

## 40 YEARS FROM THE FIRST “SHIP CONFERENCE” AND FOUNDATION OF THE JOURNAL

Yes, 40 years have passed from the probably one of the first scientific conferences lasting three days at that time (May, 1984) during which the presentations were made and discussions were held on the water, in a ship, namely on MS Vanemuine travelling along the Emajõgi River, lakes Peipsi (Peipus) and Pihkva (Pskov), the Värskla Bay and Velikaya River along the route Tartu–Värskla–Pskov–Värskla–Tartu. As the participants regarded the conference very successful, the following, second conference was held 10 years later, in 1994, and then annually until now.

The conference of 2024 would have been already the 32nd conference. Unfortunately, although five conferences (2020–2024) had been prepared, they were not held as several important participants from other countries could not travel to Estonia due to Covid-19 and the Russian aggression in the Ukraine. For some of them it was even prohibited to leave the country at that time, and some of them were ill themselves!

Also, a scientific collection of brief articles and theses was published before the conference of 1984, which can be regarded as the predecessor of this current scientific journal, the XXXII volume of which will be published this year, since 2007 under the almost similar name to the current name.<sup>1</sup>

Both the conferences and the collections (and later also the journal) became international as since 1996 several good colleagues from the University of Kiel and the Kiel University of Applied Sciences in Germany participated both in the conferences and in the publishing of papers. As Estonia had been an independent country again for several years already, our economists had managed to acquire many work-related contacts during that time, i.e. within the four or five years, with also colleagues from universities of other countries.

The author of this brief article has written about the “ship conference”, what followed it and the publications for several times also earlier in this journal. Also this time I am not going to copy sentences from earlier texts here but will write about some memories presented under a slightly different angle here.

In 1984 and in 1994, none of the participants in the conference would have believed that we would continue the activities of these first events also in 2024 with several participants from that first time. But this is how time works:

- \* a few colleagues have passed away by now;
- \* many former colleagues have retired and are not engaged in scientific research;
- \* some people have been active in earlier years and have also participated in the work of the committees in 2024.

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<sup>1</sup> In 2007–2014, the English name of the journal was “Discussions on Estonian Economic Policy”. Above all, for more accuracy, incl. for the reflection of the topics of papers published until then, and in the interests of broader geography of economic policy in future, we specified the name of the journal from 2015 and it is now “Estonian Discussions on Economic Policy” in English. The name of the journal in German and Estonian remained the same, and the continuity of the publication was maintained.

During the past 40 years, the activities have mainly developed further and been successful. Colleagues, economists of universities and other institutions of many countries have made excellent presentations and participated in discussions in our conferences. The participants always gave good recommendations to doctoral students who participated in conferences, both for presentations and for writing theses.

Substantive papers by many colleagues of foreign countries and also from Estonia have been published in the journal.<sup>2</sup> Publishing papers in our journal has been a good opportunity also for doctoral students (and also others) as it is a journal assessed and recognised by about ten international databases (incl. Scopus) and included in the databases. In the Estonian Research Information System, the journal has been in the highest ETIS category, 1.1, since 2019.

After the inclusion of the journal in international databases (particularly Scopus) we have attracted more interest:

- A number of chief editors of economic journals from Europe, USA and Asia have made proposals to authors of our journal (incl. to the chief editor of this journal) to write papers for them and/or peer review papers submitted to them (what the author of this articles has also done – being a peer reviewer for many years already for the journal “European Scientifics Journal” (ESJ) published in Rome, Italy).
- Several publishing companies and groups of researchers, research networks from India, China and Southeast Asia have also wanted to discuss with us either close cooperation (incl. with their participation) and/or acquisition of our journal in the future.
- In a few recent years (also in 2024), the undersigned has participated in an annual Academic Reputation Survey of the *Times Higher Education* at the proposal of Duncan Ross, the Chief Data Officer of *Times Higher Education (THE)* at 26, Red Lion Square, London.
- Several universities and colleges from Europe and the USA have made proposals both for writing papers and making presentations at their conferences.
- We have received quite a few applications for publishing papers in our journal and participation in the conference, often from the East, so to say. Unfortunately, their participation in our conference is problematic because of the Russian aggression in Ukraine. Also, e.g. bank transfers to us from Russia and Byelorussia are not possible because of the respective decisions of our banks (e.g. the respective information on the web site of the SEB Bank).

We can perhaps conclude from this that the papers published in our journal have attracted wider attention, and authors who have published their papers in our journal may receive interesting proposals for cooperation from the rest of the world also in the future.

We have had and have also now excellent editors, members of the editorial board, interpreters and translators, secretaries and peer reviewers.

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<sup>2</sup> See the list of countries, e.g. at the end of this issue, and also articles at the end of issues of earlier years: Informatsioon ajakirja toimkonnalt / Information from the editorial team / Information des Redaktionsteams, in three languages.

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We are surely ready to accept also representatives of the younger generation to our committees. Despite searches, we have not found any (or have not searched well enough?). We have met two kinds of people – some people hope to earn a lot of money fast and other people are not interested in neither the journal, the conference or research.

However, we have some visions of the future prospects for both the journal and the conferences for 2025–2029<sup>3</sup> (in more detail; advisably also with the inclusion of new, younger people) and even until 2037 (then already everything could be organised by new committees).

As the chief editor, I wish authors perseverance and success for writing and publishing substantive papers and as the main organiser I wish them active participation in our conferences, successful presentations and intriguing questions and the resulting discussions.

Besides, I have to emphasise again – our journal has been deemed as suitable for more than ten international databases, incl. Scopus, and has achieved the highest level, 1.1, in ETIS.<sup>4</sup> Publishing high-quality papers in this journal is a good opportunity for publishing research work both for doctoral students (why not for the best master students) and economists and other interested people.

This brings along also excellent opportunities for participation in our conferences and obtaining good experience and contacts.

NB! The editorial board of the journal and the organising committee of the conference are ready to have cooperation with you!

January – September 2024

In Tallinn, home office at Pirita-Kose

Remembering active times and fine people,

Matti Raudjärv

(Founder and chief editor of the journal, and the initiator and main organiser of the series of conferences)

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<sup>3</sup> See the information on the visions of the future, for instance, further in this issue of the journal (but also published in the issues of earlier years): Loodetav tulevikuinformatsioon (2025 – 2029) / Die Zukunftsinformation (2025 – 2029) / Expected future information (2025 – 2029).

<sup>4</sup> According to the information and opinion of some colleagues, only this economic journal has achieved such a high level in the Baltic States. The undersigned himself does not wish to express any opinion or thoughts about this issue.