

**Globalization and Organisational Innovations**  
**(The Case of Central and Eastern Europe)**

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## 1. Introduction: A Brief Overview on the Issue of Globalization

Such notions as globalization, globalo-modernisation etc. - both in the Hungarian and international debates on globalization - have economic-political and cultural-ideological implications. (Warhurst-Nickso-Saw, 1999.) This paper is focusing the various dimensions of globalization in economy and its key actor: business organisation (firm). In this analysis we assert that in spite of interaction among the various aspects of globalization, these dimensions in themselves have relative autonomies and each of them are subject of systematic analysis and assessment. The present paper is dealing with the effects on the organisational innovation and knowledge generation of globalization in economy. There are noticeable changes in the views evaluating the impacts of globalization of the in national economies.

At the beginning of the 1990s the opinions of experts on the foreign direct investments (FDI) or more generally on the impacts of globalization in the Hungarian economy were radically different in comparison to the end of the last decade. At the beginning of the 1990s, the positive assessment of FDI was mainstream view but the end of the decade the negative features of the globalization were pronounced in the evaluations of economists. (Árva, 1999.) In relation to the later, it is necessary to mention the intensification of the social-critique or mobilization of the public opinion against such international tools of globalization as World Trade Organization, International Monetary Fond etc., shown by the street manifestation at the end of 1999 in Seattle and in spring 2000 in Washington D.C.

The Seattle riots, according to M. Kazin - a social historian at Georgetown University – should be explained by the following pattern of economic development: “Since the end of the cold war there has been a growing mood of anger at international corporations. The triumph of capitalism has left many with the impression that great conglomerates are simply having their way – going across borders to knock down domestic cultures and homogenize the world”. (Baker, 2000:6)

As a result of both professional criticisms and the social movements against the “effets pervers” of globalization, such international institutions as the International Labor Office (I.L.O.) and the World Trade Organization (W.T.O.), they have established a joint-committee – at the first time in their history - to guarantee the socio-ethical,

working and environmental control of products manufactured for both the national governments and the organizations of consumers. (Edmonds, 2000.)

The following sections intend to focus on the possible relations between the various types of innovations and the process of globalization. To understand the degree of participation in the globalization process of the post-socialist economies in the Central and Eastern European region, it is worth to deal briefly with the notion a globalization itself. In the Hungarian academic community, the paradigms of Porter on the globalization of national economies are quite well known. (1) The approach of Gordon (1996) on the distinction of the various phases of economic development are less used by the academic representatives of the business sciences, in spite of the fact that these categories are suitable to measure empirically the economic development in these countries. A British scholar, Martin analyses the participation of the economies in Central and Eastern Europe in the process of globalization, using categories elaborated by Gordon (Gordon, 1996: 163) and he is critical to simple distinction between multi-domestic and global strategies of Porter's analysis of competitive strategy and globalization. According to this critic, "The distinction is weak at the extremes; few industries are unaffected by developments in other countries, if only through knock-on effects. The broad distinction between multi-domestic and global requires refinement". (Martin, 1998:10) Gordon makes distinction among the following interrelated process:

1: The process of "internationalisation", which is based on the " ... core principle of exchange, the cross-national transfer of information, goods and services or production factors between economic agents or units that remain quite discrete, a process regulated principally through a system of relative price governed by supply and demand."(Ibid.p. 10.) The international trade flows indicate the degree of involvement of the national economy concerned in the process of internationalization.

1: The process of "multi-nationalization" - which based on the logic of production has been much slower in the post-socialist countries of the CEE region - "... involves the organised direction and control of cross-national economic activities by corporations that remain fundamentally anchored in national economic systems", (Ibid. p.10.) The level of foreign direct investments (FDI), "...when associated with coordinated production and marketing arrangements, provide an indication of multi-nationalization" (Martin, 1998: 10.) are the indicators of the degree of participation on the national economies in the CEE region in the process of multi-nationalization.

3: “Globalisation, properly so-called, is propelled by a new social organizational logic of innovation” (Ibid. p. 10.) The Multinational Corporations (MNCs) are not rooted “...in a single country with head-office and satellites, but operates on the basis of strategic contributions from several countries. The dispersal of strategic decision making and activities provide an indication of the global corporation in this sense.” (Martin, 1998: 10.)

Evaluating the participation of the CEE countries in the internationalization of their national economies during the first decade of 1990’s, we may say that their involvement in this process, based on the “logic of exchange”. Some of them have started to be involved in the process of “multi-nationalization” (e.g.: Hungary, Poland and Czech Republic). None of them have showed visible signs of involvement in the process of globalization based on the “logic of innovation”.

Only, at the end of 1990’s, were registered some signs of the partial involvement in the process of globalization of Hungary. For example, such as the well-known MNCs, as General Electric, Nokia, Ericsson, Knorr-Bremse, ZDF or Motorola started to re-localise strategic functions of their operations such as “research and development”(R and D) into the country. But, evaluating the core activities of the MNCs in Hungary, we may say that the “manufacturing and assembly” and the “low-value added” operations are dominant, which indicates progress in the process of “multi-nationalization” and but slow progress in the process of globalization based on the logic of innovation.

The next part of this paper is focusing on the involvement of one of the most economically dynamic regions of Hungary (Székesfehérvár) in the process of globalisation. Empirical evidences are borrowed from an international survey - carried out in the second half of the 1990’s - which aimed at identifying the existence or lack of a regional innovation system. (REGIS). We intend to illustrate that the presence of product and process development activities in the firms operating in the

Székesfehérvár region are indicating not only their involvement in the process of globalization but have also positive impact on the diffusion of the organisational innovations (e.g. diffusion of “leading edge” managerial practices, etc.).

## 2. Weak Involvement in the Process of Globalisation. Innovation Profiles of the Firms and Diffusion of Modern Management Practices

The region of Székesfehérvár-city - in the second half of the 1990's - was characterised by the extremely high rate of Foreign Direct Investments (FDI) and therefore selected for the purpose of an international EU project aimed at identifying the existence or lack of a regional innovation system (REGIS) (Cook-Boekholt-Töedtling, 1998.) (Until the end of 1999, Hungary attracted 20.7 billions USD FDI, and the region surveyed alone absorbed more than one billion USD.(Schweitzer, 2000:93). One third (34 %) of the firms participating in the REGIS project (n=75) have foreign ownership and belong the category of the MNCs. See the Table 1 illustrating the activities of firms participating in the international project.

Table 1. Activities Practices by the Firms Surveyed in the REGIS Project

<b>Activities practiced in the firms</b>	<b>%</b>
a). Strategic planning	6.7
b). Research and development	2.7
c). Selection of suppliers	20.3
d) Sales	40.5
e). Marketing	13.5
f). Production	70.2
g). Assembly	24.2
h). Training	7.7

More detailed analysis of the research and development profiles of the firms investigated are indicating that the share of R and D activities in the turnover is extremely low, in the Hungarian and especially in the foreign owned companies. (In the Hungarian firms 2.06 % and 0.21 % in the foreign ones.) It is worth mentioning that the newly established Hungarian firms (these are the so-called “green-field” investments) did not make any efforts to develop their research and development activities. These kinds of activities were only in planning phase and concerned only tiny (residual) part of the workforce. The lack of R and D activities in the newly created Hungarian firms should be explained by the lack of motivation or incentives and by the service-character of their activities. (Note: the research tools of the survey were not adequate to identify the informal nature of the R and D activities of the firms investigated.) Table 2 gives an overview on the R and D profiles by characteristics of the firms surveyed.

Table 2. R and D Profiles and Characteristics of the Firm (n=75)

<b>Firms' characteristics</b>	<b>R and D Expenditure in 1990 ('000ECU)</b>	<b>R and D Expenditure in 1995 ('000 ECU)</b>	<b>R and D expenditure in % of turnover</b>	<b>R and D staff (1995)</b>	<b>R and D staff in the % of personnel</b>	<b>Plan to develop R and D activity</b>
<b>Hungarian firms:</b>						
Privately owned:	22.9	36.7	2.48	1.59	7.55	33.3
Mixed-ownership (private+state)	5.0	0.71	0.14	0.14	0.01	14.3
State owned	46.8	80.0	1.33	12.57	0.87	28.6
Green-field	-	0.0	0.0	0.25	1.76	25.0
Brown-field	20.43	53.95	2.50	5.78	6.00	30.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>29.43</b>	<b>38.95</b>	<b>2.06</b>	<b>3.14</b>	<b>5.05</b>	<b>29.5</b>
<b>Foreign firms</b>						
Green-field	-	6.25	0.24	2.00	0.43	15.18
Brown-field	133.3	42.67	0.09	-	-	25.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>133.3</b>	<b>38.95</b>	<b>0.21</b>	<b>3.30</b>	<b>0.56</b>	<b>20.0</b>

Source: Makó Csaba-Ellinstad Marc (1999) 'Globalizáció, közvetlen külföldi tőkebefektetések és a vezetői gyakorlat modernizációja', Szociológia, 4.sz. p. 47.

For the future economic development of both the region surveyed and the national economy, the intensification of the R and D activities in the foreign owned firms - especially the newly created ones - is crucial. To keep the durable economic growth in relatively high level in Hungary and in other CEE countries, it is not enough to attract and stabilize the low-value added production but it is necessary to use more robust economic policy incentive to attract high-value added manufacturing and R and D capacities into the country. In the contrary case the so-called "Rover-syndroma": the foreign investors will relocate production into another country where the labour costs are lower in comparison to Hungary. (e.g. reality of this risk is well illustrated by the announcement of the German multinational Mannesmann, which is closing its car-radio assembly plant in Sárbogard and laying off 1 1000 workers and starting production in Chine, where the labour cost is only one fifth of the Hungarian. ) (Pekarek, 2000.)

More visible presence of the R and D activities both in the Hungarian and foreign owned firms should be important not only for the future perspective of the Hungarian economy but also for the various aspects of the present development, such as the speed of diffusion of the organizational innovations. In this relation it is worth to mention the following experience of the international project: the presence of the process and product development has positive impact on the relatively autonomous development of the work-organization. According to the experiences of the survey of almost one thousand firms in the European Union, in the firms which are active in the fields of process and product development, the rate of the presence of such "leading-edge" management concepts (and practices) as ISO, Team-work, Benchmarking, TQM, JIT, IT etc. is higher than in the sample of the firms surveyed. See Table 2 in details.

Table 3. Relation between the Types of Development Activities and the Diffusion of Organisational Innovations: the Example of the Firms in the EU Region (%)

Forms of organisational innovations	Types of R and D activities		Firms in the EU Region (n=833)
	Product innovation (n=232)	Process innovation (n=385)	
1:ISO 9000	65.0	62.3	52.0
2: Team-work	55.1	56.4	47.8
3: TQM	54.5	57.1	46.3
4: Information technology (IT)	52.9	56.1	44.5
5: Flat-organisation	49.8	46.5	39.5
6: Just-in-Time	44.9	46.8	37.7
7: Profit or cost centres	42.7	42.3	32.7
8: Benchmarking	32.2	32.5	32.5
9: Ousourcing	28.5	24.2	22.1
10: Interdisciplinary design teams	33.4	29.4	22.1
11: Inter-organisational networking	23.5	26.0	20.0
12: System suppliers	26.9	24.4	15.5

Source: Cooke, Philip-Boekholt, Patricia-Töedtling, Franz (eds.)(1998) 'Regional Innovatoin Systems: Designing for the future - REGIS', Targeted Socio-Economic Research, EU Commission - Final Report of Project ERB-CT-95-1010, Brussels, March, p. 56.

Date presented in Table 3 are indicating the followings. Firstly, firms which are active in the field of product-development are active also in the field of process innovations, too. Secondly, firms which are leading in the fields of process and product development are also advancing in organisational innovations. The general conclusion are the followings: the various types of technological innovations (e.g. process or product developments) have strong relations with the implementations (or diffusions) of organizational innovations.

### 3. The Future Perspective: the “Creative” Period in the Transformation Process

It seems to us, that the period of the mass-privatization and the radical restructuring of the organizational and employment restructuring has come to the end in the post-socialist countries in the Central and Eastern European region. The beginning of the new century is open the path for the new quality of the transformation process, which should be labeled as “creative” in comparison to the rationalisation and restructuring of the production and management structures inherited from the state-socialist political and economic regime. In this new phase of the transformation process in the CEE region, besides of the social and economic actors of the country concerned, particular role is played by the representatives of the scientific community participating in the various international projects aimed to understand various dimensions of the globalisation. Lacking comparative evidences drawn from the international scientific cooperation, it would be difficult to assess realistically the present and future position of the national economy (e.g. Hungary) under the conditions of intensified competition for FDD by both matured and emerging capitalistic countries.

According to our hypothesis, the social and economic transformation of CEE countries in the 21<sup>st</sup> century - in spite of its highly complex and uncertain character - would have the potentials of the qualitative divide in comparison with the patterns of development identified in the last decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. “Creative” phase of transformation process from centrally planned to the market one - among other things - should be symbolized by the growing share of the higher value added production of goods and services, including the intensification of knowledge use (or innovations) in the business organizations. This tendency has to be reflected not only in the increasing share of the strategic activities (e.g. research and development or in more general term in “knowledge seeking”) of MNCs, but also their embeddedness in the social-economic and professional-cultural network of the Hungarian economy.

In the relation with the above mentioned tendency, it is worth to call attention to some new phenomena which may indicate the possible appearance of the “creative period” or “changing priorities” in the activities of the MNC (or FDI in more general term).

Firstly, in the last years, leading MNCs operating in the electronic and car industrial sectors have discovered for themselves the significant tradition of mathematical excellence and other scientific potentials of the Hungarian researchers. For instance, the well-known business newspaper of “Financial Times” (FT, 2000. April 26.) made a long interview with the heads of research laboratories of such market-leading high-technology companies as NOKIA, Ericsson, Audi, ZF about the motifs of establishing R and D capacities in Hungary. These motives are the followings:

- “One (reason for investing) was the very good education level, mainly the mathematical background”, (Ibid. P. 15.)
- “The second was the availability. There are very good researchers in southern Europe and other parts of the world, but availability is not enough for a big R and D market.” (Ibid, p. 15.)
- “The cost of labour comes only third ... one person here (in Hungary) costs about 70 % of the western level.”(Ibid. p. 15.)
- Cultural motif: “...Hungary has strong tradition of technical and scientific education”, (Ibid. p. 15.)
- The last one is the “. good research temperament ... encouraged by a keenness to innovate born from relative poverty.” (Ibid. p. 15.)

The factors listed above attracting R and D capacities of MNCs into Hungary are starting to function in the third period of their presence in the host country. As Gábor

Elő, the R and D manager in Hungary for the Finnish NOKIA expressed clearly the changing motivations of MNCs in the emerging market economy: “Every country likes to see more than (simple) commercial things (like) a sales office ... But at first, any multinational company comes to sell its products. After that, if it’s a reasonable business environment, they come for production, comes the strategic, very sensitive business of R and D.” (Ibid. p. 15.)

Secondly, it worth to present the lessons of a recent international project dealing with the investments’ motifs of the multinational corporations (MNCs) targeted to the post-socialist countries of Central and Eastern Europe. Results concerning the future investment’s motivations of the MNCs are extremely interesting. (Note: The survey was carried out in the regional or global centers of the 408 MNCs, 43 questionnaires with valuable answers were sent back, from which 28 from the manufacturing sector and 11 from the various fields of the service sector.) (Monea-Pearce, 2000.)

Before presenting the empirical evidences, it is necessary to make distinction among the following investment motifs of the MNCs:

- 1.: “market-seeking” is indicating a policy of adapting product or production process to the local contexts - creative dynamics identified related to the low level and informality of the “learning process”, (in English abbreviation: **MS**),
- 2.: “efficiency seeking” expressed in the improved cost efficiency. Methods and technics to improve cost-consciousness did represent on of the most-visible weakness of the management in the state-owned firms in the state-socialist political and economic system, (in English abbreviation: **ES**),
- 3.: “knowledge seeking” strategy aimed to improve the long-term competitiveness of the subsidiaries of the MNCs, (**KS**)

During the first decade of the transformation process from planned to the market economies in the CEE region, the core investment motivations for the MNCs were the market seeking and the efficiency seeking. In other words: during the 1990's, the so-called **MS** and **ES** strategies were served to complete or complete the “knowledge” or in more general term the “cultural deficiency”, of the managers in the former socialist countries of the region. (Thompson, 1994:193)

In the first decade of the XXIst century - in combination with the unchanged importance of the market and efficiency seeking - the motifs of “knowledge seeking”(KS) would play stronger and more visible role in comparison to the end of 1990's. In relation with the knowledge seeking, researchers made distinction between the following types of this investment motivation:

- a) knowledge seeking - phase.1: aimed to create new products for the host and EU markets using the existing knowledge capital (e.g. original host country technology, local marketing knowledge etc.) (in English abbreviation: **KS1**)
- b) knowledge seeking - phase 2: utilisation of the local-creative knowledge to make new products for the global-network of the multinational corporation concerned. (in English abbreviation: **KS2**)

Table 4 summarises the present and future (or anticipated motifs) of the MNCs in the Central and Eastern European regions.

Table 4. Evaluation the Motifs of Investments by MNCs in the CEE region(x)

		Changes in the Investments motivations (average)		
		Present investment motifs		Future investment motifs
	KS1 (CEE region)	KS2 (Global markets)	KS1 (CEE region)	KS2 (Global markets)
<b>Sector:</b>				
Chemical	1.71	1.54	2.43	1.86
Electronic	1.89	1.67	2.22	2.33
Machine	1.33	1.17	2.00	2.17
Car	1.33	1.33	1.67	1.67
Oil	2.00	1.50	2.14	2.00
Miscellaneous	1.14	1.00	n.d.	n.d.
<b>Country of origin:</b>				
Asia	1.67	1.67	1.33	1.33
USA	1.53	1.40	2.20	2.27
Western Europe	1.56	1.31	2.38	2.06
<b>Average:</b>	<b>1.56</b>	<b>1.38</b>	<b>2.21</b>	<b>2.07</b>

Source: Monea, J.- Pearce, R. (2000) 'Multinational and Sustainable Industrial Transformation in CEE Transition Economies: the Roles of Technology, (in) Young, S. - Hood, H. (Eds.) Multinational in the Millenium: Companies and Countries, Changes and Choices, "27<sup>th</sup> Annual Conferenc UK Chapter Academy of International Business", 14<sup>th</sup> / 15<sup>th</sup> April, 2000. University of Strathclyde, Glasgow-Scotland/UK, p.196.

Notes:

x= the evaluation of the various investment's motifs were assessed the following 3-points scale:

- 1: the most important target of the subsidiary firm,
- 2: secondary target of the subsidiary firm,
- 3: lacking among the targets of the subsidiary firm

In relation with the data presented in Table 4, it is necessary to note the followings. To make visible the future investment motifs of MNCS in the CEE region, such present investment motifs as "market seeking" or "efficiency seeking" were left out from Table 4. The shift into the direction of "knowledge seeking" was registered mainly in sectors such as electronic, oil and chemicals. In relation with the pay of origin of MNCs, American and European firms are showing stronger eagerness to invest in the post-socialist countries of the region in comparison with the Asian companies.

Evaluating the future perspectives of the economic development in the emerging capitalist countries of the CEE region, it is worth to know the development pattern of successful country such as Ireland. This country, beside the various kinds of the

financial incentives (e.g. tax holidays or other state-subsidies) created – from the 1950's - an “institutional matrix” (e.g. the well-known Industrial Development Authority), which played significant roles not only attracting FDI but shaping its quality, too. The present results of combining institutional and financial support are both the increasing share of the higher-value added producers and the increasing autonomy of the subsidiary firms operating in Ireland. See detail, the Table 5.

Table 5. Autonomy of the Irish subsidiary of the MNCs (average)

<b>Fields of decisions</b>	<b>Before 1986</b>	<b>Present</b>
1. <u>Market</u> are supplied by Irish subsidiary	1.59	2.11
2. <u>Product-range</u> supplied by Irish subsidiary	1.71	2.24
3. Participation in <u>strategic decision</u> by the Irish subsidiaries	1.62	2.29
4. <u>Technology</u> used by Irish subsidiary	1.82	2.60

Notes: The average numbers used in Table 5 based on the following 5-point scale:

(1) Decision taken mainly by parent/regional HQ without consulting with/seeking advice from Irish subsidiary,

(2) Decision taken by parent/regional HQ after consulting with/seeking advice from Irish subsidiary,

(3) Decision taken mainly by Irish subsidiary after consulting with/seeking advice from parent/regional HQ,

(4) Decision taken mainly by Irish subsidiary without consulting with /seeking advice from parent/regional HQ,

Source: Ana-Theresa Tavares,(2000): ‘Multinational Enterprise in Ireland: the Dynamic of Subsidiary Strategy’, (in) Stephen Young-Neil Hood (Eds.) 27<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference UK Chapter: Academy of International Business: The Multinational in the Millenium: Companies and Countries, Changes and Choices, Glasgow: University of Strathclyde, 14<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup> April, p. 176.

The majority of the decision is taken by the HQ with consulting with the subsidiaries, but the following tendency is visible: the degree of autonomy of the Irish subsidiaries is growing in all fields of the decision making, especially in the use of technology.

#### 4. Conclusions

Following the re-structuring (construction and destruction of the inherited economic-organizational and management structure of the state-socialist firms) period of the 1990's, the first decade of the Millenium represents the so-called "creative" cycle of the transformation process in the CEE region. In this period, the knowledge seeking or generating activities of MNCs would appear and simultaneously the autonomy of the Hungarian (and other CEE countries) subsidiaries will increase.

The strengthening of this tendency will depend several internal and external factors. As concerning the internal (or national) one, it is necessary to call attention to the necessity to save or even improve the quality of the Hungarian educational system. Without giving high priority of the educational (and research) community, the country will be unable to produce the necessary "critical mass" of the human resources to satisfy the need of the knowledge economy. As the Hungarian chief of the NOKIA research laboratory noticed: " We need only one thing from the state - that they support universities in launching good students." (Wright, 2000:15)

Among the external factors, it is necessary to call attention to strong short-term priority of the MNCs, such as "efficiency seeking" instead of developing knowledge generating or innovation based activities. According to our opinions, in shaping short-term versus long-term motifs of the MNCs another internal factor has crucial role: the social and institutional stability of the country. In a country where labor disputes are permanent and the institutional-regulatory supports of economic activities are unstable and not visible, force economic actors to adopt short-term policy options instead of long-term engagement represented by the so-called "knowledge-seeking" activities.

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REGIS Project was conducted between 1996 and 1997 in eleven European Regions: Baden-Württemberg (Germany), SE Brabant (Netherland), Styria (Austria), Tampere (Finland), Wales (UK), Wallonia (Belgium), the Basque country (Spain), Centro (Portugal), Friuli (Italy), Székesfehérvár (Hungary) and Lower Silézia (Poland). In the Western European regions 833 firms and in the CEE regions (in Hungary and in Poland) 165 firms were participated in the REGIS international project, which aimed to study the various dimensions of both firms and region level innovation systems. The REGIS Project was coordinated by Phil Cooke, Director at the Center for Advanced Studies, University of Wales, Cardiff, UK.

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