

has been increased inequality in income of the kind that is most commonly associated with Anglo-American capitalism. On issues such as these, the kind of research that the ESRI undertakes as its staple diet comes into its own. For instance, Richard Layte and Chris Whelan show that the expansion of the economy has not altered class differences in relative social mobility; Emer Smyth and Damian Hannan reveal that the increased rate of participation in the education system has done nothing to reduce class-based inequalities in attainment; and Tony Fahey and James Williams find marked regional differences in the incidence of poverty. Clearly, economic success has not been widely shared.

Generally, *Bust to Boom?* is an excellent collection of papers from current and former members of the ESRI. The contributors stick closely to the central themes and the editors draw the conclusions together in a valuable final chapter. Nonetheless, the book is not without flaws. The ESRI appear to have adopted the Hollywood formula of producing sequels as some of the authors repeat arguments that they have already published elsewhere (for example, on class differences in social mobility and educational attainment). Students of business, economists and industrial relations scholars will find useful material in this book, though the lack of an index will make that difficult to find. Nevertheless, this is essential reading for adults who are tired of Celtic Tiger fairy tales.

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**Lopez Lopez and Illanes Sanchez, *Casos de Economia de la Empresa: Modelos y Soluciones con Excel (2002)***

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The purpose of this book, hereafter referred to as L&I, is to explain how Excel can be applied as a tool when modelling different economic problems faced by companies. L&I is written in Spanish and includes a collection of 31 cases to illustrate how Excel 97 can be used to develop models of particular situations and to solve the problem presented.

Microsoft Excel is a powerful spreadsheet that is easy to use and allows users to store, manipulate, analyse, and visualise data. Excel helps users to develop personalised models that can be adapted to

the particular users' needs. In this case, the authors have applied this tool to different case studies where systematic and repetitive operations are reflected in the relationship between rows and columns.

The book does not aim to be a manual on the use of Excel, since there are already numerous textbooks with that approach in the market. However, it sets out to explain the application of this spreadsheet to resolve several problems faced by companies when dealing with their ordinary operations.

L&I is divided into two parts. The first part introduces concepts and issues dealing with the economy of the firm. In the second part, L&I explains how to model problematic scenarios within the company by applying Excel. Three appendices are also included in the book. The first appendix includes a summary of the most frequent errors made when using Excel. Appendices B and C provide guidelines on how to use two of the tools included in Excel, Scenarios and Solver, in order to make the resolution of the economic problems posed in the cases easier. The book is also complemented with a CD-ROM (available on request to the editor) including the worksheets of solutions in Excel format.

Each case study is structured as follows. The problem is posed and the concepts to be applied to the particular case are indicated. Afterwards, a number of questions are asked. The suggested solution for the case and formulae used are provided. In every case the solution offered comes from Excel 97, although some other spreadsheet tools (for example, Lotus 123) could be used.

One very interesting aspect of the spreadsheets is their versatility. Excel offers the possibility of making simulations and posing speculative questions, like *what would happen if...?*. By varying the value of one of the cells, Excel is able to recalculate the rest of the cells by changing all the results immediately. Thus, once the model is set up within Excel, the outcome is adapted based on the new values for the variables within the model. Users can obtain estimates of the impact of modifications, in one or more of the variables within the model. This makes it easier for users to analyse sensitivity. One example of the above function can be seen in Case 24 on page 115, "Dieta" (Diet). In the first place, the case suggests an ideal diet and then students are asked to show what would happen if some of the components of the diet were increased or decreased in quantity.

One weakness of the book is the lack of theoretical guidance, in some areas it would benefit from the use of concept and theoretical

support. For example, when the case is posed and the concepts to be applied explained, providing a definition of these concepts would be appropriate. In my opinion, an introductory chapter on the basics of Excel would have improved the usefulness of the book. Furthermore, as the book does not embrace or deal with how to use Excel, a reading list could be included in order to complement it and make it easier for students without the assumed background in Excel.

Although this book does not add to knowledge in the way that academic research might expect to, L&I would, nonetheless, be a useful tool for beginners. The book is clearly written and comprehensive in its coverage. Although it assumes familiarity with Excel at a basic level, it illustrates a practical problem solving technique using this spreadsheet package very well.

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**W. Warner Burke, *Organization Change: Theory and Practice*, Sage: Thousand Oaks, CA, 2002, 325 pages, Paperback, €25.00 approx.**

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W. Warner Burke is a major figure in the field of organisation development and change, and has been for over 40 years. This book, published in the Foundations for Organisational Science series, is the outcome of his study and reflections on current theory and practice in the field of change management (which, he wryly suggests, might be an oxymoron).

The central theme of the book is that, while the environment for organisations is discontinuous and highly unpredictable, organisations are created to last and so aim for stability and continuity. So, in order to understand the theory and practice of organisational change, the organisational literature is not sufficient. We need to study the life sciences to see what they say about complexity. In the first chapter, Burke lays out the key issues, which become the structure for the main themes of the book. These are the metaphor of choice: open systems and life sciences, types of organisational change, organisational levels, data-based change, content and process, the use of frameworks, and leadership. Each of these receives thorough treatment.



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