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THE ROLE OF HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS IN CREATING A COLLECTIVE VISION OF SUSTAINABLE BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

Summary. The development of a human, a business, a region or a country is largely dependent on their successful cooperation with educational institutions. It is universities' task to develop a responsible approach of a business to the environment. The purpose of this article is to trace the trends and opportunities that a university possesses and how they might contribute to the creation of sustainable production and supply systems. The main trends include: educating companies about sustainable business development, conducting and publicating research results on the methods of sustainable management of companies and supplies, cooperation in the development of new solutions, defining an integrated concept of CSR and implementing CSR standards, obliging business cooperators to ethical business conduct e.g. in the commercialization of innovations developed at a university. The knowledge on CSR is extensive, however, it is mainly used by large and global enterprises. This may result from the fact that there are few publications and discussions on how to implement CSR principles in small enterprises that are run by graduates of Polish universities. In the paper it is postulated that instruction on corporate social responsibility be included in the education process of all students.

Keywords: CSR, management, higher education institutions

ROLA UCZELNI WYŻSZEJ W TWORZENIU ZBIOROWEJ WIZJI ZRÓWNOWAŻONEGO ROZWOJU BIZNESU

Streszczenie. Warunkiem rozwoju człowieka, biznesu, regionu, kraju jest dobra ich współpraca z placówkami edukacyjnymi. Rolą uczelni wyższej jest kształtowanie odpowiedzialnego podejście biznesu do otoczenia. Celem artykułu jest prześledzenie kierunków i możliwości, jakie ma uczelnia, aby przyczyniać się do tworzenia

zrównoważonych systemów produkcji i dostaw. Podstawowymi kierunkami są: edukowanie w temacie zrównoważonego rozwoju biznesu, prowadzenie i publikowanie badań dotyczących metod zrównoważonego zarządzania przedsiębiorstwem i dostawami, współpraca przy tworzeniu nowych rozwiązań, definiowanie zintegrowanej koncepcji CSR i wprowadzanie standardów, obligowanie kooperantów biznesowych do etycznego postępowania, np.: w komercjalizacji innowacji powstałej na uczelni. Stan wiedzy na temat CSR jest bogaty, a sama wiedza wykorzystywana szczególnie w dużych, globalnych przedsiębiorstwach. Tymczasem mało pisze się i mówi na temat wdrażania działań CSR w małych przedsiębiorstwach, rozwijanych przez absolwentów polskich uczelni. W artykule postulowano, aby nauczanie o społecznej odpowiedzialności biznesu wpisać w proces edukacyjny każdego studenta.

Słowa kluczowe: odpowiedzialność społeczna, zarządzanie, wyższa uczelnia

1. Introduction

The term *Corporate Social Responsibility* (abbr. CSR) has now been extended to all organizations such as educational institutions, including universities. By implementing CSR policy in their activities, organizations voluntarily choose to support efforts for the benefit of the society and a cleaner environment. According to the concept of CSR, an organization should manage relationships with diverse groups of stakeholders that exert influence on its functioning[1]. Also, CSR is regarded as an ongoing commitment to behave in a manner that is both ethical and supportive of economic development by improving the quality of life of employees and their families as well as local communities and the whole society[2]. CSR also describes responsibilities of both sides of the relationship. The concept of sustainable development i.e. an organization's complete and systematic responsibility for its actions (efforts for economic development go hand in hand with ecological and pro-social activities) for the benefit of various stakeholders is becoming more and more popular. There can be distinguished the following university stakeholder groups: secondary school graduates, students, university graduates, and staff (academic and administrative), employers, caterers, central and local authorities, the media and educational institutions (both local and foreign), and the local community. According to J. Dietl, a university's activities should consist in a variety of initiatives that considerably exceed the educational services and manifest themselves mainly in the active influence on the different stakeholder groups. In order to

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[1] European Commission 2001. Promoting a European framework for corporate social responsibility. Green Paper, http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/publications/2001/ke3701590_en.pdf, p. 5.
[2] World Business Council for Sustainable Development. Corporate social responsibility: Making Good Business Sense, Genewa 2000, p. 7.

effectively implement the socially or ecologically responsible actions into the management practices, it is necessary to introduce procedures and guidelines which will encourage academics to reflect on their activities as well as take the stakeholders' requirements into account. The identification and management of the processes and their mutual links will help to sort those related to social responsibility. When designating persons responsible for social responsibility management as well as building and implementing the social responsibility strategy in a higher education institution, it is vital to identify the methods for evaluation of its activities (including the assessment and opinions of the stakeholders)[3]. There are currently no process reference models describing activities carried out for the benefit of the public or the environment. Indeed, it was only in 2008 that The Social Responsibility of Universities Observatory was founded. One year later The University Social Responsibility Alliance was founded in the United States. The Alliance's main task is to promote the idea mainly through organization of international conferences. However, COGITA (Corporate Social and Environmental Responsibility) is currently working on *the responsibility standards* for universities, which are expected to enter into force soon.

2. Educating students in the subjects of sustainable development and universities' social responsibility towards remaining stakeholders

A university's main activity consists in educating students in offered fields of study in accordance with ethics for sustainable development. While students' (i.e. the main stakeholders') major constitutes a term that is easily definable and is carried out by university scientists/teachers, education based on ethics for sustainable development can in some fields of science elude explicit definition and provision. It is important to focus on the main purpose that is educating future managers and employees of both enterprises and institutions in accordance with the basic principles of ethics for sustainable development. Introduction of CSR into syllabuses allows universities to raise future social and economic leaders' awareness. While disseminating the CSR concept (through organization of trainings and conferences and development of syllabuses), universities still seek a balance between the needs and expectations reported by their students, the authorities as well as the community i.e. all their stakeholders. The universities should not yield to pressures exerted by any of the parties but provide proper education in order to prepare their graduates to become valuable knowledge workers who, thanks to the abilities and moral norms acquired, will benefit the

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[3] Rok B.: Responsible Business: The Challenge for Management Education, [in:] Gasparski W. (ed.): Responsible Management Education. Wydawnictwa Akademickie i Profesjonalne Uniwersytetu im. L. Koźmińskiego, Warszawa 2008, p. 32-33.

whole society. Therefore, universities should target their educating process towards several groups of recipients. These may include potential procurers of knowledge (i.e. students of secondary schools, secondary-school graduates, students, students in their final year at university and those continuing their education at post-graduate studies, employed persons, persons or organizations affecting or deciding about the choice of university and the direction of education i.e. university graduates, well-known persons who graduated from a particular university, the future students' parents), as well as opinion-forming centres and the society[4]. The student life cycle presented in Picture 1 may prove helpful in identifying the addressees of the ethical behaviour modelling.

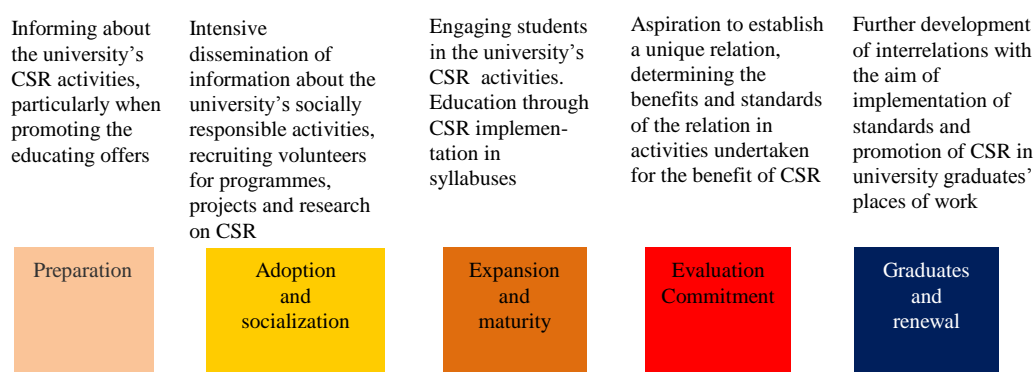| Informing about the university's CSR activities, particularly when promoting the educating offers	Intensive dissemination of information about the university's socially responsible activities, recruiting volunteers for programmes, projects and research on CSR	Engaging students in the university's CSR activities. Education through CSR implementation in syllabuses	Aspiration to establish a unique relation, determining the benefits and standards of the relation in activities undertaken for the benefit of CSR	Further development of interrelations with the aim of implementation of standards and promotion of CSR in university graduates' places of work
Preparation	Adoption and socialization	Expansion and maturity	Evaluation Commitment	Graduates and renewal

Fig. 1. Student life cycle with regard to CSR educating
Rys. 1. Cykl życia studenta z uwzględnieniem CSR
Source: Adapted from Pausits A.: Relationship Management. „Wissenschaftsmanagement", Nr 4, 2006.

Group I – future students in the preparation stage (which consists of two subgroups). The first target subgroup constitutes students of the final years of secondary school. The second target subgroup includes employees of enterprises. The first subgroup is no longer a 'tabula raza' since it possesses the ground rules for ethical behaviour learned at family home and formed by both upbringing and school education. Informing this group about the university's CSR activities (e.g. the work of the Office for Persons with Disabilities) will arouse its interest in the subject and emphasize the subject's importance. The second subgroup of potential students is additionally shaped by enterprises they are employed in. By entering education at a university they gain a larger impact on society and the environment. Thus, when describing and promoting particular fields of study offered by the university, it is vital to emphasize that the potential students' knowledge will be extended by CSR solutions. The second group is formed by students in the stages of admission and

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[4] Szymoniuk B., Rzemieniak M., Jachim A., Skowron S.: Promocja przedsiębiorstwa i produktu. Wydawnictwo Uczelniane PL, 1998, p. 16.

socialization (the second phase in the student life cycle). The second phase in the student life cycle starts with the beginning of studies and lasts a few months. It is the period when students gain first academic experience, join programmes, projects and research on CSR. The student council can play a significant role here. It can urge students to join voluntary services for the benefit of the society and the environment, thus putting CSR principles into practice. The third phase of the student life cycle – the expansion and maturity phase – is the period when the student develops the strongest bond with his/her university. This phase ends along with the student passing the final exam. Such a student met the requirements, performs his tasks with ease, readily improves their skills on their own and accurately identifies the social and environmental problems. The process of educating this group in CSR principles must result in the students recognizing the need for action in favour of the society and the environment. Therefore, CSR ought to find its place in educational programmes and then tell students how they can use their education/professional skills to help their immediate surroundings. Also, courses in Institutes of Psychology and Sociology are necessary, as they prepare students for full and responsible participation in their organization's social life and help them initiate CSR activities in the enterprise. Many students in business programmes are naive as to who is perpetrating fraud and corruption in business and government. They should by sensitized to the fact that it is well established that is fraud is germane to modern business. Ideally, they should be instructed in methods of detecting fraud and corruption such as forensic accounting. In addition to methods of detecting fraud after it has happened, there are also ways of profiling before the fact who will be most likely to commit fraud.[5] The fourth phase of the student life cycle begins along with the student passing his/her final exam, usually lasts for the consecutive year and can assume the form of active involvement in the CSR activities of alumni association or continuing studies e.g. in this area. It is worthwhile to determine the benefits and standards of mutual relations for this group (these are the tools used by socially responsible organizations). The fifth phase begins a year after university graduation. The alumni can contribute to the services delivered by universities. This may take:

− a scientific form (graduates can participate in the works of research teams, as employees of enterprises acquiring services from the university),
− a financial form (graduates being managers of enterprises/institutions can sponsor the university's activities of their choice).

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[5] Wanke Ch.: Orienting business students to navigate the shoals of corruption practice, [in:] Stachowicz-Stanusch A. (ed.): Organizational Immunity to Corruption: Building Theoretical and Research Foundations. PAN, Katowice 2009, p. 58.

Organization of trainings and trade conferences on CSR are universities' basic activities directed at this group. Description of examples of good practices, trainings in behavioural ethics, the fight against corruption, publication of examples of this fight, trainings in the way of acting in cases of a conflict of interests, raising employees' awareness with regard to fair competition and legal regulations on price and tender fixing, using dumping prices and the responsibility for communities of cooperating organizations (both local and environmental) are the hot topics of this group's educating. Apart from former students, and perhaps through them, the managers of enterprises should be invited to trainings. They are going to stimulate the processes of raising the remaining employees' awareness in relation to the social context the business operates in and present the benefits a company can have from responsible participation in supply chains and implementing CSR principles. The managers of SMEs (who do not always concentrate on CSR) may be encouraged to attend the trainings if they are promoted as helpful in reducing costs. During the recession companies see this as an opportunity to reduce costs by adopting 'a green policy'[6].

In order to be able to cooperate with stakeholders on principles based on CSR, universities should first implement them in their own structures. The works ought to begin with regulations on decision making and actions which affect society and the natural environment. The university should reveal its politics and principles applied in the face of the society and the natural environment in an accurate and clear way. An organization's transparency should embrace:

- the purpose, nature and location of its activity,
- the process of decision making applied in the organization, enforcement of the decisions and the controls indicating the persons/functions responsible for CSR and their scope of authority,
- standards and criteria against which an organization assesses its development in the area of CSR,
- the sources of its activities' financing,
- identification of its stakeholders, the criteria and procedures used for identifying and the choice of groups of stakeholders,
- the influence of the university's decisions and actions on its stakeholders, the society, the economy and the natural environment.

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[6] Collins P.: CSR and ethical issues in operations management, [in:] Stachowicz-Stanusch A. (ed.): Organizational Immunity to Corruption: Building Theoretical and Research Foundations. PAN, Katowice 2009, p. 234.

The document that presents a comprehensive approach to ethics at universities ought to be a code of ethics[7]. The research area of universities is described in the guide *On Being a Scientist: A Guide to Responsible Conduct in Research*[8]. It constitutes a common code of conduct which contains numerous case studies connected with scientific activities, beginning with the appropriate data collection followed by the issue of plagiarism, experiments on animals and ending with the concept of intellectual property. The document that is valid in the EU is *European Science Foundation Guidelines,* which served as the foundation for such academic codes as: Danish *Executive Order No. 668*[9], German *Recommendations for Safeguarding Good Scientific Practice*[10], Norwegian *Guidelines for Research Ethics in the Social Sciences, Law and the Humanities*[11], Swedish *Good Research Practice – what is it? Views, Guidelines and Examples*[12], Swiss *Integrity in scientific research: principles and procedures*[13], Polish *Good Manners in Science: a set of principles and guidelines*[14]. The model for a university code can also be *Good Practices in Academic Institutions*[15]. The document articulates 10 fundamental principles addressed to academic institutions: the principle of public service, impartiality in public affairs, legality principle, autonomy and responsibility, separation and balance of powers at the university, creativity, transparency, subsidiarity, respect for the dignity and tolerance as well as universality of research and education. Presumably, the document served as the model for: the University Code of Ethics at Silesian University of Technology[16], the University Code of Ethics at Wroclaw University of Technology[17] and the University Code of Ethics at Jagiellonian University[18]. However,

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[7] Sworowska A.: Kodeksy etyczne uczelni wyższych, [in:] Stachowicz-Stanusch A. (ed.): Główne wartości uczelni wyższych w kontekście różnych kultur narodowych. Koncepcja badań i wyniki badań sondażowych. Wydawnictwo Politechniki Śląskiej, Gliwice 2009, p. 109-124.

[8] National Academy of Sciences, National Academy of Engineering, Institute of Medicine, On Being a Scientist: A Guide to Responsible Conduct in Research. The National Academies Press, Washington D.C., USA 2009, www.nap.edu.

[9] Executive Order No. 668 of 28 June 2005 on the Danish Committees on Scientific Dishonesty Danish Agency for Science, Technology and Innovation: Annual Report 2006. The Danish Committees on Scientific Dishonesty, European Science Foundation, Stewards of Integrity, 2007, p. 14.

[10] DFG, Recommendations of the Commission on Professional Self Regulation in Science – Proposals for Safeguarding Good Scientific Practice, 1999, [in:] European Science Foundation: Stewards of Integrity, 2008, p. 22.

[11] National Committee for Research Ethics in the Social Sciences and the Humanities, 2006; Guidelines for Research Ethics in the Social Sciences, Law and Humanities. European Science Foundation, Stewards of Integrity, 2008, p. 31.

[12] The Swedish Research Council, Good Research Practice – what is it? Views, Guidelines and Examples, 2005; European Science Foundation, Stewards of Integrity, 2008, p. 39-40.

[13] Swiss Academies of Arts and Sciences. Integrity in scientific research: Principles and Procedures, January 2008; European Science Foundation, Stewards of Integrity, 2008, p. 41.

[14] Committee on Ethics in Science of the Polish Academy of Sciences, 2001; Good Manners In Science: a collection of rules and guidelines, European Science Foundation, Stewards of Integrity, 2008, p. 35-37.

[15] Fundacja Rektorów Polskich, Kodeks: Dobre praktyki w szkołach wyższych, Kraków 2007.

[16] http://biuletyn.polsl.pl/0401/senat.aspx#3, 02.11.2009.

[17] www.pwr.wroc.pl/16876.xml, 02.11.2010.

[18] www.uj.edu.pl/dispatch.jsp?item=uniwersytet/wladze/kodeks.jsp, 02.11.2009.

the existence of these documents does not guarantee implementation of the principles that are articulated in them. On the other hand, the introduction of the entries of the executive nature (ascribing responsibility for observing the rules, establishing the sanctions that will be imposed for their breaking, the most severe of which is exclusion from society, an organization or a profession) increases the likelihood of complying with the guidelines.

An important step towards the increase in the economic, social and environmental responsibility constitute also the changes in a university's organizational culture. Cultural changes affect a subtle matter that is the organization's spirit. Therefore, it is necessary to create favourable conditions for these changes i.e. support of the new culture with the adequate organizational structure or personal politics. According to Klimann, execution of cultural changes is based on 5 stages[19]:

- identification of the norms applicable in the current structure,
- appointing new change directions,
- establishing new standards,
- identification of people of the cultural change,
- elimination of the people who do not accept the cultural changes.

The cultural changes for the benefit of CSR require creation of conditions with regard to communication, confidence, patience and elasticity of action. Leaders who are an interfering binder of employees around a new concept play an important role. University authorities should clearly determine their requirements towards employees and make them aware of the connection between their actions and CSR. It is also possible to motivate scientists to cooperate with social workers, clerks and community activists and to attend meetings and work for the benefit of other people.

The employees in organizations with a strong organizational culture should not waste time for thinking what to do or how to do it because this culture creates a system of both formal and informal principles which, together with the pressure of the surroundings, indicates how an employee should behave and how he/she should use his/her time for the benefit of the enterprise and social and environmental responsibility. The implementation process of the preferred cultural values can take different forms: through incorporation them in trainings and educational programmes, passing them by word of mouth and explaining the supply procedures to new employees in order to immediately eliminate the persons unadapted to the requirements. The task of promoting the preferred cultural values rests particularly with heads of departments and institutes. Their job is to convince people that it is reasonable to act in accordance with the CSR principles. As a rule, the bigger changes in CSR are necessary, the greater cultural alterations should be conducted in the organization's

current atmosphere. These changes may be included in the process of university management. Implementation of CSR in operational management of a university is an ongoing process, the structure of which is presented in figure 2.
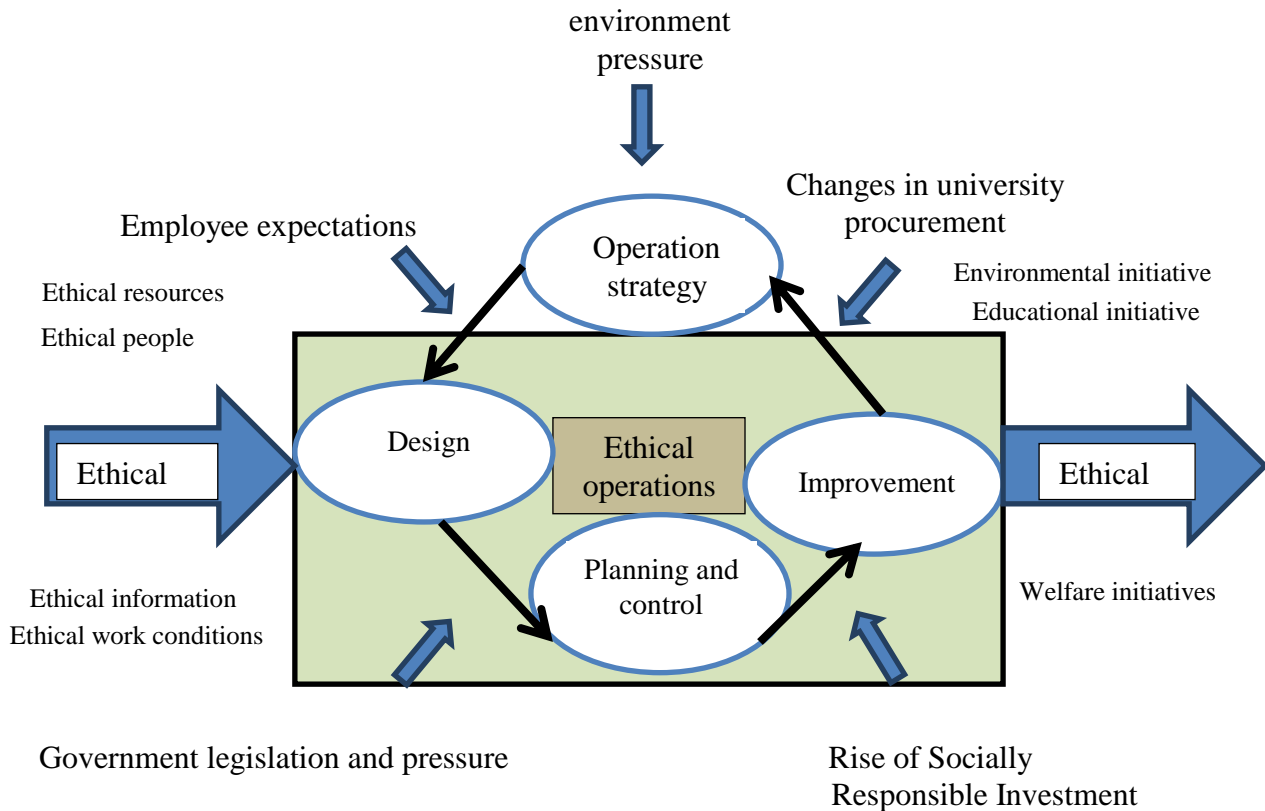

Fig. 2. CSR Operations Management
Rys. 2. Zarządzanie operacyjne CSR
Source: Adapted from Slack 2007. Courtesy of Mihaela Titsu.

The entrepreneurs are an important group of stakeholders. Universities often take their need for personnel into account when creating new fields of studies. Moreover, they direct students and graduates to various enterprises for training programmes and work and conduct research and introductory projects together. The procedures for action in execution of the above mentioned CSR-oriented activities are becoming a necessity. The influence on this group of stakeholders can become a monograph to building a strong social capital in the area where the university is located. Coleman describes social capital as the ability to cooperate within groups and the whole organization with the aim of achieving common goals. He refers to such features of the society organization as confidence as well as norms and connections

[19] Klimann R.H.: Beyond the Quick Fix. Managing Five Trucks of Organizational Success. San Francisco 1984, p. 27-35.

which can increase the society's efficiency while facilitating actions coordination.[20] Fukuyama proposes a similar definition of social capital and calls it a society's 'moral net', where it is a system of such values as reliability, loyalty and solidarity that are shared and used by all. In this view, the structure of social capital can be initiated by universities and constitute the stimulus for establishing a pro-social and pro-environmental cooperation between sectors. By disseminating CSR standards among employers, universities contribute to reducing uncertainty which is major impediment in conducting business and establishing a successful interaction between people and organizations. Universities' assistance in building the public trust, the formation of norms (including CSR) and connections as well as entities' and enterprises' pro-innovative attitude is mainly justified in the regional context. The geographical proximity encourages cooperation, understanding and overcoming local economic, social and environmental problems. Circumstantial meetings, conferences and discussion forums, unofficial contacts between scientists, entrepreneurs and the regional community are an important element of popularizing CSR next to the strict procedures of cooperation with enterprises based on CSR standards. The basic areas of the social capital influence on cooperation with the organization are presented in table 1.

Table 1

Areas of the social capital influence

The areas of the social capital influence					
Effectiveness of functioning as the result of cooperation	The vitality and longevity of the organization	Innovative, prosocial and pro-environmental actions	Creating the competitive advantage	Increased risk taking	Reviving the spirit of entrepreneurship

Source: Adapted from: Bratnicki B., Dyduch W., Zbierowski P.: Kapitał społeczny i uwaga
        w organizacji partnerskiej, [in:] Dworecki Z. (ed.): Przedsiębiorstwa kooperujące.
        EuroExpert Grupa Doradcza, Sp. z o.o., 2002, s. 272.

Support in the view and implementation of CSR can take the form of fruitful discussions with entrepreneurs (mainly in the SMEs sector) in the lecture rooms in Polish universities. It can also be based on a dynamic information system of cooperation between many organizations (universities, public institutions and enterprises) operating for the benefit of both the society and the environment of the region. The aforementioned system will be discussed in more detail in chapter 3.

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[20] Coleman J.S.: Foundations of Social Theory. Harvard University Press, Cambridge Mass., 1990, [in:] Matysiak A.: Kapitał społeczny. Akademia Ekonomiczna, Wrocław 1999, p. 61.

The purpose of a university's CSR activities can be supporting the development of different groups of stakeholders i.e. the local community of various environments e.g. of the poorest, the disabled and the young at Children's Universities. In accordance with the assumptions of the education policy, which is consistent with the requirements of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (abbr. OECD), the World Bank and the European Union, education is supposed to create the human and social capital and to prepare for living in the information society and the economy that is based on knowledge.

Another group of stakeholders includes offices, non-governmental institutions and other organizations. A university's cooperation with these entities for the sustainable development of the region will be described in more detail in chapter 3 of the present article.

3. Conducting and publishing research on methods of sustainable management of regions, enterprises and supplies

Organizations, enterprises and other public and socio-economic entities are subject to the increasing requirements regarding CSR activities that are imposed by their surroundings. These, in turn, expect universities to tell them what to do and how to do it. These expectations seem obvious due to the role universities play in the socio-economic development (they shape future elites, participate in the process of building a knowledge-based society and examine the surrounding reality). Therefore, recommendations concerning research directions were formulated for the universities whose strategy is based on CSR principles. A variety of research on CSR is conducted at Polish universities e.g. international research on the issues of sexual abuse of women, stalking and fear of crimes, all of which are, among others, aimed at taking preventive actions. Universities take part in a competition for grants and consultative contracts for these types of research. The research on the development of social responsibility instruments used by business is conducted equally willingly (even though it is more difficult to receive the grant). On the basis of the research results universities can shape consumers' awareness. They make consumers aware that while a product made in accordance with the CSR principles costs more, it is worthwhile to pay for it for the benefit of the society and the environment. Such research is vital because it is necessary to both educate the market on a permanent basis and to show positive and practical aspects of CSR implementation in managing the companies and suppliers. For instance, according to the research done by one of the universities for the Polish Green Web, 50 percent of respondents making purchases of clothes, electronics, toys and food is not only willing to pay more for ethically produced goods, but also reads labels on the products and

checks their favourite producers' codes of conduct on the Internet. Publication of the research results motivated others to behave ethically. Informing about similar research can assume the form of a report or an online publication. Dissemination of the research findings is aimed at portraying the positive aspects of CSR. The findings should indicate the reporting period as well as contain the statements on politics, the purposes and the strategies and reviews of research results allowing for their comparison in the following years. The reports should also take into consideration the interests and needs of a wide group of stakeholders. It is regretful that in spite of the funds coming from the Human Capital Operational Programme, the Infrastructure and the Environment Operational Programme, the National Learning Centre and the National Research and Development Centre, still too little money is spent on this kind of research and that it is carried out in the design rather than the procedural arrangement. The universities are supported by *The Global Ethics Observatory (GEObs)*[21] in the process of promoting and implementing CSR principles. The Observatory constitutes a database system which is developed and run by UNESCO with the purpose of providing information on the issue of ethics in science and technology. This initiative has been active since 2005. The system consists of 5 independent databases[22]:

- the database of experts from the field of ethics,
- the database of key institutions active in the field of ethics,
- the database of ethical training programmes,
- the database of legal regulations and guidelines connected with ethical issues,
- the database of codes of conduct.

4. Cooperation between universities, the authorities and enterprises on the production of new solutions and implementation of CSR standards

Polish universities are at the stage of building their own strategies while following the principles of social responsibility and the identified needs of the stakeholders. They draw from the solutions developed at universities around the world as well as from the guidelines in such standards as: CSR Europe in the 'Enterprise 2020'[23] strategy, The Principles of UN

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[21] European Science Foundation, Stewards of Integrity, 2008, p. 7.

[22] Sworowska A.: Kodeksy etyczne uczelni wyższych, [in:] Stachowicz-Stanusch A. (ed.), Główne wartości uczelni wyższych w kontekście różnych kultur narodowych. Koncepcja badań i wyniki badań sondażowych. Politechnika Śląska, Gliwice 2009, p. 109-124.

[23] The purpose of the 'Enterprise 2020' strategy developed in 2010 is promotion of a social dialogue and the projects engaging different environments so that a common vision of sustainable business of the future comes into existence.

Global Compact[24], **ISO 26000**[25], Quality Management System ISO 9000[26], Environmental Management System ISO 14000[27], Social Accountability SA 8000[28], ICS[29], WCA[30] and the sectoral standards: Electronic Industry Citizenship, Fair Trade[31], WRAP. The universities focus on those recommended by the European Commission: The OECD guiding Principles for Multinational Corporations, ISO 26000, The Principles of the UN Global Compact Initiative[32].

All universities which obtain money for research from structural funds have already learned to formulate socially the responsible public procurements (these are procurements which take into account at least one of the following social issues: job openings including the young, the elderly and equality of sex, decent work, compliance with social rights and with the right to work, social integration, equality of opportunities, consideration of handicapped persons' needs, the criteria of sustainable development as well as the issue of ethics in trade and the voluntary adherence to the CSR principles). Simultaneously, SRPP must take into consideration the principles laid down in the EU Treaty and the directives concerning public procurements[33].

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[24] http://supply-chain.unglobalcompact.org.

[25] International Organization for Standardization (ISO) published ISO 26000 standard on 28 October 2010. The standard's task is to systematize the knowledge on CSR. ISO 26000 is not a certification but a practical guidebook on the principles of responsible business and contains guidelines for organizations of all types regardless of their size or location. ISO 26000 enumerates the following areas of CSR: organizational order, human rights, labour relations, the environment, fair market practices, relations with consumers, civic involvement. The National Standards Body is an institution which deals with the implementation of ISO 26000 in Poland.

[26] The system of quality management.

[27] The system of environmental management.

[28] The system of social responsibility management. It was introduced by Business Social Compliance Initiative (BSCI) located in Brussels. BSCI is an ethical standard that was originally developed by sales networks on the German market. Nowadays, similarly as other ethical standards, it is used all over the world in order to evaluate the ethics of activities by companies in the supply chain. 700 companies implemented the standards and are part of BSCI organization.

[29] ICS ethical standard (Initiative, Clause Sociale) was published by French Federation of Trade FCD in 1998. The standard is based not only on ISO guidelines, the standards of SA 8000, but also on the guidelines of the local law. Among the companies which worked on the development of the standard, there are Auchan, Carrefour, Groupe PPR, Okaidi, Systeme U, Monoprix, E. Leclerc, Galeries Lafayette, Cora Rovera, Casino and Camif.These organizations also have their suppliers in Poland and require their contractors to observe the rules of the standard.

[30] WCA (Workplace Conditions Assessment) is an ethical standard developed and implemented by INTERTEK, a company which is one of the largest institutions dealing with audits of organizations and systems, product reviews and laboratory tests in the world. The WCA Standard is based on the guidelines of International Labour Organization convention and on the GSCP (Globalny Program Społecznej Odpowiedzialności) programme. However, the local law is also an important part of the guidelines in the standard.

[31] www.fairtrade.org.pl (15.09.2012).

[32] www.pohid.pl/cms/public/photos/FCK/file/Broszura%20ZLD.pdf, 15.09.2012.

[33] Social issues in public procurements. A guide for implementing social issues in public procurements, http://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=6457&langId=pl, 10. 09.2012.

Universities not only readily share their experience in implementing CSR standards but also assist the authorities, non-government organizations and the entrepreneurs. When working in collaboration with the non-government organizations they deal with monitoring production standards and publication of information on the observed irregularities, exerting pressure on the private sector towards raising social and environmental standards. They also cooperate in the development of new solutions and standards implementation as well as educate consumers. The most common constraints that universities encounter during execution of their CSR activities are troublesome accounting, shortage of personnel, the increasing number of legal regulations and the practices of public reporting. Here, a solution may be the universities' joining programmes carried out by other entities e.g. the media, foundations or state institutions with the aim of performing the role of a partner. Another solution could be the IT system operating for the benefit of CSR (with regional institutions' and enterprises' collaboration in these operations). Picture 3 presents the model of the regional system for the development of socially responsible business.
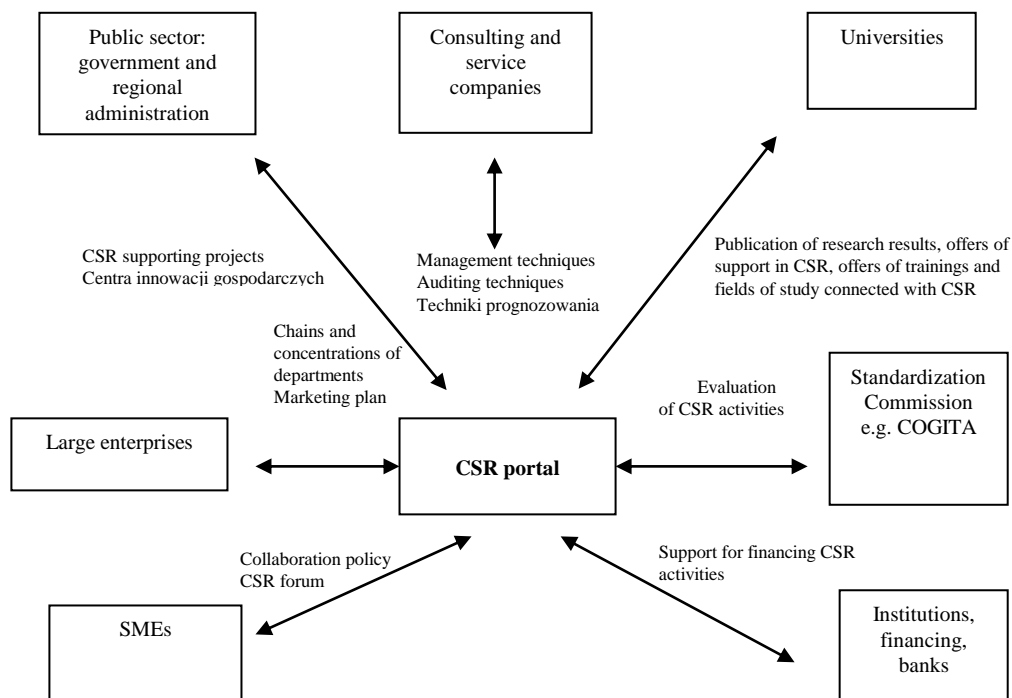

Fig. 3. The model of the regional system for the development of socially responsible business
Rys. 3. Model regionalnego system wspierającego rozwój społecznej odpowiedzialności biznesu
Source: Adapted from Domański R., Marciniak A.: Sieciowe koncepcie gospodarki miast i regionów.
        Studia Tom CXIII, nr 13. PAN KPZK, Warszawa 2003.

The initiation of the IT system for the flow of knowledge about CSR could result in increasing the number of activities carried out in cooperation with regional/local organizations e.g.:

- − support the actions for the benefit of the local community, local institutions and hastening investments.
- − improve the sustainable management of raw materials, waste segregation, the society's environmental education, implementation of ecological technology processes and ecological products and services, eco-labelling social labelling consisting in informing the consumer about the social and the social and environmental aspects of the product (the impact on health and the environment).
- − improve the effectiveness of public campaigns which influence social attitudes through the media (outreach campaigns, the campaigns aimed at donating part of profits from sales of a particular product to social objectives and pro-environmental activities).
- − initiate programmes for employees i.e. investment in employee development, integration programmes, employee voluntary services and equal opportunity programmes.

5. Obliging universities' business cooperators to ethical proceedings in e.g. commercialization of the innovations developed at the universities

Innovation is a new way of fighting against poverty, providing equal social opportunities and protecting the natural environment. While being innovative, a university is also prosocial and pro-environmental. A university must ensure that its innovation is commercialized in accordance with its purpose which is the good of both the society and the environment. Recently, a lot has been done for formalizing the commercialization process of the inventions developed at universities. The developed commercialization strategy does not always protect the innovation platform (on the basis of which an entrepreneur can create 'unethical' products i.e. ones which do not meet the norms). How far an inventor's responsibility reaches in the process of commercialization depends on the chosen commercialization strategy (the lowest level of responsibility occurs during the sale of an invention). However, even in this case a university should not feel dismissed from the actions for raising ethics in the business cooperating in the commercialization process[34]. In response to its business cooperators' expectations, the universities should create their own codes of ethics for

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[34] Stawiarska E.: Działalność marketingowa w procesie komercjalizacji technologii. Studium dobrych praktyk promowania innowacji technicznej przez organizacje akademickie oraz wynalazców. Kwartalnik Naukowy Organizacja i Zarządzanie, nr 10. Politechnika Śląska, Gliwice 2010, s. 130.

the commercialization field. These codes will constitute a group of directly expressed set of intrinsic values which are important for universities, its employees and business stakeholders. W. Gasparski demonstrated the importance of ethical codes and the huge need for development in this issue. In his research focused on Poland, he noted that for a country with 38 million residents, only 6 thousand organizations have ethical codes. The author also underlined the codes' fundamental role in the correct functioning of ethical programmes. Thus, the greatest challenge concerning management of contacts with business is equipping oneself with effective tools enabling implementation of CSR strategy (the CSR tools described in the code are: the development and communication of the criteria of cooperation, the economic, social, and environmental requirements, tender criteria, the recording of regulations in agreements, the system of incentives, the CSR standards and environmental and quality norms conducted, the channels used in communication with entrepreneurs that enable proposition of initiatives, the information systems used that extort observing the maturity dates and improve the flow of funds thanks to the electronic transfers, granting loans or capital guarantees as well as the development and communication of cooperation procedures e.g. in conducting audits at the entrepreneurs cooperating with the university, the detection of irregularities, reporting infringements and unethical behaviours[35]). Equipped with these tools, CSR can establish correction actions on the principle of 'the follow-up' without fear and repressions and on the basis of its experience in creating and supporting the effective system of preventing corruption and the prohibited practices in competitions etc. The regularity of analyses conducted facilitates the risk management of the negative influence on relations, the society and the environment as well as preparation of the repair plan and the development of better policies and operating procedures. The EFQM Model of Excellence, which recommends the cyclical internal self-assessment and can function as the basis for planning actions and the development initiatives, is perfect for responsible universities which attract inventors and scientists. It is also possible to obligate the business partners in the economic, social and environmental fields to make similar self-assessments. In 2009 the Business In the Community (BITC) organization published a guide for enterprises where these three areas are described in more detail. In the category of economic criteria which shape the relations of the organization with its cooperators are shaping, it is important to take care of:

- fair conditions in contracts,
- timely payment of amount due,

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[35] Even if the enterprise has not implemented the CSR, quality or environmental standards, it can still use the audit procedures developed by e.g. BSCI, www.standardyetyczne.pl/bsci.html, 15.09.2012.

−   not using the economic advantage for negotiating inadequate prices and conditions of agreements,

−   preventing corruption.

An organization can monitor the public aspects in its relations. Among these, there can be distinguished:

−   following the labour law and human rights,

−   fair remuneration of employees,

−   following the set working hours,

−   safety at work,

−   the ways of influencing the local community and the ways of minimizing the adverse impact.

BITC suggests that the issues associated with the impact on the environment should refer to the entire life cycle of a product being created and commercialized i.e. from its design to recycling, including transport of materials, the use of appropriate raw materials and their rational management. Within the supply chain, there can be measured:

−   the amount of emitted greenhouse gases during the production process,

−   energy efficiency of the product/material,

−   the kind of energy sources used during production and by the product,

−   the possibility of a renewed processing of materials that make up a product,

−   recycling,

−   biodegradation.

The organizations which decide to implement a standard e.g. SA 8000 or ETI Base Code appoint a representative of the senior management who deals with contacts with cooperators. The same process takes place at universities. The Technology Transfer Centres are contact cells. Among the CTT employees there is to be a person dealing with CSR and supervising the maintenance of the compliance with the requirements of standards. The required documentation of the rules of conduct, the different kinds of policies or also the actions taken is written into the scope of responsibilities of such a person. The person's task can be the formation of internal teams consisting of people from departments/institutes dealing with CSR and their effective motivation to achieve the purposes planned by the university. The representative can also form external teams (communities of CSR actions) and to manage knowledge in this respect for the purposes of different projects.

It is fortunate that Polish enterprises (also the ones cooperating with universities) understand the need for gradual improvement of the ethics of actions. On 28 May 2012 the signing of the Declaration of Polish Business for Sustainable Development took place. This declaration confirms Polish entrepreneurs' involvement in actions aimed achieving

the strategic objectives enumerated in the 'Vision of the Sustainable Development for Polish Business 2050' report[36].

6. Conclusion

The issue of social responsibility has been the centre of attention ever since the beginning of the twenty-first century due to the stakeholders' increasing oversight and the changes in business and social environment. Thus, there appeared a need to manage higher education institutions in a way that takes the stakeholders' expectations into consideration[37]. The multitude of roles that universities play makes it possible to look at their responsibilities from different perspectives: by referring to the management theory, the idea of the stakeholders' common good, or the academic ethos[38]. Nowadays, universities engage in socially responsible activities in their own way, depending on their competences, resources, the organizational culture or the stakeholders' needs identified. The universities' wider and standards-approved CSR activities are expected by all stakeholders. Moreover, they will benefit both the society and universities themselves. Social responsibility should be a part of a university's mission and strategy. The principles of responsible influence should have their implementing application that is consistent with educational institutions' mission and strategy[39]. The operational management ought to present a mechanism of steady improvement, where communication with stakeholders on sustainable development is a very important element. The improvement loop can be used with two strategies developed in the management of universities' social responsibility. The strategy of 'meeting requirements' (which focuses on prevention of accidents of violating the law and other provisions contained in codes) will involve corrective actions taking place in the loop. On the other hand, the 'capacity building' strategy will embrace the stakeholders getting involved in the process of CSR development[40]. The implementation of the strategic objectives of CSR, the improvement of the effectiveness of impact and the publicizing activities will have promotional advantages for the university and for the promotion of the principles of ethical conduct in the economic environment.

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[36] www.odpowiedzialnybiznes.pl, 15.09.2012.

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