

SYSTEM OF CRITERIA FOR INTER-ORGANISATIONAL NETWORK CLASSIFICATION

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Innovation development and growth are the result of a new network model that appears in economics for organising and coordinating relations, as well as new societal thinking. Integrated inter-organisational networks ensure sustainability and development of companies and organisations, and innovative product and technology designing; they represent a global trend in due course of transition to knowledge economy.

The subject of this article is to define conceptual and methodological principles with which to develop a system of classification criteria for inter-organisational networks that is based on previous studies of the author using the principles of funding spiral.

Inter-organisational network structure is the core notion as it explains network relations, interactions, formation and expansion. A network structure will be considered as durable regulated relations between its agents time- and space-wise, as any change in these parameters can cause the changes on key networks functions, but a network itself. Depending upon network purpose, its

functions and relations one can identify the following types of a structure: hierarchical, fishbone, and metrical.

Inter-organisational network functions are implemented via material and information flows, while the network structure itself is a set of flows limited in time and space. The relations in inter-organisational network can be informal and flexible, but the relationships among network members are inter-dependent and deeply trustful, hence they can be classified as informational and communicational. Informational relations deal with a network structure, and can be linear, parallel, circle, star, centric, with multiple centres.

If a form of interaction that intensifies information exchange is found, then a network is highly effective; it is high competitive and able to respond to changing market conditions. In everyday activities of a company, that is a network structural economic agent, the development of beneficial cooperation among partners and effective application of information and communications technologies form a base for network management.