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Article

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Editorial

Slovenia “on average”?

In their book on CEE management from 2000, Vince Edwards and Paul Lawrence have characterised the Slovenian Manager/Management as forming the average of their sample within CEE countries.

Certainly, there may be some doubts about such “averages”. Other studies reveal on the one hand a kind of East European management in styles and structures based on a common cultural cluster of CEE countries, which is not only a result of the last years 50 years of “communist heritage” and transformation, but of a long lasting historical, religious and cultural tradition. But on the other hand, the cultural and management differences in-between the Central and East European countries are much more developed than often expected in the West. So, the “average” is, as pointed out by Edwards/Lawrence, more a virtual one.

But looking at Slovenia, we can see an interesting cultural and historical mixture of a borderline country with geographical, cultural and historical routes to the Roman and the Austrian Empire, the religious conflicts in the Balkan region, but also the experiences of the Yugoslavian model of socialism/communism with the self-government regimes in the firms.

As a small country in-between East and West in Europe, it seems to be a melting pot of influences, also in management more an “average” European than East European country.

This issue of JEEMS contributes to a better understanding of management development in Slovenia. Just by chance and not as a planned special issue, we get first hand information on a few aspects of these developments.

In the first article, *Miroslav Stanojevic* describes the impact of the internal “production coalitions in Slovenian enterprises” based on the exchange between the managers, demanding work intensification, and trade unions, defending employees’ wage and job stability. Under the pressure of the competition on the international markets, the data from national surveys and from the Cranfield network on HRM in Slovenia suggest surprising results of such coalitions.

Within the logic of the exchange, trade unions actively participated in the fight for companies’ survival, enabling the managers to non-conflicting work intensification.

While especially in this article some traces back to traditional work systems may be found, the next two are dealing with the introduction and spreading Western methods of “good” management in Slovenian enterprises.

In the second contribution, *Adriana Rejc* describes the use and special design of performance management, taking into account the contingencies of the field. The paper provides empirical evidence on performance measurement and its factors are based on a sample of large Slovenian companies.

In the third paper, *Roberto Biloslavo* analyses mission statements of the 50 top Slovene enterprises which are published on the companies' web sites. He shows the degree to which the Slovene enterprises make use of their web sites to convey their mission to various stakeholders, including the stakeholder groups addressed and the contents of statements.

The article also highlights the differences between the mission statements of Slovene firms and those of other European or American companies, which are seen as culturally, institutionally and historically embedded. The contexts are reflected in diverse understandings of a mission and its role in a firm, despite the processes of globalization.

Also in the field of external regulations and its impact on employment policies of organisations, Slovenia seems to be at least on the way to European "normality", whatever this means. In the fourth article, *Karin Širec Rantaša* is presenting findings of a larger survey on SMEs. The results are analysed with respect to the required procedures governing employment regulation, and the administrative burden that results on recruitment policies in SMEs. It shows a certain deregulation, but still comparatively high number of procedures to be taken into account.

And finally, this issue includes an interesting research note from *Matej Lahovnik* on corporate strategies of Slovenian and Croatian companies in six different industries. Diversification seems to be the most frequently used strategy. It can be shown that a very high percentage of the companies are expanding their operations internationally, which again shows the special trace of Slovenian management from the past to the future.

All in all, a very interesting mix of articles worth reading. I hope you will enjoy it too.

And...do not ask for the average!

Rainhart Lang (Editor-in chief)

<p>We were happy (and proud) to learn that recently our author Matej Lahovnik was appointed Minister of Economics of Slovenia. We congratulate him for this new major position and wish him all the best for his work in favour of his country!</p>
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