

**ECONOMICS***Sociology*

**Kinga Wołodźko,**  
*University for Finance and  
Management,  
Warsaw, Poland,  
E-mail: kinga-wolodzko@wp.pl*

**Jacek Woźniak,**  
*University for Finance and  
Management,  
Warsaw, Poland,  
E-mail: jkwozniak@tlen.pl*

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**Introduction**

Recruitment with the use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) – a widely utilized Human Resource Management (HRM) tool – is, in theory, a standard practice in all kinds of organizations. We should therefore expect that it will base on the available scientific knowledge concerning image formation by employers, hence specifically on activities of a symbolic value for potential candidates. CSR research and the role that media and professional reports assign to presenting CSR-related activities suggest that well-managed organizations should make wide use of these activities, also for creating their image as employers.

The goal of this text is to establish whether this suggestion is applicable also for large Polish enterprises, as the research on CSR activities done in Poland and role of these activities in Polish enterprises leads to divergent results – some authors conclude that their role in company strategies are important (Skrzypek & Saadi, 2014; Żychlewicz, 2015), but some – show them to be superficial (Leszczyńska, 2011) and small in scale (Cyran & Dybka, 2015). The article presents the results of two empirical studies. The websites of 300 of the largest

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**THE USE BY LARGE POLISH ORGANIZATIONS OF INFORMATION ABOUT CSR ACTIVITIES IN E-RECRUITMENT**

**ABSTRACT.** One of the advantages of e-recruitment is broadening the scope of information used to improve the organization's image; information about the organization's Corporate Social Responsibilities (CSR) is a tool usually recommended for this. The article proves that e-recruitment tools and CSR information are less widely used by the largest Polish companies than the public believes, and that such information could improve employer brand. Two types of data are used: the results of an e-survey concerning the perception of company attractiveness as an employer, based on its CSR activities (a sample of 1054 young Polish professionals and students), and direct observation of 300 websites of the biggest Polish enterprises. Less than 30% of the biggest companies publish information about their CSR activities on their websites, while for about 2/3 of potential candidates, such information would attract them to submit their application to this company (*ceteris paribus*). No gender difference were found.

enterprises in the country were observed to check how many of them use modern tools during e-recruitment, and specifically – how many of them describe their CSR-related activities on their websites. The second study verified whether potential candidates in Poland are sensitive to CSR-related information, i.e. whether placing such information on their website increases the attractiveness of the enterprise as a potential employer. An e-questionnaire filled out by 1054 young people verified that information concerning CSR activities increases the attractiveness of the enterprise as a potential employer not only among people professing values on which CSR is based, but among bigger groups of respondents. Additionally, no gender differences were found, which is consistent with some previous research from a non-European context and different from German sample results. Monitoring of websites however showed that the largest Polish enterprises do not make full use of the possibilities e-recruitment offers.

The text is organized as follows. The first part describes Corporate Social Responsibility and presents a discussion of the utility of activities in this area for business, and for business in Poland in particular. Part 2 describes arguments for the belief that placing easily accessible information about CSR activities on websites is a rational strategy during e-recruitment. Part 3 presents methodology and research hypotheses, and part 4 the results. Part 5 discusses the results and presents conclusions. A first version of the article was presented at the Strategica conference in Bucharest, 2016 (citations are not marked in the following text).

## **1. Corporate Social Responsibility as a tool for creating a positive image of the company**

The concept of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) was introduced under this name in the mid-1950s, although CSR practices were relatively widely in use in the XIX century (Husted, 2014). It was defined as the responsibility an enterprise had for its impact on the environment in which it functioned, at first personified by the entrepreneur or CEO, but later taken to mean the activities of the enterprise as a whole. This company environment is generally divided into the closest surroundings (local community), own employees, the natural environment and variously marginalized groups. Any of a company's activities aimed at improving the situation of these stakeholders are considered CSR activities.

An ongoing discussion continues whether enterprises should take into consideration their impact on their environment and care for its well-being, and for what reason. A second issue concerns whether the company should be a good citizen because this is considered right (autotelic CSR), or because CSR activities are “rewarded” and improve the company's well-being, for example its financial status or market share (CSR activity is instrumental), which could be phrased as “doing good leads to being well” (Margolis). Extreme positions on this issue – that companies should care only for shareholder profit (Friedman), or that they should adhere to the legal and moral norms of all community members “over and above” what is required – are reconciled by showing that respect for such norms (and informing about the significant costs of doing so) is advantageous to shareholders, so CSR activities have instrumental value (Berrone & Gomez-Mejia, 2009). However reviews of research on the relationship between CSR investment and a company's financial effects lead to unequivocal conclusions. In roughly 50% (from about 100 papers published before 2007, concerning correlation between financial effects and CSR involvement), the relationship between “being good” and “being well” (CSR involvement and positive financial results of the company) is positive, 25% find no relationship, 20% a mixed one, but in 5% –the relationship is negative (Berrone & Gomez-Mejia, 2009). This data leads us to an alternative explanation for management investing in CSR. The reasons are not so much future financial rewards, but a surplus of resources (slack resource mechanism), or else a discretionary decision made by

managers with no direct connection to future rewards (good management mechanism) (Kang *et al.*, 2016).

Although current research shows that a good CSR reputation has promising effects for economic returns (Godfrey *et al.*, 2009; Kang *et al.*, 2016), studies usually assume that CSR investments are significant, and hence that the company will not be suspected of consciously manipulating public opinion. CSR credibility is rarely taken into account as a factor in research, as it is common knowledge that manipulation of this kind has a destructive effect on reputation (Woźniak, 2014a). The manipulation problem is even more significant as companies frequently engage in CSR activities in response to public outcry caused by company “errors”. To be precise: research has shown CSR activities to correlate with a company’s previous CRI (Corporate Social Irresponsibilities) (Flammer, 2013; Kang *et al.*, 2016).

There are no agreed on definitions of the list of possible CSR target groups, the scope of CSR activities, or the scale of a company’s financial or other involvement. However, it is commonly understood that evidenced of corporate social responsibility is to be found in “company actions that advance social good beyond that which is required by the law” (Kang *et al.*, 2016, p. 59), “those [scientists] examining CSR have focused largely on inventories of CSR activities” (Basu & Palazzo, 2008, p. 123). Usually four group of these activities are studied, as the typical reporting practice is organized into four spheres: actions towards wellness of employees; actions on behalf of business environment (directed towards clients, suppliers and other actors in the value-chain of the company); actions for wellness of society as such with significant stress for local society and charity; and actions for wellness of environment (Woźniak, 2012, p. 236). In practice organizations use CSR – understood as an umbrella concept describing several unrelated areas of the company’s potential involvement – mimetically. In other words, they consider that CSR activities help in creating a positive image because some organizations and the media think this way.

Interest in CSR is large and growing, not only in the academia, but in business as well. Consultancy reports declare that 93% of world’s largest enterprises formally report on CSR (KPMG, 2013), not only from the US, but also from the rest of the world. E.g., 69% of large companies in India reported CSR activities, and in 2009 15% of the CSR reports in the world were published in China (Marquis & Qian, 2014).

In Europe, the average level of involvement of business in CSR is lower than in the US, an explanation for which is sought in differences in how the role of the state is defined (Matten & Moon, 2008). An even lower involvement level should be expected in Poland, as social involvement of Poles is lower than the European average (Adamiak, 2014). However it is now commonly acknowledged in Poland that CSR-related activity is necessary for improving company image (Skrzypek & Saadi, 2014). The KPMG report (2014) showed that 96% of respondents from large and medium enterprises accept that business has responsibilities with respect to social and environmental issues. Nevertheless only 46% of companies from the study actively take part in CSR activities (KPMG, 2014). This research, as most consultancy reports on the Polish market, are based on small (and unrepresentative) samples (e.g. KPMG, 2014 – 101 respondents). However this attitude is consistent with some scientific research based on small samples (Skrzypek & Saadi, 2014; Żychlewicz, 2015).

Larger samples yield different data – in 2011 only 31% companies (from a representative sample of 850 companies with over 4 employees) were acquainted with the concept of CSR, but only 2/3 of them declared involvement in CSR activities (PARP, 2011). Since 2009 Poland has a CSR Forum, much publicised by the media, which collects reports from enterprises concerning examples of good practices for CSR. The scale of activities has increased from about 100 in 2009, through over 400 in the years 2013-2015, up to over 800 in 2016 (PulsHR 2016), which in itself illustrates the limited role of this phenomenon.

There are studies that show a different picture – e.g. a representative sample of small and medium enterprises from the Podkarpackie region in Poland showed very low interest in CSR activities (Cyran & Dybka, 2015). Research has also shown that entrepreneurial involvement in CSR is superficial in Poland (Leszczyńska, 2011): employees know nothing of the activities communicated in CSR reports of their companies. These are designed purely for PR purposes and are not very carefully prepared. In a recent study on credibility of CSR reports in Europe, Polish samples gain the second lowest score from 11 studied countries (Lock & Seele, 2016). Additionally, some data suggests that this attitude of management boards – pretence without investment – seems rational, as Polish clients are not interested in the CSR activities of companies, not only in their role of clients (purchasers of goods), but also in their role of job candidates (Bołtromiuk, 2009).

We may expect Polish enterprises to gradually increase CSR involvement (Skrzypek & Saadi, 2014; Żychlewicz, 2015), especially as – and this should be emphasized – Polish companies (particularly the largest ones) currently have at their disposal a surplus of financial resources, which are not reinvested due to the slowing down of the economy. However, there is a need to verify the factual scale of CSR activities in Polish companies; and if it is small, are these companies making a mistake?

## 2. Internet recruitment

E-recruitment has been shown to be the most dynamically developing group of recruitment tools. Access to the Internet has ceased to be a barrier both for business, as for job candidates, so technology has ceased to be a barrier in using e-tools (Woźniak, 2014b, 2014c). The advantages of using e-recruitment – from presenting an image of a modern business, lowering the costs and time needed to contact the right candidates, gaining access to a wide range of potential candidates and a global pool of talents, up to tailoring information about the company to profiles of desired candidates – have made this kind of recruitment a management standard. We should therefore expect it to be common practice for large organizations – which we assume should be espousing a modern approach to HRM – to harness the whole potential of e-recruitment tools.

In 2008 scientists were already stressing that Poland is not a leader in the use of ITC technologies (Runiewicz-Wardyn, 2008), and existing data confirms that this has not changed (Woźniak, 2016). Only 2/3 of Polish enterprises have their own website, and only 16% businesses employing over 10 persons declared in 2015 that they use their website for recruitment purposes, as reports the Central Statistical Office (CSO). This situation is different for the largest businesses, employing over 1000 people. CSO reports that nearly all of them (91%) have their own website, with 63% declaring they publish information about job vacancies on it (Woźniak, 2016).

The justification for focusing on the existence of websites and their use for recruitment purposes is that the website is the basic carrier of information significant for the e-recruitment process. The main advantage of one's own website for e-recruitment is that it gives the freedom to choose and build the message to be presented, with the use of a rich palette of selectively addressed means of communication:

- differing in form – from gamification, games, films or lower-density contents;
- specialized in content – addressed to different audiences;
- adjusting content credibility to the desired candidate with the use of different methods – from personal testimonies given by “those similar to me” (e.g. in blogs), through group statements (data concerning career paths of groups which are natural reference groups for the desired candidate), up to reports by experts.

We can therefore expect that the opinion – expressed basing on research on European enterprises in 2009 (Strohmeier & Kalbs, 2009) – that new EC countries are leaders in the application of these technologies and modern managerial knowledge in Human Resource Management, signifies that the largest businesses in Poland will be making full use of both ICT in HRM practice, as well as other managerial tools, for achieving economic and image-related benefits in e-recruitment processes.

Marketing research suggests that value for (potential) employees is created through both the functional (instrumental) as the symbolic features of the company brand, and recruitment literature stresses that both the functional and symbolic features of the job are of high importance for potential candidates (Lievens, 2007). However, a company which is building its e-recruitment communication strategy is limited in the way it can present its functional features (salary levels; such organizational components as place, times, flexibility, length of working hours, how the workplace is equipped, material benefits, etc.; or potential for growth and promotion), because most of them are determined by the market or rigidified by company culture. Symbolic features – the prestige of working for a given employer, or the image that a certain job carries for different social groups, or how consistent the job is with the image one has of oneself – are to a greater extent at the discretion of management. Accordingly, we should expect that businesses will use a wide range of tools for developing a positive image in the area of its symbolic features, as the costs of doing so are relatively low.

We assume therefore that large companies in Poland – whose size is indirect testimony of their being well managed and of having the necessary resources to successfully implement sound management practices – will also be using CSR for recruitment purposes. This in turn will be reflected in their website content. If this is not the case, it is worth checking whether this decision is rational, i.e. whether potential candidates are insensitive to information about the company's CSR activities. In other words, maybe the company has nothing to gain – at least in the area of recruitment – from being a good citizen.

### 3. Research assumptions and hypotheses

The above analyses have shown that according to scientific data, we should expect information concerning CSR activities to appear systematically on the websites of the largest (assumed to be well-managed) Polish enterprises. We may also suppose that during e-recruitment, modern image-building tools – such as games, personalized contact with candidates, or increasing the credibility of information presented through the use of marketing knowledge – will also be a universal phenomenon. On the other hand, we may fear that the Polish job market does not expect CSR-related information, or that the involvement of Polish companies in CSR is so superficial that information concerning CSR activities will not be used in e-recruitment. The second line of argumentation led us to formulate hypotheses one and two (below), which were verified through direct observation of the internet sites of 300 of the largest Polish enterprises in 2013, distinguished on the basis of the “500” list published in no. 2907 of the weekly “Polityka” (one of the most respected Polish weekly journals).

H.1. The largest enterprises in Poland relatively infrequently use technically advanced e-recruitment tools and communication techniques.

H.2. The enterprises in the study relatively infrequently place information about CSR activities, which would be easy to find by potential job candidates, on their websites.

Both these hypotheses base on the assumption that Polish enterprises do not make use of the potential which knowledge from the field of HRM proffers for the purposes of recruitment. They are therefore consistent with arguments presented above, describing the low involvement of Polish enterprises in CSR-related activities, and how the latter are treated above all as a PR tool, not as a part of corporate strategy. Such an approach may on the other

hand be entirely rational, as the literature describes arguments supporting the thesis that Poles do not consider information related to CSR activities as important. A separate study – concerning the effect of a company’s CSR-related activities on its attractiveness as an employer – was conducted to determine whether the decision of large enterprises to place CSR related information on websites is rational. An e-questionnaire was used to gather the opinions of potential job candidates to verify the hypothesis that potential employers’ attractiveness increases under the influence of information concerning their involvement in CSR-related activities.

H.3. Information about an enterprise, which the young person is taking into consideration as one from several comparable employers, concerning its involvement in CSR-related activities, increases the attractiveness of this employer.

H4. In the above conditions, giving specific examples of activities in which the enterprise is involved more frequently increases the company’s attractiveness as an employer than general declarations, or information that it funds the activities of other organizations with an unspecified amount of money.

H.5. This increase in attractiveness – measured by the percentage of people giving a first choice to a given job offer – is higher among women than among men.

Hypothesis 3 bases on the assumption that young Poles are sensitive to CSR activities, both those which can be of direct benefit for them (employee-related activities), as those which bring long-term and indirect benefit. Hypothesis 4 is consistent with general marketing knowledge, which show personal involvement to be valued higher than the use of financial resources for implementing values (cf. Woźniak, 2014).

Hypothesis 5 refers to research which show that the effectiveness of CSR and other similar activities differs when gender is taken into account. It was recently shown on a German sample that perceived fit with organizational culture increases the attractiveness of the organization as an employer only for women (not for men) (Pfieffelmann *et al.*, 2010). No such relationship was observed on a sample of Iranian candidates (Kahre *et al.*, 2014).

The survey was conducted in the Spring of 2014, by e-questionnaire on a special portal for e-research with large young audiences, where participation in surveys is “paid for” by gamification systems. The respondents were 1054 young Poles, mostly women (65% of the sample), employed on different types of contracts (70%). The respondents were relatively young: 57% aged 21-30, 14% aged 31-40; 16% over 41 years old, but only 24% were on full parental support (declare “no actual need to work for money because of parental support”). More than 40% of the sample had already completed their tertiary education, the rest were still studying. The sample is not representative for any important strata of Polish society, but it gives some information about the opinion of young Polish job applicants, or future professionals.

55% of the respondents know nothing about CSR (only 11% declare the knowledge, and an additional 27% declare that “they have some knowledge, but do not know exactly what CSR is about”). It should be stressed that in the case of our study, the low level of knowledge about CSR is an advantage.

When analysing website content for the purposes of testing hypothesis 1, “technical” sophistication was understood in two ways: (1) the use of tools specific for advanced forms of internet recruitment, and (2) the use of non-CSR related communication tools, i.e. typical marketing tools used to increase the impact of advertising. This means that two groups of criteria were selected for analysing image-related sophistication in e-recruitment: (1) The use of classic means of increasing marketing effectiveness, such as testimonials, personalization of contact and English language version of the website (Woźniak, 2014c), and (2) for hypothesis 2 – references to CSR-related activities.

The most significant advanced e-recruitment tool is a web-based application form (for collecting curriculum vitae), currently the only effective means for automatically preselecting applications; however we also expected the occurrence of games and gamification-based methods (Woźniak, 2015a, b).

#### 4. Research results

We should note that no new tools such as games or gamification were observed. Of 300 websites, 49,3% (148) allowed job applications to be made via an online form, 44,3% (133) asked candidates to send their documents using email. Some of the websites offered both possibilities, while others – which were not conducting recruitment for any positions at the time – did not offer any possibility of sending in CVs. We should therefore consider the technical sophistication of e-recruitment in large Polish enterprises to be low, as stated in the first part of hypothesis 1.

The websites of the enterprises studied did not widely feature any photos, descriptions or contact details to employees, which would be a natural way of developing *testimonials* (the testimony of people similar to us). However, photos could be found on 53 websites, descriptions on 45 and contacts on 47 (respectively on 17,7%, 15,0% and 15,7% of the websites studied). The chairperson/president's photo and name appeared more frequently – 84 websites included the president's photo and 112 – his/her name (28% and 37,3% of websites studied).

Personalization of contact was sought even less frequently – the chairperson's email address was featured on only 20 websites (6,7%). Brief profiles of the recruiting person appeared 17 times (5,7% websites), while their email address was more frequent, often among the contact details of people from various company departments.

At the same time, it was common for distance to be “shortened” – in approximately 1/3 of the websites, position announcements and texts used the popular “you” (similar to the French “tu”), and only 10% websites used the polite “sir/madam”(“vous” form). The dominant form used was the impersonal third person plural, e.g. “Interested persons are asked to send in their cv by email”.

Astonishingly, almost half of the job announcements were multilingual – visible after clicking the language tab and switching the whole website to other languages. Different language options for the whole website, or in the job announcement browser, were available for 134 websites (44,7%).

To summarise this short review of chosen indices of the image and technical sophistication of websites, we may acknowledge two parts of hypothesis 1 as confirmed, although not to the same extent for the different marketing tools, i.e. enterprises are selective in their use. It is difficult to ascertain, however, whether these classic tools are used for the purposes of recruitment, or for image-building, as tools utilized purely for recruitment are observed far less frequently.

CSR-related data is even more disquieting. The various CSR areas were measured with a different number of indices, varying as to significance level and reliability (from general declarations, through examples of typical activities, up to non-standard solutions). Two questions were used as a measure for ethical business practices; 6 for environment; 4 for local communities; 3 for marginalized groups; and 6 typical and 16 unusual questions measured pro-employee activities. We were surprised to find that even typical activities for the benefit of employees are relatively rarely presented (under half of the websites declared they promote career development, offer trainings or fund education; less than ¼ declared that the company offers additional benefits or medical packages; and under 5% offered non-standard solutions – such as flexible working hours, canteens or support for parents of small

children or sportspeople). Pro-environment activities were mentioned relatively frequently, 1/3 of the businesses feature a separate tab on their websites for this issue. However, specific information about “small” pro-environmental activities (e.g. saving office paper or waste segregation) or support for chosen environmental projects were to be found on less than 1/5 of websites. The indices were built as a mean of percentages of questions from the same area, i.e. giving equal value to information about typical or less-typical activities.

The general level of involvement in CSR-related activities, however, is low – which should be set against expectations related to CSR involvement expressed by potential employees. Two comparisons were conducted, measuring (1) the percentage of respondents for whom information about involvement in CSR would increase the desire to give a given enterprise first place from among a list they are applying to, and then (2) the percentage of those who declare they participate in activities implementing these values. We should emphasize that respondents answered the question: “Will the following information, which you find on the company’s website, increase your desire to apply as a first choice for a job in it”, with the assumption that they have several equally good job positions to choose between. The high risk of unemployment for young people made such a presumption necessary; the study could yield answers concerning the symbolic component of job offers (the functional value of the competing offers were assumed as similar).

Table 1. Information concerning CSR-related activities and expectations of potential candidates

Average percentage of answers in the group	CSR area				
	Environment	Local communities	Ethics	Charities	Employees
Percentage of websites with information about the given CSR area from among a total of 300 websites	29,8	21,4	24,3	18,4	16,4
Percentage of respondents declaring increase in the company’s attractiveness as an effect of the given CSR area, from among a total of 1054 respondents	48,0	65,5	68,1	61,3	67,21
Percentage of respondents who declare a given value to be of personal significance from among a total of 1054 respondents	51,6	39,4	63,6	45,0	70,7

*Source:* questionnaire study and observation of websites (Wołodźko, 2014), see (Woźniak, 2017).

The above results allow us to state that enterprises do not use information about their CSR-related activities to increase their attractiveness as employers, although it would have increased in the eyes of almost two thirds of a 1054 sample of young internet users who participated in the study.

Table 2. Differences between women (n=689) and men respondents (n=367) in the attractiveness of a job offer depending on chosen information, and the percentage of respondents who declare increased attractiveness in the case of each information (n=1054; answers „increase” and „rather increase” together)

Information	Chi square	df	p	Percentage of all respondents declaring the increase of company's attractiveness
The company is active in pro-environment issues	4,626	2	,099	44,8
The company informs about its activities related to cleaning the environment, waste, etc.	3,729	2	,155	51,4
The company financially supports environmental NGOs	18,380	2	,000	47,8
The company supports local society – schools, clubs	7,502	2	,023	69,0
The company financially supports local events – concerts	3,617	2	,164	61,6
The company supports its local environment by creating better living conditions – roads, sport fields	6,481	2	,039	69,0
The company supports education by giving grants to children	4,895	2	,087	65,5
The company stresses that it adheres to legally sound practices	10,508	2	,005	65,1
The company stresses that it supports good relationships among employees	13,535	2	,001	71,1
The company admits that its wages are lower but the atmosphere and training are better	1,358	2	,507	47,1
The size of salaries is specified in the ad	7,005	2	,030	73,7
The procedure for calculating incentives is announced in the ad	14,578	2	,001	66,7
The company supports its employees with computer, mobile and car	5,998	2	,050	69,5
The company offers individualized schedules and/or the possibility of working from home	6,664	2	,036	77

*Source:* data from (Wołodźko, 2014).

This data shows that young Polish candidates are sensitive to image-related information, and that information which shows the potential job to be a good place of work increases the employer's attractiveness. This suggests that the level of trust in information found over the Internet is high, and that enterprises make a significant mistake in not using their websites to provide a greater scope of image-related information. At the same time, these results show that specific activities increase the attractiveness of the workplace more than general declarations or than funding the activities of other organizations. Although this hypothesis (H.4) was only tested on the example of financial support for environmental organizations, it seems consistent with more general marketing knowledge, and we may be tempted to make such a generalization.

It should also be noted that the difference between women and men in the Polish sample was smaller than expected in hypothesis 5 – although statistically significant in some cases, in others no differences were observed. An analysis of types of information shows that

the differences between women and men becomes statistically significant in the case of specific activities for the benefit of the environment and local communities. This means that hypothesis 5 is confirmed only in the case of specific pro-environment activities, and should be rejected in the case of: abiding by law and supporting employees or local communities, as well as when declarations of involvement are of a general nature. It should be noted that the differences in how gender affects the way in which information is valued do not depend on the respondents' involvement in a specific value. Separate questions about respondents particulars concerning declared values and activities undertaken to implement these values did not show statistically significant differences between genders in this sample (this data is not presented in the article) – respondents of both gender have similar level of engagement in each of 3 values – ecology, local society or charity – measured by general declaration of interest and declaring that a specific action for these fields were made by respondent in last month.

Attention should also be drawn to the respondents' sensitivity to all information associated with remuneration systems. Although information that in return for slightly lower wages the company offers training, increased attractiveness only in half of the subjects, even such insignificant information as how bonuses are calculated increased the attractiveness of the job offer. The study therefore highlights the traditional problem of confidentiality with respect to wages – candidates would like to know (at least approximately) how much they will be earning before applying for the position. Sensitivity to additional bonuses (gadgets) also turned out to be high, despite the depreciating way in which the question was phrased.

## 5. Discussion of results and conclusion

The above data confirms that the use of modern tools for increasing attractiveness is relatively low in large Polish enterprises. The cause seems to lie in the lack of difficulty in finding desirable candidates, rather than in a lack of marketing knowledge. A case for this is made by the fact that some of the marketing solutions on websites are relatively sophisticated – e.g. distance shortening, or availability of different language versions on almost half the websites. Apart from these single examples, however, website sophistication – both in the technological, as the marketing sense – is low.

Limited information concerning CSR activities, when set against the increased attractiveness for potential candidates of employers who do present such information, suggests that knowledge concerning employer branding is also insufficiently applied. It is especially surprising that information about employee benefits is so minimal, as both common knowledge and personnel marketing theory consider these to be highly effective as a recruitment tool. The low level of this index is partly an effect of the adopted research tactic, which assigned low value to general information concerning whether a company cares for its employees, or teaches, develops and promotes them. It was assumed that such information will not differentiate enterprises, as it is commonly found on websites and so is unconvincing for potential candidates. However, even if the index were to be built on the most typical activities in this area, it would be lower than 50%.

The fact that there is a high percentage of respondents who declare that values associated with the various CSR areas are important, suggests that not informing about CSR activities during e-recruitment is a managerial error, understandable only in the light of the fact that these enterprises function on an easy job market. There is after all no reason to suspect HR departments of the large enterprises to be incompetent, or lacking the technical means to place this information on their websites.

At the same time there is a clearly visible group of about 20% of enterprises which take advantage of the possibilities of informing about CSR activities for building a positive

image. These companies are active in all CSR areas and generally describe specific activities, rather than just making general declarations. This suggests they are well aware of how image building tools should be applied, and this bodes well for the further development of strategies of this kind.

Several practical consequences of the research should be emphasized. The analysis above has shown that using several types of image-related information may be beneficial as an e-recruitment tool; at the very least, this favours choosing the given job offer if other functional factors remain similar. Our study also confirmed that even CSR activities that are not associated with employee relationships may be of benefit for the company's image as an employer. In contrast to typical CSR research, the study model did not assume that large investments need to be made in this area. The results unequivocally suggest that enterprises should inform about their activities in this area, even if they do not invest significant resources in CSR.

A second, practically significant result of the study confirms the fact – known from general research into consumer marketing – that information about a specific project is of greater benefit for image than general declarations. The differences in our study were not large (though statistically significant), but as the costs of presenting information in a different way are negligible, practitioners should be informed of this fact.

A large percentage of people who declare that they are involved in activities connected with CSR values suggest that young people are especially susceptible to image-related information. However, differences between the opinions of men and women turned out to be smaller than the results of other research would suggest, despite the fact that there were no statistically significant differences between the genders concerning the value appropriated to various areas of CSR.

It should be emphasized that – though observation of websites unequivocally confirms that enterprises make limited use of the possibilities that management knowledge offers concerning employer image – opinions concerning the irrationality of this behaviour are based on a survey of a large but accidental sample of young people. We may expect their sensitivity to CSR-related information to be high in comparison to that of candidates the large enterprises seek, e.g. mid-aged professionals. In other words it is the inappropriateness of the group whose expectations were gathered which is the source of the observed discrepancy between facts and expectations – and this is the first limitation of the conclusions we have drawn from this study.

A second significant limitation of the study is that different image-related information is treated as equivalent. A more conclusive analysis, however, should be based on information that distinguishes a given employer (given website) from the websites of other companies it competes with for employees, and on an assessment of the credibility of this information. Enterprises compete in separate niches of the job market. Adjusting their image-building tools requires on the one hand an analysis of the expectations of potential employees in these niches, and on the other, a relative analysis – of information from other companies and the credibility of this information.

The goal of the study was to verify hypotheses concerning the effect of information concerning CSR-related activities on the attractiveness of an enterprise in its role as employer. However, the study's greatest limitation for generalizing results is the manner in which it was conducted: the situation in which respondents made their decision was comfortable, they made their choices between several equally attractive job offers. Hence the results may be related only to the symbolic aspects of the job offers, assuming the functional features are on an acceptable level. The study therefore does not provide us with data on how to increase the attractiveness of a bad work offer – i.e., where the salary is unsatisfactory, the localization bad or the market segment uninteresting. Translating these into practical advice: if a company is

planning to create an employer branding strategy, it should not base this on CSR activities alone, even those which are employee oriented, as functional qualities matter and information about these features are important for most young candidates. Informing about work-related conditions, procedures and environment increases their desire to apply, and from the perspective of the organization – decreases the risk of employing candidates for whom work in the organization will not be satisfactory. A realistic image of working conditions – even concerning ostensibly insignificant details – increases the attractiveness of a job offer for a greater percentage of candidates, than information about CSR-related activities. So we may accept that even if CSR-related activities become common in Polish organizations, informing about them should be treated as a supplementary activity, despite the fact that young people in Poland are sensitive to this kind of information. At the same time it should be emphasized that informing about specific CSR activities (especially those devoted to helping local communities or charity-oriented) provoke interest, even when their financial scale is not large. Hence it is worth enriching information on company websites about working conditions and organizational procedures with reports of CSR activities

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