni vidiki podjetništva in trženja**

Current aspects of entrepreneurship and marketing

### **Mladen Borić**

Specializirana mreža za trženje življenjskih zavarovanj omogoča večji indeks rasti prodaje  
Specialized network marketing of life insurance provides greater level of sales

### **Štefanija Bornšek**

Pravo, kriza in politika  
Law, crises and politics

### **Desimir Bošković, Ana Težak Damijanić, Zdravko Šergo**

Segmenting tourists based on interest for visiting attraction on rural area

### **Desimir Bošković, Ana Težak Damijanić, Darko Saftić**

Influence of children on marketing of tourism destination attributes

### **Mojca Braz**

Motivacijski dejavniki v slovenskih podjetjih  
Motivational factors in Slovene companies

### **Jože Celin**

Vpliv izbranih dejavnikov na produktivnost slovenskih zavarovalnic  
Impact of selected factors on productivity of Slovenian insurance companies

### **Ljerka Cerović, Nikolina Dukić, Tijana Horvat**

The agency problem in healthcare and the importance of incentives

### **Ksenija Dumičić, Miro Simonič, Gabrijel Devetak**

Statistical analysis of poultry meat supply data for European countries

### **Martina Ferk, Maja Quien**

Entrepreneurial competence of women in EU project management

### **Nataša Fink, Desimir Bošković**

Spremljanje stroškov naročanja in zalog v Sloveniji  
Monitoring the cost of procurement and supply in Slovenia

**Anita Goltnik Urnaut**

Vrednote, delovni motivi in zadovoljstvo z delom  
Values, work motives and job satisfaction

**Štefka Gorenak**

Pomen upravljanja odnosov s kupci  
Importance of Customer Relationship Management

**Petronije Jevtić, Ljiljana Stošić Mihajlović**

Changing organizational structure and team work

**Nataša Keuc**

Nagrajevanje prodajnikov – analiza  
Reward salespeople – analysis

**Beno Klemenčič, Natalija Klemenčič**

Moda in stališče mladih porabnikov do modnih oblačil  
Fashion and opinions of young consumers towards fashion clothes

**Aleksandra Kregar Brus**

Poslovni modeli in vrednost podjetja; ali določeni poslovni modeli prinašajo več vrednosti podjetju?  
Business models and the value of the company; do some business models perform better than others?

**Miran Lampret**

Fiksni in variabilni del plač v strukturi plač slovenskih podjetij  
Fixed and variable component of salaries in the salaries' structure of slovene enterprises

**Karmen Marguč**

Sistem nagrajevanja in uspešnost slovenskih podjetij  
Remuneration System and Enterprise Efficiency in Slovenia

**Karmen Marguč**

Ekonometrična analiza interakcije med emisijami in porabo energije v državah v razvoju  
Econometric analysis of the interactions between emissions and energy consumption in developing countries

**Goran Matošević, Vanja Bevanda**

The comparison of social media usage in Croatian and UK SME companies

**Marjana Merkač Skok, Sandi Brenk**

Nekateri vidiki obvladovanja zadovoljstva zaposlenih in kupcev  
Some aspects of the management of the satisfaction of employees and customers

**Riko Novak, Viljem Pšeničny**

Vpliv dejavnikov rasti na dinamična podjetja  
Effect of growth factors on the dynamic business

**Bojan Osterc, Štefka Gorenak**

Outsourcing v SOVIZ Murska Sobota  
Outsourcing in SOVIZ Murska Sobota

**Ivona Pavelić, Martina Levar**

Role of Student Business Incubators for Economic Development

**Mirjana Pejić-Bach, Péter Sasvári, Marjana Merkač Skok, Rajeev Dwivedi, Lee Wai Yee, Vanja Šimičević, Karmen Abramović**

Gender perspective on entrepreneurial intentions and innovation cognitive style: cross-country study

**Marko Podbreznik, Aleksandra Geršak Podbreznik**

Ekonomika naložb v sončne elektrarne  
Economics of investment in solar power

**Blaž Ručigaj, Anita Goltnik Urnaut**

Menedžerji v košarki  
Managers in basketball

**Anita Sluga, Desimir Bošković**

Vpliv optimizacije naročil in zalog na uspešnost poslovanja  
Influence of optimization of purchasing and stock on business performance

**Anita Stilin**

Creating an entrepreneurial organization – experience from Croatia

**Ljiljana Stošić Mihajlović, Petronije Jevtić**

Structure of operating systems

**Mateja Škornik, Borut Jereb**

Spletni katalog tveganj kot opora pri začetnih fazah upravljanja tveganj v oskrbovalnih verigah  
The online catalogue of risks as a post in supply chain risk management initial stages

**Matjaž Štor**

Globalne logistične strategije in učinkoviti sistemi za upravljanje oskrbnih verig  
Global logistics strategy and effective systems for managing supply chains

**Štefan Šumah**

Obveščanje kot eden izmed dejavnikov spreminjanja zadovoljstva uporabnikov storitev javnega sektorja  
Information as one of the factors changing the satisfaction of public sector services

**Hana Šuster Erjavec, Petra Vovk Škerl**

Vpliv zadovoljstva na zvestobo v izobraževalni organizaciji  
The impact of customer satisfaction on customer loyalty in educational organization

**Hana Šuster Erjavec**

Dejavniki zadovoljstva uporabnikov frizerskih storitev  
Antecedents of customer satisfaction with hairdressing services

**Ljerka Tomljenović**

Specificities of change management in SMEs

**Denis Tomše, Boris Snoj, Ksenija Dumičič**

Stališča, odnos in vedenje uporabnikov do marketinškega komuniciranja v družbenih omrežjih

Users beliefs, attitude and behavior toward marketing communication in social media

**Denis Tomše, Boris Snoj, Ksenija Dumičič**

Vpliv starosti, spola, izobrazbe in dohodka na odnos in vedenje uporabnikov do marketinškega komuniciranja v družbenih omrežjih

The influence of age, gender, education and income on users attitude and behaviour toward marketing communication in social networks

**Svetlana Trajković, Ljiljana Stošić Mihajlović**

The role of management in future development of small companies

**Boštjan Urbančl**

Povezanost podjetij z dobavitelji

Supplier integration

**Vinko Zupančič**

High growth coaching as a tool of entrepreneurship support environment

**Izzivi na področju financ, računovodstva in bančnega sektorja**

Challenges in finance, accounting and banking

**Borut Ambrožič**

Novi – inovativni pristopi na področju bančnega sektorja v obliki »prize linked savings«

New – innovative approaches on area of bank sector in form of »prize linked savings«

**Vladimir Bukvič**

Poslovodni, informacijski in izvajalni vidik organiziranosti računovodenja za notranje poročanje

Organising the accounting system for the needs of internal financial reporting: management, information and performance aspects

**Daniel Circiumaru**

A Score Function for the Analysis of Bankruptcy Risk of Romanian Companies

**Fitim Deari, Tamara Cirkveni**

Macedonian and Croatian Accounting Systems: A Comparative Analysis

**Goran Dobrojević, Davor Jagodić**

Closed end Funds Discount – Modern Approach to Puzzle Solving

**Tatjana Dolinšek**

Regresijska analiza cen stanovanj v občini Celje

Regression analysis of housing prices in Celje

**Martina Dragija, Ivana Dražić Lutilsky, Verica Budimir**

Analysis of different costing methods for development of financial indicators at Croatian faculties

**Cristina-Petrina Drăgușin**

The Accounting Profession Under The Impact of Global Economic Crisis

**Ivana Dražić Lutlisky, Sanja Broz Tominac, Željka Jurak**

Comparison and effects of different dividend taxation systems and participations in profits

**Ivica Filipović, Tino Kusanović**

Using bank financial ratios to predict bank failures

**Mateja Gorenc**

Pomen računovodskih informacij za odločanje v srednje velikih in velikih Slovenskih podjetjih  
The importance of accounting information for decision making in the medium and large slovenian companies

**Katarina Horvat Jurjec**

Impact of Evaluation of Intangible Assets on Financial Position and Performance of Companies

**Nevenka Ribič**

Napovedovanje plačilne sposobnosti s pomočjo računovodskih izkazov  
Predicting the ability to pay by Financial Statements

**Marino Turčič**

The model of harmonised external and internal financial reporting by operating segments

**Sodobne rešitve v poslovni informatiki in e-poslovanju**

Contemporary solutions in business informatics and e-business

**Mateja Gorenc**

Rast spletnega nakupovanja v evropskih državah  
The growth of online shopping in the European countries

**Mateja Gorenc**

Pogostost uporabe interneta za iskanje službe ali pošiljanje elektronskih prošenj za zaposlitev v EU  
Frequency of Internet use for job search or send an electronic job applications in European countries

**Tatjana Kovač, Srečko Robek**

Zakaj spodbujati e-izobraževanje  
Why to promote e-education

**Sebastian Lahajnar**

Ključni procesi komponentnega ogrodja za inženiring metod  
Key processes of the method engineering component framework

**Marina Nikolić, Martina Ferk**

E-Entrepreneurship: Modern Solutions and Tools



**Mirjana Pejić-Bach, Josip Stepanić, Ivan Strugar**  
Embedded Systems Development Practices: Croatian Perspective

**Janja Razgoršek, Luka Urisk**  
Upravljanje z digitalnimi identitetami: primer Šolskega centra Slovenj Gradec  
Digital Identity Management: example on School centre Slovenj Gradec

**Luka Samaržija**  
The importance of e-supply chain in Croatian furniture cluster

**Ivan Strugar, Božidar Jaković, Fran Dragomanović**  
The impact of country development on efficiency of company's electronic business

**Mario Župan, Svjetlana Letinić, Robert Idlbek**  
OpenERP – implementation and ergonomoy

**Trendi kakovosti v izobraževanju in menedžment znanja**  
Quality trends in education and knowledge management

**Katharina Baumeister**  
Knowledge Management in a learning culture: a view on management of knowledge from four directions

**Jasna Bošnjović**  
Academic Mobility in the Western Balkans – Strategic or Rhetorical Commitment

**Janja Budič**  
Varnost v prometu, medij in tehnologija  
Traffic safety, media and technology

**Leopold Hamminger**  
Transferring Academic Knowledge to the World of Business

**Bojan Macuh**  
Z vseživljenjskim izobraževanjem do novih znanj  
With lifelong learning to new knowledge

**Marjeta Malec**  
Model prepoznavanja in razvoja ključnih in perspektivnih kadrov v podjetju  
The model of recognizing and development key and perspective personnel in a company

**Breda Perčič**  
Zadovoljstvo študentov s študijem na izbrani fakulteti  
Student Satisfaction with Studies at Selected Faculties

**Tatjana Pivac, Kristina Košič, Igor Stamenković**  
Students' interests and the future development of studies of Tourism

**Ljerka Sedlan-König**  
Role of self-efficacy in influencing entrepreneurial behavior at universities

**Nataša Seljak, Miran Lampret**

Vpletanje vrednot in načel trajnostnega razvoja v prakso izobraževanja visoke strokovne šole  
Integrating values and principles of sustainable development into higher- education practice

**Damjana Vardič, Janez Bauer, Nataša Fink**

Motiviranost zaposlenih v javnem zdravstvenem zavodu  
Motivation of Employees in Public Health Institute

**Turizem in izzivi trajnostnega razvoja**

Tourism and challenges in sustainable development

**Ivanka Avelini Holjevac, Ana-Marija Vrtođušić Hrgović, Marija Jerončić**

Social responsibility and quality management systems

**Zdenko Cerović, Josipa Cvelić-Bonifačić**

Marketing management of camping tourism on the LGBTIQ market

**Stanka Djurić, Aleksandra B. Djurić, Cvjetin Živanović**

Municipalities contribution in sustainable development as a part of the philosophy for sustainable development: humanistic paradigm of existence

**Danijel Drpić, Vedran Milojica, Anamarija Manestar**

Rural Tourism in the function of creating a Tourist Destination Brand

**Karolina Gorec**

Športni dogodki in njihove posledice za trajnostni razvoj turizma  
Sport events and their implications for sustainable tourism development

**Karolina Gorec**

Pomen okoljevarstvene politike in izdatkov namenjenih za varovanje okolja za turizem  
The importance of environmental policies and expenditures intended to protect the environment for tourism

**Mirjana Ivanuša-Bezjak, Karmen Barabaš**

Gostoljubnost v turizmu?!  
Hospitality in Tourism?!

**Natalija Klemenčič, Gabi Feher**

Razvoj turistične ponudbe v okviru trajnostnega razvoja podeželja v Občini Lendava  
Development of tourist offer within the sustainable development of the countryside in the Municipality of Lendava

**Carmen Klepej**

Kulinarično izročilo kartuzijanov kot motiv za obisk destinacije  
Culinary heritage of the carthusians an a motive for visiting destination

**Kristina Košič, Tatjana Pivac, Anđelija Ivkov-Džigurski, Igor Stamenković**

Key principles in development of sustainable rural tourism – case study of Vojvodina

**Mirjana Kovačić, Darko Saftić, Anto Violić**

Possibilities of Geographic Information System (GIS) Implementation in coastal area management – the case of Croatia

**Elena Marulc, Gabrijel Devetak**

Viri investiranja osnovnih sredstev v slovenskih naravnih zdraviliščih  
Sources of investment for fixed assets in Slovenian natural health resorts

**Žarko Anton Mlekuž**

Triglavski narodni park 2022 – Pogledi mladih na trajnostni razvoj turizma v parku  
Triglav national park 2022 – Views of young people on sustainable development of tourism in the park

**Ilija Morić**

The role of eco-rural tourism in community and rural development in Montenegro

**Anton Ogorelc, Borut Milfelner, David Kamšek**

Zaznavanje vplivov igralniškega turizma pri domačinih  
Host perception of impacts of casino gambling tourism

**Tatjana Rijavec, Peter Pečečnik, Marjetka Pirš**

Organizacijska kultura in trajnostni razvoj poslovnega sistema v turizmu  
Organizational culture and business system's sustainable development in tourism

**Catalina Soriana Sitnikov, Claudiu Bocean**

Improving quality management of small enterprises in rural tourism

**Tatjana Stanovčić, Đurđica Perović, Sanja Peković, Ilija Morić**

Empirical analysis of socio-demographic characteristics and satisfaction of tourists in Montenegro

**Anton Vorina, Rok Šijanec**

Menedžment kakovosti v velneških centrih  
Quality Management in Wellness centers

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## Gender perspective on entrepreneurial intentions and innovation cognitive style: cross-country study

### Abstract

*A number of researchers indicate that although environmental and personal characteristics are important for developing entrepreneurial intentions, a better understanding would be gained if innovative cognitive style, as a moderating factor, would be introduced. According to theory, individuals with high innovative cognitive ability could also have higher entrepreneurial intentions. Persons that are more innovative, could have higher self-confidence in starting a business, especially if they are not satisfied with their current jobs, or expect that they will not be satisfied as employees in organizations. In addition, in a number of studies it has been found that there are unresolved issues regarding gender and entrepreneurial intentions and gender and innovative cognitive style. Therefore, the goal of our paper is to explore gender perspective on entrepreneurial intentions and innovative cognitive style on the sample of students from Croatia, Slovenia, India, Hungary and Hong Kong. Logistic regression revealed that entrepreneurial intentions are determined by country of origin, gender, attitudes toward entrepreneurship (personal attraction, social norms, and perceived self-efficacy), and innovative cognitive style (willingness to try, being opinion leader and solving ambiguities and problems).*

*Keywords: entrepreneurship, gender, innovation, cross-country, intentions*

# 1 Introduction

The theory of entrepreneurship does not yet give a complete answer to the question whether environment and personal characteristics are equally important to entrepreneurial intentions. The personality of entrepreneurs has been a matter of interest in a number of researches. Researchers agree that entrepreneurship involves processes like a tendency to make decisions independently, a determination to innovate and take risks, an inclination to be uncompromising against competitors, and to use windows of opportunities as much as possible (Lumpkin et al., 1996; Di Zhang et al., 2011). Mitchell et al. (2007) define entrepreneurial cognition as a unique combination of knowledge structures that allow entrepreneurs to efficiently use windows of opportunities by making adequate decisions. Entrepreneurial intentions are affected by personal attractiveness of entrepreneurship to individual, social norms among the micro as well as macro environment that shape beliefs and attitudes towards entrepreneurship, and perceived self-efficacy as a future entrepreneur (Lüthje et al., 2004).

Entrepreneurship and innovation foster each other, contribute to the success of an organization, and are both crucial to enduring successes in the global economy (Zhao, 2005). Innovation and entrepreneurship are tightly connected together since the entrepreneur is a critical enabler of making innovations available to the market (Sundbo, 1998; Verloop, 2004). Like entrepreneurship, innovative behaviour is determined by many factors that comprise supporting environment and personal characteristics (Laforet, 2011). Innovative cognitive style could be defined as a deep-rooted way of decision-making, problem solving and creativity (Goldsmith et al., 1991; Georgellis et al., 2000). The Kirton Adaption-Innovation Inventory is widely used for the measurement of problem-solving cognitive style (Kirton, 1976, 2003; Bobic et al., 1999), that also shapes innovative behaviour (Sadler-Smith et al., 1998).

The influence of gender on entrepreneurship intentions is generally investigated by a number of researchers as a consequence of barriers that women face in obtaining enough resources for starting and/or development of a business (Moore et al., 1997; Heilman et al., 2003; Lynn et al., 2005). Recent research suggests that women are also more apt in perceiving themselves as less capable of succeeding as an entrepreneur (Thébaud, 2010), which is in accordance with the results of laboratory studies according to which women entrepreneurs were rated considerably less capable and their innovative ideas were also considered as less commercial, leading to the conclusion that innovativeness of women is perceived with a bias (Thébaud, 2007).

We theorize that innovative cognitive style could have a strong impact on entrepreneurial intentions, as one of the factors besides such factors as personal attraction, social norms, perceived self-efficacy, however taking into gender and country of origin. The goal of the paper is to investigate gender perspectives on entrepreneurial intentions and innovative cognitive style based on a cross-country survey conducted in Croatia, China, Hungary, India, and Slovenia.

## 2 Methodology

### *Research questions*

The research is based on the following research questions: (1) RQ1: Does the country of origin influence entrepreneurial intentions?; (2) RQ2: Does gender influence entrepreneurial intentions?; (3) RQ3: Do attitudes towards entrepreneurship (personal attraction, social norms, and perceived self-efficacy) influence entrepreneurial intentions?; (4) RQ4: Does

**Current aspects of entrepreneurship and marketing**

innovative cognitive style (willingness to try, creativity, leading opinion maker, problem solving) influence entrepreneurial intentions?; (5) RQ5: What are the differences in gender regarding influence of attitudes toward entrepreneurship and innovative cognitive style on entrepreneurial intention?

*Sample description*

Our primary survey was conducted on a sample of students of business and economic colleges that range from second-year to graduate students, from Croatia, China, Hungary, India and Slovenia. Samples based on students (Ahmed et al., 2010) and cross-countries (Mueller, 2001) have already been used by other researchers in similar studies that investigated entrepreneurial intentions. Table 1 presents the profiles of respondents' characteristics. Some differences exist in the gender structure of the respondents since the Indian sample consists of more male respondents whereas the Hungarian sample is slightly dominated by female respondents. Also, there are some differences existing in the year of study where some biases exist in the third year of study that is biased towards female respondents, and the fourth year of study that is biased towards male respondents.

Table 1: Profile of respondents' characteristics  
 (Authors' survey)

Respondents' characteristics	Total (N=435)		Male (N=180)		Female (N=255)		Chi-square
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	
<b>I. Country</b>							
Croatia	86	19,8	41	22,8	45	17,6	26,811**
Hungary	92	21,1	23	12,8	69	27,1	
Slovenia	151	34,7	57	31,7	94	36,9	
India	54	12,4	36	20,0	18	7,1	
China	52	12,0	23	12,8	29	11,4	
<b>II. Year of study</b>							
2nd year	13	3,0	4	2,2	9	3,5	20,826**
3rd year	96	22,1	26	14,4	70	27,5	
4th year	93	21,4	55	30,6	38	14,9	
5th year	213	49,0	87	48,3	126	49,4	
Graduate	20	4,6	8	4,4	12	4,7	

Note: (two-tailed) \*\*  $p < 0,01$

*Research instrument*

The research instrument was developed based on the work of Marcic et al. (1990) and Liñan and Chen (2009). Table 2 presents the research instrument items. The dependent variable is binomial and it measures if a respondent has ever seriously considered becoming an entrepreneur. Among the independent variables, there are gender, the year of study, the country of study and constructs on which the respondents claims the level of agreement on a scale from 1 to 7 (1-don't agree, 7-completely agree). There are two main groups of constructs. First, attitudes toward entrepreneurship together comprise the selected factors (PA, SN, PSE) of entrepreneurial intentions (Liñan and Chen, 2009). Second, cognitive abilities that together comprise innovative cognitive style (WTT, CO, OL&AP) measured by Kirton-Adaption-Innovation Inventory (Marcic et al., 1990).

*Statistical methods*

Validity analysis was first conducted in order to check instrument validity. The content validity of the instrument is based on the fact that items from existing literature were used (Marcic et al., 1990; Liñan and Chen, 2009). Convergent validity was investigated by means of explanatory factor analysis in order to examine the essential composition of a moderately large number of variables. Reliability analysis was performed by using Cronbach's alpha coefficients in order to test the internal consistency of the items used for computing

## Aktualni vidiki podjetništva in trženja

constructs. Logistic regression was employed in order to investigate the relationship between dependent and independent variables. The validity of logistic regression models is investigated by using Nagelkerke R Square, and the statistical significance of independent variables was tested against the threshold value of 5%.

Table 2: Research instrument items  
(Marcic et al., 1990; Liñan et al., 2009)

Dependent variable		
Entrepreneurial Intention (EI)		Have you ever seriously considered becoming an entrepreneur? (Yes/no)
Independent variables		
Gender		Male, female
Year of study		2nd year, 3rd year, 4th year, 5th year and Graduate
Country of study		Croatia, Hungary, Slovenia, India, China
Construct	Code	Item
Personal Attraction (PA)	PA1	Being an entrepreneur implies more advantages than disadvantages to me.
	PA2	Being an entrepreneur would give me great satisfaction.
	PA3	It is desirable for me to become an entrepreneur.
	PA4	It is interesting for me to become an entrepreneur.
	PA5	A career as an entrepreneur is attractive for me.
Social Norms (SN)	SN1	I care about what my closest family members think as I decide whether or not to pursue a career as an entrepreneur.
	SN2	I care about what my closest friends think as I decide whether or not to pursue a career as an entrepreneur.
	SN3	I care about what people important to me think as I decide whether or not to pursue a career as an entrepreneur.
Perceived Self-Efficacy (PSE)	PSE1	If I wanted, I could easily become an entrepreneur.
	PSE2	It is entirely up to me whether or not become an entrepreneur.
	PSE3	As an entrepreneur, I would have sufficient control over my business.
	PSE4	There are very few circumstances outside my control that may prevent me from becoming an entrepreneur.
Willing to Try (WTT)	WTT1	I am reluctant about adopting new ways of doing things until I see them working for people around me. (Reverse scale)
	WTT2	I rarely trust new ideas until I can see whether the vast majority of people around me accept them. (Reverse scale)
	WTT3	I am generally cautious about accepting new ideas. (Reverse scale)
	WTT4	I must see other people using new innovations before I will consider them. (Reverse scale)
	WTT5	I often find myself sceptical of new ideas. (Reverse scale)
	WTT6	I am aware that I am usually one of the last people in my group to accept something new. (Reverse scale)
	WTT7	I tend to feel that the old way of living and doing things is the best way. (Reverse scale)
Creative-Original (CO)	CO1	I consider myself to be creative and original in my thinking and behavior.
	CO2	I am inventive kind of person.
	CO3	I seek out new ways to do things.
	CO4	I enjoy trying out new ideas.
	CO5	I find it stimulating to be original in my thinking and behavior.
	CO6	I am receptive to new ideas.
	CO7	I frequently improvise methods for solving a problem when an answer is not apparent.
Opinion-Leader & Ambiguities-Problems (OL&AP)	OLAP1	I feel that I am an influential member of my peer group.
	OLAP2	My peers often ask me for advice or information.
	OLAP3	I enjoy taking part in the leadership responsibilities of the groups I belong to.
	OLAP4	I am challenged by ambiguities questions.
	OLAP5	I am challenged by ambiguities and unsolved problems.

### 3 Results

Explanatory factor analysis was performed in order to investigate if the propositions of convergent validity are met. Iterated principal axis factor combined with varimax was conducted by means of statistical package SAS. The results of factor analysis are displayed in Table 3. The approach suggested by Costello and Osborne (2005) was used by applying a loading cut-off value ranging from 0.40 to 0.70, which was confirmed for all of the measurement factors. Factor analysis confirmed the existence of 6 factors. However, it has to be declared that Kirton-Adaption-Innovation Inventory (Marcic et al., 1990) originally consists of four factors (Willing to Try, Creative-Original, Opinion-Leader and Ambiguities-Problems), and for the purpose of this survey two factors Opinion-Leader and Ambiguities-Problems were merged into one factor, because the factor analysis consisting of seven factors did not reveal interpretable results. Reliability analysis was performed based on the usage of Cronbach's alpha coefficients in order to test the reliability of using average values of items grouped into factors in Table 3 as constructs for further analysis. Feldt et al. (2008) recommend the usage of a cut-off value of Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.70 or higher. All of the calculated coefficients were higher than cut-off value, which led us to conclude that the item scales are internally consistent.

Table 3: Rotated factor matrix for six factors and Cronbach's alpha (Authors' survey)

Factor	Item	Factor						Cronbach's alpha
		PA	SN	PSE	WTT	CO	OLAP	
Personal Attraction (PA)	PA1	0,7518						0,9375
	PA2	0,8571						
	PA3	0,8697						
	PA4	0,8828						
	PA5	0,8572						
Social Norms (SN)	SN1		0,8360					0,9173
	SN2		0,8400					
	SN3		0,8719					
Perceived Self-Efficacy (PSE)	PSE1			0,7239				0,8067
	PSE2			0,7968				
	PSE3			0,7570				
	PSE4			0,6486				
Willing to Try (WTT)	WTT1				0,8483			0,8941
	WTT2				0,8671			
	WTT3				0,7801			
	WTT4				0,7917			
	WTT5				0,7949			
	WTT6				0,6915			
	WTT7				0,6476			
Creative-Original (CO)	CO1					0,7504		0,8660
	CO2					0,7969		
	CO3					0,8436		
	CO4					0,7299		
	CO5					0,7262		
	CO6					0,5403		
	CO7					0,7287		
Opinion-Leader & Ambiguities – Problems (OL&AP)	OLAP1						0,6327	0,8729
	OLAP2						0,7266	
	OLAP3						0,7915	
	OLAP4						0,7489	
	OLAP5						0,7332	

Table 4 presents the results of three logistic regressions conducted with Entrepreneurial Intention as dependent variable: (1) based on the total sample, (2) based on the sample of



## Aktualni vidiki podjetništva in trženja

male respondents only and (3) based on the sample of female respondents only. Logistic regression was used in order to investigate research questions set in the initial phase of the research. All of the three models explain variations in dependent variables to the high extent based on the Nagelkerke R Square.

*Gender* statistically influenced entrepreneurial intentions ( $p < 0,05$ ) in the total sample model. Entrepreneurial intentions were influenced by the *country of origin* in all of the three models. Croatia ( $p < 0,05$ ), Slovenia ( $p < 0,01$ ), and India ( $p < 0,01$ ) showed a statistically significant impact on entrepreneurial intentions. However, logistic regression based on male sample only revealed a statistically significant impact in only two countries – Slovenia ( $p < 0,05$ ) and India ( $p < 0,05$ ). Logistic regression based on the female sample only revealed a statistically significant impact only in India ( $p < 0,01$ ). As expected, *the year of study* did not influence entrepreneurial intentions neither in the total sample nor in the male and female samples.

Entrepreneurial intentions were influenced by *attitudes toward entrepreneurship* in all of the three models. Personal Attraction (PA) had a statistically significant impact on entrepreneurial intentions in the total sample ( $p < 0,01$ ) and male sample ( $p < 0,01$ ). Social Norms (SN) had a statistically significant impact on entrepreneurial intentions in the total sample ( $p < 0,01$ ) and female sample ( $p < 0,01$ ). Perceived Self-Efficacy (PE) of the respondent as a future entrepreneur had a statistically significant impact on entrepreneurial intentions in the total sample ( $p < 0,01$ ), and both the male sample ( $p < 0,01$ ) and female sample ( $p < 0,01$ ). Such results would indicate that female students do not perceive themselves as entrepreneurs.

*Innovative cognitive style* also affects entrepreneurial intentions in all of the three models. Willingness to try (WTT) had a statistically significant impact on entrepreneurial intentions in the total sample ( $p < 0,01$ ) and male sample ( $p < 0,05$ ). Creative-Original (CO) had a statistically significant impact on entrepreneurial intentions only in the female sample ( $p < 0,05$ ). Opinion-Leader & Ambiguities-Problems (OLAP) had a statistically significant impact on entrepreneurial intentions in the total sample ( $p < 0,01$ ), as well as in the male ( $p < 0,01$ ), and female sample ( $p < 0,01$ ).

Table 4: Logistic regression results (regression coefficients) with Entrepreneurial Intention as dependent variable (Authors' survey)

Independent variables	Total sample (N=435)	Male (N=180)	Female (N=255)
<b>Respondent's characteristics</b>			
Gender	-0,7374**	-	-
Country*Croatia	-1,5941*	-1,0326	-1,5538
Country*Hungary	-0,2383	0,1092	-0,6967
Country*Slovenia	-1,9160**	-2,9172*	-1,8152
Country*India	-1,9296**	-2,4359*	-2,7371**
Year of study*3rd	0,3006	-1,0913	-0,3361
Year of study*4th	-0,4126	0,4797	-0,5839
Year of study*5th	0,7127	-0,3417	0,1376
Year of study*Graduate	0,5779	-	0,5987
<b>Attitudes towards entrepreneurship</b>			
Personal Attraction (PA)	-0,3502**	-0,6225**	-0,3005
Social Norms (SN)	-0,4516**	-0,3114	-0,7057**
Perceived Self-Efficacy (PSE)	-0,4778**	-0,6342*	-0,4920**
<b>Innovative cognitive style</b>			
Willingness to Try (WTT)	-0,4903**	-1,4149**	0,1063
Creative-Original (CO)	-0,2310	0,1564	-0,4781*
Opinion-Leader & Ambiguities – Problems (OLAP)	-1,3488**	-1,0623**	-1,6425**
Constant	0,0196	-0,1438	0,2312
Nagelkerke R Square	R <sup>2</sup> =0,437	R <sup>2</sup> =0,509	R <sup>2</sup> =0,509

Note: (two-tailed) \*  $p < 0,05$ ; \*\*  $p < 0,01$

## 4 Conclusions

Our study has indicated that gender and country of origin have a strong impact on entrepreneurial intentions as well as on the attitudes towards entrepreneurship and innovative cognitive style. However, the results also indicate that there are significant differences among female and male students regarding the incentives for their intentions to start a new venture.

This paper has provided verification of the previous findings of gender and country of origin impact on entrepreneurial intentions (Mueller et al., 2001; Thébaud, 2010; Di Zhang et al., 2011; Gupta et al., 2009). Entrepreneurial intentions are particularly strong among Croatian, Slovenian and Indian students. It could be possible to conclude that the impact measured in India is a result of the predominance of male students in the sample, but it is also present in the female sample. Therefore, the impact measured in India could be interpreted as a consequence of the Asian model of entrepreneurship (Dana, 2007).

Variations in the results of the male and female sample are interpreted as a result of gender stereotypes in perceptions of entrepreneurs which strongly influence the intentions to start a new venture (Gupta, 2009). Females are more influenced by the attitudes of persons in their surroundings and worry about being able to succeed in such a role, which confirms the impact of gender stereotypes (Gupta et al., 2009). Regarding innovative cognitive style, male respondents with higher entrepreneurship intentions are also more willing to try new things, while female respondents are urged into starting new ventures by the new ideas of their own. Both genders are more apt to become entrepreneurs if one is acting as an opinion leader of a group and is puzzled by ambiguities and problems.

The results also indicate that females are highly aware of the barriers that are all over the male-dominated areas of innovation, technology and entrepreneurship (Ranga et al., 2010). Before a female makes a decision on becoming an entrepreneur, she is more likely to estimate realistically how successful she will be on the task, as well as how her environment will accept the decision. She will rely on her own creativity and originality because, due to gender stereotypes, other innovators (male or female) would probably be less likely to collaborate with her in an entrepreneurial position. Since contemporary society should aim to provide equal opportunities for all gender and minority groups, strategies on how to succeed in a male-dominated venture society should be made available through media, press, research and educational programs. For example, case studies of female high-tech entrepreneurs should be presented (Cain Miller, 2010).

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