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e-mail: [office\\_jedep@spiruharet.ro](mailto:office_jedep@spiruharet.ro)

## FOREWORD

More and more, the today's economic debates gravitate around the Fourth Industrial Revolution and the global transformation characterized by the digital, physical and biological technologies that interfere and change the world around us and our perception of the humankind progress.

Important changes are expected regarding size, speed and scope of these transformations that Fourth Industrial Revolution generated. The transformations consist mainly of new systems built on the infrastructure of the digital revolution. Also, this will fundamentally change the way in which we produce, consume, move, communicate and interact with one another. Nanotechnologies and given new powers of genetic engineering will impact dramatically who we are and how we think and behave<sup>1</sup>.

Nevertheless, the fundamental nature of this revolution will affect the labor markets and the future of work, will generate income inequality and even social value systems and ethical frameworks will need to be changed.

Also, the environmental changes should be constantly monitored to be able to take measures before anything dramatically occurred. In the past 20 years, it has become obvious that our major global issues are interconnected and must be approached as a whole. Acting to solve a global problem is a tremendously difficult task and it needs to start from a critical approach to the existing situation. Defining a problem can be more challenging than even finding the solution. But, Buckminster Fuller said: *“you never change things by fighting the existing reality. To change something, build a new model that makes the existing model obsolete”*.

*“These are critical times. We need critical minds”* says Menard Gabel and I am totally agreed with, therefore JEDEP encourages young and critical minds to share their views with our readers and to have the courage to be the first suggesting new and unconventional

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<sup>1</sup> adapted from Klaus Schwab, *The Fourth Industrial Revolution*, 2016



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approaches to today's global challenges. Networking brilliant minds could make the difference for the next centuries. Also, collective work due to the new digital technologies is possible and accessible to a large number of people, and the benefits will emerge in the near future.

The current issue includes papers discussing: the social partnership as a need to tackle the environmental problems and the dimensions of atypical employment in Romania, from global to particular issues ensure readers with a two-sided perspective at a glance. Networking platforms as digital solutions to encourage collective thinking and work become more popular among small and medium-sized businesses, and with a small investment, all have access to the results of collective work.

JEDEP editorial team is seeking new ways of making the young researchers' work more visible internationally and is working to develop a new collaborative tool in order to encourage interdisciplinarity and cooperation between "critical minds" no matter where they are located.

Editor in-chief,

Prof. Manuela Epure, PhD