

# Cross Border Ventures and their Border-Crossing Strategies. The Case of Russian and Norwegian “born borders”

This article represents the results of the scientific research on Russian-Norwegian cross-border business cooperation in the framework of which a team of Norwegian-Russian researchers were trying to identify what unique challenges cross-border ventures face when crossing the border between developed and emerging economies and what strategies they develop to meet these challenges.

**Keywords:** international entrepreneurship, international new ventures, “born-globals”, “born-borders”, strategy-as-practice, border region.

Straipsnyje pateikiami mokslinio tyrimo apie Rusijos-Norvegijos pasienio įmonių bendradarbiavimą rezultatai, pagal kuriuos Norvegijos ir Rusijos tyrėjų komanda siekė nustatyti, su kokiais unikaliais iššūkiais susiduria pasienio įmonės, veikiančios išsivysčiusiose ir plėtros (besivystančios) ekonomikos šalyse, ir kokias strategijas jos plėtoja, norėdamos reaguoti į šiuos iššūkius.

**Raktiniai žodžiai:** tarptautinis verslumas, naujos tarptautinės įmonės, „globaliomis gimusios“ įmonės, pasienyje įsikūrusios įmonės, strategija kaip veikla, pasienio regionas.

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## 1. Introduction

In this article we focus on a special type of international new ventures which we call “cross border ventures” and identify some of their unique border crossing strategies. Their main characteristic is that they are crossing only one border in their internationalisation efforts. In the literature,

this type of ventures has been known for a long time, at least since 1994 when B. M. Oviatt and P. P. McDougall identified and described them as geographically focused international ventures (Oviatt, McDougall, 1994). However, still the characteristics of these companies and their internationalisation strategies are rather unknown territory. This lack of knowledge is problematic

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Eva J. B. JØRGENSEN - Assistant professor, Department of Economy, Management and Regional Innovation; Finnmark UNiversity College Norway; Follumsvei 31, N-9509 Alta. E-mail: Eva.Joergensen@hifm.no

Peter FISCHER - Assistant professor; Department of Economy, Management and Regional Innovation; Finnmark UNiversity College Norway; Follumsvei 31, N-9509 Alta. E-mail: Peter.Fischer@hifm.no

Victor EMELIANOV - Associate professor; Department of World Economy and International Relations, Murmansk State Technical University, Sportivnaya 13, Murmansk. E-mail: emelivanov@mstu.edu.ru

Maya CHECHURINA - Professor; Department of World Economy and International Relations, Murmansk State Technical University, Sportivnaya 13, Murmansk. E-mail: chechurina@mstu.edu.ru

because the cross border ventures play an important role in developing border regions all over the world. In Europe, the born borders connect to a great extent the developed economies in the west with the emerging economies in the former communist countries in the east. Also, L. E. Lopez et al. shows that most firms in their study actually are born regional, rather than born global (Lopez, Kundu, Ciravegna, 2009). Their findings are coincident with other findings that show that many of the world's largest firms are not global but regionally based in terms of the breadth and depth of market coverage (Rugman, Verbeke, 2004). The current debate in the field is to a great extent about how to conceptualise the "true" international new venture: the born global (Aspelund, Moen, 2005; Crick, 2009; Gabrielsson, Kirpalani, Dimitratos, Solberg, Zucchella, 2008b; Knight, Cavusgil, 2005). In this article, we argue that the current research can discover some important differences between born globals and born borders that will make it easier to describe, explain and support these important cross border business foundations.

We strongly agree with S. A. Zahra (2007) when he states that an entrepreneurship literature rarely gives you the sense of the substance, magnitude and dynamics of the context, and that this lack of contextualisation is leaving a major gap in our understanding. S. A. Zahra means that contextualising is linking the research objectives, theory and sites, and build on the innate qualities of the phenomenon studied. Theoretically, we contextualise this study by bringing in the border and a border region as the context. In addition, it is common to think that an internationalisation strategy is something that firms have. But methodologically we take a different perspective i.e. international strategy is something

that people in firm do (Johnson, Langley, Melin, Whittington, 2007). As such we link internationalisation strategies to activities and sites, and try to build a theory linked to our objectives from the ground and up. This strategy-as practice-approach has several benefits. First and most important, it is our impression that entrepreneurs crossing national borders are mainly occupied with the practical "what" and "how" aspects of strategic management.

The objective of this article is to develop new knowledge about cross border ventures and to document some of their practical border crossing strategies. The research question guiding our study is as follows: what characterises the practical internationalisation strategies of cross border ventures and what makes them different from strategies applied by born globals? The question is analysed and discussed by adopting an exploratory multi-case study on 8 case companies crossing the border between Norway and Russia. Thus, we have gained an in-depth insight about border-crossing strategies in 4 Norwegian and 4 Russian case companies. It is documented that the cross border ventures apply unique internationalisation strategies in terms of the scope, extent and speed of internationalisation. What make them different from born globals is that they cooperate through business relations rather than strategic alliances. The born borders combine innovative outward and inward ways of internationalisation actively exploiting the advantages of neighbourly friendship.

By addressing the research question and developing propositions about the unique practices which create competitive advantages for cross border ventures we contribute to a new theoretical insight in the field of international entrepreneurship and small and medium-sized enterprises

(SMEs) internationalisation. We enrich the existing theory and develop new knowledge about a special type of international firms - the cross border ventures. By using the strategy-as-practice approach we add some new lenses in order to describe and contextualise some unique practices applied in our case firms, which in turn, may serve as stronghold for further discussions and practical conclusions.

The structure of the rest of the paper is as follows. First, we establish the theoretical background for our analysis. Then, we present and discuss our methods including the design of the study, selection of cases, the collection of the data and how the data is analysed. In the next section we present our case companies, and turn to the analysis. Next, we proceed by formulating our proposition which describes the essence of the unique border crossing practices we have observed. Finally, we discuss limitations and possibilities for further research.

## 2. Theoretical background

### International entrepreneurship

Theoretically, we position this study in the field of international entrepreneurship. Entrepreneurship research has traditionally focused on venture creation and development in a domestic context, while international business researchers have been mainly occupied with large multinational enterprises. In recent years, the new field of international entrepreneurship has evolved quite a number of researchers (Jones, Coviello, 2005; Keupp, Gassmann, 2009; McDougall, Oviatt, 2000; Oviatt et al., 1994; Oviatt, McDougall, 2005; Zahra, George, 2002) who are trying to explain

how and why firms explore and exploit the opportunities in the foreign markets in order to survive and create wealth. In particular, much effort has been devoted to explain how and why it is possible for small and new firms to internationalise from their inception. In this article we follow B. M. Oviatt and P. P. McDougall's (2005) latest opportunity-based approach to international entrepreneurship and define it as the exploration and exploitation of opportunities across national borders to create future goods and services. As we shall come back to, we perceive cross border entrepreneurship as a special type of international entrepreneurship, performed in cross border ventures and by international entrepreneurs.

### Different types of international new ventures

B. M. Oviatt and P. P. McDougall's (1994) seminal article was an important starting point of the international entrepreneurship research (Autio, 2005; Keupp et al., 2009). In this article the authors develop a framework which presents the phenomenon of new international ventures and describe the necessary and sufficient elements behind their existence. They define a new international company as "a business organization that, from its inception, seeks to derive a significant competitive advantage from the use of resources and sales outputs in multiple countries" (p. 49). In this article B. M. Oviatt and P. P. McDougall also show that there are several types of new international ventures depending on two factors, i.e. how many activities are integrated across the border and how many nations are involved. The authors identify four types of international ventures: i) The export/import ventures, ii) The multinational traders, iii) The

geographically focused ventures, and iv) The born globals. The firms in group i) and ii) are international market makers selling goods and services across the borders to the countries where they are demanded. What is common for both of these groups of firms is that they are coordinating only a few activities across borders, and what makes them different is the number of countries involved. The born globals in group iv) are the most radical manifestation of the international new ventures because they derive competitive advantage from extensive international coordination of activities and a global focus. Companies in group iii) are ventures with a geographical focus on one particular region and have more than just a few logistic activities coordinated across the borders.

Since B. M. Oviatt and P. P. McDougall's article a large body of research has been concentrating efforts on describing and understanding different types of international ventures. Much energy has been put into distinguishing the born globals from the traditional international ventures in group i) and ii) (Gabrielsson, Kirpalani, Dimitratos, Solberg, Zucchella, 2008a; Knight, Cavusgil, 2004; Weerawardena, Mort, Liesch, Knight, 2007). The consequence of this has been an ignorance and lack of knowledge about the geographically focused international ventures in group iii).

### **Cross border entrepreneurship and cross border ventures**

In this article we use the term cross border entrepreneurship to describe a particular form of international entrepreneurship which is performed by cross border ventures. Three key dimensions of international entrepreneurship has been highlighted: the extent, the speed and the scope

(Zahra et al., 2002). The extent of international entrepreneurship is understood as the firm's sales generated from foreign markets. The speed of internationalisation has traditionally been defined as the length of time elapsed between the year the firm was created and the year of its first foreign sales. The number of countries in which the firm generates sales says something about the scope of its internationalisation. When introducing the concepts of cross border entrepreneurship and cross border ventures, it is the scope of the entrepreneurial activity that is put in the middle. Cross border entrepreneurship has a limited, often regional scope. Following B. M. Oviatt and P. P. McDougall (2005), who take an opportunity-based approach to international entrepreneurship, we define the concept as the exploration and exploitation of opportunities across *one* national border to create future goods and services. As such, cross border entrepreneurship involves partners on two sides of a specific national border (Smallbone, Welter, 2009).

Cross border ventures can be distinguished from other forms of organisations. Table 1 is an extension of B. M. Oviatt and P. P. McDougall's (1994) overview of academic literature on organisations. Earlier, a substantial body of literature has been published in the traditional international business literature with a focus on large companies with international activities in many nations (quadrant IV). Domestic entrepreneurship literature is classified in quadrant I and conventional international entrepreneurship in quadrant II, putting emphasis on born globals. As we have argued above cross border ventures can be found in quadrant V and VI, with a regional cross border scope in their internationalisation and include both new and more established companies.

Table 1

Cross border ventures

| Organisation age | Geographical scope |              |               |
|------------------|--------------------|--------------|---------------|
|                  | Domestic           | Cross border | International |
| New              | I                  | V            | II            |
| Established      | III                | VI           | IV            |

And finally to avoid misunderstanding, we do not believe that there are only “born border” firms in border regions. There are, of course, other firms in these regions – including born globals and multinational enterprises.

**Methodology**

In this study we have adopted a multiple-case study approach (Eisenhardt, 1989; Eisenhardt & Graebner, 2007; Yin, 2003) with all together 8 cases: 4 Norwegian and 4 Russian cross border ventures. In-depth qualitative data is a central requirement for using the strategy-as-practice perspective (Johnson et al., 2007). The data was collected in connection with a larger research project. The aim of the project was to study cross border cooperation between Norwegian and Russian companies in the fish industry. Consequently, the case companies are all from the fish industry. The research questions and design, the data collection and interpretation have been carried out by a cross border research group consisting of four persons: two Norwegians and two Russians.

**Selection of cases**

Traditionally, the cooperation across the border between Norway and Russia has to a great extent been connected to fisheries due to the rich common fish stocks in the

Barents Sea. Also today, the most intensive business co-operation across this border is connected to the fisheries (Stålsett, 2006). These companies were the first ones to cross the border between Norway and Russia – before anyone else did. Some of the companies cooperated with actors on the other side even before the border opened again in 1992. In the 1990s the Norwegian market lacked a supply of fish and the Russian trawlers needed high quality services, so in this period the cooperation across the border was rather extensive. Today, the interaction between business actors across the border in the fishing industry is declining. Due to the market conditions, especially the tough competition from China, the process industry had to downsize and today there is no demand for fish from the Russian trawlers in Norway. In addition, on the Russian side the fleet is getting more and more independent of the Norwegian support industry. However, Norwegian support actors (shipyards, shipping agents, fish trading firms) still have quite extensive collaboration with Russian fishing companies (fishing fleet, processing industry). The selected case companies are, therefore, relatively small suppliers from Norway and larger customers from Russia. The subset of case companies for the analyses in this study was selected on bases of two criteria: being small or medium sized and their relatively narrow scope of internationalisation to one border.

### Collecting and analysing data

The Norwegian researchers have collected data on the Norwegian side of the border and the Russians on the Russian side. Most of the data material was collected during the summer 2009. The main data source has been in-depth interviews with a representative from the firm, mainly the owner/manager. In addition, we have also collected data for the analysis from various sources like home pages, data bases with economic information etc. The questions we asked in the interviews were about the internationalisation processes and cooperation across the border in rather broad terms. On the Norwegian side the interviews have been recorded, but due to the more closed business culture in Russia we have not been able to record all the interviews there. Instead, extensive notes were taken during the interviews. The data material on both sides of the border was transcribed and translated into English.

In the analysis the weight is put on what the case companies have in common. In the course of our survey we found out that there were a lot of differences between the Norwegian and the Russian cross border ventures. However, discussing these differences is beyond the scope of this article. By employing the strategy-as-practice approach in the analysis we focused on what people actually do, or rather, what they say that they do. The work with the analysis we have to some extent been inspired by modern versions of grounded theory (Charmaz, 2006; Glaser & Strauss, 1967), but we have not followed the principles very strictly. We admit that we have had many pre-assumptions, especially about the companies on the other side of the border and the border crossing

processes into unknown territory, but we tried not to push theoretical models or pre-defined categories on the data material. We have carried out rather various interpretations and reflections. The strategies we have identified have to a great extent raised from the ground and up – rather than from testing theory.

### The border context

Certain practices always take place in a wider context. S. A. Zahra (2007) advocates a more theoretical contextualised entrepreneurship research, while F. Welter and F. Lasch (2008) emphasise the importance of a thorough grounding entrepreneurship research in its national context. In this article we pay much attention to characteristics of the empirical context that we believe are significant for the findings and discussion, i.e. the history of the region and the level of economic development on each side of the border.

The internationalisation practices examined in this study are all linked to the border region between Norway and Russia: The Barents Region. In The Barents Region trading between people from the northern parts of Norway and people from the north-western parts of Russia have had a long history even from the Pomor Trade times (1740 – 1917) until today's development of the big oil and gas Shtokman field on the Russian side. Earlier the Pomors from Russia went to the coast of North Norway to trade fish against grain products, but the situation today is mainly that Norwegian entrepreneurs are crossing the border in order to create and develop business activity in Russia. The border was closed for a long period of time. During the Cold War (from 1947

to 1992) the border, as the only northern border between the old Soviet Union and a NATO country, was effectively sealed and heavily guarded.

Cross border entrepreneurship offers potential benefits for entrepreneurs, firms and regions because it offers opportunities in new markets and for fresh sources of supply. However, the nature and extent of these benefits is likely to be affected by the relative level of economic development on either side of the border (Smallbone et al., 2009). Today, crossing the border between Norway to Russia is crossing the border between a developed and an emerging economy. As such, these firms have some attractive opportunities but they also equally face disadvantages due the idiosyncratic characteristics of the emerging economy (Bruton et al., 2008; Pisano, Ireland, Hitt and Webb, 2007). The advantages include operating in markets with a rapid pace of growth, policies favouring economic liberalisation and the ability to form entry barriers as a result of being first-movers. The disadvantages increase risks and costs in a substantial manner, and are connected to high uncertainty and instability stemming from social problems (e.g. lack of qualified labour force), economic problems (e.g. high inflation rate) or political problems (e.g. corruption). Emerging economies often have uncertain and subjective legal system which makes it difficult to protect private properties and enforce contracts. Furthermore, knowledge and experience can not easily be transferred from developed to emerging economies. As such, the context of crossing the border to and from an emerging economy provides a unique and quasi-experimental setting for testing existing theories.

## **Presentation of the case companies**

The cases selected for this study are 4 Norwegian firms (Nor1, Nor2, Nor3 and Nor4) with activities in the Russian market, and 4 Russian companies (Rus1, Rus2, Rus3 and Rus4) doing business with Norwegian actors – all from the fish industry. Nor1 and Nor2 provide services and maintenance to the Russian fishing fleet in Norway, Nor3 is selling mechanical equipment in Russia and Nor4 is selling fish from Norway to Russia. The Russian actors are one fish processing company (Rus1) and three companies in both fishing and processing. The firms are briefly presented in Table 2. On the Norwegian side the companies have from 7 to ca. 80 employees, so they are all small- and medium sized. On the Russian side the companies are larger: from 90 till about 300 employees. They are larger than the Norwegian companies, but compared to other Russian companies they are relatively small in size. Since the size of the companies vary so much, this seems not to be a unique characteristic of cross border ventures (link to previous debate in the theory section). Of course, there are many other differences between the 8 firms in this study, especially between the group of Norwegian and the group of Russian firms. In addition, there are huge differences in crossing the border from a developed economy to an emerging economy compared to crossing the border “the other way around”. However, it is beyond the scope of this article to discuss these differences. In our analysis and discussion we focus on the similarities between our case companies, and try to point to what makes them unique as cross border

ventures and what distinguish them from born globals.

## Findings and discussions

### The cross border ventures are born border

We have examined the internationalisation processes in our case companies in terms of their scope, extent and speed (Zahra et al., 2002), and can conclude that the firms are “born borders” in many ways. First, they were selected to represent the group of cross border ventures because of their scope of internationalisation to mainly crossing

one border: the border between Norway and Russia. Second, their cross border activities are rather extensive. As shown in Table 2 the extent of activities vary, but all over the rates in % of sales and/or purchase. Third, they are all founded around the time the border between Norway and Russia opened again in 1992, after being closed and heavily guarded for nearly 50 years. Clearly, the re-opening of the border gave the entrepreneurs some new opportunities to explore and exploit through founding new firms. Fourth and last, the speed of internationalisation – the time that has elapsed between the founding year and the first internationalisation effort – is 0 for all

Table 2

Presentation of the CBV cases

| Cases | Core competence                    | Employees | Foreign base   | Operation mode                                  | Start-up year | Extent of cross border activity  |
|-------|------------------------------------|-----------|--|---|---------------|----------------------------------|
| Nor1  | Service and maintenance on vessels | Ca 80     | Representative office with 2 employees since 1992                        | Exporting                                       | 1986          | 60% of sales                     |
| Nor2  | Services to the fishing fleets     | 7         | Representative office with 1 employee 1997-2000                          | Exporting                                       | 1998          | Ca. 55% of sales                 |
| Nor3  | Mechanical equipment               | 17        | 15 employees in Murmansk (2 at the home-base)                            | Investment: 1 wholly owned Russian subsidiary   | 1992          | 50% of sales                     |
| Nor4  | Fish trading                       | 10        | 7 employees in Murmansk<br>2 employees in Moscow<br>(1 at the home-base) | Investment: 2 wholly owned Russian subsidiaries | 1998          | 100% of sales                    |
| Rus1  | Fish processing                    | 150       | No   | Importing                                       | 2003          | Purchase 15 %                    |
| Rus2  | Fishing and fish processing        | >300      | No   | Importing                                       | 1990          | Purchase of gear and baits       |
| Rus3  | Fishing and fish processing        | 90        | No   | Investment: Joint venture                       | 1998          | 50% of sales                     |
| Rus4  | Fishing and fish processing        | 120       | No   | Exporting and importing                         | 1996          | 30% of sales<br>Purchase of gear |

of the companies. They have all carried out their internationalisation from their inception. In terms of the extent and speed of internationalisation the firms in our sample satisfy the requirements for being born global. According to the original definition of a born global it was required that a small firm had to achieve 25% export within 3 year of its inception, but later on a much stricter definition – maintaining that one needs at least 50 % to be sold in foreign countries to qualify as a born global (Gabrielsson et al., 2008b). However, what is unique is the scope of internationalisation to mainly one foreign nation, and based on these findings we suggest the following proposition:

Proposition 1: A narrow internationalisation scope, a high extent of activities across this border and an extremely high speed of internationalisation are practical strategies that help cross border ventures to create value.

### **Business relations instead of strategic alliances**

For firms entering foreign markets there are several possibilities to organize their cross-border business. Traditionally, we identify three groups of entry modes: exporting, collaboration and investments (Jones, Young, 2009). Exporting can take place in a direct or an indirect mode: directly, by using agents and distributors, by selling or by establishing local sales offices or indirectly by using export intermediaries in the home market. The collaboration mode is connected with licensing or franchising which results in forming different forms of strategic alliances or establishing industry consortiums. When it comes to investments, we talk about foreign direct investments (FDI) in the form of joint ventures, wholly owned subsidiaries, mergers, acquisitions and Greenfield invest-

ment. Traditionally, export depends on the an arm's length relationship and investments in internal integration. Cooperation modes make use of intermediate governance mechanisms where trust is the key word.

Looking at the operation strategies applied by the cross border companies in our study (Table 2 above) we see that Nor1 and Nor2 are exporting directly, while Nor3 and Nor4 invest in wholly owned subsidiaries. The main aims of the subsidiaries in both cases are to sell and be actively engaged in the Russian market and to be the base for employees and people travelling from Norway to Russia. Rus3 is also using investment as their operation mode being a joint venture with a Norwegian company. Two of the Russian companies (Rus1 and Rus2) use import as they operational mode to cross the border with Norway while one more Russian company (Rus4) use an exporting mode. Though according to some scientists (Holmlund, Kock, Vanyushyn, 2007; Welch, 2004) it is not common to include the inward side of internationalisation but here we must add importing as an operating mode, if we want to paint the whole picture.

However, the most interesting finding is that none of our 8 case companies are using a collaborative mode of operation. This finding is rather contradictory to what is common in the international entrepreneurship literature. Forming strategic alliances is thought to be an effective strategy for new ventures to overcome capability deficiencies when expanding internationally (Lee, Lee, Pennings, 2001). Particularly, in the context of internationalising between developed and emerging economies strategic alliances have been argued to be the most effective entry and operation mode (Pisano et al., 2007; Yamakawa, Peng, Deeds, 2008). The reasons behind this statement are several: reduced costs of gathering information,

reduced uncertainty and risk, easier access to resources and better learning. One main finding in our study is that, for ventures being born border, the customer or the supplier on the other side enjoys the same advantages as partners in strategic alliances. This turns the focus to the less formalised but close and long lasting exchange relationships between supplier firms and customer firms – so called *business relationships* (Håkansson, Johanson, 2001; Johanson, Vahlne, 2003). The problem is that the strong emphasis on strategic alliances in the international entrepreneurship literature has to a great extent hidden the important role of business relationship and networks. It takes time and resources to build such relationships, and the practice involved will possibly differ from the practices connected to building alliances. The relationships are extremely vulnerable for changes in the market situation, and even small changes can destroy the border cooperation in the industry that is why it especially important to develop strong and long lasting relationships where the partners trust each other. This leads us to our next proposition:

Proposition 2: For cross border ventures building and developing business relationships is more important than forming strategic alliances in order to create value.

### **Interrelations between outward and inward internationalisation**

In the development of ideas about internationalisation, inward processes have received limited attention (Welch, 2004), and the links between inward and outward practices is an under-researched area (Holmlund et al., 2007). While the outward internationalisation refers to activities such as marketing, sales, production and distri-

bution in foreign markets, inward activities cover a multiplicity of forms, such as imports of goods and services, technology, financial and human capital. Applying a cross border perspective in this study, one of the unique practices identified lies in the interrelations between the outward and inward internationalisation.

Inward internationalisation may be particularly important when considering the entrepreneurial basis of internationalisation, given the research which indicates that many firms begin their first international activity on the inward side, as importers, licensees, franchisee and alike (Welch, 2004). The evidence from our study can confirm this but the order is the “other way around” – first exporting, and then importing. As the manager from Rus2 said they started with selling fish in Norway but later they came to ordering fish gears, fish baits and so on.

From a network perspective it is natural to assume that there are links between import and export indicating that resources, such as knowledge, can be transferred from one activity to another (Holmlund et al., 2007). In our data material we also have other unique examples on the links between importing and exporting practices. Nor1 – the largest company on the Norwegian side of the border – “imports” Russian workers to their company. Through learning how their Russian employees want and think they also learn to know their Russian customers. As a conclusion, the fact that these firms are born border – on one specific border – give them some possibilities to combine outward and inward international practices in unique ways and that is one important driver behind their competitive advantage. Consequently, the following proposition is developed:

Proposition 3: Cross border ventures

practice unique interrelation between outward and inward internationalisation activities in their value creation.

### **Neighbourliness and interdependency**

In addition to the practices we have already mentioned, and in line with what others (Peng, 2009; Yamakawa et al., 2008) have observed, we have found that a wider and higher societal level from the border region context itself – so called institutional influences – play a crucial role in developing value among the cross border ventures in the study. Institutions are commonly understood as the rules of the game in society.

The feeling of interdependency is expressed very clearly by the entrepreneur from Nor1:

“Our livelihood has traditionally been based on Russian activities. Russia has been and still is our most important customer, and will also be in the future. [Nor1] was founded on the basis of the Russian fleet. It is just as important today as it has always been. We depend on them 100 per cent and I think they depend just as much on us”.

In summary, this leads us to the following proposition:

Proposition 4: Practices which promote and institutionalise neighbourliness and interdependency help cross border ventures to create value.

### **Limitations and further research**

As a first step to understand more about the uniqueness of cross border ventures and cross border entrepreneurship we are only scratching the surface of this interesting phenomenon. As a consequence, a number of limitations are connected to our study

and further research is required in many areas. First, we have based our study on a limited set of data on cross border ventures and their practical strategies. It is possible to overcome this limitation through sustained empirical efforts by scholars focusing on ways of entrepreneurial crossing the borders in the world. Second, more research is needed to improve and test our propositions. We need to develop a better understanding about the scope, extent and speed of internationalisation among cross border ventures, about their relationships and networks, how they connect inward and outward internationalisation practices and how institutional factors affect their value creation. In this article we do not give a comprehensive picture of the internationalisation practices applied by cross border ventures. As a third possibility for further research efforts is to follow the three theoretical perspectives (Peng, 2009; Yamakawa et al., 2008): an industry-based (Porter, 1980), a resource-based (Barney, 1991; Penrose, 1959/1995; Teece, Pisano, Shuen, 1997), and an institution-based perspective. By using these perspectives further research will develop a more complete understanding of practices in cross border ventures. Since all of the perspectives are common in the strategy literature, using them will also contribute to a better grounding of studies in the field of strategy. Fourth, we admit openly that our analysis of strategies is more connected to internationalisation than to entrepreneurship, consequently a fourth thread of research could bring entrepreneurial practices into the analysis. Fifth, further research is needed when it comes to understand international entrepreneurship that crosses the border in case of an emerging and developed economies, as well as the development of entrepreneurship and economic

growth on both sides of the border. In line with what have been found earlier for large companies (Hitt, Dacin, Levitas, Arregle, Borza, 2000), we have reasons to believe that the situation is quite different for cross border ventures moving from developed to emerging economies compared to the other way around. Sixth and last, there are a lot of methodological challenges in doing cross border research that has to be solved in one way or another. In addition, we have only had an experience of practice in getting entrepreneurs to tell about what they have done. Further research must go out to find new forms for entrepreneurial cross border activities.

## Conclusions

The aim of this study was to fill the knowledge gap about cross border ventures – or born borders – and cross border entrepreneurship. Theoretically, we have defined cross border firms which explore and exploit opportunities across one national border. Based on data from 8 born borders we have shown that these companies differ from the traditional born globals in many respects. As a consequence, the current focus on born globals helps to fully understand and support these firm's important internationalisation activities.

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Eva J.B. JØRGENSEN, Peter FISCHER, Victor EMELYANOV, Maya CHECHURINA

## PASINIO ĮMONĖS IR JŲ VEIKIMO STRATEGIJOS. RUSIJOS-NORVEGIJOS PASIENYJE ĮSIKŪRUSIŲ ARBA PASIENYJE GIMUSIŲ ĮMONIŲ ATVEJIS

### S a n t r a u k a

Tradicinėmis teorijomis apie tarptautinį verslumą siekiama paaiškinti, kaip ir kodėl verslios firmos gali tapti tarptautinėmis. Šiomis teorijomis daugiausia susitelkiama į vieną firmų rūšį – naujas tarptautines įmones, vadinamąsias „globaliomis gimusias“ įmones. Taip didžia dalimi neatsižvelgiama į kitos svarbios rūšies – pasienyje įsikūrusių įmonių – internacionalizacijos procesus. Analizuojant 4 Norvegijos ir 4 Rusijos pasienio įmonių duomenis bei remiantis nauju *strategija kaip veikla* požiūriu, šiame straipsnyje autoriai bando naujai pažvelgti į tai, ką tokios firmos realiai daro, kad sukurtų būsimą vertę. Minėti duomenys atskleidžia pasienio įmonių unikalumą, vertinant jų apimtis, mastą bei internacionalizacijos spartą. Tyrimas taip pat atskleidžia, jog pasienio įmonės skiriasi nuo „globaliomis gimusių“ įmonių, nes vietoj strateginių sąjungų labiau linkusios pasikliauti verslo santykiais. Be to jos naujoviškai apjungia išorines ir vidines veiklas skirtas tarptautiniam bendradarbiavimui bei oficialiai įformina gerus kaimyniškus santykius ir tarpusavio priklausomybę, kad tai padėtų kurti vertę. Straipsnyje taip pat supažindinama su plėtos (besivystančiomis) ekonomikomis pateikiant skirtingas praktikas, kai kertama siena iš besivystančios ekonomikos į išsivysčiusios ekonomikos šalį ir atvirkščiai.

Žvelgiant į Tolimojoje Šiaurėje Rusijos-Norvegijos pasienyje įsikūrusių smulkių ir vidutinių įmonių bendradarbiavimą, nedidelio pramoninio miestelio Kirkeneso atvejis iliustruoja regioninės plėtos periferinėse srityse pavyzdį. 2009 metų vasarą apklausus daugelį smulkių ir vidutinių įmonių atstovų Finmar-

ko apygardos rytinėje dalyje, gauti duomenys buvo analizuojami remiantis tinklų ir klasterių (*angl.* cluster) teorijomis bei vadovaujantis verslumo koncepcija. Per du dešimtmečius, firmos išplėtojo savo pagrindinę pramonės šaką nuo kalnakasybos iki naujų galimybių, dažniausiai tapdamos tiekėjomis Rusijos žvejybos laivui arba persiorientuodamos į veiklą susijusią su nafta ir dujomis. Straipsnyje atskleidžiami verslios veiklos bruožai išsivysčiusioje ekonomikoje, kurie palei valstybinę sieną pasirodo besantys visiškai priklausomi nuo bendradarbiavimo su besivystančios rinkos ekonomikos šalimi. Todėl smulkių firmų tinklas atsirado pradžioje konkuruojant, o vėliau jau siekiant bendradarbiauti. Autoriai argumentuoja, kad šis pasienyje įsikūrusių arba „pasienyje gimusių“ įmonių tinklas gali tapti potencialiu verslumo centru visoje Rusijos-Norvegijos pasienio zonoje vystant būsimą plėtrą. Vykdamas tyrimą buvo atskleista, kad daug veiklos palei šią sieną ir ypač sparti internacionalizacija vyksta dėka praktinių veiklos strategijų, kurias pasienio įmonės naudoja vertei sukurti. Sėkmingo pasienio įmonių bendradarbiavimo svarbiausi veiksniai yra tvirti glaudūs ryšiai tarp įmonių, istoriniai ir kultūriniai bendrumai bei centrinės ir vietos valdžios politinė valia remti naujoviškas verslo formas. Autorių įsitikinimu, pasienyje įsikūrusios („pasienyje gimusios“) įmonės gali pakeisti esamą darbo praktiką taikydamos inovacijas pasienio zonoje, didindamos eksportą ir produktyvumą, plėtodamos bendrus prekių ženklus, kurdamos aukštos kokybės darbo vietas bei pritraukdamos investicijas.