Special issue
to mark the 50th birthday of
Rainhart Lang!

50 years, of course, are worth dedicating a special issue to JEEMS's editor-in chief! However, conforming to the tradition of our journal and Rainhart's dislike of endless speeches in his honor, we decided not to celebrate this event in the ordinary way. Instead we aimed to organize a special issue dealing with one of Rainhart's favorite academic topics, namely

Leaders and leadership in Central and Eastern Europe

For this purpose we asked several colleagues and friends of Rainhart who have co-operated with him for several years to contribute to this topic from their particular (country) perspective. The result is what you have in hand.

Nevertheless, we should make a few words here about Rainhart's research activities in this field as well:

Firstly: Just a few months after the Berlin wall broke down he launched the so-called SOKULT project to investigate CEOs in East German (at that time still GDR) companies. With the support of Ramona Alt and several other colleagues from his chair, this large survey was repeated in 1992, 1994, 1996 and 1998 providing an extended, fascinating data base about the development processes of this group and constituting the base for a large number of conference papers, articles and books on leaders in East Germany.

Secondly: The Chemnitz East Forum founded by Rainhart in 1993 and organized by his chair biannually made a highly valuable contribution to research in transforming societies. The conference addressed several issues, as Leaders and Leadership, Corporate Culture, Human Resource Management or Ethics.

Thirdly: He joined the GLOBE project group founded by Bob House from Wharton Business School to continue his research on leaders and leadership in East Germany. Moreover, he proceeded on this basis to do some intercultural comparative analyses worked out together with colleagues and friends all over Central and Eastern Europe. So, we should be curious about his future activities and outcomes.

This special issue comprises six papers focusing on six different countries in Central and Eastern Europe as well as a concluding overview paper. We start with four papers which shed light on leaders and leadership in their country in general: *Karoly Balaton (Hungary)* in his paper places the development of leadership patterns in Hungary into a historical context. He shows the influence of historical contingencies as well as new developments inside and outside

companies on the emerging patterns of leadership. The article of *Jure Kovac and Manca Jesenko (Slovenia)* deals with values guiding the life, work and leadership styles of Slovenian managers. They compare the results of two studies, which were conducted in 1998 and 2003. The authors show that value change is a long-term process. However there is a shift to values considered as post-modern. *Shyqyri Llaci, Mimoza Kasimati and Vasilika Kume (Albania)* are highlighting the historical context of the understanding of leader and leadership in present Albania. As one result they show the strong impact of collectivism, high uncertainty avoidance, and high power distance based on the belief in a strong individualistic person serving as a leader. *Karin Lohr (East Germany)* concentrates on managers and management processes from an explicit sociological point of view. The newer ones of the numerous empirical studies succeed to develop a perspective of the interrelatedness between subjective orientations and perceptions and endogenous as well as exogenous structural constraints.

The following two papers have a more particular focus: *Igor Gurkov (Russia)* presents the results of a survey of 530 Russian CEOs of industrial companies. It could be shown that there is an excessive workload of Russian executives and that the CEOs exhibit the patterns of time management, familiar to Western managers 20-30 years ago. *Snejina Michailova and Elena Iankova (Bulgaria)* investigate the networking activities of business leaders in their home country. They concentrate on political networking structures and processes in Bulgaria. According to the authors there is a clear trend of transforming political networking abilities, skills and practices into an integrated part of enterprises' business strategies.

Vince Edwards finally rounds up the volume by presenting the results of a comparative study including seven CEE countries. Although there is some influence of national culture on managerial attitudes and behaviour, it is diffuse and variable. Overall it could be shown that a huge change in behavioural patterns and attitudes has taken place with managers in CEE countries. The respondents portrayed managers as willing to challenge authority, to take risks and to introduce innovations.

We hope you will enjoy the volume!

Ingo Winkler, Thomas Steger (Guest editors)