

## **“Managing power in asymmetrical buyer-seller relationships on business-to-business market”**

The rationale for this project is in research gaps that exist in management science, especially in strategic marketing within wider discipline of so-called economic sciences. The starting point is the assumption that so-called relational view is important paradigm of corporate strategy, which means that companies of various sizes and industries may successfully achieve their financial and market objectives through collaboration with other entities rather than through individual building of competitive advantage. At the same time this project is based on “careful approach” towards this paradigm, so business relationships are not treated as panacea and it is taken into consideration that there is serious risk of relationship dysfunctions, which is connected among other things with exploiting weaker partner as zero sum game (“I win only if you lose”).

Power asymmetry in business-to-business relationships has been studied using multiple perspectives, including power sources, exertion of power, mediated or non-mediated power, the difference between potential and enacted power, and balancing power and leveraging benefits in asymmetrical relationships. Although power utilization and power asymmetry are commonly perceived as typical features of exchange business relationships, remaining in asymmetrical relationships and maintaining a strong dependence on a business partner are treated as risky and demand the application of management tools. This is mainly because power dominance correlates with relationship dysfunctions such as: unfair distribution of relationship rent, partner opportunism, opportunity costs and staying stuck in close but unprofitable business relationships. This project takes into consideration that business relationships as any other human relations are complex and dynamic phenomena, so there is high likelihood that concrete partnership degenerates, even if this partnership was initially very profitable. In asymmetrical relationships uncomfortable dynamics is dangerous mainly for a weaker partner, because such partner stays frequently in lock-in situation and high switching costs. This all encourages expanding our knowledge on effective methods for managing power in b2b relationships from the perspective of a weaker side. This project has a potential to minimize existing gap and it assumes that any management tool developed in this research are should decrease the risk of losing key, strategic customers by a given supplier. Consequently, this project focuses mainly on managing so-called non-coercive power sources.