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INTRODUCTION TO THE SPECIAL ISSUE

This very first special issue of *Ekonomski vjesnik/ Econviews* is devoted to the theme of public, social and nonprofit marketing as factors of value creation and quality of life improvement. This was the working title of the 13th Congress of the International Association on Public and Nonprofit Marketing (IAPNM) that was hosted by the Faculty of Economics in Osijek, Croatia, June 12–14, 2014.

Such an event is a unique opportunity for the exchange of thoughts and ideas and the promotion of knowledge on nonprofit marketing among scholars through the dissemination of new research findings and by opening discussions and raising interest for new research topics. Altogether 50 papers were presented at the Congress, making a high quality contribution to the area of public, social and nonprofit marketing.

Papers presented at the 13th IAPNM Congress are focused on a few major areas:

1. Social responsibility and performance of companies, institutions and individuals
2. Consumer behavior with respect to cause-related marketing and from a social marketing perspective
3. Marketing perspectives on social issues (health, education, culture, etc.)
4. Social entrepreneurship
5. Internal marketing and market orientation in the nonprofit sector
6. Destination and territorial marketing from a sustainability perspective
7. Marketing in public services
8. Civic engagement and voluntarism in quality of life improvement.

The two facts that create the specific features of nonprofit organizations: the value they produce lies in the achievement of social purposes, and their revenues that come from sources other than customer purchases have motivated the topic for the 14th IAPNM Congress.

The questions that arise from these two features are likely to motivate research in terms of the definition of public or social value and how to create it, the identification of sources of legitimacy and the support for the nonprofit organization and sector as a whole, and creation of operational capacity to deliver the value. By definition, social value is created when resources, inputs, processes or policies are combined to generate improvements in the lives of individuals and the society as a whole. It is about inclusion and access, respect, openness of institutions as well as about history, knowledge and cultural identity.

On the other hand, quality of life is increasingly taken as a valid but complex construct that defines development. The challenge for the nonprofit and public sector is to identify those values that efficiently contribute to the quality of life improvement on the local, regional and international level. The specific marketing issue here is to find ways in which society or its particular stakeholders might be mobilized to contribute to defined social purposes. The complexity of stakeholders that contribute to quality of life improvement can be well illustrated with Etzkowitz's Triple Helix model: companies with their corporate social responsibility and performance, the government with its provision of

a legal and political framework and public utilities performance and the nonprofit sector with its provision of services that the market or government fails to provide, representation of underrepresented population and societal needs, facilitating social capital and democratic processes in the society.

As is the usual practice for the institution's home journals to follow the high quality conferences, it was decided that *Ekonomski vjesnik/Econviews* will follow the 13th IAPNM Congress with this Special Issue. The aim is to, on the one hand, make the presented papers more visible in the scientific community, and on the other, to increase the journal's quality as well as interest in the journal.

Altogether, for this Special Issue 10 papers were selected that, according to editors, best contribute to the different aspects of the major theme. All of the papers went through the usual review process for the journal (double-blind international review).

The papers in this special issue present a wealth of both empirical evidence and theoretical investigations, highlighting the most important aspects of the area of public, social and non-profit marketing in different economic and social environments. More on the papers themselves can be found in the 13th Congress Review.