

Multinational enterprises in regional clusters - A promising nexus? -

Scope of the Workshop

The last decade has witnessed the popularization of two seemingly competing trends: globalization and localization (De Martino et al., 2006). The latter one usually refers to regional networks or clusters, which form an essential part of today's modern economies. On the other side, it can be constituted that the globalization is steadily progressing and affecting tremendously all parts of our society. Regional clusters can therefore not be viewed in isolation from globalization trends. Multinational enterprises (MNE) that locate their subsidiaries in and even move their headquarters to regional clusters are a frequently observed form of this trend. However, despite some exceptions (e.g. De Martino et al., 2006; Enright, 2000), the corresponding implications for e.g. incumbent firms, network dynamics, cluster managements or policy implications of the location of MNEs in clusters remain to be investigated comprehensively (McCann and Folta, 2008; Nachum and Keeble, 2003). On the one hand, it has been highlighted that MNEs can offer a crucial source of external knowledge from which the regional firms as well as the whole cluster can profit from and which can prevent potential lock-ins (Hervás-Oliver and Albors-Garrigós, 2008). On the other hand, MNEs might not share their knowledge voluntarily and instead use their subsidiaries to establish an outflow of regional knowledge and human resources that endangers the further cluster development (McCann and Folta, 2008). Thus, especially for policy-makers it seems to be of particular concern to identify effective measures to strengthen the regional embeddedness of MNEs (Mattes, 2013; Meyer et al., 2011).

The aim of this workshop is therefore to shed light on the relationship between multinational enterprises and regional clusters, both from a systematic empirical as well as from a theoretical point of view. In particular, but not limited to, we are interested in contributions, which deal with the following questions:

- To what extent does the embeddedness of MNEs in clusters influence the local network structure?
- Is the embeddedness of MNEs in local and international linkages supportive for (radical) innovations?
- Which conditions positively affect the likelihood of MNEs to introduce innovations within clusters (e.g. firm characteristics and/or regional policy)?
- Does the organizational form/composition of a cluster influence the regional embeddedness of MNEs?
- How can MNEs effectively manage their 'multiple embeddedness'?
- In what way can policy possibly help to strengthen the regional embeddedness of MNEs?

Participation

The workshop will take place at the University of Bremen (Germany) from **June 20 to June 21**. Each presenter will get 60 minutes to present and discuss his/her paper (30 minutes presentation, 30 minutes discussion).

Several researchers have been invited directly to submit a paper for presentation at the workshop. Nevertheless, we also want to encourage other researchers in this area to submit ideas that focus on the workshop's subject. Therefore, feel free to circulate this call for papers.

An abstract has to be sent by email to NGrashof@uni-bremen.de. The abstract (max. 250 words) must be delivered by **April 28, 2019**. Decisions on acceptance for the workshop will be emailed by May 05, 2019.

Participation without presenting a paper is also welcome. Due to limited space capacities, however, registration is necessary. Please contact Nils Grashof by email (NGrashof@uni-bremen.de).

Costs and fees

There are no participation fees. Lunch and dinner are free for researchers presenting a paper. Lodging and travel costs will be reimbursed for presenters as well.

Publication

It is intended to publish a selection of contributions of the workshop in an edited volume with Edward Elgar Publishing. To be considered for a potential publication in this edited volume, please submit your complete paper before 30th September 2019. Please note that extended abstracts cannot be considered for the submission process.

Local organizers

Dirk Fornahl
Nils Grashof

Literature

De Martino, R., Hardy Reid, D. M., & Stelios, C. Z. (2006): Balancing localization and globalization: exploring the impact of firm internationalization on a regional cluster, *Entrepreneurship & Regional Development*, Vol. 18, Issue 1, pp. 1-24.

Enright, M. J. (2000): The Globalization of Competition and the Localization of Competitive Advantage: Policies towards Regional Clustering, in: Hood, N., & Young, S. (eds): *The Globalization of Multinational Enterprise Activity and Economic Development*, Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 303-331.

Hervás-Oliver, J.-L., & Albors-Garrigós, J. (2008): Local knowledge domains and the role of MNE affiliates in bridging and complementing a cluster's knowledge, *Entrepreneurship & Regional Development*, Vol. 20, Issue 6, pp. 581-598.

Mattes, J. (2013): The Regional Embeddedness of Multinational Companies: A Critical Perspective, *European Planning Studies*, Vol. 21, Issue 4, pp. 433-451.

McCann, B. T., & Folta, T. B. (2008): Location Matters: Where We Have Been and Where We Might Go in Agglomeration Research, *Journal of Management*, Vol. 34, No. 3, pp. 532-565.

Meyer, K. E., Mudambi, R., & Narula, R. (2011): Multinational Enterprises and Local Contexts: The Opportunities and Challenges of Multiple Embeddedness, *Journal of Management Studies*, Vol. 48, Issue 2, pp. 235-252.

Nachum, L., & Keeble, D. (2003): MNE linkages and localised clusters: foreign and indigenous firms in the media cluster of Central London, *Journal of International Management*, Vol. 9, Issue 2, pp. 171-192.