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Editorial

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Editorial

Dear Reader,

Empirical research on economic behaviour in Central Eastern European countries becomes mature. One may read the following articles as a proof of that development. They use qualitative as well as quantitative methods, often combining them in order to get a more realistic account on what we may call the ‘social facts’ of economic relations. And the research can relate itself on previous research results thus creating ‘traditions’. The empirical research on economic behaviour is theory driven, making sure that empirical findings can be evaluated against the assumptions that have lead the construction of hypotheses, basic questions, research designs etc.

If one looks into the articles of JEEMS published in the last years, one may also discover a slight preponderance towards culture thus mirroring overall tendencies in social science research in the economy, work and related issues that have underlined that ‘culture matters’. In this issue of JEEMS, all articles – in one way or the other - touch ‘culture’: culture of learning in the transformation from one economic system to another (*Brussig, Leber*), the differences between established financial markets and those just emerging as in the case of Poland (*Jackowiez, Kowalewski*), the organizational culture of Czech manufacturing companies (*Lukasova, Frankova, Surynek*), the culture in cross-national networks of small and medium – sized enterprises (*Lungwitz, Le, Campagna*). This acceptance of culture as an important element in economic life does render research more complex, helps to create more realistic accounts but also rises the need for further theoretical clarifications, for overall diagnosis. So, my account about the development is somewhat blurred. We need more theory and the readers of this journal may well understand this as an appeal to hand in also articles driven by the idea to spur our discourse on theoretical questions.

But back to the articles themselves. *Jackowiez and Kowalewskis* article “why do companies go private in emerging markets? Evidence from Poland” reveals the disregard of this topic in current research. Financial markets knowledge was largely gained from observation in US and Western European markets and thus standard explanations for this phenomenon of going private come from these developed markets. But Poland established its capital market only in 1991. What motives, what kind of driving forces are to take into account under these conditions? The mere posing of this questions seems valuable to me.

The article of *Lukasova, Frankova and Surynek* “Organizational culture of Czech manufacturing companies: an empirical typology” leads them to pose some basic questions concerning organizational culture in post-communist societies. They pledge for more comparative research to better understand the remnants of the past and the influences coming from the new forms of capitalist market activities. They also discuss their results in the light of Czech national

culture, a much broader frame of explanation that would need further research and they hint at the strong differences between their empirically found typologies and those from other authors. It seems that lack of innovativeness, experimenting and the related risk taking behaviour does characterize Czech's management behaviour. This finding can be seen as similar to that of Brussig and Leber. Their research on 'Formal and informal ways to learning in employer-provided further training in East and West German enterprises' reveals a clear difference between the two Germans: East German companies neglect informal and work-integrated forms of further training. If this and how this could account for general firm performance is an open question. To answer it, the authors rightly argue, that we would need more detailed indicators on performance, an enlarged conceptional frame that stills needs to be developed.

Lungwitz, Le and Campagna's article demonstrates the role of the factor time in transformation processes. The analysis compares 'co-ordination media in cross-national networks of small and medium-sized enterprises' in East and West and shows a growing equality in the positions between East and West SME companies. After a period in which the utilisation of labour cost advantages dominated the relations, it seems that nowadays more competence driven co-ordination emerges that allows Eastern companies a stronger position of power in their relations to their Western partners. If this holds true also for bigger companies and for all branches is still an open questions in my eyes. But the result as such is quite interesting, allowing for certain hopes concerning Eastern socio- economic development as well as posing the need for a more elaborated theory on comparative advantages.

I hope that with my short remarks I have incited readers' wishes to go more deeply into the interesting peaces of research we edit in this volume of JEEMS.

Eckhard Dittrich (Member of the Advisory Board)