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## Article

# Cross-border mergers and acquisitions in the context of evaluation of the attributes of their future implementation

Ekonomický časopis

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*Reference:* Hečková, Jaroslava/Birknerová, Zuzana et. al. (2020). Cross-border mergers and acquisitions in the context of evaluation of the attributes of their future implementation. In: Ekonomický časopis 69 (2), S. 204 - 219.

<https://www.sav.sk/journals/uploads/0222112202%2021%20He%C4%8Dkov%C3%A1%20+%20SR.pdf>.

doi:10.31577/ekoncas.2021.02.05.

This Version is available at:

<http://hdl.handle.net/11159/5570>

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## Cross-border Mergers and Acquisitions in the Context of Evaluation of the Attributes of their Future Implementation<sup>1</sup>

Jaroslava HEČKOVÁ – Zuzana BIRKNEROVÁ – Alexandra CHAPČÁKOVÁ –  
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### Abstract

*Identification and specification of the key attributes influencing the considerations about implementation of a future cross-border merger or acquisition (M&A) are the main objective of the paper. Based on the views of managers from 165 international corporations located in 45 EEA countries that had previously been the subject of a cross-border M&A, significant attributes relating to their experience from its implementation were extracted. By means of the Principal Component Analysis with Varimax Rotation, three key attributes of implementation of a potential M&A process were extracted and labeled as Aims, Concerns, and Reasons. The content specification of the individual attribute items, as well as the basic parameters of the AFM&A (Attributes of Future Mergers and Acquisitions) methodology – Eigenvalues, Cronbach's alpha values, and percentage of the variance explained, and the results of an analysis of differences in the assessment of the extracted factors by managers – are further presented in the proposed contribution. In terms of the gender-based differences, female managers scored higher in the Concerns attribute, whereas male managers reached higher scores in the attribute of Reasons, which represents the importance they attach to these attributes in terms of a future cross-border M&A process.*

**Keywords:** *cross-border mergers, cross-border acquisitions, future cross-border M&As, future M&A management*

**JEL Classification:** G34, A10, F20

**DOI:** <https://doi.org/10.31577/ekoncas.2021.02.05>

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<sup>1</sup> The contribution was compiled as part of the VEGA project No. 1/0661/20 *Trends in Development and Determinants of Cross-border Mergers and Acquisitions in the European Area*.

## Introduction

The issue of mergers and acquisitions (M&As) in terms of exploring their motifs is the subject of economic research, as evidenced by numerous published research studies (e.g. Trautwein, 1990; Matsusaka, 1993; Caprio, Croci and Giudice, 2011; Kislingerová, Krabec and Čížinská, 2014). Implementation of mergers and acquisitions has the potential to trigger changes at the national, international, branch of business level (more in Hečková, Chapčáková and Litavcová, 2016). Many businesses consider mergers and acquisitions to be a significant strategy for the business growth (more in Palter and Srinivasan, 2006). There are certain drivers and rationales which propel the underlying motivation of companies to merge. Rationales are essentially represented by a higher-level reasoning which comprises the conditions for making a decision to merge. Drivers are mid-level specific (often operational) forces contributing towards the justification for a merger. For instance, if one company decides to acquire another company, the rationale could be that of strategy implementation in order to achieve one or more strategic objectives, as there is currently an over-capacity in the sector in which the two companies operate. This is an example of a strategic rationale, as the acquisition driver is the desire to control capacity in that sector (Roberts, Wallace and Moles, 2016).

Many different factors of various macro- and microeconomic nature influence implementation and efficiency of the merger and acquisition processes (more in Kotulič et al., 2016; Obadi et al., 2017; Morvay et al., 2018; partial conclusions in Hečková, Chapčáková and Badida, 2014; Hečková, Chapčáková and Litavcová, 2016; Hečková et al., 2017a; 2017b; 2018). Their subjective perception is a crucial aspect here, therefore the proposed paper is aimed at the managerial view of this issue in the context of identifying and specifying the attributes of the considered future implementation of a cross-border merger or acquisition. The main objective of the paper is to specify in detail the identified key attributes of cross-border M&As, which affect the considerations about their future implementation.

The major motivation for implementation of this research was to enrich the knowledge in the research area due to the absence of scientific studies which would focus on the potential intent to implement a cross-border M&A (from the companies' viewpoint), as most of the M&A research studies deal almost exclusively with the aspects connected to the before-during-and-post-M&A processes.

### 1. Brief Theoretical Background to Cross-border M&A

When it comes to cross-border M&A, Finkelstein (1999) provides a few considerations that could be taken into account when the companies try to manage this complicated process. The author accentuates value creation through synergies

to cut costs, and revenue increase through repositioning the competitive strategy. Hopkins, Chaganti and Kotabe (1999) also examines a wide range of issues relating to cross-border mergers and acquisitions, for instance cross-border M&A in relation to foreign direct investments, M&A trends and regional patterns, and strategic, market, economic, and personal motives for cross-border M&A implementation. According to Hitt and Pisano (2003), this process implementation brings about opportunities which companies could use to diversify their activities also geographically, improve knowledge-wise and resource-wise. Geographical expansion and improvement of company's resources are, thus, aspects under consideration also in the research provided below. Hitt and Pisano (2003) further describe challenges brought about by any cross-border M&A implementation, namely the difficulties arising from the target company evaluation, and institutional and cultural differences (as in Gupta, 2008). In their study, the authors examined cross-border M&A also regarding the post-M&A integration process, highlighting the need to study the process of double acculturation, effective structure identification, and potential synergies realization through team and action integration. These aspects are taken into account also in the research later carried out by Hečková et al. (2017b).

Coourdacier, De Santis and Aviat (2009) provide a complex overview of cross-border M&A within and across several manufacturing and service sectors, and provide Gravity Models on bilateral M&A at the sectoral level. In their study, the authors conclude that global development of cross-border M&A, particularly within the manufacturing sector, has been positively affected by European integration and the improvement of the institutional setting in the target country. Vargas-Hernández and Rodríguez (2015) conducted a similar study but with accentuation on the sector of services in terms of the constitutional reform carried out in Mexico and the Latin America. The authors analyzed cross-border M&A implementation in this geographical area during the years of 2009 to 2014 and their analysis results point to the fact that the most cross-border M&A carried out after the constitutional reform were in the sector of telecommunications. Future research on M&A processes therefore calls for further elaboration of these contexts in terms of cross-border mergers or acquisitions implementation.

In addition to general expectations and challenges regarding the cross-border M&A processes, Pendleton (2019) highlights the existence of the Cross-border Mergers Directive (CBMD), which was passed in 2005, and by the end of 2007, most EU Member States included it into their national legislation and regulations. The CBMD describes the simplified procedures of cross-border M&A within EU and Pendleton (2019) calls for a more systematic future research particularly on the labor effects of M&A under the CBMD.

Regarding the aforementioned findings, the theoretical background to the research presented below will be further elaborated in the methodology factors definition part (part 3 – Results), where all previously discussed aspects are taken into account and linked to the newly extracted factors of the proposed original methodology designed to evaluate the attributes of future cross-border M&A implementation.

## **2. Research**

Building up on the theoretical part of this paper, the main objective of the research was to identify and specify the factors related to the considerations about a merger or an acquisition process in the future. The attributes of the considered implementation of a cross-border merger or acquisitions in the future were identified by means of a questionnaire. Another objective of the conducted research was to verify the factor structure of the original methodology AFM&A – Attributes of Future Mergers and Acquisitions (the questionnaire items are shown in Table 1) and theoretically specify the contents of the identified factors and their corresponding items (based on the findings from the previous research studies by the authors of this paper).

AFM&A is a new methodology verified during the process of research project solution. It has a form of a questionnaire consisting of 11 items relating to evaluation of the attributes of future cross-border M&A implementation. The items were formulated on the basis of the studied literature relating to the cross-border M&A processes. The task for the respondents-managers was to assess the individual items of the questionnaire on a 4-point scale, where 1 = insignificant, and 4 = very significant. The identification and specification of the key attributes of considerations about a merger or an acquisition was carried out on the basis of an analysis of the views of top managers of 165 companies (international corporations) headquartered in 45 countries of the European area which had been the subject of a cross-border merger or acquisition during the period of 2010 – 2016, with market capitalization of more than 100 mil. Euro Businesses were selected from the Zephyr database (Bureau van Dijk, 2017). A thousand businesses were approached, but the responses received from the 165 of those involved in the research were analyzed. This selection may be considered as deliberate and, at the same time, it is of a voluntary nature. The method of selecting companies is also related to the reasonable degree of generalization of the results obtained.

The research sample consisted of 126 male managers (76.4%) and 39 female managers (23.6%) aged between 21 and 65 years ( $M = 41.76$  years,  $SD = 10.910$  years), who had been working for their company from 1 to 25 years ( $M = 11.16$

years,  $SD = 6.115$  years). These managers were working on a position in their company's top management.

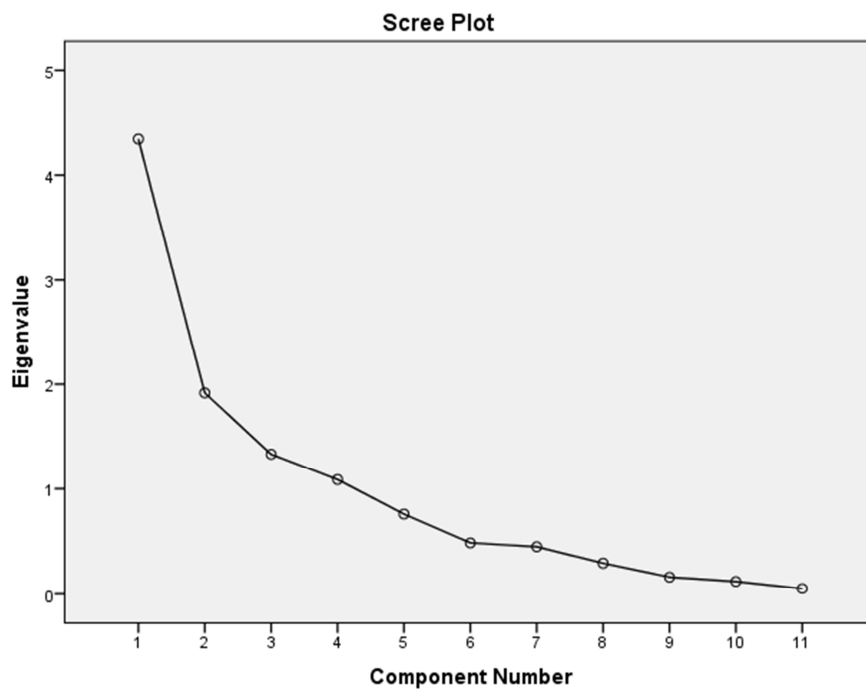
The data obtained were evaluated by means of the mathematical and statistical methods of descriptive statistics, Principal Component Analysis (PCA) with Varimax Rotation, Pearson Correlation Coefficient, Friedman test, and t-test (processed by the IBM SPSS software).

### 3. Results

The factor analysis of the data obtained using the Principal Component Analysis with Varimax Rotation method allowed extraction of three key attributes of implementation of a potential merger and acquisition process – Aims, Concerns, and Reasons (Figure 1, Table 1).

Figure 1

Scree Plot of the Extracted Factors of the AFM&A Methodology



Source: Own elaboration (SPSS).

The Scree plot illustrates the existence of three distinct factors of the proposed methodology and, simultaneously, supports the fact that definition of more factors would be inadequate and redundant.

Table 1  
Factor Structure of the AFM&A Methodology

Methodology Items	Attributes		
	<i>F1 – Aims</i>	<i>F2 – Concerns</i>	<i>F3 – Reasons</i>
Lack of control over acquisition	.030	<b>.910</b>	.241
Transition management	.046	<b>.584</b>	-.197
Adding clients	.066	-.326	<b>.750</b>
Staffing issues/Layoffs	.231	<b>.724</b>	-.006
Expand geographically	-.105	.198	<b>.804</b>
Adding staff	-.104	-.005	<b>.670</b>
Expand firm's financial resources	<b>.791</b>	.114	-.155
Manage growth	<b>.832</b>	.127	-.135
Improve firm's management resources	<b>.841</b>	.161	-.106
Provide impetus for growth	<b>.851</b>	.259	-.014
Increase opportunities for staff	<b>.858</b>	-.205	.150

Source: Own elaboration (SPSS).

Table 2 presents the basic parameters of the newly created methodology labeled as AFM&A (Attributes of Future Mergers and Acquisitions), namely Eigenvalues and the percentage of the variance explained.

Table 2  
Eigenvalues and the Percentage of the Variance Explained for the Extracted Factors

Attributes	Eigenvalues	% of Variance	Cumulative %
F1 – Aims	4.341	39.468	39.468
F2 – Concerns	1.917	17.425	56.893
F3 – Reasons	1.330	12.093	<b>68.986</b>

Source: Own elaboration (SPSS).

The extracted factors related to considerations about a future merger or acquisition explain 68.986% of the variance and it is possible to specify them content-wise as follows:

***F1 – Aims*** (Cronbach's alpha – 0.931). When considering a possible merger or acquisition, managers scoring high in this attribute attach greater importance to the expansion of the firm's financial resources, growth management, improvement of the firm's management resources, providing an impetus for growth, and increasing opportunities for the staff. Items saturating the given factor define it content-wise as follows:

- *Expand firm's financial resources*. Every merger or acquisition may result in a larger, financially stronger organization. Among the effects of a successful M&A Hečková (2007) includes the benefits of better financial opportunities for the company due to its growth, access to cheaper foreign sources in larger volumes (due to the lower capital costs), and decrease in transaction costs (more in Kotulič et al., 2016). Growing financial opportunities for an enterprise simultaneously

lead to potential improvements in brand and reputation, which is reflected in the increase in the market value of the business (expressed by higher shareholder values).

Financial factors motivate some M&As. For example, an acquirer's financial analysis may reveal that the target is undervalued. That is, the value of the buyer may be significantly in excess of the market value of the target, even when a premium that is normally associated with changes in control is added to the acquisition price (Mackenzie, 2014).

For the target company, an M&A transaction provides its shareholders with an opportunity to cash out at a significant premium, especially if the transaction is an all-cash deal. If the acquirer pays partly in cash and partly in its own stock, the target company's shareholders would hold a stake in the acquirer, and thus have a vested interest in its long-term success.

Many M&A transactions are also financed through the acquirer's stock. For an acquirer to use its stock as currency for an acquisition, its shares must often be premium-priced to begin with, else making purchases would be needlessly dilutive. As well, management of the target company also has to be convinced that accepting the acquirer's stock rather than hard cash is a good idea.

Stock transactions may offer the seller certain tax benefits that cash transactions do not provide. However, securities transactions require the parties to agree on the value of the securities. This may create some uncertainty and may give cash an advantage over securities transactions from the seller's point of view.

Financial synergy refers to the impact of a corporate merger or acquisition on the costs of capital to the acquiring firm or the merging partners. The extent to which financial synergy exists in corporate combinations, the costs of capital should be lowered. The issue of synergies in merger and acquisition processes is addressed by several authors (Sirower, 1997; Larsson and Finkelstein, 1999; Sirower and Sahni, 2006; Ficery, Herd and Pursche, 2007).

- *Manage growth.* One of the primary motives for implementation of M&As is the future growth of the newly merged company. Businesses can grow in their own industry or outside their business category. Expansion outside the sector means diversification of the business. If an enterprise strives for growth, it can arrive at a conclusion that the internal growth is not an acceptable alternative because the slow growth of an enterprise through internal expansion gives the competition room to gain more market share (more in Baláž, Karasová and Chrančoková, 2019). Managers of international corporations are under constant pressure to grow, all the more so if they have grown also in the past. However, when the demand for products or services slows down, it is difficult to secure growth. For this reason, mergers and acquisitions are considered one of the solutions.



Managers expect the capital reallocation through mergers and acquisitions to lead not only to revenue growth but also to an improved profitability through synergies. Mergers and acquisitions bring positive synergy effects on the one hand, but at the same time, they put greater demands on the management of an even bigger company. Growth management through merger and acquisition strategies ultimately improves the position of the owners and brings them greater returns corresponding to the size of the business after the merger (more in Lyócsa and Výrost, 2018). According to Oduro and Agyei (2013), at the corporate level, M&As have been identified by most companies as the most favored non-organic strategy for achieving their growth objectives.

- *Improve firm's management resources.* Among other things, some mergers and acquisitions are motivated by the belief that the management of the acquiring company can better manage the resources of the target enterprise. The source (acquiring) enterprise believes that its managerial abilities and skills will lead to an increase in the value of the target enterprise. That is why the acquiring company is willing to pay more for the target enterprise than the current value of the shares of that undertaking. The argumentation of improving corporate management resources is particularly valid when large enterprises try to acquire small, growing businesses (more in Hackbarth and Morrellec, 2008). Smaller businesses can offer a unique product or service that is well sold and shows the potential for further rapid growth. Such a growing business must gradually oversee a much larger distribution network and will have to adopt a different marketing philosophy that requires a different set of management skills. Lack of managerial experience and skills may be an obstacle for a smaller growing business and may limit its ability to compete on the market (more in Širá, Kravčáková Vozárová and Radvanská, 2016). These management resources can be offered by the acquiring business to the target company.

Some scholars argue that a multinational may choose to engage in cross-border mergers to internalize an activity in order to avoid the disadvantages of working through a foreign firm (Sonenshine and Reynolds, 2014).

- *Provide impetus for growth.* The impetus for growth is primarily the decision to reallocate the company's capital through mergers or acquisitions. Bobenič Hintošová and Mesároš (2008) summarize the motifs leading the companies to the implementation of mergers and acquisitions into two groups, i.e. offensive motifs and defensive motifs. Offensive motives are typical of businesses from attractive business areas with further growth prospects that have the ambition to take full advantage of the opportunities offered and to promote expansion strategies for that purpose. Defensive motifs result from the feeling of narrowing of the market's maneuvering space, in which managers see a solution in

acquisitions or mergers in order not to end up as an object of interest of their competitor. It is these defensive motifs which are supported by the theory that only large enterprises can win in a fierce competitive struggle.

**F2 – Concerns** (Cronbach's alpha – 0.896). When considering a possible merger or acquisition, managers scoring high in this attribute attach greater importance to the lack of control over acquisition, transition management, and staffing issues or layoffs. Items saturating the given factor define it content-wise as follows:

- *Lack of control over acquisition.* Control is an important part of the management process and is in fact overlapping with all of its activities. Particularly important and irreplaceable is the role of control in monitoring the communication processes. The most significant task of control is to monitor the current state and compare it with the past and with the target state. Only in this way can it be clearly determined whether the activities of the surveyed unit are aimed at achieving the stated goal. Management of the M&A process requires thorough control of all partial processes. The shortage or loss of control over this process is the path to the failure of the entire transaction.

- *Staffing issues/layoffs.* An appropriate organizational structure is a basic functional requirement for flexibility to secure and achieve future (expected) business strategy results. After occupying the managerial positions, managers should evaluate and then select the new employees to fill their respective job positions. Senior management should emphasize the importance of new job positions, especially if the skills required are a key to completing the integration process of the “new, expanded” business. During the integration process, managers are under stress as a result of running common business operations while simultaneously integrating the individual components of the expanded business.

- *Transition management.* The contextual attribute, which companies take into account when considering implementation of a merger or an acquisition, is one of the issues of change management. Change management addresses aspects that relate to new areas of an “expanded entrepreneurship” in order to achieve the company's strategic goals following a merger while enhancing managerial efficiency and performance (more in Rajnoha, Štefko and Merková, 2016). After the stage of a visible growth of performance, according to Sádovský (2009), an optimal space is created for the use of an increasing confidence in making changes to the necessary changes of all systems, structures and procedures that are incompatible with the transformation vision.

**F3 – Reasons** (Cronbach's alpha – 0.895). When considering a possible merger or acquisition, managers scoring high in this attribute attach greater importance to adding clients, geographical expansion, and adding staff. Items saturating the given factor define it content-wise as follows:

• *Adding clients.* M&As can also be driven by an attempt to gain access to new markets and a related new client base. For example, if one bank merges with another bank, each acquires the client base of the other bank. In some cases, the acquired client base can represent a market that was previously unavailable. For instance, if one bank specializes in business clients and the other in domestic clients, after the merger, the new entity will have a more balanced client base (more in Kiseľáková and Šofranková, 2015).

• *Expand geographically.* Geographical expansion is another way of a business to grow. In many cases, it is much faster and less risky than the internal growth of an enterprise. Companies with successful products in one national market can, through a cross-border merger or acquisition, achieve revenue and profit growth in another one. A cross-border agreement may allow the acquirer to use the target country's know-how and its distribution networks (more in Glaister and Ahammad, 2010; Lu and Beamish, 2004).

• *Adding staff.* In the light of the above characteristics, a cross-border agreement may allow the acquirer to use the domestic labor force. It is about gaining new employees for both the managerial and the non-managerial positions.

On the basis of testing the skewness and kurtosis, it is not possible to regard the distribution of research data as normal (Table 3), therefore a non-parametric statistical method was used.

Table 3  
Skewness and Kurtosis of Data Distribution

	F1 – Aims	F2 – Concerns	F3 – Reasons
Skewness	-.988	-.907	-.451
Kurtosis	.560	1.031	-.410

Source: Own elaboration (SPSS).

Comparisons of statistical significance of the differences in the assessment of the extracted factors are illustrated in Table 4.

Table 4  
Differences in the Assessment of the Individual Factors of the AFM&A Methodology

	Mean Rank	Median
F1 – Aims	1.99	3.00
F2 – Concerns	2.06	3.00
F3 – Reasons	1.95	3.00

Source: Own elaboration (SPSS).

These comparisons were performed by the Friedman test. The result of this test was not statistically significant (significance level of .557). Data analysis did not confirm the existence of statistically significant differences in the assessment of the extracted factors. The mean values of the factors' assessment suggest that they were considered significant by the managers.

In this research, we also investigated whether there were statistically significant differences between the male and female managers in the assessment of attributes of future mergers and acquisitions. A t-test was used to compare the differences between men and women and their perception of the three key attributes of the implementation of a potential merger and acquisition process – Aims, Concerns, and Reasons. The results are presented in Table 5.

Table 5

**Gender Differences in the Assessment of Attributes of Future M&A Implementation**

Attributes	Gender	M	t-test	p
F1 – Aims	Male manager	2.81	.820	.413
	Female manager	2.92		
F2 – Concerns	Male manager	2.88	2.781	<b>.006</b>
	<b>Female manager</b>	<b>3.15</b>		
F3 – Reasons	<b>Male manager</b>	<b>2.80</b>	3.256	<b>.001</b>
	Female manager	2.41		

Source: Own elaboration (SPSS).

A comparison of the responses of managers showed the existence of two statistically significant differences. We found significant gender-based differences between managers when assessing the Concerns and Reasons attributes. Female managers assessed themselves more positively in the Concerns attribute, which means that they attach greater importance to the worries over the lack of control over acquisition, transition management, and staffing issues or layoffs than male managers. On the contrary, male managers worry less about these M&A-related aspects and assess themselves more positively in the Reasons attribute, meaning that attach greater importance to adding clients, staff, and geographical expansion of the newly created company. When interpreting these results, we can refer to the role expectations which are specific within different socio-cultural environments.

We were also interested in the possible existence of statistically significant links between the age of the respondents and the evaluation of the attributes of future mergers and acquisitions. The recorded results of the correlation analysis are presented in Table 6.

Table 6

**Correlations between the Age of the Respondents and the Evaluation of the Attributes of Future M&A**

		Aims	Concerns	Reasons
Age	Pearson Correlation	.301**	.092	.162*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.241	.038
	N	165	165	165

Note: \*\*Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed); \*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Source: Own elaboration (SPSS).

Through this research study, we also found that in two attributes there is a statistically significant correlation between their assessment and the age of the respondents. With the growing age of managers, they focus more on the aims of and the reasons for the M&A process, i.e. expansion of the firm's financial resources, growth management, improvement of the firm's management resources, providing an impetus for growth, increasing opportunities for the staff, adding clients, geographical expansion, and adding staff.

#### **4. Discussion**

Based on the results of our research by means of the AFM&A methodology it may be noted that when considering future cross-border mergers or acquisitions, managers take into account the parameters such as the lack of control over the acquisition, transition management, staffing issues, adding clients, expanding geographically, expanding the firm's financial resources, growth management, improving firm's management resources, providing impetus for growth, and increasing opportunities for staff. Implementing a merger or an acquisition as a comprehensive process of achieving the new company's strategic objectives, while increasing managerial efficiency and performance, requires, in terms of its successful implementation, adequate attention from the top managers aimed at the key areas of the "expanded business" already in the period of considering its implementation.

At this stage, the successfulness of the "expanded business" activities of the new company is conditioned by the issue of managing the change related to the new business areas, as well as the issue of growth management, if the senior management seeks to achieve a much faster business growth process through a merger or an acquisition (as compared with the internal growth of the company), thereby gaining a bigger market share faster, diversifying business, and achieving other positive synergies (such as synergy profits bringing profitability improvements, better shareholder positioning, generating appropriate returns for shareholders, improving corporate management resources, improving managerial skills, obtaining a new client base, acquiring new previously unavailable markets including markets of other regions, using the know-how of the target countries and their workforce, as well as distribution networks).

The motive of considering a future implementation of the merger or acquisition is, from the manager's point of view, also the growth of corporate finance, which means for the company not only to increase its market value, but also to improve its reputation and consolidation of the company name and brand. Increasing the efficiency and performance of the entire company in order to achieve the future

(expected) results of the corporate business strategy goes hand in hand with staffing issues relating to the appropriate organizational structure, which must be in line with the specific needs of ensuring the smooth operation of the “expanded business” (after the subsequent M&A implementation) and its objectives. Managing the entire merger and acquisition process also requires checking all of its sub-processes, as loss of control can lead to the failure of the entire process.

These individual parameters can be summarized on the basis of the factor analysis results, Cronbach’s alpha calculations, and the inter-correlation analysis into three key factors of considerations of a future merger or acquisition, which are Aims, Concerns and Reasons. These results show that, when considering a future merger or acquisition, managers take into account the acquisition strategy for the growth of the business value, or a tool to restructure the corporate structure and a tool to diversify the business-related risks, while not merely focusing on the area of financial and investment aspects of the entire transaction, but also the business strategy attributes including exchange of know-how, transition management, market position, enterprise value, risk reduction, transaction costs, restructuring, improving corporate management resources, staffing issues, acquiring new employees, etc.

Foreign scientific studies by several authors have also reached similar conclusions (e.g. Sirower, 1997; Larsson and Finkelstein, 1999; Sirower and Sahni, 2006; Ficery, Herd and Pursche, 2007; Barney, 1988; Stahl and Voigt, 2008; Kim and Olsen, 1999; Fuller, Netter and Stegemoller, 2002). Considering an implementation of a future merger or acquisition by managers can, in addition to the factors we have specified, and despite the extensive empirical material that served as the basis of our analysis, include a whole set of combinations of other factors, which we see as an incentive to our further research on the subject.

## **Conclusion**

On the basis of the new original AFM&A (Attributes of Future Mergers and Acquisitions) methodology, the paper identifies and subsequently specifies the significant determinants affecting the implementation of the merger and acquisition process of potential cross-border mergers and acquisitions. These determinants are taken into account by business companies when they consider conducting a cross-border merger and/or acquisition activity. The identification and specification of the key merger or acquisition consideration attributes were carried out by analyzing the views of the top managers from 165 business companies based in 45 EEA countries, which were subject to a cross-border merger and/or acquisition over the period of 2010 – 2016, with a market capitalization of more than 100 mil. Euro.

Creating and the subsequent testing of our methodology on the research sample allowed us to identify three key factors of considerations of a future merger or acquisition, which are Aims, Concerns and Reasons. The AFM&A methodology presented here may better explicate the consideration aspects relating to the future merger or acquisition implementation, thus contributing methodologically to the increase of the process efficiency. From a theoretical point of view, it is a specification of the particular parameters of these factors, which are regarded by the top managers as key in the process of making considerations whether to implement a merger or an acquisition or not.

By extracting the given attributes, definition of the theoretical concept of these processes on the one hand, and their implementation into practice on the other became possible. The aforementioned factor extraction also enabled increase in the efficiency of decision-making about the M&A implementation and maintaining the long-term impact of these processes. The issue of a meaningful generalization or abstraction degree of defining these factors should be accentuated here. Simultaneously, it is crucial to draw attention to the issue of trans-situationality and versatility of these factors, particularly in future M&A considerations and also culture-wise.

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