Praise for *Female Entrepreneurship in Transition Economies*:

“Veland Ramadani, Shqipe Gërguri-Rashiti and Alain Fayolle have addressed an important topic particularly for academics, government officials, and business people in their book *Female Entrepreneurship in Transitional Economies*. Appropriate authors from a variety of countries and positions were selected to look at the important aspects of this topic from different cultural views. As such, the book provides a comprehensive picture of the issues involved from both a theoretical and an empirical perspective. The book contributes to the understanding of one of the most important and strongest economic engines in a transition economy – the female entrepreneur.”

—Robert D. Hisrich, *Thunderbird School of Global Management, USA*

“Women’s entrepreneurship is a rapidly growing phenomenon in transition economies. For the first time, this new book offers in-depth analysis of the challenges and opportunities women entrepreneurs encounter as they launch and grow businesses and, more importantly, strive to achieve equality in the business world. The research provides a foundation for understanding women’s entrepreneurship from multiple perspectives and has implications for women, their businesses and country policies. This is a great reference for educators, policy-makers and entrepreneurs.”

—Candida Brush, *Babson College, USA*

“Here is a new, fresh book on female entrepreneurship, still an underestimated topic by researchers and policy-makers, especially in the specific conditions in transition economies. This book gives some additional insights on the field from authors from different countries. They research and discuss almost all important issues of female entrepreneurship like the nature of female entrepreneurship and its performance, problems and challenges, credibility of female entrepreneurship, gender inequality, innovativeness, motivation problems and challenges and need of stronger institutional support. So, I would like to recommend this valuable book to researchers, entrepreneurs (not only women, but also men),

and policy-makers to enrich their knowledge, vision and sense for good practice.”

—Kiril Todorov *Bulgarian Association for Management
Development and Entrepreneurship, Bulgaria*

“This compendium of current research offers a wealth of insights into the opportunities and challenges facing women entrepreneurs and small business owners in transition economies around the world. Of particular note is the wide geographic coverage, as well as the nice balance between contributions discussing issues salient to women entrepreneurs worldwide, such as access to finance or career management, and survey chapters presenting profiles of women’s entrepreneurship in countries as diverse as Nigeria, Chile and Albania. This book will be of interest to students of entrepreneurship, entrepreneurship in emerging markets (economies in transition, in particular), gender, and economic development, among others. Academics doing research on female entrepreneurship and entrepreneurship in emerging economies will find fresh and intriguing empirical evidence from contexts not readily covered by mainstream entrepreneurship or gender research. Last, but not least, this collection will be a valuable reference for researchers and policy-makers at international organizations and NGOs seeking to promote economic development and female entrepreneurship in emerging markets.”

—Tatiana Manolova, *Bentley University, USA*

“This volume is very useful for anyone interested in learning about the specific features of female entrepreneurship in countries transitioning both economically and socially. The chapters focus mainly on Southeastern Europe but other regions are included providing new insights into the realities for female entrepreneurs in various country contexts. This book makes a valuable contribution to the literature, opening up new avenues for future research.”

—Ruta Aidis, *George Mason University, USA*

Female Entrepreneurship in Transition Economies

Trends and Challenges

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*To my wife, Lindita, my sons, Rron and Rrezon, and
female entrepreneurs all over the world
Veland Ramadani*

*To my husband, Berat, and my daughters, would-be
female entrepreneurs, Lina and Aja
Shqipe Gërguri-Rashiti*

*To female entrepreneurs for their willingness to
undertake a better world
Alain Fayolle*

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Foreword

David Smallbone

Entrepreneurship is becoming a global phenomenon and a key driver for economic development and change in a wide variety of countries. At the same time, it is becoming increasingly clear that the involvement of women in entrepreneurship is consistently below that of their male counterparts. There are various reasons for this, but fundamentally the nature and extent of women's involvement in entrepreneurship reflects their wider role within society. This applies in mature market economies but also in many economies in transition. However, this is only part of the story and the transition context does result in a number of distinctive features. One is that, following the collapse of the former Soviet Union, self-employment and small business activity represented one of the options facing people who are looking for ways of earning a living. Women often have the needs of their family and household in mind when they get involved in this kind of entrepreneurial activity.

It is necessary to keep in mind that, during Soviet times, women had reasonable equality in the labour market and the workplace, made possible by crèche facilities offered by State agencies to enable women to work. In some former Soviet territories, the collapse of the Soviet Union led to these facilities becoming bankrupt and falling into disuse, so that it became more difficult for women going into the formal labour market. Moreover, in some countries there are additional complications. In Uzbekistan, for example, the collapse of the former Soviet Union and the closure of childcare facilities in the market led to very little resource being made available for women in business. What happened in Uzbekistan was that the vacuum left by the collapse of the Soviet style institutions led to Islamic values reasserting themselves, which had implications for the role of women.

In this context, the volume under consideration here is potentially an important addition to the literature on women in business, on the basis that it is necessary for our theories and concepts to be applied across a range of countries. To avoid narrow specialisation of the usual suspects, such as the UK and the USA, it is necessary to publish material related to transition economies. Without it, it may be argued that the study of women in business appears partial, concentrating mainly on countries where the conditions for women in business are more benign.

It is also important to recognise the variety of transition contexts because, whilst sharing many common processes – a combination of different starting points, differences in the nature and pace of market reforms, and in the wider processes of social and economic development during the transformation period – there are considerable differences in the nature and extent of women's involvement in entrepreneurship across transition economies. These differences partly reflect differences in the environment for entrepreneurship in general across transition economies where Central and Eastern European countries that are now members of the European Union possess certain advantages in this respect compared with former Soviet republics. The result is that not only does the environment for entrepreneurship vary considerably between economies in different stages of development but, in addition, transition environments are not homogenous.

It must be kept in mind that the study of women in business itself represents a challenge in some countries because of the lack of data for which gender is a variable. As a result, the evidence base for women's involvement in entrepreneurship is dependent on empirical studies which gather survey data and other data; but there are hardly any cases where official statistics and secondary sources contain information about gender *per se*. Not surprisingly, studies of women in transition conditions point to some similarities in the nature and extent of women's involvement in business compared with mature market economies, but also certain differences.

One of the differences identified in previous research is the qualitative differences in the nature of the networks that women entrepreneurs are part of compared to their male counterparts. As with many other features, they reflect differences in the position of men and women in their role in society. In the case of networks of male entrepreneurs these often include aspects inherited from previous Soviet times, during which men and women were not equal. So it is not a question of women networking more or less than men, but rather who exactly is within their networks and what kind of help and/or favours may be granted. In some cases this has led to women being very active in the development of business organisations which, in the case of countries such as Uzbekistan, are very powerful indeed.

A further feature of entrepreneurship involving women in these countries is the family nature of their involvement. Previous research has uncovered examples where a woman may have a business in her home country, such as Moldova, where a woman's male partner may be working abroad and contributing to the household finances in a different way.

One might argue that this is more like a family business in which the role of the woman is complementary to that of the man, and vice versa. To consider this a woman-owned business is somewhat misleading.

So, it is increasingly being recognised that entrepreneurship and its study needs to be placed into the social, economic and institutional contexts in which it takes place. This means that the study of entrepreneurship and the concepts used need to be robust enough to be applicable and valid across a range of environments. It also means that the role of gender within these different contexts needs to be explicitly recognised because contextual influences may not be the same for women as for men. Entrepreneurship may be a global phenomenon but it is not a uniform phenomenon, taking on different forms, different features and different social, economic and institutional contexts. Bringing new data and new ways of looking at women's involvement in entrepreneurship, this volume adds significant value to the literature on women entrepreneurship.

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Foreword

Alan L. Carsrud

The past as context

Women have been running ventures, even if informally, since prehistoric times when humans first settled into villages and commerce began between individuals even if it were merely selling excess produce or finished goods like textiles. More recently, interest in women as business owners and female entrepreneurship has certainly taken off since women first achieved the vote and became able to own property in their own right. These political and economic rights have only been gained in most cultures in the last century and a half.

The formal study of women-owned businesses was for many years simply a set of statistics kept by governmental organizations like the Small Business Administration in the United States. For example, in the United States in 1984 the number of women led firms stood around three million. Some 30 years later that figure is now nine million, no small increase in thirty years. In 1985 The University of Texas at Austin hosted a major gathering of leading women entrepreneurs in the United States. *The National Summit for Women Entrepreneurs: Survival and Growth* brought together over 600 such woman business owners and female political leaders. These events clearly reflected the increased role the public saw that women were starting to play in the entrepreneurial economy in the United States. Similar increases in the number of women entrepreneurs have been seen in other developed economies like the European Union. But what is behind that growth rate has become of research interest only more recently.

In 1988 one of the first research conferences on female entrepreneurship was held in Ohio and was attended by many leading academics. Many of these researchers contributed primarily theory-based chapters to the book *Women-owned Businesses* (Hagan et al., 1989). These chapters covered very traditional topics one would have expected in a developed economy such as those found in the United States, Canada, Western Europe and Australia. These included chapters on business models and funding, networking and corporate governance, family business, management succession and assistance programs. Yet important topics like gender inequality were ignored.

In the mid-1980s and early 1990s empirical research started to appear in many of the leading journals in entrepreneurship, looking at the needs of female entrepreneurs (Chrisman et al., 1990), their personalities and motivations compared to male entrepreneurs (Carsrud & Olm, 1986), as well as studies on the assistance needs of minority and non-minority entrepreneurs (Chrisman & Carsrud, 1991). While gender issues in entrepreneurship continued to be studied, most of these studies remained focused on entrepreneurs in developed economies and often on majority ethnic and racial groups. There are research studies on entrepreneurship in developing and emerging economies that appear in outlets like *Journal of Small Business Management*, *Journal of Business Venturing*, *Entrepreneurship and Regional Development*, *Entrepreneurship: Theory and Practice* and *Journal of Enterprising Culture*. Most work has the firm as the unit of analysis and little attention is paid to the issue of gender in new venture creation in transition economies. Exceptions exist like Gundry et al. (2014), who examine innovation in women-owned firms in Russia since 2005.

The current volume

Just as the Hagan et al. (1989) book set the stage for a decade of work on women business owners in the United States, the importance of this volume, *Female Entrepreneurship in Transition Economies: Trends and Challenges*, is the contribution this book makes to the understanding of the special issues facing women-owned-and-managed new ventures in transitional, emerging, and developing economies. As in the Hagan et al. (1989) book the authors in this book are among some of the most respected researchers on entrepreneurship in transition economies. Chapters in this volume look once again at the important topic of motivation of female entrepreneurs, but this time in transition economies. In the same vein there is a chapter that looks at the emotional issues that female entrepreneurs deal with in the venture process. Chapters on emotions in entrepreneurs are rare and the idea of the emotions and passion in the entrepreneur has not been examined to the degree it should be. Likewise, innovation and gender are looked at in depth.

In a unique chapter the role of gender on credibility in emergent economies is available, which should stir research on the idea of credibility among male entrepreneurs as well. A topic that is most important for entrepreneurs in any economy is examined here in the context of transition economies, namely career perspectives as an entrepreneur. Finally a topic which cannot be ignored when working in emerging

and transition economies is the role of gender inequality. While much progress has been made in women's rights, much still remains to be done and addressed. Economic independence for women remains an important goal by the United Nations, especially in emerging economies. In closing, this book should challenge the reader to take a new look not only at entrepreneurship in transition economies, but also the role women entrepreneurs play in this process.

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Last, but not least, we must express our affectionate thanks to our families and colleagues who have stood by us since the beginning. Their support and motivation have always been irreplaceable and indispensable for each of us, and therefore we dedicate the book to them with our gratitude, appreciation and love.

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List of Abbreviations

EC	European Commission
GCI	Global Competitiveness Index
EFI	Index of Economic Freedom
EC	European Commission
DB	Doing Business
TEA	Total Early-stage Entrepreneurial Activity
GGGI	Global Gender Gap Index
WEF	World Economic Forum
EBRD	European Bank for Reconstruction and Development
CATI	Computer-assisted Telephone Interviewing
SeECs	Southeast European Countries
SBA	Small Business Administration
BEEPS	Business Environment and Enterprise Performance survey
OLS	Ordinary Least Squares
ATT	Average Treatment-on-Treated
PSM	Propensity Score Matching
GEDI	Global Entrepreneurship and Development Index
CEE	Central and Eastern Europe
TEs	Transition Economies
WOB	Woman-owned Businesses
ONRC	Romanian National Trade Register Office
GVA	Gross Value Added
CAEN	Classification of National Economic Activities
NIS	National Institute of Statistics
NLC	National Licensing Center
VET	Vocational and Education Training
JCI	Junior Chamber International
FTAs	Free Trade Agreements
CCs	Carbon Credits
TOYP	Ten Outstanding Young Persons of the World