

Introduction

This monograph includes the research results of the **V4 Survey** 2013-2014 prepared and conducted within the project no. StG-21310034 entitled “**Patterns of Business Internationalization in Visegrad Countries – In Search for Regional Specifics**” financed by the **International Visegrad Fund** in the years 2013-2014 and coordinated by Cracow University of Economics (Poland) in the cooperation with four partner universities (University of Economics in Prague, Czech Republic; University of Miskolc, Hungary; Slovak University of Agriculture in Nitra, Slovakia; Gdańsk University of Technology, Poland) and three associate partners (Fachhochschule Joanneum in Graz, Austria; University of Zagreb, Croatia; as well as Technical University of Cartagena, Spain). The project has been mainly financed by the International Visegrad Fund based in Bratislava within the scheme of Standard Grants and co-financed by Cracow University of Economics. The project has aimed to integrate researchers from V4 countries by exchanging research experience and benefiting from mutual exchange of knowledge and expertise between partner universities and beyond. The project has been based mainly on research activities and scientific exchange.

The project started on 1 July 2013 and ended on 30 June 2014. The V4 Survey was carried out between October 2013 and February 2014. The survey was conducted among a random sample consisting of 1149 firms from V4 countries, including 274 Polish firms, 618 Czech firms, 113 Hungarian firms and 144 Slovak firms. The **main objective** of the research project was the exploration and explanation the various paths and patterns of the internationalisation process of businesses from four Visegrad countries.

The book is divided into 10 chapters written by the core team of 12 researchers from four Visegrad countries.

Chapter 1 discusses the basics of the firm-level internationalisation process, especially it includes the theoretical foundations for paths, patterns or pathways of internationalisation of businesses.

Chapter 2 introduces the research methodology. It discusses the conceptual framework of the research project, including objectives, hypotheses, the applied research model as well as research methods.

Chapters 3-6 present survey results in four countries, in which the V4 Survey was carried out, which are the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Slovakia. They are the core chapters of the book.

Chapters 7-9 bring in-depth outlook on selected qualitative and quantitative issues by exploring and explanation selected issues of international business in Visegrad countries.

Chapter 10 presents the macro conditions for firms operating in Visegrad countries, especially these planning internationalisation or internationalised ones.

We do hope that the research results can be used in both ways, as a practical directive addressed to entrepreneurs and NGOs, on the other hand as the basis for the decisions of the central government and local authorities to improve policies in favour of businesses internationalisation, especially SMEs. We do hope that the research results will contribute to the enrichment of existing scientific knowledge in this area.

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