

14th Zittau Talks on Business Ethics

Call for Papers

Supply Chain Management – Human Rights, Digitization and Responsibility

Zittau, November 12-13, 2020

Topics:

Ethical implications of global supply chains
– Human Rights, Digitization and the
responsibility of MNEs

Organizer:

Technical University Dresden -
International Institute Zittau
Chair of Social Sciences
Markt 23, 02763 Zittau

Conference Fee:

Regular: 100.00 €
Students: 40.00 €

Important Dates:

Abstract submission: 28.08.2020
Acceptance: 14.09.2020
Registration Deadline: 26.10.2020

Conference Venue: KOMENSKÝ Gäste- und Tagungshaus – Comeniusstr. 8+10, 02747 Herrnhut

Conference Languages: German / English

Covid 19-related measures will be communicated in due course.

Dear friends of the business ethics dialogue,

Against all odds, we are planning the 14th Zittau Talks on Business Ethics in 2020. Because of the very late start into the winter term on Oct 26 the workshop will take place on the 12th and 13th of November at the KOMENSKÝ conference house in Herrnhut.

As part of this year's discussions on business ethics, we will address the ethical implications of global supply chains and focus on human rights, digitization and the associated responsibility of multinational enterprises (MNEs). Recent developments imply that the conference topic is not just an accumulation of buzzwords, but that civil rights and liberties can only be realized in future ahead with the help of digital support, and this will also have an impact on business conduct on an international level.

All of this cannot remain without consequences for the globally linked supply and value chains, the complexity of which, even for companies at the end of the supply chains, today can hardly be fully understood. With regard to human rights, supply chains bear a wide range of risks, especially for people whose rights are insufficiently protected. Low prices on the consumer goods markets in industrialized countries come at a high cost for people at the end of the value chains. For this reason, the political idea of a supply chain law that addresses precisely these negative human rights effects is currently being discussed in Germany.

For the debate on business ethics, this raises the fundamental question on the responsibility of multinational companies in a globalized world with respect to human rights. In this context, another important issue is the

position of economic ethics in the current global discourse and how it relates to the increasing critique on globalization.

Growing digitization and its applications, such as AI and blockchain technologies can be helpful and offer new opportunities for the entire supply chain management. On the one hand, the risk of violating human rights or contributing to such violation can be taken into account - on the other hand, missing regulations and enforcement allow for the misuse of both personal and business data.

Currently the corona pandemic shows quite painfully the risks of global networks and the associated social implications - more dramatically than the 2008/09 financial crisis. The long-term consequences of the new skepticism about globalization for the global value chains cannot yet be fully predicted. However, it turns out that many companies were badly prepared for the partial or even total collapse of their international supply chains and that much had to be re-evaluated.

Thus, we are looking forward to empirical and theoretical contributions to the supply chain debate around the following (and other) key questions for the 14th Zittau Talks on Business Ethics:

I. What is the responsibility of multinational companies in a globalized world concerning human rights?

- Must companies anticipate and prevent all kinds of human rights violations along their supply chains, or is it part of their business case to use legal gaps, in order to source as cheap as possible?
- What would be the consequences if MNEs "withdraw" from globally distributed value creation processes and leave developing countries at their own?

II. How much do human rights risks deriving from sourcing strategies vary in different industries?

- Which human rights opportunities and risks imply different sourcing strategies, e.g. in the textile and clothing industry?
- Which human rights-related problems and solutions can be observed in supply chain management in the food industry?
- What are human rights implications of sourcing rare earths in the ICT industry?
- What are human rights problems in supply chain management in the automotive industry?

III. Do digitization and its new applications, such as Artificial Intelligence (AI), offer new opportunities and threats for an efficient supply chain management?

- What role does digitization play in relation to global sourcing strategies?
- What is the phenotypic nature of the use of AI in supply chain management in different industries?
- What are the ethical challenges associated with integrating new technologies into supply chain management?

IV. What effects will the 'corona crisis' have on global supply chains and corporate responsibility of MNEs?

- Is the corona crisis leading to deglobalization of supply chains?
- What are the human rights implications of effective stabilization and (re-)regionalization of supply chains?
- Will the corona crisis globally squeeze out cost-cutting production rather than quality production?

The conference invites academics as well as practitioners. We welcome theoretical and empirical papers including case studies that open up new perspectives on supply chains and their ethical implications and stimulate critical discussion.

This year, the Zittau Talks are organized and conducted in cooperation with the European Business Ethics Network Deutschland e.V., and the Akademie Herrnhut for political and cultural development.

Submissions, including title of contribution, extended abstract (500 to 1000 words) and short CV in Word or PDF format should be submitted by **August 28th, 2020**.

All submissions will be double-blind reviewed. Notification on acceptance will be sent by **September 14th, 2020**.

Registration deadline for the conference is **October 26th, 2020**.

For Submissions and conference registration please visit our homepage, opening in early July:

https://www.dnwe.de/zittauer_gespraech_e_2020/

The conference fee is **100.00 Euro**. (**40.00 Euro** for students)

We kindly ask you to make your own hotel reservation. The following accommodations are available in Herrnhut;. Furthermore, Zittau offers several possibilities (15 km travel distance).

KOMENSKÝ Gäste- und Tagungshaus (<https://www.komensky.de/startseite/>)

→ Conference Venue (A limited number of rooms is reserved for conference attendees.)

Single Room 53.00 Euro per room/night, incl. breakfast

Double Room 80.00 Euro per room/night, incl. breakfast

Pension Alt-Herrnhuter Haus (<http://www.clemens-herrnhut.de/Herzlich-Willkommen>)

Single Room 45.00 Euro per room/night, incl. breakfast

Double Room 66.00 Euro per room/night, incl. breakfast

Jesus-Haus Herrnhut (<https://www.jh-herrnhut.de/de/gastehaus/>)

18 € per person per night – no breakfast, shared facilities

For any further questions please contact:

Eckhard Burkatzki

Tel.: 0049 3583-6124175

email: eckhard.burkatzki@tu-dresden.de

Melanie Arzberger

Tel.: 0049 3583-6124139

email: melanie.arzberger@tu-dresden.de

Our Postal Address:

TU Dresden – IHI Zittau

Chair of Social Sciences

Markt 23

02763 Zittau

Conference Venue:

KOMENSKÝ Gäste- und Tagungshaus

Comeniusstr. 8+10

02747 Herrnhut

Directions (<https://www.komensky.de/unser-haus/>):

You can reach Herrnhut by car via the A4 motorway (Dresden-Görlitz) and the 178 federal highway (A4-Zittau). Those who travel by train, can use the Löbau (Dresden-Görlitz), Zittau or Oderwitz (Dresden-Zittau), Zittau or Hagenwerder (Zittau-Cottbus) train stations. Herrnhut can be reached by bus from Zittau or Löbau (line 27) and from Görlitz (line 147). In Herrnhut, use the »Zinzendorfplatz« stop; from there it is a 250 meters walk to the KOMENSKÝ Gäste- und Tagungshaus.