

Kingston
Business
School

Small Business Research Centre Report 2010



Kingston University London

“2010 has been one of the more challenging years in the Small Business Research Centre’s (SBRC) 23-year history, as the fallout from the recession has affected all parts of the economy. However, research from the SBRC continues to have impact at home and abroad, as staff maintain strong levels of engagement with stakeholders and our research outputs reach high quality levels.

In presenting the annual report for 2010, I am delighted to be able to share with you our successes from the year.”

Professor Robert Blackburn



David Smallbone meets Michael Dell of the Dell Corporation with ICSB colleagues

Report 2010

2010 has been a busy year in the SBRC. Eight externally funded projects either started or continued in 2010, and 40 research outputs were published by the nine staff. These publications included nine peer-reviewed journal articles, three books, seven book chapters, 14 conference papers, and seven research reports. In addition, David Smallbone and Robert Blackburn were co-chairs of the ISBE Annual Conference in London, in November.

International links

2010 saw a high level of international activity by SBRC staff, in terms of collaborative research, co-authorship of publications and conference participation. We have continued to work with our European partners, and were responsible for the UK section of the EU’s Annual SME Report for DG Enterprise and Industry. Most SBRC researchers were involved in at least one major international conference in 2010 (including RENT, ICSB and the International Network of Business and Management Journals (INBAM)). As in previous years, the SBRC has hosted a number of international researchers during the past year, including visitors from Finland, Japan and Spain. In addition, three projects were either sourced internationally, or involved foreign partners. This year, we were also delighted to host Professor Busujima Takakazu from the Chiba University of Commerce, Japan.

Research projects

New research projects undertaken during 2010 included the following:

- **A study of small firm survival and growth strategies in post-recessionary conditions.** Building upon a 2009 study, this is an investigation of London-based SMEs, involving David Smallbone, John Kitching, Mirela Xheneti and Eva Kasperova. Supported by an ISBE RAKE grant and the Workspace Group PLC, the study is concerned with the implications of the different forms of adaptation undertaken by firms in 2008–09 for their medium- and longer-term performance prospects.

- **The views and responses of British SMEs in the recovery.**

Commissioned by Barclays Bank and undertaken by Robert Blackburn and Thomas Wainwright, this study examined how firms in Britain are responding to challenges in the economy and what their views and expectations are for 2011. Specific regions and sectors across Britain were studied to develop a large-scale picture of the recovery. The findings of this project were publicised widely in the media, including radio and newspaper interviews.

- **The development of a measure of the innovative characteristics of young people.** Led by Elizabeth Chell and involving Rosemary Athayde, this project builds on earlier work by further developing and testing the tool further, and establishing norms by age of student (ages 14–19 years).

- **Global University Entrepreneurial Spirit Students’ Survey (GUESSS).** The SBRC is the UK partner of GUESSS, an international research project that investigates the entrepreneurial spirit/intentions of students worldwide. The project, involving around 30 universities and in collaboration with the University of St Gallen, Switzerland, investigates the effectiveness of universities’ entrepreneurship programmes with national/international benchmarking. The SBRC is responsible for surveying students in the UK in spring 2011.

- **The value of small company abbreviated accounts.** This study was commissioned by the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Scotland, and undertaken by John Kitching, Eva Kasperova and Robert Blackburn. Using interview and survey data from preparers of small company accounts and from a wide variety of account users, the study explores directors’ motivations for filing abbreviated accounts and user motivations in the context of other sources of information they could use instead.

- **SME capability to manage regulation: a literature review.** This project builds on previous SBRC research on regulation and small business behaviour. Commissioned by the New Zealand government, it was undertaken by John Kitching and David Smallbone. The review formed the first stage of a large empirically based project in New Zealand.

Copies of the reports for most of the projects listed above may be downloaded from <http://eprints.kingston.ac.uk>

People news

External activities and appointments

Robert Blackburn performed numerous external roles including international plenary presentations at the 7th SMEs in a Global Economy conference in Sarawak, the Higher School of Economics, Moscow and the Business School at the University of Montpellier. Robert presented one of the first 'webinars' for the International Council for Small Business (ICSB) on Publishing in Journals, involving an interactive presentation with 40+ participants across the world. As Editor in Chief of the International Small Business Journal, Robert has worked with the editorial board to further strengthen the Journal's reputation. He examined PhDs at Aston, Royal Holloway, Strathclyde and Leeds Metropolitan universities. Robert also presented to the British Academy of Management's (BAM) Annual Doctoral Symposium at the University of Sheffield and the Association of Business Schools' / BAM's Director of Research Programme in London. Robert was elected to the Executive Board of the European Network for Social and Economic Research (www.ensr.eu/index.cfm). In December, Robert was appointed Chair of the international panel to evaluate the 3.5m Euro LIIKE2 research programme for the Academy of Finland.

In June 2010, **David Smallbone** became the President of the ICSB, which has led to visits to ICSB affiliates worldwide. He also sat on the appointment panel for a Professorship at the University of Aarhus, Denmark; was appointed to the Advisory Committee of the Entrepreneurship Development Programme at the Universidad Nacional de General Sarmiento, Argentina; and was a Distinguished Academic Visitor, Massey University, New Zealand. He examined PhDs in the universities of Edinburgh and North Staffordshire. He delivered invited keynote presentations in plenary sessions at conferences in Puerto Rico, South Korea, Russia, Bulgaria, New Zealand and China. The highlight was an invited keynote at the first international conference to be held in Soweto, South Africa. David has continued in the position of Associate Editor for the Journal of Small Business Management and co-chaired the 2010 ISBE Annual Research conference in London, with Robert Blackburn. He was also a member of the judging panel for British Chamber of Commerce Business of the Year Award.

Elizabeth Chell completed the NESTA-funded project to profile the innovative characteristics of young people, working with a software company to produce an online questionnaire that measures innovative characteristics of young people. She was guest editor (with Nicolopoulou K and Karatas-Ozkan M) for a special issue of Entrepreneurship and Regional Development on 'Social entrepreneurship: international and cross-cultural innovation'. Elizabeth also organised a workshop with Andrew Godley on social enterprise and business ethics, at Reading University.

John Kitching has reviewed research proposals for the ESRC; chaired the ISBE doctoral workshop; and reviewed papers for seven different journals on small business themes.

The Attitudes to Enterprise (ATE) Test developed by **Rosemary Athayde** to measure enterprise potential in young people has been successfully piloted in the Hangzhou Province in south-eastern China, by the Zhejiang University.

Mirela Xheneti presented a paper at the RENT XXIV conference: 'Research in entrepreneurship and small business', in Maastricht, Holland in November 2010.

New staff appointments

We are pleased to welcome the following members of staff to the SBRC:

Dr Thomas Wainwright joined the SBRC as a post-doctoral researcher in January 2010. His PhD (Nottingham University) examined the UK mortgage



market, wholesale banking, asset management and the unfolding of the credit crunch within the financial services sector.

Eva Kasperova also joined the SBRC in January 2010, as a research assistant. She is particularly interested in disability and entrepreneurship, and has recently embarked on a part-time PhD at Kingston.

Vik Gill joined the SBRC in August 2010 as an ESRC Management and Business Development Fellow pursuing a full-time PhD. Her research interests include social entrepreneurship, gender and entrepreneurship, and technology and innovation in SMEs.

Staff leaving the SBRC

We were sorry to say goodbye to **Professor Paul Robson** who left the SBRC in December 2010 to take up a Professorship at Royal Holloway, University of London. We wish him every success with his continued academic career.

Postgraduate research

Congratulations to the following students who successfully completed PhD theses in 2010: **Sameera Ali Syed** for a study of small business marketing; and **Briga Hynes** for a study of the determinants of small business growth. In addition, **Arie Barendregt** successfully completed a DBA thesis on competitor analysis in small Dutch firms.

In terms of current students, **Alfred Akakpo** entered the PhD programme in 2010, alongside **Eva Kasperova** and **Vik Gill**. They join **Suthinee Mongkol**, whose research focuses on the role of networks in the internationalisation of SMEs in Thailand; and **Rosemary Athayde** whose PhD research is in the field of entrepreneurship education. Two new DBA students joined the SBRC in 2010 – **Natalia Bukhshtaber** and **Chi Maher**.

Staff

Robert Blackburn, Director of SBRC and Professor of Small Business Studies

David Smallbone, Associate Director of SBRC and Professor of Small Business and Entrepreneurship

Elizabeth Chell, Professor of Entrepreneurial Behaviour

Dr John Kitching, Reader

Rosemary Athayde, Senior Researcher

Dr Mirela Xheneti, Researcher

Dr Thomas Wainwright, Researcher

Vik Gill, ESRC/SAMS Management & Business Development Fellow

Eva Kasperova, Research Assistant

Valerie Thorne, Research Administrator and Editorial Assistant for International Small Business Journal

Associate members

Robin Jarvis BA, FCCA

David Stokes PhD

Visiting Professors and Fellows

Professor Friederike Welter PhD

Ewald Kibler

Jari Kuusisto MSc, PhD

Sue Lawton MA(HRM), MA(Soc Ent), MCIPD

Richard Parkes

David Purdy

Professor Anne Kovalainen PhD

Publications 2010

Books

Karatas-Ozkan M & **Chell E** (2010) *Nascent Entrepreneurship and Learning*, Edward Elgar, Cheltenham

Smallbone D, Leitao J, Raposo M and **Welter F** (eds) (2010)

The Theory and Practice of Entrepreneurship: Frontiers in European Entrepreneurship Research, Edward Elgar, Cheltenham, p336.

ISBN 9781849803793

Smallbone D (ed) (2010) 'Entrepreneurship and Public Policy Volumes 1 and 2', *International Library of Entrepreneurship 19*. Edward Elgar, Cheltenham and Northampton, Mass. ISBN 461, 978 1 84542 117 5



Setting the research scene, ISBE, London, Nov 2010

Journal articles

Atherton A and **Smallbone D** (2010) 'State promotion of SME development at the local level in China – an examination of two cases', *Journal of Chinese Entrepreneurship*, 2(3), 225–241, ISSN (print) 1756–1396

Bennett R J and **Robson P J A** (2010) 'Exploring the use of trade and professional association services', *Applied Economics*, ISSN (print) 0003-6846

Chell E, Nicolopoulou K and Karata-Özkan M (2010) 'Social entrepreneurship and enterprise: International and innovation perspectives', *Entrepreneurship & Regional Development*, 22:6, 485–493

Harrison R, Mason C and **Robson P J A** (2010) 'Determinants of long-distance investing by business angels in the UK', *Entrepreneurship & Regional Development*, 22(2), 113–137, ISSN (print) 0898–5626

Smallbone D, **Kitching J** and **Athayde R** (2010) 'Ethnic Diversity, Entrepreneurship and Competitiveness in a Global City', *International Small Business Journal*, 28(2), 1–16, ISSN (print) 0266-2426

Smallbone D and **Welter F** (2010) 'Entrepreneurship and the Role of Government in Post-Socialist Economies: Some Institutional Challenges', *Historical Social Research*, 35(2), 320–333, ISSN (print) 0172-6404

Smallbone D, **Welter F**, Voytovich A and Egorov I (2010) 'Government and entrepreneurship in transition economies: the case of small firms in business services in Ukraine', *The Service Industries Journal*, 30(5), 655–670, ISSN (print) 0264-2069

Storey D J, Saridakis G, Sen-Gupta S, Edwards P K and **Blackburn R A** (2010) 'Linking HR formality with employee job quality: the role of firm and workplace size', *Human Resource Management*, 49(2), 305–329, ISSN (print) 0090-4848

Wainwright T (2010) 'Commentary: 'It's crunch time': the 'lost' geographies of the crisis', *Environment and Planning A*, 42(4), 780–784, ISSN (print) 0308-518X

Book chapters

Aaltonen S, **Blackburn R A** and Heinonen J (2010) 'Exploring entrepreneurial exits: a study of individual exit experiences in Finland and the UK' in: **Smallbone D**, Leitao J, Raposo M and **Welter F** (eds) *The Theory and Practice of Entrepreneurship: Frontiers in European Entrepreneurship Research*, Edward Elgar, Cheltenham, pp145–168. ISBN 9781849803793

Blackburn R A and **Kasperova E** (2010) 'La contribució de les petites i mitjanes empreses a l'ocupació i al creixement' in: Font A R and Ripoll Penalva A M (eds) *Informe econòmic i social de les Illes Balears*, "SA NOSTRA" Caixa de Balears, Palma, Majorca, pp242–251. ISBN 9788492863099

Chell E, Karatas-Ozkan M and Read R (2010) 'Exploring women academics' involvement in science entrepreneurship: a structuration view' in: Malach-Pines A and Ozbilgin M F (eds) *Handbook of Research on High Technology Entrepreneurs*, Edward Elgar, Cheltenham, pp315–332. ISBN 9781847209498

Kitching J (2010) 'A Burden on Business? Reviewing the Evidence Base on Regulation and Small Business Performance', reprinted in **Smallbone D** (ed) *Entrepreneurship and Public Policy*, Edward Elgar, Cheltenham. ISBN 9781845421175

Welter F and **Smallbone D** (2010) 'Women's Entrepreneurship in a Transition Context' in Brush C, Gatewood E, Henry C and De Bruin A (eds), *Women's Entrepreneurship and the Global Environment for Growth: a research Perspective*, Edward Elgar, Cheltenham. ISBN 978 1 84720 914 6

Xheneti M and **Blackburn R** (2010) 'Small Business and Entrepreneurship (SBE): an Analysis of Publications and Implications for the Development of the Field' in Lee B and Cassell C (eds) *Challenges and Controversies in Management Research*, Routledge Series on Advances in Management and Business Studies, Routledge, London, chapter 22.

ISBN 978-0-415-47217-3

Research reports

Blackburn R, Carey P and Tanewski G A (2010) '*Business advice to SMEs: professional competence, trust and ethics*' (Project Report) Association of Chartered Certified Accountants, London, p40 (ACCA Research Report, no. 119). ISBN 9781859084656

Blackburn R and **Jarvis R** (2010) '*The role of small and medium practices in providing business support to small- and medium-sized enterprises*' (Project Report) International Federation of Accountants, New York p32. ISBN 9781608150649

Blackburn R and **Wainwright T** (2010) '*The year ahead: a view from Britain's small businesses*' (Project Report) Barclays Bank PLC, London, p24.

Kitching J and **Smallbone D** (2010) '*Literature Review for the SME Capability to Manage Regulation Project*', report for Inland Revenue, New Zealand.

Conference papers

SBRC staff presented a total of 13 papers (excluding invited keynotes) at a variety of national and international conferences, including four at RENT, Maastricht in November. Staff attended other international conferences in Australia, New Zealand, Switzerland and the USA.

Further information

Small Business Research Centre, Kingston Business School,
Kingston University, Kingston Hill, Surrey KT2 7LB, United Kingdom.
T: +44 (0)20 84175354
E: r.blackburn@kingston.ac.uk or visit our home page for more details:
www.kingston.ac.uk/business/sbrc