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"Conditions and effects of introduction and implementation of the principles of corporate social responsibility in enterprises of the construction sector in Poland"

Summary of doctoral dissertation

The dissertation illustrates the problem of corporate social responsibility (CSR). CSR is a concept, according to which enterprises in their activities take into account social interests, relationships with various groups of stakeholders, and also show concern for the natural environment. The dissertation focuses on the areas of implementation of the CSR concept postulates and the benefits of using good practices in this field, as well as conditions that can have a significant impact on the implementation of the concept.

The subject of the research included Polish enterprises in the construction industry. In construction, CSR principles are of particular importance as this sector contributes to a heavy burden on the environment. Polish construction appears to have the highest number of fatal accidents in comparison to other sections of the economy.

The main goal of the dissertation was to develop a model of conditions associated with introduction and implementation of CSR principles in construction entities in Poland. Established hypotheses indicate that:

1. Large enterprises undertake purposeful, formalized actions and their activity in this aspect, may affect the organizational structure of the entity;
2. Small and medium enterprises implement the postulates and principles of corporate social responsibility to a large extent in an informal manner. Such activities are not part of the company's strategy;
3. The size of the enterprise, turnover, internship and the origin of capital are factors that differentiate the degree of implementation of the rules in individual areas of CSR;
4. The main barriers related to the implementation of CSR in small and medium enterprises refer to restrictions in the area of acquiring knowledge about CSR;
5. The owners and managers of small construction companies perceive CSR activities only as an unnecessary overhead that will not generate any additional benefits;
6. For large companies implementing CSR postulates, image benefits are very important and financial benefits may be delayed.

The answers obtained as a result of the research procedure allowed for positive verification of the research hypotheses. The conducted research indicates that the CSR concept is implemented primarily by large enterprises, where activities in this area are part of the company's complex strategy. Small and medium-size entities implement activities related to CSR, however they do not define them as socially responsible and they are not included in the company's strategy. Amongst entities declaring the implementation of CSR postulates, the majority are those with foreign and mixed capital. There are also differences in involvement in the socially responsible enterprises that depend on the volume of annual turnover. The higher the turnover the company achieves, the more often it undertakes CSR activities.

The conclusions of the conducted research indicate that:

- CSR activities are part of the strategy most often in large enterprises, while in small and medium-sized enterprises they are informal and undertaken incidentally,
- the degree of implementing the assumptions of the CSR concept depends on the size of the economic entity, the origin of capital, achieved turnover and seniority on the market,
- areas in which entrepreneurs in the construction industry are most active are human rights and organizational order, while the least actions are implemented for the benefit of the local community,
- the main motives for the implementation of CSR by Polish companies in the construction sector are benefits in the image sphere, and the most significant barriers are restrictions related to acquiring / possessing knowledge that is necessary for implementing CSR principles,
- the most important benefits of CSR implementation that construction companies see are the improvement of the image and relations with the local community, and the increase of trust of local authorities. However, the most unfavorable effect of undertaking socially responsible activities is high costs.

Studies portrait the need for raising awareness amongst Polish construction industry companies about the nature of socially responsible activities. This particularly applies to areas where they show the least involvement. It is also necessary to realize that running a business based on CSR principles can bring a number of benefits.