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**Social Responsibility of Companies  
Operating in the Czech Republic  
– Student Awareness Survey**

Přemysl Průša

**Faculty of International Relations  
Working Papers**

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## **Social Responsibility of Companies Operating in the Czech Republic – Student Awareness Survey**

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### **Summary:**

This paper brings the results of the primary research conducted among students of the Faculty of International Relations of the University of Economics in Prague. The aim of this research was to find out students' awareness about the Corporate social responsibility in general as well as their opinion about the current situation among companies operating in the Czech Republic in terms of their social responsibility. The results have been processed with standard mathematic – statistical methods. At the beginning of the text several hypotheses are set, most of them are finally confirmed by the results of the survey. Most students already know about the CSR notion. But the socially responsible activities of the companies operating in the Czech Republic are still not regarded as sufficient.

**Keywords:** corporate social responsibility, student awareness survey

## **Společenská odpovědnost firem působících v ČR – výzkum povědomí o “CSR” mezi studenty**

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### **Abstrakt:**

Text přináší výsledky primárního výzkumu provedného mezi studenty Fakulty mezinárodních vztahů Vysoké školy ekonomické v Praze. Cílem výzkumu bylo zjistit povědomí studentů o problematice společenské odpovědnosti firem, jakož i jejich názor na současnou situaci ve vztahu ke společenské odpovědnosti mezi firmami působícími v České republice obecně. Výsledky výzkumu byly zpracovány pomocí základních matematicko – statistických metod. Na začátku textu jsou stanoveny některé hypotézy, z nichž většina je pak potvrzena výsledky daného výzkumu. Většina studentů zná pojem společenská odpovědnost podniků, ale společensky odpovědné aktivity firem (obecně) působících v ČR stále ještě nejsou vnímány jako dostatečné.

**Klíčová slova:** společenská odpovědnost podniků (“CSR”), výzkum povědomí o “CSR” mezi studenty

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## Introduction

Corporate social responsibility has become a popular topic both among the expert and among the laic public in the Czech Republic. In my last working paper, which was also devoted to the theme of CSR, I concentrated on the explanation of the term of CSR as well as on evaluation of several methods of companies assessment in terms of their social responsibility. To sum up my temporary results I will repeat some definitions which describe the notion of CSR.

CSR is the voluntary commitment of a company to behave responsibly towards society and the environment and it is mainly based on three pillars: the economic, social and environmental pillars (triple- bottom-line strategy). From other definition there are following to be mentioned especially:

*CSR is a voluntary integration of social and environmental perspectives into the daily company's operations and interactions with company's stakeholders (European Commission 2001).*

*CSR is the business philosophy, which is in compliance or goes well beyond the ethical, legal, commercial and social expectations.<sup>1</sup>*

*CSR is a continuous commitment of companies to behave ethically and to contribute to the economic growth and to struggle to increase the life quality of the employees and their families as well as the local community and the entire society at the same time.<sup>2</sup>*

In the further text I will present the results of a questionnaire survey conducted among students of the University of Economics in Prague. The survey was carried out in May, 2008 and the aim was to find out students' general awareness of the CSR topic, their opinion about the importance of socially responsible behavior of companies in general and finally the students' attitude and evaluation of the current situation in terms of socially responsible behavior of companies operating in the Czech Republic.

In fact this survey can be regarded as a survey, that ties together with the research carried out by Alena Filipova and Jiri Zeman from the Department of Retailing and Commercial Communications of the University of Economics in Prague, published as a Working Paper named Corporate Social Responsibility in Students' Awareness (Filipová; Zeman 2007).

Students have been chosen for the purpose of this survey especially due to the fact, that they can be easily addressed and they represent potential future employees as well as managers of companies operating in the Czech Republic.

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<sup>1</sup> Non governmental organization Business for social responsibility.

<sup>2</sup> World business council for Sustainable development, 1997.

Of course we can not neglect the fact, that a group of students can not serve as a sample of the whole population in the Czech Republic.

The research has been performed by a structured questionnaire, which was created with the assistance of Milan Postler from the Department of Retailing and Commercial Communications of the University of Economics, Prague. The questionnaire was distributed personally to students of second and third year classes, who filled in the questionnaires at the seminars. Therefore the rate of return was 100%.

In total, 250 questionnaires were distributed and filled in, from them 236 were forwarded for further analysis due to several incorrect fulfilment or equivocation of some answers. The questionnaire contained seventeen questions, all of them closed questions. The evaluation was done by means of standard mathematic – statistical methods.

I have set several working hypotheses as followed:

1. *Most students have already heard about the topic of CSR.*
2. *The most mentioned activities, that should be the part of the CSR, are social and environmental activities.*
3. *Most companies in the Czech Republic are not regarded as socially responsible.*
4. *Students would prefer products produced by socially responsible companies.*
5. *Students have problems to obtain information about the socially responsible activities of companies, the main source of information are companies' communications, which is not very trustful.*

## **1. Respondents**

From 236 respondents that fulfilled the questionnaires correctly, the most were women (71,19%), which basically corresponds with the structure of the Faculty of International Relations. Almost all of the respondents were aged between 18-25 years, which also demonstrates the typical population of the Faculty. Three students older than 26 years are rather an exception.

If we look at the household composition of the respondents, more than half of them live in households of 4 people, quite a lot in households of 3 people (20%). Households of 1 person are quite rare (2,97%), it is probably the situation, when a student lives alone in a flat or in students' dormitory. As regards the monthly household income, most of the respondents' households earn monthly more than 30.000 CZK (61%) or 20.000 – 30.000 CZK (25%).

The respondents live in all possible sizes of towns and cities, therefore we can say they could represent quite well the population of the Czech Republic in terms of their place of residence. However most of them live in Prague (33%),

which is given by the fact that they study in Prague as well. On the other hand 26% of the respondents live in small villages (less than 10.000 inhabitants). All tables and figures in this paper are obtained from my own research.

**Tab. 1: Number of respondents according to Gender**

Group	Absolute	Relative (%)
Men	68	28,81
Women	168	71,19

**Tab. 2: Number of respondents according to age**

Group	Absolute	Relative (%)
18 – 25 years	233	98,73
26 and more years	3	1,27

**Tab. 3: Number of respondents according to household members**

Group	Absolute	Relative (%)
1	7	2,97
2	21	8,90
3	48	20,34
4	134	56,78
5 and more	26	11,02

**Tab. 4: Number of respondents according to household monthly income**

Group	Absolute	Relative (%)
0 – 10.000 CZK	14	5,93
10.000 – 20.000 CZK	21	8,90
20.000 – 30.000 CZK	58	24,58
30.000 CZK and more	143	60,59

**Tab. 5: Number of respondents according to place of residence**

Group	Absolute	Relative (%)
town 0 – 10.000 inh.	61	25,85
town 10.000 – 20.000 inh.	21	8,90
town 20.000 – 50.000 inh.	31	13,14
town 50.000 – 100.000 inh.	20	8,47
town 100.000 and more inh.	24	10,17
Prague	79	33,47

**The first question** in the questionnaire was used as a screening question:

***Have you ever heard about the notion “Corporate social responsibility”?***

Structure of the group with positive answers:

**Tab. 6: Number of respondents according to Gender**

<b>Group</b>	<b>Absolute</b>	<b>Relative (%)</b>
Men	52	30,05
Women	121	69,95

**Tab. 7: Number of respondents according to age**

<b>Group</b>	<b>Absolute</b>	<b>Relative (%)</b>
18 – 25 years	172	99,42
26 and more years	1	0,58

**Tab. 8: Number of respondents according to household members**

<b>Group</b>	<b>Absolute</b>	<b>Relative (%)</b>
1	6	3,47
2	13	7,51
3	37	21,39
4	97	56,07
5 and more	20	11,56

**Tab. 9: Number of respondents according to household monthly income**

<b>Group</b>	<b>Absolute</b>	<b>Relative (%)</b>
0 – 10.000 CZK	11	6,36
10.000 – 20.000 CZK	11	6,36
20.000 – 30.000 CZK	42	24,28
30.000 CZK and more	109	63,00

**Tab. 10: Number of respondents according to place of residence**

<b>Group</b>	<b>Absolute</b>	<b>Relative (%)</b>
town 0 – 10.000 inh.	45	26,00
town 10.000 – 20.000 inh.	16	9,25
town 20.000 – 50.000 inh.	22	12,72
town 50.000 – 100.000 inh.	17	9,83
town 100.000 and more inh.	17	9,83
Prague	56	32,37

In case the respondents answered negatively, their questionnaires were not evaluated further. This situation happened in case of 63 respondents, therefore we can say, that 26,69% of the enquired students do not know about the Corporate Social Responsibility at all. The other questionnaires were

evaluated further and their number was 173 (73,31%). I have analyzed the demographic structure of both groups and there are just very little differences between both groups: in case of negative answer there are slightly more women (in case of gender) and there are slightly more students with household monthly income lower than 20.000 CZK. But the differences are so small, that we can say the both groups are almost identical in terms of demographic characteristics.

In my further text I will only analyze the results of the group with positive answers.

## 2. Where have you heard the notion „CSR“ for the first time?

**Tab. 11: Where have you heard the notion „CSR“ for the first time?**

Group	Total		Men		Women	
	Abs.	Rel. (%)	Abs.	Rel.(%)	Abs.	Rel.(%)
Newspaper articles	79	45,66	22	42,31	57	47,11
Product labels	4	2,31	0	0,00	4	3,31
Advertising and PR	14	8,09	5	9,62	9	7,44
Annual reports of companies	4	2,31	2	3,85	2	1,65
School	75	43,35	24	46,15	51	42,15
Other	9	5,20	1	1,92	8	6,61

Most students have heard about the CSR notion for the first time in newspaper articles and at school (during their education), only few students have seen the CSR notion or any information concerning CSR on product labels, in companies' advertising or annual reports. Some respondents named also other possibilities – AIESEC, conferences, job. One student does not name the source of his knowledge about the CSR. The number of answers does not vary in relation to gender. As regards the distribution of answers according to the household monthly income, the structure quite corresponds with the structure of the whole group, the only exception is the segment of households with the monthly income lower than 10.000 CZK, where the most frequently named source of knowledge about CSR was school (education) with 64% and on the second place there are newspaper articles. The richest group of respondents (household monthly income more than 30.000 CZK) also named advertising and PR more frequently than the other groups.

I have not recognized any influence of the factor „place of residence“ on the frequency of answers in case of this question.

### 3. What kind of activities should belong to the CSR?

**Tab. 12: What kind of activities should belong to the CSR?**

Group	Total		Men		Women	
	Abs.	Rel. (%)	Abs.	Rel. (%)	Abs.	Rel. (%)
<b>Protection of environment and energy saving</b>	166	<b>95,95</b>	49	<b>94,23</b>	117	<b>96,69</b>
<b>Social activities</b>	81	<b>46,82</b>	21	<b>40,38</b>	60	<b>49,59</b>
<b>Economic activities</b>	54	<b>31,21</b>	14	<b>26,92</b>	40	<b>33,06</b>
<b>Other</b>	8	<b>4,62</b>	3	<b>5,77</b>	5	<b>4,13</b>

According to students, companies, that are willing to behave socially responsibly, should perform especially those activities, which are to protect the environment including energy saving processes implementation. Almost all students named environmental protection as an important socially responsible activity. Further almost fifty percent of the respondents named social activities, these are followed by economic activities (esp. good relations with employees, customers and suppliers, fair trade). Following activities were mentioned among the „other“ activities: development of cities and city centres, sustainable development, support of education (this activity belongs among the social activities) and support of non-profit organizations (social activity as well). There are no gender tendencies in this case.

There are no special tendencies in any of the groups sorted by household monthly income. The only exception was evident in the case of the group with monthly income lower than 10.000 CZK, which prefers the economic activities more than the groups with higher monthly incomes. This fact could be explained by lower social level of the lower monthly income group and its higher sensitivity to economic matters (companies' relations with employees).

I have not identified significant impact of the factor „place of residence“ on the frequency of answers in this case.

#### 4. Are you willing to pay higher price for environmentally friendly products?

Tab. 13: Are you willing to pay higher price for environmentally friendly products?

Group	Total		Men		Women	
	Abs.	Rel. (%)	Abs.	Rel. (%)	Abs.	Rel. (%)
<b>Certainly yes</b>	29	<b>16,76</b>	3	<b>5,77</b>	26	<b>21,49</b>
<b>Rather yes</b>	101	<b>58,38</b>	26	<b>50,00</b>	75	<b>61,98</b>
<b>Don't know</b>	23	<b>13,29</b>	11	<b>21,15</b>	12	<b>9,92</b>
<b>Rather not</b>	17	<b>9,83</b>	9	<b>17,31</b>	8	<b>6,61</b>
<b>Certainly not</b>	3	<b>1,73</b>	3	<b>5,77</b>	0	<b>0,00</b>

Generally, most students would pay more for environmentally friendly products (75%), only few respondents would not (12%). However, women are much more sensitive to this matter, as 83% of them would pay more (22% certainly yes), and only 7% would probably not (0% certainly not). Men are more reluctant to pay more for environmentally friendly products – only 6% certainly yes, 50% rather yes. More men (21%) than women (10%) don't know, if they would pay more.

As regards the willingness to pay more for environmentally friendly products in various income groups, there are some differences. For example, the group with monthly household income between 10.000 CZK – 20.000 CZK is more willing to pay more (91%) than the other groups (more or less 73-75%). Also, the group with the lowest level of monthly household income is more reluctant to pay more (18% rather and certainly not), which is probably given by their lower purchase power. However, this situation also might be given by the fact that in the lower income groups there are only few respondents (11 in the case of the group 0 – 10.000 CZK and 11 in the group 10.000 – 20.000 CZK).

In the case of the factor „place of residence“ I have not identified any differences amongst the various groups. The only difference is evident in case of the „town with 10.000 – 20.000 inhabitants“ – the respondents were more reluctant to pay more (19%) than the other groups (in average 10%).

5. Would you prefer a product from a company which communicates its socially responsible activities to an identical product from a company which does not communicate any socially responsible activities?

Tab. 14: Would you prefer a product from a company which communicates its socially responsible activities to an identical product from a company which does not communicate any socially responsible activities?

Group	Total		Men		Women	
	Abs.	Rel. (%)	Abs.	Rel. (%)	Abs.	Rel. (%)
<b>Certainly yes</b>	65	<b>37,57</b>	13	<b>25,00</b>	52	<b>42,98</b>
<b>Rather yes</b>	85	<b>49,13</b>	32	<b>61,54</b>	53	<b>43,80</b>
<b>Don't know</b>	16	<b>9,25</b>	4	<b>7,69</b>	12	<b>9,92</b>
<b>Rather not</b>	6	<b>3,47</b>	2	<b>3,85</b>	4	<b>3,31</b>
<b>Certainly not</b>	1	<b>0,58</b>	1	<b>1,92</b>	0	<b>0,00</b>

In total, most respondents would prefer a product produced by a socially responsible company – 87% (it is supposed that a company which communicates its socially responsible activities is deemed as socially responsible). Only very few respondents don't know (9%) and even less would not prefer such a product (4%). Men are again more reluctant to prefer such a product but the difference is not as significant as at the previous question. The percentage of men and women that would prefer such a product is nearly the same (about 85%), but women are more decided to do so (43%) than men (25%). The percentage of negative answers is slightly the same and not very high (5% in case of men and 3% in case of women).

There is no significant influence of the factor household monthly income, the groups with higher income are slightly less reluctant to prefer a product produced by socially responsible company, but the results can be distorted, because there are only few respondents in the lower income groups.

I have not identified any significant influence of the factor „place of residence“. In small towns (less than 50.000 inhabitants) people tend more „not to know“ if they prefer such a product or not.

**6. Is „CSR“ a source of company/product differentiation (competitive advantage)?**

**Tab. 15: Is „CSR“ a source of company/product differentiation (competitive advantage)?**

Group	Total		Men		Women	
	Abs.	Rel. (%)	Abs.	Rel. (%)	Abs.	Rel. (%)
<b>Certainly yes</b>	23	<b>13,29</b>	6	<b>11,54</b>	17	<b>14,05</b>
<b>Rather yes</b>	71	<b>41,04</b>	18	<b>34,62</b>	53	<b>43,80</b>
<b>Don't know</b>	38	<b>21,97</b>	12	<b>23,08</b>	26	<b>21,49</b>
<b>Rather not</b>	38	<b>21,97</b>	15	<b>28,85</b>	23	<b>19,01</b>
<b>Certainly not</b>	3	<b>1,73</b>	1	<b>1,92</b>	2	<b>1,65</b>

In total, slightly more than 50% of all respondents think that CSR might be a source of company or product differentiation (only 13% are really convinced), many respondents do not have any idea if yes or no (22%), and quite a lot of the respondents rather do not see CSR as a source of company or product differentiation. Women are in this case a little more positive about this question but the difference between them and men is very small.

The results sorted according to household monthly income more or less correspond with the total results. However, the group with monthly income between 10.000 – 20.000 CZK seems to be an exception, as these respondents are especially concentrated in the group „don't know“ and „rather not“. There is no clear explanation for this situation, but again – there are only 11 respondents in this group, therefore the results might be slightly distorted.

In case of the factor „place of residence“ I have identified several distinctions: Respondents coming from smaller towns (up to 100.000 inhabitants) are more convinced that CSR might be a source of company differentiation (always more than 50%), respondents coming from cities bigger than 100.000 inhabitants are not that sure about it (always less than 50%). However, the percentage of answers „certainly yes“ was always much lower than the percentage of answers „rather yes“ (max. 20% and 50% respectively). The percentage of negative answers was never higher than 30%.

## 7. Where do you obtain information about socially responsible behavior of companies in the Czech Republic?

**Tab.16: Where do you obtain information about socially responsible behavior of companies in the Czech Republic?**

Group	Total		Men		Women	
	Abs.	Rel. (%)	Abs.	Rel. (%)	Abs.	Rel. (%)
Corporate web sites	44	25,43	10	19,23	34	28,10
Newspaper articles	74	42,77	19	36,54	55	45,45
Corporate communication	50	28,90	12	23,08	38	31,40
Annual reports	4	2,31	2	3,85	2	1,65
Products labels	34	19,65	5	9,62	29	23,97
Assessment of independent organizations	21	12,14	8	15,38	13	10,74
Own experience	48	27,75	18	34,62	30	24,79
Don't know	7	4,05	3	5,77	4	3,31

In total, the respondents obtain information about companies behavior mainly from newspaper articles (43% of respondents), corporate communication (29%), from their own experience especially during shopping (28%), corporate web sites (25%) and from product labels (20%). Only 12% of the respondents obtain information from independent organizations' assessment, which is given mainly by the fact, that students don't know these organizations and their assessments. Only 3% of the respondents source information from annual reports of companies. The annual reports are not regarded as very truthful.

It is interesting, that the product labels are much more preferred by women than by men (24%, 10% respectively). The ranking of the results sorted by men and women is slightly different, but the differences of percentages are small, except of that named above (product labels).

The results sorted according to household monthly income show quite similar picture as the results of the whole group – the most preferred information sources are newspaper articles, corporate web sites, corporate communication, own experience and product labels. The annual reports as well as assessment of independent organizations are not very often named.

If we look at the results according to the factor „place of residence“, the figures are very variable and there are hardly any tendencies to be identified. The

ranking is different for each group, but generally the annual reports and assessment of independent organizations are the least mentioned.

### 8. Which information source about companies' behavior in terms of their social responsibility do you prefer?

**Tab. 17: Which information source about companies' behavior in terms of their social responsibility do you prefer?**

Group	Total		Men		Women	
	Abs.	Rel. (%)	Abs.	Rel. (%)	Abs.	Rel. (%)
Corporate web sites	73	42,20	20	38,46	53	43,80
Corporate communication	68	39,31	17	32,69	51	42,15
Newspaper articles	78	45,09	27	51,92	51	42,15
Annual reports	11	6,36	5	9,62	6	4,96
Product labels	96	55,49	22	42,31	74	61,16
Assessment of independent organizations	82	47,40	24	46,15	58	47,93

In total, students do not prefer any special source of information. However, only product labels are preferred by more than 50% of respondents, which is quite surprising. Assessment of independent organization is important for nearly 50% of respondents. The other sources of information are quite equally important for students, but annual reports of companies seem not to be very important for them, as only 6% of respondents in average do prefer them. What could be the reason? Probably the credibility of the information source plays the crucial role – product labels are the most credible source of information and annual reports are the least credible sources of information.

There are no significant gender tendencies in case of this question. The results sorted according to household monthly income more or less correspond with the total results. The very same can be said about the factor „place of residence“.

## 9. Which contention do you agree at most with?

Tab. 18: Which contention do you agree at most with?

Group	Total		Men		Women	
	Abs.	Rel. (%)	Abs.	Rel. (%)	Abs.	Rel. (%)
Most companies in the Czech Rep. behave socially responsibly	1	0,58	1	1,92	0	0,00
Some companies in the Czech Rep. behave socially responsibly	75	43,35	24	46,15	51	42,15
Only few companies in the Czech Rep. behave socially responsibly	97	56,07	27	51,92	70	57,85
No company in the Czech Rep. behaves socially responsibly	0	0,00	0	0,00	0	0,00

In total, the respondents assume that only some companies in the Czech Republic do behave socially responsibly (99%). Only one man thinks, that most companies in the Czech Republic behave socially responsibly, on the other hand nobody thinks, that no company in the Czech Republic behaves socially responsibly. There are no strong gender tendencies in the examined group of students.

As regards the factor household monthly income, there are no big differences from the total results with the exception of the group with income of 0 – 10.000 CZK, which agrees more with the statement „Only few companies behave socially responsibly“ than with the statement „some companies behave socially responsibly“ (82%, 18% respectively).

The factor „place of residence“ did not prove to have any impact on frequency of answers in the case of this question.

**10. Do you think, that companies in the Czech Republic communicate their socially responsible activities sufficiently?**

**Tab. 19: Do you think, that companies in the Czech Republic communicate their socially responsible activities sufficiently?**

Group	Total		Men		Women	
	Abs.	Rel. (%)	Abs.	Rel. (%)	Abs.	Rel. (%)
<b>Certainly yes</b>	2	<b>1,16</b>	1	<b>1,92</b>	1	<b>0,83</b>
<b>Rather yes</b>	11	<b>6,36</b>	4	<b>7,69</b>	7	<b>5,79</b>
<b>Don't know</b>	45	<b>26,01</b>	14	<b>26,92</b>	31	<b>25,62</b>
<b>Rather not</b>	101	<b>58,38</b>	28	<b>53,85</b>	73	<b>60,33</b>
<b>Certainly not</b>	14	<b>8,09</b>	5	<b>9,62</b>	9	<b>7,44</b>

More than 90% (92%) of the respondents do not think, that companies in the Czech Republic communicate their socially responsible activities sufficiently or they don't know (67% and 26% respectively). This is a huge number and it is probably caused by the lack of information about companies' behavior that consumers have at their disposal. And in case a company does not communicate its socially responsible activities, it cannot have advantage, even if it performs socially responsible activities. And, consequently it is no wonder, that most respondents think that only some or few companies behave socially responsibly. I have not identified any important gender tendencies.

As regards the structure of answers according to household monthly income, there is a clear tendency that lower income groups (0 – 20.000 CZK) tend to prefer the answer rather not and are more certain about it (in average 77%), the rest of the groups more or less corresponds with the total results of the whole group of respondents.

As for the factor „place of residence“ I have not identified any special tendencies, different from the whole group.

**11. Which is the reason, why companies behave socially responsibly?**

**Tab. 20: Which is the reason, why companies behave socially responsibly?**

Group	Total		Men		Women	
	Abs.	Rel. (%)	Abs.	Rel. (%)	Abs.	Rel. (%)
<b>Bigger attractiveness of its products for consumers</b>	70	<b>40,46</b>	19	<b>36,54</b>	51	<b>42,15</b>
<b>Social necessity</b>	106	<b>61,27</b>	33	<b>63,46</b>	73	<b>60,33</b>
<b>Bigger attractiveness for investors</b>	24	<b>13,87</b>	8	<b>15,38</b>	16	<b>13,22</b>
<b>Bigger attractiveness for employees</b>	19	<b>10,98</b>	5	<b>9,62</b>	14	<b>11,57</b>
<b>Other</b>	5	<b>2,89</b>	2	<b>3,85</b>	3	<b>2,48</b>

It is quite interesting that most respondents in total (61%) mention „social necessity“ as the main reason why companies behave socially responsibly. It means that the society already requires such a behavior and the companies would not behave in such a way, if the society would not require it. On the second position „bigger attractiveness of products“ produced by socially responsible companies is named (40%, slightly less by men and more by women). „Bigger attractiveness for investors“ is placed as third and „bigger attractiveness for employees“ as fourth. Among other possibilities especially „stability of companies“ and „prestige“ of companies were named.

The are no substantial gender tendencies in this case.

However, I have identified several differences due to the factor „household monthly income“: The order of reasons, which were named by various income groups corresponds with the order of the whole group of respondents. But the lowest income group (0 – 10.000 CZK) puts a bigger emphasis on bigger attractiveness for employees, which probably mirrors higher social sensitivity of this group (socially responsible companies provide better social programmes for their employees). The group with income of 10.000 – 20.000 CZK puts a smaller emphasis on bigger product attractiveness than the other income groups. Otherwise the percentages of the answers are similar to those for the whole group of respondents.

The factor „place of residence“ did not show any substantial impact on answers of this question.

## Summary

Most respondents have already heard about the notion „Corporate social responsibility“ (73% in total). The main source of information, where the respondents heard about the „CSR“ for the first time were either newspaper articles or school – mostly the university education or various conferences. It is quite probable, that the percentage of students, who know about the „CSR“ will grow in the future, as it is becoming the part of educational programmes at various universities. According to the respondents the environmental and social activities should form the crucial part of „CSR concepts“ of companies.

The students expressed their belief, that „CSR“ could be a source of company/product differentiation (competitive advantage), but their conviction in this matter was not very strong. However, as a support we can mention the fact, that the most respondents would pay more for environmentally friendly products, as well as they would mostly prefer products from companies, which do communicate their socially responsible activities.

The respondents suppose that the main reason, that companies behave socially responsibly is the social necessity, followed by bigger attractiveness of company products for customers.

Only some or only few companies in the Czech Republic are regarded as socially responsible. One of the reasons could be the lack of information, about 70% of the respondents have the opinion that the companies do not communicate their socially responsible activities sufficiently. As for the information sources, most respondents obtain information from newspaper articles, corporate communication, their own shopping experience, corporate web sites and product labels. Companies should communicate their activities in these channels more. On the other hand the respondents mostly prefer information put on product labels and assessment of independent companies. But the assessment by independent organizations is not very used among the students, therefore they should be more educated about this source of information (that could be the part of university education).

To sum up the results I will come back to my hypotheses:

1. *Most students have already heard about the topic of CSR. (confirmed)*
2. *The most mentioned activities, that should be the part of the CSR, are social and environmental activities. (confirmed)*
3. *Most companies in the Czech Republic are not regarded as socially responsible. (confirmed)*
4. *Students would prefer products produced by socially responsible companies. (confirmed)*
5. *Students have problems to obtain information about the socially responsible activities of companies, the main source of information are companies' communications, which is not very trustful. (partly confirmed, the sources of information are also newspaper articles,*

*students' own experience, product labels, also, the students would appreciate more information about the assessment by independent organizations).*

In my survey I was trying to obtain some basic information about students' awareness about the CSR problems and about the current situation among companies operating in the Czech Republic. All results have been solely described without any personal evaluation. Therefore the information provided in the paper are to be regarded as facts and not judgements.

It would be suitable to analyze the obtained figures by more sophisticated statistical methods, but that would exceed the space of this working paper, therefore it will be a part of my following works.

It would also be interesting to perform a similar survey in the future to see any changes in students' opinion.

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