



Master Thesis

“Managing the VUCA environment: Internationalization paths of German MNEs”

Background

Today’s globalized and interconnected world poses not only business opportunities but also challenges to (multinational) corporations. Current events like the military conflict between Ukraine and Russia have not only consequences for the political sphere but also heavily impact the business world due to imposed sanctions and other restrictions forcing companies to undertake significant changes to their business like withdrawing from a country and liquidating all related assets. The often complex and interlinked political and economic events are hard to foresee since everything that lies in the future is uncertain. Enterprises thus need to adapt to this “VUCA” environment, for instance, by reducing their presence in certain product/geographical markets and/or increasing it in other. This thesis seeks to explore how publicly listed German MNEs behave in this situation by comparing the internationalization paths of several companies in a particular industry in-depth and providing insights into how these companies leverage internationalization for sustained growth and competitiveness in a rapidly evolving global landscape.

Introductory Readings

- Vertinsky, I., Kuang, Y., Zhou, D. et al. The political economy and dynamics of bifurcated world governance and the decoupling of value chains: An alternative perspective. *J Int Bus Stud* **54**, 1351–1377 (2023). <https://doi.org/10.1057/s41267-023-00597-z>.
- Petricevic, O., Teece, D.J. The structural reshaping of globalization: Implications for strategic sectors, profiting from innovation, and the multinational enterprise. *J Int Bus Stud* **50**, 1487–1512 (2019). <https://doi.org/10.1057/s41267-019-00269-x>.
- Meyer, K. E., & Li, C. (2022). The MNE and its subsidiaries at times of global disruptions: An international relations perspective. *Global Strategy Journal*, 12(3), 555–577. <https://doi.org/10.1002/gsj.1436>.

Tasks and Goals

This master thesis is closely related to the current research of the chair, and you will conduct your analyses in close collaboration with the doctoral students. The thesis will be based on a case study-like empirical methodology to examine the internationalization paths of German MNEs. You will especially review relevant literature, analyze annual reports, and track changes in MNEs over time. Based on the data that you gather, you will undertake empirical analyses to uncover patterns in internationalization strategies of these firms.

Requirements

- Good English skills
- Good knowledge of Microsoft Excel
- Independent, reliable, and diligent working style with an eye for detail
- Successful participation in one of the chair’s modules (details of grade requirements etc. can be found on the website)

Details

- Supervisors Prof. Dr. Thomas Hutzschenreuter and Jan Müller
- Start Flexible / As of now
- Working time 6 months (after exposé acceptance)

Contact

If you are interested in writing your thesis at our chair or have questions about this topic, please contact Jan Müller (jan2.mueller@tum.de). Please send an email, including a tabular CV and current transcript of records (as one PDF file), to apply for a master thesis. We are looking forward to working together with you!

Professor Dr. Thomas Hutzschenreuter
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