A Comparative Analysis of Leadership Styles and Organizational Culture

Germany | Czech Republic | Romania

Laura Raluca CIUI · Cristian Iulian MOLDOVAN

Universitatea "Aurel Vlaicu", Arad, România

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CONTEXT

Why This Study?

?

The Challenge

Multinationals need consistent culture across different countries with different expectations

3

Locations Studied

Munich (DE)
Prague (CZ)
Iasi (RO)

124

Respondents

89% response rate
Anonymous online survey
45-item questionnaire

RESEARCH QUESTION

Can corporate culture remain consistent across countries while leadership practices adapt to local expectations?

Key Concepts:

Leadership Styles | Organizational Culture | National Context | Cross-National Mgmt

METHODOLOGY

How Was the Research Conducted?

01

Design

Comparative
Quantitative
Cross-sectional
Survey-based

02

Sample

140 invited
124 valid responses
89% response rate
DE:44 | CZ:40 | RO:40

03

Instrument

45-item questionnaire
5-point frequency scale
10 leadership categories
Anonymous online

04

Styles Measured

Autocratic · Bureaucratic
Charismatic · Cultural
Democratic · Laissez-faire
People · Task-oriented
Transformational
Transactional

SAMPLE PROFILE

Who Participated? (N=124)

Gender



74 women · 50 men

Total: 124 respondents

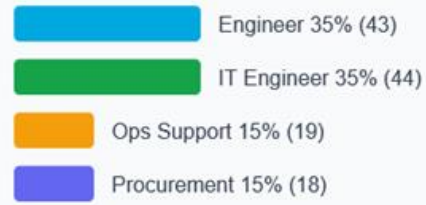
Response rate: 89%

Age Distribution



Predominantly early-to-mid career

Role Distribution



Technical profiles dominant

Tenure by Country

Tenure	RO	CZ	DE
Less 1yr	1	0	0
1-2 yrs	9	24	**28**
3-5 yrs	6	16	12
5+ yrs	**24**	0	4

RO most stable · DE newest

DISTRIBUTION BY LOCATION

Germany (Munich) — 44 · 35% | **Czech Rep. (Prague) — 40 · 32%** | **Romania (Iasi) — 40 · 32%**

Key Insight: Romania shows the most stable tenure profile (60% over 5 years),

while Germany is concentrated in 1-2 year range — a structural difference with implications for leadership expectations.

LEADERSHIP STYLES

10 Leadership Categories Measured

Autocratic
Top-down decisions, little input from team, strong control

Control-oriented

Bureaucratic
Strict rule adherence, procedures followed, formal structures

Process-oriented

Charismatic
Inspirational vision, personal appeal, emotional engagement

Inspiration-oriented

Cultural
Promotes shared values, reinforces norms, aligns to org identity

Values-oriented

Democratic
Team input valued, shared decision-making, collaborative approach

Participation-oriented

Laissez-faire
Minimal direction, high team autonomy, hands-off approach

Autonomy-oriented

People-Oriented
Employee wellbeing, relationship building, supportive behaviours

Relationship-oriented

Task-Oriented
Goal clarity, planning, monitoring progress, operational reliability

Performance-oriented

Transformational
Vision and change, inspires commitment, mobilises for innovation

Change-oriented

Transactional
Rewards and targets, performance exchange, clear expectations

Exchange-oriented

MEASUREMENT FRAMEWORK

Each style measured via dedicated item groups · 5-point frequency scale · 45 total items

Yukl (2002) Framework

Supportive · Task · Change-oriented

Influence Strategies

Relational vs. assertive tactics

Bandura (1977)

Social Learning Theory

ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE

What Was Measured and How?

DEFINITION (Schein, 2010)

"Shared values, norms, and assumptions that guide how members interpret their environment — sustained through practices and symbols."

5 Culture Dimensions Captured:

1

Sense of Belonging

Employees feel part of shared community

Cohesion indicator

2

Values Alignment

Personal values align with org ethics

Alignment indicator

3

Communication Quality

Clear info flows, standard meetings

Infrastructure indicator

4

Freedom to Disagree

Psychological safety, express views freely

Safety indicator

5

Benefits Satisfaction

Satisfaction with org benefits and support

Retention indicator

Cultural Infrastructure Identified Across All Sites:

Shared Language

Common terminology across all 3 locations

Standard Meeting Formats

Consistent routines in all sites

Recurring Feedback Routines

Regular review cycles maintained globally

Key Finding: Organizational culture appeared COHESIVE across all three sites.

Shared mechanisms sustain common identity even when leadership tone differs by location.

KEY FINDINGS

What Did We Find?

Location	Workforce Profile	Leadership Preference	Cultural Expectation
Romania (Iasi) N=40 | 60% 5yrs+	Stable, experienced teams	**Supportive + Relational**	Hierarchy accepted Predictability valued
Czech Rep. (Prague) N=40 | Mixed tenure	Intermediate profile	**Competence + Structure**	Moderate hierarchy Rules and consistency
Germany (Munich) N=44 | 64% 1-2yrs	Dynamic, newer teams	**Task-oriented + Clarity**	Low power distance Expertise and transparency

COMMON CULTURAL INFRASTRUCTURE — ALL 3 LOCATIONS

Shared language · Standard meeting formats · Recurring feedback routines · Common organizational values

Finding 1

Corporate culture consistently perceived across all 3 locations

Same values, same processes

Finding 2

Leadership expectations vary by tenure and team maturity

Stable vs. dynamic teams differ

Finding 3

One culture, multiple credible leadership styles possible

Local adaptation is not fragmentation

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COUNTRY PROFILE

Romania — Iasi Office

40	60%	Carrier Sourcing	Most Stable Site
Respondents · 32%	More than 5 years tenure	Specialist roles	Lowest turnover across all sites

Workforce Profile

Tenure Distribution:

Less than 1 year: 1 person

1-2 years: 9 people

3-5 years: 6 people

Over 5 years: 24 people (60%)

Gender: 22 women · 18 men

Hofstede Context:

Higher power distance acceptance

Strong preference for predictability

Relational security valued highly

Leadership Insights

Preferred Leadership Style:

Supportive + People-oriented + Relational

Why:

Stable teams develop shared routines and relational norms — trust-based coordination becomes the dominant expectation

Cultural Alignment:

Strong sense of belonging reported

High values alignment with organization

Consistent feedback routines cited

Romania Profile Summary

Mature, stable workforce — values supportive, relationship-oriented leadership and responds well to trust-based coordination.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Czech Republic — Prague Office

40	60%	Carrier Specialist	Intermediate Profile
Respondents · 32%	1-5 years tenure	Specialist roles	Mixed tenure

Workforce Profile

Tenure Distribution:

Less than 1 year: 0 people

1-2 years: 24 people (60%)

3-5 years: 16 people (40%)

Over 5 years: 0 people

Gender: 28 women · 12 men

Hofstede Context:

Moderately hierarchical

Relatively stronger individualism

Strong preference for rules and predictability

Leadership Insights

Preferred Leadership Style:

Competence-based + Structured + Consistent

Why:

Intermediate tenure creates expectations for autonomy within clearly defined structures

Leaders valued for expertise and consistency

Cultural Alignment:

Rules and process adherence strongly present

Feedback mechanisms consistently cited

Pathway toward greater autonomy expected

Czech Republic Profile Summary

Intermediate maturity — values structured, competence-driven leadership with autonomy within clear boundaries.

COUNTRYPROFILE

Germany — Munich Office

44	64%	Carrier Management	Most Dynamic Site
Respondents · 35%	1-2 years tenure	Management roles	Newest workforce across all sites

Workforce Profile

Tenure Distribution:

Less than 1 year: 0 people

1-2 years: 28 people (64%)

3-5 years: 12 people (27%)

Over 5 years: 4 people (9%)

Gender: 24 women · 20 men

Hofstede Context:

Low power distance

High individualism, direct communication

Strong emphasis on planning and standards

Leadership Insights

Preferred Leadership Style:

Task-oriented + Clarity + Decisive structure

Why:

Newer, dynamic teams prioritize clear direction and consistent decision rules over relational or paternalistic behaviours

Cultural Alignment:

Expertise and transparent reasoning expected
Paternalistic styles perceived less appropriate
Performance standards and planning central

Germany Profile Summary

Younger, dynamic workforce — values task-oriented, expert-driven leadership with clarity and structured performance expectations.

N A T I O N A L V S O R G A N I Z A T I O N A L

Two Levels of Culture — One Framework

National Culture

(Hofstede, 2001)

Characteristics:

- Deep-rooted individual values
- Changes slowly over generations
- Shapes authority and communication norms
- Cannot be easily overridden by organizations

Examples in this study:

RO: Hierarchy acceptance, predictability need

CZ: Autonomy within rules, competence trust

DE: Low power distance, direct communication

Level: INDIVIDUAL VALUES

Organizational Culture

(Schein, 2010)

Characteristics:

- Shared practices and norms within a firm
- Can be designed, reinforced, standardized
- Transmitted through routines and symbols
- Can be sustained consistently across borders

Evidence in this study:

Same meeting formats in all 3 locations

Common language and communication tools

Recurring feedback cycles reported by all

Level: ORGANIZATIONAL PRACTICES

KEY ANALYTICAL DISTINCTION

The two levels interact but remain analytically distinct. Multinationals translate corporate practices into locally acceptable routines.

Social Learning (Bandura, 1977)

Congruent behaviours reproduced when observed and rewarded

Practical Implication

Same culture + locally adapted leadership = effective multinational mgmt

PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS

Recommendations for Multinational Management

01 / Dual-Track Leadership Development

Standardized corporate curriculum for all managers AND localized coaching adapted to team maturity and national context expectations per site.

One style does not fit all national contexts

02 / Tenure-Aware Management Practices

Stable teams (Romania): invest in relational leadership. Dynamic teams (Germany): structured onboarding and clarity of direction.

Tenure is a stronger predictor than nationality alone

03 / Protect Cultural Infrastructure

Maintain shared language, standard meeting cadence, and recurring feedback routines — the glue that holds culture together.

Shared routines prevent cultural fragmentation

04 / Locally Credible Leadership

Translate corporate principles into locally credible practices without abandoning core values. Credibility must be earned locally.

Legitimacy is local, even if values are global

05 / Monitor Engagement by Location

Regular pulse surveys per site to track leadership perception and cultural alignment. Early signals allow proactive adjustments.

Perception gaps compound over time if unaddressed

06 / Onboarding as Cultural Transmission

Embed corporate values from day one while acknowledging local norms. Onboarding is the first cultural signal a new employee receives.

First impressions of culture are lasting

CORE PRINCIPLE

A strong cultural core + locally adapted leadership = engaged, high-performing multinational teams

CONCLUSIONS

Key Takeaways

01 **Strong corporate culture can coexist with locally adapted leadership**

Shared values and routines create cultural infrastructure even when leadership tone differs across sites

02 **Tenure and team stability shape leadership expectations**

Stable teams (Romania) value relational leadership; dynamic teams (Germany) prioritize clarity and structure

03 **National culture is a contextual factor, not a deterministic barrier**

Corporate practices can be translated into locally credible routines without altering deeper national values

04 **Practical implication for multinational management**

Dual approach: maintain stable cultural core while adjusting leadership to local team maturity

FUTURE RESEARCH

Extend beyond one department · Include more organizations · Longitudinal tracking of leadership perception changes