

Special Issue Editorial



Editor-in-Chief

Adrian-Victor VEVERA

Romanian Journal of Information Technology and Automatic Control

Dear readers, I welcome you to the pages of the new issue of the Romanian Journal of Information Technology and Automatic Control. This issue features key papers from ABRIC 2020/21, the 3rd Advances in Business Research International Conference 2020/21 which took place virtually from 26-27 January 2021 and was organized by the Faculty of Business and Management (FBM) of the Universiti Teknologi MARA's (UiTM) Puncak Alam Campus in Malaysia.

The 2020/2021 edition had as tagline “Advancing Knowledge, Embracing Digital Economy”. The basis of the theme is the extremely rapid advance of digitalization, which creates new possibilities of innovation, competitiveness, growth and cost reduction, not only for established behemoths, but also for small and medium enterprises. It is also fast becoming a premier area of competition between economic actors (and states, of course), and the winners of the new business environment will be the organizations which best harness the capabilities offered by new technology and new scales of connectivity. There are innumerable examples of transformative technologies now becoming mainstream and shifting business models and product philosophies towards ground breaking paradigms. More and more of the added value of any product lies in its digital or cyber component, rather than in the labor, materials or the hardware used for its manufacture. The latter are still important, but growing much more slowly than the digital component.

We are very pleased with our flourishing partnership with Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM) from Malaysia, an ambitious university aiming to become a globally renowned university of science, technology, humanities and entrepreneurship. This relationship will offer the opportunity for diverse contacts and an enriching exchange of ideas. It will also see cross-publications which enable us to reach a wider and more diverse audience outside of the Western and European milieus we often confine ourselves too.

Malaysia is an actor of significant importance in South-East Asia, with a dynamic economy that is at the forefront of leapfrogging whole levels of development through digitalization, an experience which, to a certain extent, Romania also has and has benefitted from. The rewards of our exchanges will be significantly moving forward and also marking one dimension of the growing possibilities of cooperation between our two countries. In the future, we will see greater cross-participation in important events related to the digitalization of business, but also cybersecurity and critical infrastructure protection, as well as the advancing frontier of technology and its use cases (AI, blockchain etc.).

As the pandemic slowly recedes, with glimpses of a possible return to normality in sight, we must remember that our other great pandemic, that of cybersecurity threats to our digital body public, continues to fester and expand. And, as we have learned from the biological pandemic, it is important not only to foster research and cooperation between all great stakeholders, including academia and private sector, but to do so internationally. These exchanges may create not only wealth through new/novel ideas and new possibilities of cooperation, but also security and stability, through coordination, information exchanges and common pertinent research into global threats that also undermine the prosperity and stability of the emerging digital economy.

Having said this, I invite you, our readers, to read a curated selection of articles from the 3rd Advances in Business Research International Conference 2020/21 and to consider the wealth of knowledge and possibilities inherent in a bold drive for contacts and partnerships beyond the borders of the EU.