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Post-graduate Managerial Education in the Field of CSR

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Abstract

Purpose: Article shall review the competency development opportunities and managerial education in CSR-related activities. Based on the review of available postgraduate studies in the field of CSR in Poland, the aim of this paper is to identify the key success factors and challenges in this area. Moreover, the specific aim of the paper is to assess the curricula of selected postgraduate courses in the context of implementation of social responsibility core subjects in accordance with ISO 26,000.

Design/methodology/approach: The research objectives were achieved by: reviewing and analysing articles and the Internet sources. Moreover, in the research process, there were applied brief telephone interviews with selected HR staff of post-graduate studies and a structured telephone interview with an expert in the field of CSR.

Findings: The results indicate that postgraduate courses in the field of CSR are offered in many academic centres in Poland but the most successful programmes are found in Warsaw. The deeper analysis shows that the offer of numerous postgraduate studies in the field of CSR is rather lifeless. In many cases, postgraduate courses were not successfully launched.

Research and practical limitations/implications: The list of the examples of managerial education in the field of CSR provides

a very general review, which does not claim to be complete. Nonetheless, it increases the awareness for selected available managerial education in Poland and helps to identify main problems of not launching CSR postgraduate courses.

Originality/value: The paper provides the key success factors for launching CSR postgraduate studies. It also provides insights to decisive reasons why many postgraduate programmes in Poland were not launched.

Paper type: general review.

Keywords: corporate social responsibility, CSR, managers, managerial competencies, managerial education, postgraduate studies.

1. Introduction

The activities in the field of corporate social responsibility (CSR) are more and more common and they are slowly becoming a standard for many companies, contributing to the improvement of the functioning of contemporary organisations. For example, CSR performance has an impact on the market value of firms and a positive impact on economic performance (Arouri and Pijourlet, 2017, p. 263).

Corporate social responsibility often begins with its owners and management staff. They have a major impact on the procedures and standards implemented and applied in a company. They have a key influence on decisions, which largely shape the image of a company and its relationship with the environment. Managerial decisions often reflect the rules and ethical values (Wilewska, 2010, p. 185). Therefore, organisations must have properly trained staff who should be actively involved in dealing with sustainability in their work environment and capable to implement the requirements of standards, which are the foundation of CSR-related activities.

The aim of this paper is to review the competency development opportunities and managerial education in the field of CSR in Poland, and to identify the key success factors and challenges in this area. The authors make an attempt to review the available postgraduate studies in the field of CSR and rate the curricula of selected postgraduate courses in the context of implementation of social responsibility core subjects in accordance with the ISO 26,000 standards.

The data collection process consisted of two steps. First of all, desk research and the review of the Internet sources were applied. Secondly, there were conducted brief telephone interviews with selected HR staff

responsible for CSR postgraduate studies in order to determine the number of postgraduate studies in the field of CSR in Poland launched in 2014–2017. Moreover, there was conducted a structured telephone interview with Prof. Bolesław Rok, who is a recognized expert in the field of CSR.

The structure of the paper reflects its objectives. First of all, the authors present the role and importance of managerial staff for CSR related activities. The next section is dedicated to the review of selected postgraduate courses in the field of CSR in Poland. Finally, the case of Koźmiński University is used to analyse the key success factors for CSR postgraduate studies.

2. Managerial competencies in the field of CSR

Corporate social responsibility is gaining significance in the business world, therefore corporations increasingly recognise the importance of ethical and responsible business practices in their activities. The empirical studies indicate that “(...) CSR has become an important consideration from the perspective of various entities such as shareholders, managers and consumers” (Bian, Li and Guo, 2016, p. 83). Recently, leadership and corporate social responsibility are often studied in the context of Positive Organisational Scholarship and listed among the key areas of positive organisational potential (Stankiewicz (Ed.), 2013; Karaszewski and Lis, 2013; Skrzypczyńska, 2013; Karaszewski and Lis, 2014a). While analysing the relationships between these two variables, leadership is considered as an antecedent of corporate social responsibility (Karaszewski and Lis, 2014b; Karaszewski and Lis, 2014c). Therefore, as observed by Wesselink, Blok, van Leur, Lans and Dentoni (2015) “[s]ince solving corporate social responsibility issues is not a routine job, every challenge in corporate social responsibility requires its own approach; and management competencies are crucial for designing appropriate approaches towards the realization of sustainable solutions” (Wesselink et al., 2015, p. 497).

The interest of business communities in implementing CSR makes it necessary to prepare employees who, equipped with appropriate competencies, will be able to take responsibility for coordinating social activities in enterprises (Rudnicka-Reichel and Reichel, 2015, pp. 104–105). It is extremely important to have the support of the

boards for the efforts to implement a CSR policy in an organisation. It is also crucial that all who work in an organisation recognise these policies to be relevant, key and beneficial for an organisation. Moreover, it is advisable to establish a team working on the timely implementation of specific measures. The members of such a team must be prepared for performing these tasks and equipped with relevant knowledge and skills that will enable them to operate efficiently. In addition to knowledge they should have certain competencies that enable them to interact with other people, and manage this process efficiently. The preparation of such people is connected with specific activities, it should be preceded by a diagnosis identifying competency gaps and fixing how to fill them. It is possible to look for such people in the labour market and employ them for a specific project. This way, however, it also requires considerable investment of time to get to know by such a person the specifics of an industry and a business. CSR activities are based on specific guidelines contained in the ISO 26,000. Hence to effectively implement them knowledge of these principles is essential. Because the standard is rather a collection of tips, adapting them to the functioning of a specific organisation will require cooperation of many people from different areas, so that the project coordinator will be able to adjust the action to guidelines and standards and the capabilities of the organisation (Boguszynska, 2014).

Who are CSR managers? What are knowledge, skills and competencies they should have? Andrejczuk stresses that CSR managers are faced with numerous challenges in a company and they should be equipped with thorough knowledge, understanding and ethical competencies. “Above all, they should combine the role of ethical leaders as well as mentors. They should have a deep understanding of the corporate strategy while pursuing ethical goals. Above all, however, they should rely on ethics and sense of decency” (Andrejczuk, 2016, pp. 11–12). Managers’ individual values can decisively impact organisational commitment to CSR. “(...) Managers may exercise influence and agency on CSR policy and decision-making” (Chaudhri, 2016, p. 427). Managers should be inherently ethical in their CSR activities (Lee, 2017, p. 364). CSR managers should be good coordinators and determined to be able to manage the project and be guided by values, such as: ethics, innovation, independence, cooperation. Karaszewski and Lis emphasize that “(...) the leaders of organisations that follow the CSR doctrine must prove the coherence of strategy and actions undertaken

in their everyday work” (Karaszewski and Lis, 2014c, p. 67). Moreover, CSR leaders should have good skills in communication which starts a dialogue with internal and external stakeholders, convinces for responsible business, informs and encourages action. There is a need for clear and open internal communication. Two-way communication is necessary to keep employees informed of CSR programmes, including their rationale, specifics, resource allocation, challenges, and successes (Chaudhri, 2016, p. 421).

Managers should be particularly talented. Talented executives are defined as those who are successful in utilizing corporate resources more efficiently. Talented managers are more capable of distinguishing between judicious and unwise policies. As a result, talented managers are more likely to adopt corporate policies that enhance firm performance. Managers with strong managerial talent perceive CSR as beneficial to the firm and therefore they promote CSR activities (Chatjuthamard, Jiraporn, Tong and Singh, 2016, p. 265–266). “(...) Managerial talent is indeed a significant factor in determining CSR investments. How much firms invest in CSR critically depend on the managerial talent of their executives” (Chatjuthamard et al., 2016, p. 267).

The literature provides several lists of relevant individual competencies for CSR leaders (Osagie, Wesselink, Runhaar and Mulder, 2018, pp. 892–893). Table 1 shows seven competencies required for professionals, CSR managers who should be actively involved in dealing with sustainability in their work environment and examples of tasks of CSR managers in their everyday practice. Among the key CSR competencies should be mentioned: systems thinking, diversity and interdisciplinary, foresighted thinking, normative, action, interpersonal and strategic management competencies.

Leaders can greatly influence employee work behaviours and therefore they play a crucial role in the implementation of corporate social responsibility in the company’s core business processes (Osagie et al., 2018, p. 891). A CSR manager through his/her ethical attitude is a creator of the organisational culture and moral values among their employees. He/she is a proponent of ethics in business and protects rules and standards of CSR in the organisation. In addition, CSR leaders have to deal with many uncertainties and must work widely with external stakeholders due to the wicked nature of sustainable development challenges (Dentoni, Hopes, and Ross, 2012). Therefore, to shape ethical and responsible behaviours among managerial teams, there should

Table 1. CSR manager competencies

No.	Competencies	Description with examples of tasks performed by CSR managers
1.	Systems thinking	The ability to identify and analyse all relevant (sub) systems across different domains (people, planet, profit) and disciplines, including their boundaries. Systems thinking competency is the ability to understand and reflect upon the interdependency of these (sub)systems including cascading effects, inertia, and feedback loops and accompanying cultures
2.	Embracing diversity and interdisciplinary	The ability to involve all stakeholders and to maximize the exchange of ideas and learning across different groups (inside and outside the organisation) and different disciplines
3.	Foresighted thinking (or future orientation)	The ability to creatively envision possible futures, the capability for long range thinking. In an organisational context, it provides input to create future ready organisations by balancing multiple challenges and choices
4.	Normative (or values thinking) competency	The ability to map, apply and reconcile sustainability values, principles and targets
5.	Action-oriented (or strategic thinking) competency	The ability to actively involve oneself in responsible actions for the improvement of the sustainability of social-ecological systems
6.	Interpersonal (or collaboration) competency	The ability to motivate, enable, and facilitate collaborative and participatory sustainability activities and research
7.	Strategic management competency	The ability to collectively design projects, implement interventions, transitions, and strategies for sustainable development practices involving skills in planning (e.g. design and implement interventions), organising (arranging tasks, people and other resources), leadership (inspiring and motivating people) and controlling (e.g. evaluating policies, programmes and action plans)

Source: own work based on Dian (2009, pp. 59–61), Hines and Gold (2013, pp. 37–39), Lans et al. (2014, pp. 40–41), Osagie et al. (2016, pp. 240–243), Wesselink et al. (2015, pp. 499–500) and Wiek et al. (2015, pp. 242–247).

be highlighted the role of education and educational programmes in the field of CSR for entrepreneurs and popularization of the CSR idea in business (Wilewska, 2010, pp. 193–194).

3. Review of postgraduate studies in the field of CSR in Poland

Polish universities introduce the CSR content into syllabi at various levels and in diverse disciplines, but they also implement the principles of sustainable development in their own activities (Popowska, 2016, p. 99). Managers, who need more thorough knowledge, skills and competencies necessary to implement the ideas of corporate social responsibility in their organisations, look for postgraduate studies in CSR. Such programmes are offered by numerous higher education institutions and usually they last for two semesters. Table 2 presents the catalogue of postgraduate studies in CSR offered by the tertiary education sector in Poland.

Table 2. Review of the selected postgraduate studies in the field of CSR

No.	Location	Education Institution	Course Title	Duration	
				Semesters [N]	Teaching hours [N]
1.	Cracow	Cracow School of Business	The Strategy of Corporate Social Responsibility in Management	2	200
2.	Cracow	Tischner European University	Corporate Social Responsibility	2	215
3.	Gdańsk	Gdańsk University of Technology (Faculty of Management and Economics)	Corporate Social Responsibility	2	180
4.	Katowice	University of Economics	Corporate Social Responsibility	2	212
5.	Poznań	Collegium Da Vinci	CSR Management	2	160
6.	Sosnowiec	Humanitas University	The Appearance and Social Responsibility in the Modern Enterprise Management	2	184

Table 2.
continued

No.	Location	Education Institution	Course Title	Duration	
				Semesters [N]	Teaching hours [N]
7.	Warsaw	University of Ecology and Management	CSR – Socially Responsible Business	2	196
8.	Warsaw	Collegium Civitas	CSR Manager	2	160
9.	Warsaw	Koźminski University	CSR. Responsible Business Strategy	2	180
10.	Warsaw	Warsaw University of Life Sciences – SGGW (Faculty of Economic Sciences)	Corporate Social Responsibility Strategy	2	200
11.	Wrocław	University of Economics	Social Responsibility of Enterprise	2	180

Source: own work based on the review of the Internet sources.

The presented offer of postgraduate studies in CSR apart from some similarities contains also significant differences. The shortest course organized by the Collegium Civitas takes 160 teaching hours, and the longest one offered by Tischner European University covers 215 contact hours. All of the courses last for 2 semesters and they present CSR as a new management paradigm, which is a prerequisite for contemporary companies. The differences between the courses are manifested in specific programme activities and focusing on selected aspects related to the idea of corporate social responsibility. For instance, the course in the Cracow School of Business is focused on ethical issues, cooperation with the media and promotion of CSR. In case of the course in the University of Economics in Katowice, the most important aspect is embedding the idea of CSR in the context of strategic management. In turn, the Wrocław University of Economics puts the emphasis on CSR in the following areas: nature, the market, the local community and the environment. Developing future CSR managers is the main concern of the programme offered by Collegium Da Vinci in Poznań. The University of Ecology and Management in Warsaw is focused on the implementation of CSR in enterprises, environmental issues, building relationships with business partners and environmental management. Collegium Civitas in its programme highlights the importance of CSR in management of contemporary

organisations. Koźmiński University is focused on a practical dimension and cooperation with Deloitte Sustainability Consulting Central Europe for business ethics and social innovation. In the table below there are presented seven core subjects of CSR and selected postgraduate courses are assessed whether they contain those subjects or not.

The analysis shows that only some of postgraduate courses under the study contain in their curricula all the seven core subjects of social responsibility in accordance with the standard ISO 26,000. Four among ten of the programmes include all the core subjects. These are the courses in Collegium Civitas and Koźmiński University in Warsaw, Humanitas University in Sosnowiec and the postgraduate programme “Social Responsibility Enterprise” at the University of Economics in Wrocław. In turn, the postgraduate course at the Cracow School of Business contains only two core subjects of social responsibility in its curriculum i.e. Organisational Governance and Fair Operating Practices. Organisational Governance is the only core subject included in the curricula of all CSR courses under the study. Labour Practices and The Environment are the parts of almost all postgraduate courses in CSR, except for the Cracow School of Business. Similarly, Fair Operating Practices are included in the curricula of all courses with the exception of the University of Ecology and Management in Warsaw (Table 3).

The deeper analysis shows that postgraduate studies in the field of CSR are offered in many cities in Poland but unfortunately, in many cases, postgraduate courses are not successfully launched. Table 4 presents the review of the launching status of postgraduate programmes in the field of CSR in Poland.

Post-graduate studies in CSR are concentrated mainly in Warsaw. In the aforementioned city, post-graduate CSR studies are offered at universities, such as: University of Ecology and Management, SGH Warsaw School of Economics, Warsaw University of Life Sciences, Collegium Civitas and Koźmiński University. Postgraduate studies were not launched in such cities as Wrocław, Gdańsk, Poznań, Sosnowiec, Katowice, due to the insufficient number of candidates. At the Tischner European University in Cracow and Warsaw University of Life Sciences in Warsaw, postgraduate studies in CSR were launched in the academic year 2014/2015 and 2015/2016, but in the third edition in the academic year 2016/2017, the studies were

Table 3. ISO 26,000 core subjects of social responsibility included in postgraduate courses curricula

Location	Education Institution	Course Title	Core subjects of CSR in accordance with ISO 26,000							
			Organizational Governance	Human Rights	Labour Practices	The Environment	Fair Operating Practices	Consumer Issues	Community Involvement and Development	
Cracow	Cracow School of Business	The Strategy of Corporate Social Responsibility in Management	X				X			
Gdańsk	Gdańsk University of Technology	Corporate Social Responsibility	X		X	X				
Katowice	University of Economics	Corporate Social Responsibility	X		X	X	X			X
Poznań	Collegium Da Vinci	CSR Management	X		X	X	X			X
Sosnowiec	Humanitas University	The Appearance and Social Responsibility in the Modern Enterprise Management	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Warsaw	University of Ecology and Management	CSR – Socially Responsible Business	X		X	X			X	X
Warsaw	Collegium Civitas	CSR Manager	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Warsaw	Koźmiński University	CSR, Responsible Business Strategy	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Warsaw	Warsaw University of Life Sciences – SGGW	Corporate Social Responsibility Strategy	X		X	X	X	X	X	X
Wrocław	University of Economics	Social Responsibility of Enterprise	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

Source: own work.

Table 4. Status of launching postgraduate studies in the field of CSR in Poland in 2014–2017

City	Education Institution	Status of launching postgraduate studies
Cracow	Cracow School of Business	Insufficient number of candidates enough to launch the programme
Cracow	Tischner European University	Two editions were launched within 2 years. However the third edition was not launched due to an insufficient number of candidates
Gdańsk	Gdańsk University of Technology	Insufficient number of candidates enough to launch the programme
Katowice	University of Economics	Insufficient number of candidates enough to launch the programme
Poznań	Collegium Da Vinci	Insufficient number of candidates enough to launch the programme
Sosnowiec	Humanitas University	Insufficient number of candidates enough to launch the programme
Warsaw	University of Ecology and Management	Insufficient number of candidates enough to launch the programme
Warsaw	Collegium Civitas	The first edition of studies was launched. However, in the second academic year, the second edition was not launched due to an insufficient number of candidates
Warsaw	Koźmiński University	In the 2016/2017 academic year the postgraduate programme was launched for the eighth time. For last seven years studies have been completed by more than 180 graduates
Warsaw	Warsaw University of Life Sciences – SGGW	Two groups were launched within 2 years. However, in the third academic year the third edition did not succeed due to an insufficient number of candidates
Wrocław	University of Economics	Insufficient number of candidates enough to launch the programme

Source: own work based on telephone interviews.

not launched at both universities due to an unsatisfactory number of applicants.

In the academic year 2016/2017, Koźmiński University in Warsaw was the only university in Poland, which launched postgraduate studies in the field of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) for the eighth time in history. The postgraduate course titled “CSR. Responsible Business

Strategy” is the result of cooperation with Deloitte Team Sustainability Consulting Central Europe and Business Ethics and Social Innovation Centre. It is the only university which for so many years has been successful in launching post-graduate CSR studies, with over 180 graduates in the last seven years.

4. The case study of the successful CSR postgraduate programme at Koźmiński University

CSR studies at Koźmiński University were found to be an example of a successful postgraduate programme. Therefore, the thorough analysis of the programme was the next step of the research. The telephone interview with Prof. Bolesław Rok conducted on 14 February 2017 was the main method used to collect data for analysis.

Prof. Rok holds the function of the head of the “CSR. Responsible Business Strategy” postgraduate programme at the Koźmiński University. He also holds the function of the Director of the Business Ethics and Social Innovation Centre of Koźmiński University. He is also a co-founder of the Responsible Business Forum (2000) and since 2007 – a co-author of the annual Ranking of Responsible Firms for *Dziennik Gazeta Prawna*.

The interview took about 25 minutes and it followed an earlier discussion with the informant. During the first conversation the respondent was informed about the subject and objectives of research and he expressed his willingness to participate in the interview. The survey questionnaire consisted of 7 open-ended questions, which enabled the respondent the freedom of speech in terms of the issues under the study. The interview covered:

- the main reasons why it is worth taking up “CSR. Responsible Business Strategy” postgraduate programme at Koźmiński University:

The respondent stressed that it is mostly a tradition and relations. First of all, the idea of the postgraduate programme is to facilitate social networking to make it easier for managers to find their way on the job market later.

- profile candidates who most eagerly and most frequently participate in the postgraduate programme:

Prof. Bolesław Rok pointed to no regularities in terms of the typical profile of a postgraduate program student since the situation has

changed a lot over the years. However, he admitted that the candidates more often come from Polish companies than from the international ones. As he indicated, it is due to the fact that international companies have their internal know-how, more opportunities for specialised training and experienced managers the others can learn from. Because Polish companies usually do not have such experts in the field, their boards delegate managers to take part in postgraduate programmes. Prof. Bolesław Rok indicated that, in regard to the type of an organisation represented by the students, about 70% of participants come from the business sector while about 30% are the representatives of non-governmental organisations, public institutions, social enterprises or the people who are still searching for their career paths.

- the key success factors for postgraduate courses “CSR. Responsible Business Strategy” launched for the eighth time at Koźmiński University:

The respondent indicated that the success and outstanding position of the “CSR. Responsible Business Strategy” postgraduate programme are mostly determined by a combination of theory and practice as well as a possibility of networking and relationship building. As he stressed, as a part of theory, the programme can offer a very transparent review of what is happening in that field and practice is provided by consultants, experienced CSR practitioners representing different fields. And as for relationships, the classes are tutored by business practitioners, which facilitates networking. Moreover, he stressed the role of a group of lecturers who are the top experts in the field i.e. the who were establishing the grounds for the development of the corporate social responsibility concept in Poland, thus allowing the students to learn from the best ones, the role models.

- interest in the “CSR. Responsible Business Strategy” postgraduate programme at Koźmiński University:

The head of the programme admitted that it is hardly possible to specify a single trend. It is rather a sinusoid i.e. in one year there are more candidates, whereas in successive years there is less interest in. As he stressed, currently there is a downturn. There are only about 20 students per group. The third and fourth editions attracted most interest, which coincided with the biggest number of representatives of various firms, about thirty participants per group. However, as the informant highlighted, in another two or three years the trend can get reversed again.

- evaluation of other postgraduate CSR programme offers:

Prof. Bolesław Rok admitted that the CSR postgraduate programme focuses mostly on Warsaw as it is the place with many large companies. In Warsaw, the CSR postgraduate program was offered by SGH Warsaw School of Economics, however, the programme failed to be launched due to an insufficient number of candidates. Later, such a programme was offered at the Warsaw University of Life Sciences and two groups were launched within 2 years. However, the third edition did not succeed. Later on, the postgraduate programme was in the offer of Collegium Civitas in Warsaw. The first edition was launched, unlike the second one which failed unfortunately. The respondent indicated that such programme offers are available also in other cities e.g. in Poznań, or in Silesia (Sosnowiec, Katowice). However, it turns out that the institutions in those locations are not able to enrol a number of students sufficient to launch such programmes. The respondent highlighted that he supported a programme in Silesia to be started. Later one of graduates of the Kozminski University CSR programme was trying to launch it in Gdańsk, but with no success. The situation was similar in Poznań and in Wrocław. It turns out that the programmes have not been launched due to an insufficient number of candidates. Moreover, Prof. Bolesław Rok indicated that the offers of postgraduate programmes, successfully launched, included two editions of the “Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)” programme at the Tischner European University in Cracow.

- the key reasons why many postgraduate programmes are not launched at all:

The key reasons for many postgraduate programmes not getting started, in the opinion of the respondent, include, first of all, too small and limited market which has already got saturated and is not showing a high demand for education programmes in the field of CSR. The second important reason is that the concept of CSR seems to be underestimated and insufficiently comprehended by the boards of companies. The boards sometimes identify CSR only as part of a communication and PR package or narrow down its scope to e.g. environmental protection only. The boards claim that it is enough and frequently they are not aware that more can be done about it. As underlined by the respondent, Koźmiński University provides education to the people who can hold functions of CSR coordinators or CSR managers and deal with it in

larger firms to infect with that CSR ‘virus’ there and to get it developed and, indeed, many graduates succeed.

- assessment of including CSR or business ethics as parts of programmes in management or MBA courses:

CSR and business ethics classes are offered in most MBA programmes in Poland, however, as stressed by the respondent, it is different than the postgraduate CSR programme. Postgraduate CSR programmes provide specialized education for CSR managers, whereas MBA programmes educate general managers who should have a general understanding of the idea of corporate social responsibility. As highlighted by the respondent, regardless of various general higher education programmes, more and more frequently people want to complete a specialised course in an emerging field which is getting trendy. As an example he pointed to the second major of postgraduate programmes offered at Koźmiński University i.e. Ethics and Compliance. The objective of the programme is to provide students with knowledge of compliance policy, including ethical and responsible organisational strategy. In the academic year 2016/2017, the fifth edition of the programme is conducted and it attracts a lot of interest.

5. Conclusions

The survey showed that the offer of postgraduate studies in CSR, apart from some similarities, also contains significant differences. All courses offered are annual and last 2 semesters. Differences in courses appear mainly in the scope of specific curriculum activities, focusing on selected aspects. In the study programmes you will find indirect references to ISO 26,000, which defines the standards and directions of CSR implementation in the enterprise. A deeper analysis has shown that not all postgraduate courses include and implement all seven CSR topics according to ISO 26,000 in their offer. As a rule, study programmes are complemented by additional modules that apply to the managerial competencies required by the profession.

However, a deeper analysis of the problem shows that many post-graduate studies have not been launched at all. One of the reasons for this situation is insufficient demand. This is surprising in the context of the introduced legislation in this area. Moreover, CSR is

underestimated by the management of companies, their understanding seems to be limited to typical PR activities in the field of cooperation with the local community. What is needed is a deeper understanding of CSR and relying on a solid foundation of this specific knowledge.

The only institution that has been successful for many years in conducting a CSR postgraduate programme in Poland is Koźmiński University in Warsaw, with over 180 graduates in the last seven years. The key success factors of post-graduate studies “CSR. The Responsible Business Strategy” include: a combination of theory and practice, the possibility of building relations during the course, classes conducted by lecturers who are regarded experts in the field of CSR and experienced CSR practitioners.

It seems that nowadays, when the obligation for large organisations to prepare non-financial reports was introduced, the interest in the educational offer in the area of CSR should be on increase. On the other hand, CSR activities are not to be linked with PR activities aimed at having CSR events included in the report. Therefore, education and training of the next generation of responsible managers is important, as is the dissemination of CSR ideas in business practice. Government administration also has a significant role to play, and through its involvement it can help to draw public attention to the issues of CSR. Moreover, it is to support the creation of an atmosphere conducive to socially responsible business and the implementation of the CSR concept into the business practice.

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Annex

Interview questionnaire

1. Let us start with a question which may seem to be very simple: Why is it worth taking up “CSR. Responsible Business Strategy” postgraduate programme at Koźmiński University in Warsaw?
2. Who most often and willingly applies for your postgraduate studies in this area? The previous seven editions were attended by representatives of such companies as: Bank Zachodni WBK, Grupa Żywiec, IKEA, Orange, PKO BP, Poczta Polska, Polpharma, PZU, BMW Group, Lotos. In which industries are the most frequently/least frequently employed persons applying to programme? Are the students more often employed in Polish or international companies?
3. In the academic year 2016/2017, the postgraduate programme was launched for the eighth time, being proud of more than 180 graduates for the last seven years. What does determine the success of the “CSR. Responsible Business Strategy” postgraduate programme conducted at your University?
4. What is the average number of postgraduate programme candidates annually? Is there a growing interest, from one year to another, in the programme offer? Or just the opposite; does the trend remain the same?
5. What other postgraduate CSR programme offers have you heard about? What percentage of such programmes get actually launched?
6. A more profound problem analysis shows that the postgraduate programme offer is available, however it is rather lifeless. Many postgraduate programmes are not launched at all. What are, in your opinion, the key reasons for it?
7. CSR, or business ethics, can be a part of the curricula, e.g. in management or MBA programmes, etc. Are, in your opinion, separate programmes needed or would it be enough e.g. to offer a course, or a few lectures as a part of other courses in MBA or management programmes?

