



Université
de Montréal



UNIVERSITÉ
LAVAL

HEC MONTRÉAL

CALL FOR PAPERS

Multinational Companies, Global Value Chains and Social Regulation

International CRIMT Conference

June 6th to 8th 2011, HEC Montreal, Montreal, Canada

As part of its Major Collaborative Research Initiatives project, the **Interuniversity research centre on globalization and work (CRIMT)** will host an international conference on multinational companies, their global value chains and emerging forms of labour regulation. This conference will take place from June 6th to 8th 2011 in Montréal, Canada.

The spread of **multinational companies (MNCs)** through their global value chains is at the forefront of the current phase of globalization. The analysis of their development is critical for an understanding of the dynamics of labour and employment regulation. Far from evolving outside society, MNCs structure national business systems and influence public policy. Research points to how these firms control their subsidiaries and manage employment, how and why they adjust in varied ways to different societal environments, and the importance of institutional and other variations between home and host countries.

The analysis of **global value chains** (or global production networks) shifts the focus to the reconfiguration of the sequence of activities within and across national boundaries and across networks. The increased possibilities for firms to delocalize or relocate production activities across countries and regions in search of the optimal location often clashes with the logic and dynamics of labour relations and public policy orientations, challenging national capacities to regulate work and employment relations in MNCs. This raises questions about the motives behind the restructuring of corporate activities and functions and the impact on working conditions in different locations along the value chain.

The ways in which MNCs and their value chains cut across national and international employment regimes highlight the basic problem of institutional territoriality. In response, there is a process of institutional restructuring and hybridization where old and new collective actors and other stakeholders seek to regulate firms both within and beyond

national borders. In these contested processes, actors attempt to mobilize both national and extra territorial sources of labour regulation through a variety of mechanisms of social regulation. We are especially interested in assessing how different forms of **social regulation** intertwine and their relative effectiveness in enhancing worker protection and voice at level of the firm and beyond.

This Call for papers invites original contributions on the following themes.

1) MNCs and National Business Systems. How do MNCs control their subsidiaries and manage employment? How and why do they adjust in varied ways to different societal environments? What is the importance of institutional, actor, organizational and public policy variations between home and host countries? How do actors strategize and shape MNC employment practices and policies?

Key themes include: home and host country influences; dominance effects; the impact of embeddedness on MNC practices; the micro-politics of control within MNCs; whether MNCs transfer global practices or adapt to local contexts; corporate governance; the importance of HR and employment in the context of changing forms of ownership and control.

2) Global Value Chains (GVCs)/Global Production Networks. How does the reconfiguration of GVCs affect the management of work and employment? What are the consequences across GVCs for local actors (workers, trade unions, managers, NGOs, or public policy actors)? How do public policy initiatives at different levels (supranational, national, sectoral, regional) affect GVCs? In turn, how does the reconfiguration of GVCs impact on public policies at different levels and what are the consequences for work and employment?

Key themes include: patterns of value chain reconfigurations including relationships between firms and sites in high and low-cost destinations; links between MNCs and their GVCs, including transfer of practices between MNCs and small- and medium-sized firms; actor and public policy strategies for the regulation of work and employment within GVCs in developed and emerging economies; firm restructuring within GVCs and their labour and social impacts.

3) Emerging Architecture of Social Regulation. Can old and new mechanisms of social regulation promote decent and sustainable work within MNCs and along GVCs? How are collective actors and stakeholders seeking to regulate MNCs and GVCs both within and beyond national borders? Are new actors and institutions for social regulation emerging at different levels and, if so, how do they interact with each other and existing forms of regulation? What are the social alternatives and policy options with regard to the social regulation of work and employment within MNCs and GVCs?

Key themes include: the melding of national and extraterritorial source of labour and employment regulation; corporate social responsibility initiatives and corporate codes of conduct; international framework agreements and other regulatory mechanisms; the links and the interplay between different kinds of regulation; the implications of this emerging architecture for actor strategies and public policy.

Comparative papers and workshops addressing the relationships between these themes are especially welcome.

Submitting Proposals

Scholars are invited to submit an original paper proposal in English or French. The papers can be theoretical, analytical, empirical or policy-oriented. We also encourage proposals for workshops of linked papers (four papers or three papers and a discussant).

All proposals will be subject to a competitive review by the Scientific Committee. We will do our utmost to provide a timely response to your proposals after their submission in order that you can secure financing to attend the conference. All participants must cover their registration fees (300 Canadian dollars), travel and other expenses.

The deadline for submission of proposals is **January 6th, 2011**.

Individual paper proposals should be a maximum of 2 pages and should outline the nature of the study, the methodological approach, and the main lines of analysis to be developed. Workshop proposals should be 3-5 pages in length and include details on the contribution as a whole, on each contribution (see details on papers proposals above) and on the institutional affiliations of the participants.

All proposals should be sent by electronic mail to: Nicolas Roby, CRIMT Scientific Coordinator at the following address: nicolas.robby@umontreal.ca. For further updates on the conference organization, check www.crimt.org.

The authors should submit a first draft of the full version of their paper by **May 1st, 2011**, which will be made available at the time of the conference on a special conference Website for participants. Some papers will be selected for submission as special issues of leading refereed journals.

The organizing committee of the Interuniversity Research Centre on Globalization and Work (CRIMT) and key research stakeholders look forward to interesting and rich debates. We hope that this conference will bring together academics and practitioners, from all perspectives and from many countries, in order to better our understanding of the challenges of a changing world of work and employment. This conference will provide an exciting forum for this exchange.

For the Organizing Committee:

Renée-Claude Drouin (Université de Montréal)
Francine Jacques (CRIMT)
Patrice Jalette (Université de Montréal)
Christian Lévesque (HEC Montréal)
Gregor Murray (Université de Montréal)
Nicolas Roby (CRIMT)