

AN INCENTIVE TO SHARE AND PROSPER

- Research shows the value of workers taking a role in their companies' finances through share ownership and similar schemes
- Research team including Staffordshire University's Iraj Hashi wins bids to produce high-profile reports for multiple EU institutions
- Projects led by Staffordshire University are a major influence on EU support for Employee Financial Participation

The time for Employee Financial Participation (EFP) has come. It's the idea that if employees have a share in their companies' results – in the form of share ownership, share options, profit sharing and other similar schemes – those companies will become more productive and competitive.

Thanks to research lead by Iraj Hashi, Professor of Economics at Staffordshire University, it's a concept that's now high on the agenda of EU policymakers. Significantly, the European Parliament declared its confidence in the research in January 2014 by passing a resolution that pledged its firm support for EFP. And the team is set for even greater influence, with the European Commission currently setting up a Europe-wide Centre for Employee Ownership.

Professor Hashi's work in the area has spanned 20 years and has had a sizeable effect on several European Union institutions – including the European Economic and Social Committee, the European Commission and the European Parliament.

His research started with employee ownership in Poland and Yugoslavia during their transition to a market economy. After this, Professor Hashi and his colleagues won competitive tenders to undertake research and prepare reports for the Commission. Between 2006 and 2009, the team produced two PEPPER Reports (Participation by Employed Persons in Profits and Enterprise Results), with one looking at the details of EFP in all EU-27 member states.

He says: "These two reports reignited the debate on the role of employees and the impact of employee participation in EU institutions."

The impact of the Staffordshire University research spread throughout the academic and policymaking community. In 2010, the European Commission launched a project on "Promoting Employee Financial Participation in the EU-27", and Professor Hashi was invited to speak at a conference in Brussels the following year.

As part of the Action Plan on European Company Law and Corporate Governance, adopted in 2012, the European Commission sought a research team for its biggest EFP undertaking, titled "Implementation of the Pilot Project – Promotion of Employee Ownership and Participation".

In a competitive tender, Professor Hashi and his group were again chosen to complete the project. Their interim report was presented in Brussels in January 2014, shortly after the European Parliament resolution that asked the Commission to implement the proposals made in a study co-authored by Staffordshire University.

To find out more about Professor Iraj Hashi and his work on EFP, read the case study in full at: www.staffs.ac.uk/prosper



IRAJ HASHI MBE

Professor of Economics

A well-travelled academic, Iraj completed his undergraduate education in Iran, his Masters in the United States, his Doctoral studies in the UK and has been awarded the Presidential Medal of Merit for his contribution to Kosovo society. He has always chosen to specialise in microeconomics, industrial economics and the economics of transition.

Iraj has been an active researcher since 1992, and this has seen him work across much of Central and Eastern Europe. He has used his vast experience to publish a number of books, articles, journals and conference papers.

The European Parliament said they and the Commission should encourage all member states to develop a system of employee financial participation

