

**COMBINED ENTREPRENEURIAL AND NON-ENTREPRENEURIAL
INTERNATIONALIZATION: A CASE STUDY**

Niina Nummela, Turku School of Economics, University of Turku, Rehtorinpellonkatu 3, 20500 Turku, Finland, niina.nummela@utu.fi

Tiia Vissak (corresponding author), School of Economics and Business Administration, University of Tartu, J. Liivi 4-302, 50090 Tartu, Estonia, tiia.vissak@ut.ee

Barbara Francioni, Department of Communication Sciences, Humanities and International Studies. Cultures, Languages, Literatures, Arts, Media (DISCUI), University of Urbino Carlo Bo, Via Saffi, 15, 61029 Urbino, Italy, barbara.francioni@uniurb.it

Acknowledgements

This work was supported by the Institutional Research Funding IUT20-49 of the Estonian Ministry of Education and Research and by the Estonian Research Council's grant PUT 1003.

Abstract

This study focuses on how and why a combination of entrepreneurial and non-entrepreneurial internationalization happens. It demonstrates that internationalization is not always a fully entrepreneurial process: SMEs can also enter foreign markets non-entrepreneurially. We bring in insights from internationalization – mostly (International) Entrepreneurship and International Business – literature, but also use an illustrative case study of a small Italian exporter to investigate a combined – simultaneously entrepreneurial and non-entrepreneurial – internationalization process. We show that combining entrepreneurial and non-entrepreneurial internationalization cannot be fully explained with existing internationalization theories, as they do not take into account the nonlinear nature of internationalization or explain why the process seems to reach a ‘glass ceiling’ beyond which it does not progress. Our study concludes with an alternative explanation: a conceptual framework.

Keywords: internationalization; international entrepreneurship; case study