

Editorial

Dear readers,

a cursory look over the contents of the this JEEMS issue may let us think that JEEMS is (finally...) dealing with some current political-economic issues in the Eastern Europe, namely with the alarming situation in the Ukraine: the papers selected for this issue focus on such topics as power and influence, practices of risk management, or the relationship between change and growth. Unfortunately, the first view, as often, is deceptive. Despite of some seemingly literal references, the spring issue of JEEMS in 2014 does not address the Ukrainian crisis. Instead of this, it proceeds with the academic business-as-usual by publishing articles that have survived desk consideration as well as the double-blind review process. But although the situation in Ukraine has not received explicit attention in the papers, the topics addressed seem to be of particular relevance to the current political situation in the Ukraine – albeit in a metaphorical sense – as well as for organizations in the East European countries in general.

In her research study, *Monika Wieczorek-Kosmala* critically observes the risk management practices in Polish firms and aims at evaluating the “maturity” of risk management procedures. The questions of risk management derive its relevance (if not to say its revival) particularly from the current financial and economic crisis and, therefore, from the fact that the ability to manage risk in organizations is considered (once again) an important part of the competitive advantage of organizations. Based on her panel data, the author makes twofold conclusions. First, Polish companies still seem to apply less mature risk management practices compared to the globally observed risk management procedures. Second, much stronger board commitment to risk management could be found in Polish companies than in the global survey.

Vera Belaya and *Jon Henrich Hanf* deal with the issues of power and influence in their paper on agri-food supply chains in Russia. The authors consider some important power asymmetries between buyers and suppliers. They base their conceptual analysis on an empirical qualitative study of 97 multinational companies, with the help of interviews designed in three languages: Russian, English and German. In the light of the mutual interdependence between suppliers and retailers, the preparedness to cooperate and to build partnerships with other firms in the sector turns out to be one of the most relevant influence and survival strategies. Can there be some more direct correspondence to the situation in the Ukraine?

Galina Shirokova, *Irina Berezinets* and *Alexander Shatalov* address the relationship between organizational change and organizational growth in the context of, as they call it, “emerging economies”, by asking how various types of organizational change are related to growth of organizations and whether there are dif-

ferences in the short and in the long term. By combining two dimensions of organizational change, the scale of change and its durations, the authors differentiate between four clusters of organizational change: rapid realignment, rapid transformation, slow realignment and slow transformation. The conceptual hypotheses are tested in an empirical study based on the Business Environment and Enterprise Performance Survey initiated by the European Bank of Reconstruction and Development and the World Bank and conducted in 2002 and 2005. This approach results in a considerable sample of 1446 companies from 28 countries in Central and Eastern Europe. Using some econometric models, the authors conclude that only rapid changes have some strong (positive) influences on the growth of firms, but only in the short run. In the long run, no impact on firm growth can be observed; slow changes seem to have no influence on firm growth at all. The authors discuss their results in the light of frequent changes in the economic environment of the Central and Eastern European countries. Once again, the dramatic correspondence to the Ukrainian situation is more than evident.

In the final paper of this issue, *Branka Ahlin, Mateja Drnovšek and Robert D. Hisrich*, with the help of a questionnaire-based survey, explore the relationship between social networks and innovations in organizations by looking at the effects absorptive capacity may have on this relationship. They consider absorptive capacity to be one of the mechanisms that enable small firms to benefit (in terms of innovations) from social networks of their founders. On the basis of some empirical data stem from SMEs in the USA and Slovenia, the authors demonstrate that innovations in SMEs from the USA are related to personal networks of entrepreneurs and this relationship is much stronger in case of high absorptive capacity of the firms. In the Slovenian sample, those relationships turned out not to be significant. This result, by the way, demonstrates not only the relevance of social networks and absorptive capacity for innovations in companies but also the relevance of the context-sensitive (and non-absorptive) research approaches for studying Non-American, Non-Western European countries and organizations and, potentially, for innovations in social research.

I wish you a joyful reading of this JEEMS issue and hope for a relieving situation in the Ukraine!

Irma Rybnikova