

# „Organisational culture is a mechanism that enables individuals to adapt to broader contextual and technological changes.”

## Interview with Professor Hulusi Cenk Sözen

Professor Hulusi Cenk Sözen is full time professor of Turkish Academy of Management, Ankara.

**RETP: With the advent of new technologies, what management behaviours are likely to prevail?**

**Cenk Sözen:** The increasing integration of artificial intelligence and digital communication systems may eliminate the need for lower- and middle-level management positions in organisations. Operational and functional units will directly transfer information to the strategic level through autonomous AI tools. Consequently, the proportion of employees performing routine tasks will decline. In the manufacturing sector, the rise of dark factories will lead to a significant reduction in the workforce. This trend will rapidly extend to the service sector, particularly in roles where humans act as intermediaries. Since artificial intelligence organises work around a single form of rationality, human creativity, initiative, and independent thinking will be confined to the strategic level. As a result, firms in the new economic era are unlikely to be employee-friendly. Alienation, mechanisation, and governance by a superior rational mind may intensify feelings of detachment and depression across societies.

**RETP: Beyond new technologies, are there differences between Western and Eastern Europe in this respect?**

**Cenk Sözen:** If companies in both Western and Eastern Europe develop closer relationships with local cultures and stakeholders for security reasons, significant organisational implications will emerge. First, corporate behaviour will be more intensely shaped by context-specific institutional effects. The historical background, educational systems, and the state's approach to market governance in each region will contribute to the formation of legitimate management and behavioural standards within firms.

At the same time, the tension between the homogenising pressures of industrialisation and liberalisation, and the incorporation of local, context-specific characteristics, may create internal conflicts. In this regard, the convergence and divergence theses may need to be reinterpreted in the European context.

Western European companies, long governed by liberal logics, are likely to address security concerns through arm's-length relationships with stakeholders and local communities, relying primarily on rational mechanisms. In contrast, Eastern European firms — often operating as suppliers to Western multinationals — may attempt to mitigate these concerns by building more closed, trust-based relational networks.

**RETP: Emerging factors such as security, AI, and robotics. Are there notable regional or cultural differences?**

**Cenk Sözen:** Artificial intelligence designs business processes around rational and positivist reasoning, potentially leading to a “single mind” approach to supply chain management. Organisations within such supply chains will likely exhibit a high degree of technical isomorphism due to AI-driven governance mechanisms.

The replacement of humans with robotic technologies, especially in manufacturing, may initially trigger socio-technical challenges related to human-machine interaction. In a machine-driven interorganizational environment, the existence of distinctive organisational cultures will become increasingly difficult to sustain. Loosely coupled interorganizational relations may evolve into tightly coupled, highly integrated ecosystems characterised by human-free decision-making.

While some firms already use AI for specific functions, it remains too early to make definitive statements about emerging corporate behaviour patterns.

The widespread use of AI and robotics will increase the influence of civil society organisations, business associations, and chambers of commerce. Although AI will dramatically reshape lower- and middle-management layers, the strategic level is likely to remain relatively untouched for a long time. These integrated ecosystems will require governance and regulatory oversight by NGOs and intermediary institutions to address new macro-level ethical, coordination, and strategic challenges.

At this stage, I have not observed apparent regional or cultural differences in how new supply chains are evolving.

**RETP: Today, there is much discussion about the knowledge-based economy. What can each learn from the other?**

**Cenk Sözen:** Most modern universities are products of the Enlightenment, while older ones evolved from theological institutions into centres of scientific inquiry. The AI revolution is now fundamentally transforming research and teaching practices in higher education.

Artificial intelligence can divide large classes into smaller learning groups and teach complex topics using real business cases. As a result, the role of the human actor in teaching is becoming increasingly blurred, and large cohorts can be managed by a single professor employing AI-based pedagogical tools. The time

required to complete academic degrees will shorten, allowing students to engage more actively with business life. This shift may reduce the appeal of purely theoretical studies while emphasising practical solutions to real-world problems.

Since the Scientific Revolution, a persistent gap has existed between theoretical and practical thinking in universities. The knowledge produced by an elite group of scientists in “ivory towers” may lose influence as quantum computing and AI evolve. This could narrow the gap between academia and business. The organisational cultures of universities and state institutions will increasingly interact and influence each other.

**RETP: How can economic policy support and encourage the development of a new corporate culture? What role do chambers of commerce play in this transformation?**

**Cenk Sözen:** Modern society is on the verge of facing a second major crisis due to the rise of machines within corporations. Industrialism once deprived humans of their senses and individuality after millennia spent in small rural communities. Since then, social researchers have sought ways to reduce the burden of modern corporate life.

Organisational culture can be understood as a mechanism that enables individuals to adapt to broader contextual and technological changes.

Today, society faces a more rationalised and machine-driven business environment. The emerging business ecosystem will likely be more integrated, dynamic, and technologically sophisticated.

Chambers of commerce should play a crucial role in shaping corporate cultures that support socio-technical systems, fostering a balance between technological efficiency and human well-being.

**Thank you for the interview**