

LETTER FROM THE EDITORS



Daniel Rottig, Ph.D.,
Editor



John Mezias, Ph.D.,
Associate Editor

Alan Rugman and Alain Verbeke sparked a considerable debate with their 2004 JIBS article titled “A perspective on regional and global strategies of multinational enterprises.” Their analyses of sales data revealed that many large multinational enterprises (MNEs) appeared to be much more regional than global. While the global versus regional debate is ongoing, most would agree that more analyses and improved understanding of regions is warranted. Heeding this call, we are excited to begin AIB Insights’ eighteenth year of publication with an issue focused on the Central and Eastern European (CEE) region.

In our first article, Andreja Jaklič, Matevz Raskovic, and Arnold Schuh explore the rich context of the complex CEE region. They note significant divergence in defining this region, which they argue reflects not only the ideological divide between east and west, but also an aggregation of often conflicting economic, political, social, and geographic meanings. They believe this economic, political, and social transition, and the resulting tension, make this an ideal region for scholarly inquiry.

Arkadiusz Kowalski’s analysis of the international competitiveness of CEE countries constitutes our next article in this focused issue. He utilizes multiple measures to assess country-level competitiveness in this region. He demonstrates how broadening the analyses to go beyond the common, yet simplistic comparison of gross domestic product data results in different conclusions about different aspects of international competitiveness of CEE countries.

In our third article, Marta Götz examines both incoming (IFDI) and outgoing foreign direct investment (OFDI) policies adopted by CEE countries after the Great Recession. Her examination distinguishes between “pro” and “anti” investment policies for both types of FDI. She then classifies each country’s IFDI and OFDI based on distinct policy indicators to create a framework of four FDI policy models that can be applied across regions.

In our final article, Attila Chikán, Erzsébet Czakó, Péter Juhász, and László Reszegi also assess the international competitiveness in the CEE region. They utilize data from their study of Hungary to examine whether foreign subsidiaries of MNEs improve host-country competitiveness. By examining multiple measures, they provide insight into how different types of firms affect country-level competitiveness. They suggest that what makes MNEs competitive may not necessarily improve competitiveness of their host countries, which provides challenging implications for policy makers.

These articles present interesting arguments and findings from analyses into a relatively under-researched region. Taken together, these articles bolster the argument for more regional studies, and the need for testing the often assumed global applicability of existing theory in different regions. AIB Insights continues to seek manuscripts that articulate what differentiates regions and draw insights into how this specific regional differentiation affects country-level competitiveness, internationalization, and multinational operations.

We would like to thank guest editors Łukasz Puślecki (Chair of AIB’s CEE Chapter), Piotr Trapczyński (Vice Chair for Communication at AIB’s CEE Chapter) and Mirosław (Mirek) Jarosiński (2015 Program Chair for AIB’s CEE Chapter) for their dedicated work and efforts on this focused issue, which we had conceived at the 2015 AIB annual conference in Bengaluru, India and worked on in a collaborative effort since. Łukasz’s, Piotr’s and Mirek’s outreach to and coordination with local authors in the CEE region was instrumental for realizing this focused issue and their work and efforts regarding the establishment and further development of AIB’s CEE chapter have been remarkable.

Daniel Rottig

John Mezias

Reference:

Rugman, A. M., & Verbeke, A. 2004. A perspective on regional and global strategies of multinational enterprises. *Journal of International Business Studies*, 35(1): 3-18.