



**ARTICLE**

## Corporate social responsibility in hotel industry - environmental implications

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**Abstract** – The first objective of this article is to describe the fundamental aspects of the concept of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). The second goal is to present the activities, or the so-called good practices that hotels may take up and which are in tandem with the idea of CSR. The good practices will be described on the example of Polish hotel group and two hotels active on the Polish market, especially in Krakow. The article outlines possible benefits resulting from the implementation of CSR principles into the hotel strategy.

**Keywords** – Corporate social responsibility, CSR, good practices, hotel industry

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Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is a management strategy in which companies voluntarily take into account the social and environmental aspects and consequences of their activity. The basic idea of CSR is ethical and responsible conduct towards all stakeholders while respecting the environment at the same time. Initially, the idea of corporate social responsibility was particularly interesting for big corporations, especially the international ones. Currently, CSR becomes appealing not only to corporations and management theorists, but also to small and medium-sized companies. The strategy allows them to operate in a stable and efficient way and opens up new areas of competitiveness.

The origins of CSR can be traced back to the turn of the 18th and 19th centuries. The pioneer in the CSR area was Andrew Carnegie, an American industrialist who, in his work "The Gospel of Wealth", presented the first version of theoretical foundation of CSR in the form of the principle of charity and stewardship. The boost CSR popularity came in the second half of the twentieth century. The modern understanding of CSR took its shape in the 1960s. The 1970s was the period of sorting out terminology relating to corporate social responsibility. The last decade of the 20th century was the time of formulating new questions relating to CSR. Globalisation, the creation of global corporations, and changing expectations towards corporate activities has

contributed to the development of the idea of CSR [Mazur-Wierzbicka-2012, p. 12-13].

Hotel management as a dynamically developing sector of economy and an important part of the tourism sector, apart from providing high quality services, should meet the society's expectations within the framework of minimizing negative effects on the natural environment, supporting their workers and local community. Hotel management is a specific industry which contributes to environmental degradation by the erecting and running tourist accommodation facilities. In turn, the employees of this sector have to deal with the physical and psycho-social risks, including extended working hours and social threats.

The purpose of this article is to present the fundamental issues related to the concept of corporate social responsibility and to outline the CSR good practices adopted by the hotel industry.

In the article the terms corporate social responsibility, social responsibility, responsible business and the acronym CSR are used interchangeably. The paper is based on the analysis of the source literature in the field of corporate social responsibility and the analysis of the information materials provided by the hotels and a hotel group.

## **The core of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and the stakeholders**

Responsibility is the ethical standard that specifies certain willingness to bear the consequences of the positive and negative effects of one's (individual and/or group) decisions [Jabłoński 2013, p. 59]. The word "responsibility" was used in Roman law, it stems from the Latin word *respondere* which means "to answer before court" [Filek 2002, p. 160]. The Dictionary of contemporary Polish language defines responsibility as "the need to bear the consequences of one's conduct, behaviour resulting from internal beliefs or legal order, as well as awareness of this need."

The clear-cut explanation of this phenomenon is difficult due to the vast variety of definitions of corporate social responsibility (CSR) in the source literature. The multitude of definitions stems from the difficulty in achieving consensus and determining of how corporate social responsibility affects management. According to the European Commission Green Papers, CSR is a concept voluntarily taking into account the social and environmental aspects of business and interaction with the stakeholders [Mazur-Wierzbicka-2012, p. 29].

Responsible business is a strategic and long-term approach based on the principles of social dialogue and the search for solutions of benefit to all. It is gaining profit and wisely shaping relationships with all stakeholders at the same, it is providing services and products in a way that does not degrade the social and natural environment, it is doing business in harmony with social expectations that have ethical, legal, civic and financial character [Rok 2004, p. 18].

According to M. Rybak, CSR is the leaders' choice of such decisions and actions that contribute to both care about self-interest (to increase profit) as well as the protection and increase of social welfare.

Apart from the statement that CSR is a commitment to open and ethical business conduct according to the principles of sustainable development, the definition given by J. Adamczyk also draws attention to the fact that the business activity must be in tandem with the law and standards of conduct.

In turn, J. Korpus considers CSR a new global change in direction of strategic company management which commits the companies to sustainable development with due regard to the principles of economics, ecology and ethics [Szot-Gabrys 2013, pp. 35-36].

Each of the definitions presented, draws attention to the various aspects of a company's activity. Nevertheless, they do have something in common, namely, the implementation of corporate social responsibility is voluntary; it is balancing the economic, social and

environmental dimensions. The companies implementing CSR in their activities shall be guided by ethical principles and their actions shall be addressed to a wide group of stakeholders.

Also, it should be emphasised that CSR is not philanthropy. Being a philanthropist is not equivalent with taking social actions. The reason lies in the source of the benefaction. The philanthropist may be presenting people with items that were created or acquired by means of exploitation of man by man. Also, CSR cannot be associated with relationship marketing, although it provides long-term care for a consumer [Bartkowiak 2011, p.15].

However, the most common and most frequently cited definition of CSR is the one developed by the International Organization for Standardization (ISO). According to the ISO 26000 standard, corporate social responsibility is the "responsibility of an organization for the impacts of its decisions and activities on society and the environment through transparent and ethical behaviour that contributes to sustainable development, including health and the welfare of society; takes into account the expectations of stakeholders; is in compliance with applicable law and consistent with international norms of behaviour, and is integrated throughout the organization and practised in its relationships".

Responsibility, which is the superior part of the CSR concept, is divided into different types. A. B. Carroll has formulated four types of responsibility presenting them in the form of a pyramid constructed based on the A. Maslow's hierarchy of needs. The reason of the comparison is that in order to achieve higher levels of responsibility, it is necessary to fill the lower ones. Carroll has presented the following types of responsibility [Rybak, 2004, pp. 29-30]:

- Philanthropic responsibility - desired by the society, it encompasses the activities for the benefit of the local community, volunteering and charitable activities;
- Ethical responsibility - expected by the society, it encompasses the actions in line with the spirit of the law and providing ethical leadership;
- Legal responsibility - required by the society, it encompasses activities relating to the observance of the law, the protection of consumer rights, environmental protection and meeting the provisions of the contract;
- Economic responsibility - required by the society, it encompasses the activities that are focused on maximizing profits and minimizing costs.

A significant position in the concept of corporate social responsibility belongs to the stakeholders. They are the individuals and organizations that have direct or indirect impact on the organization or are under the influence of its activity. The group of internal stakeholders consists of i.e. employees, shareholders, and owners; in contrast,

the group of external stakeholders encompasses customers, suppliers, local communities, authorities, financial institutions, media, business competitors, and trade unions [Paliwoda-Matiolańska 2009, p. 57].

### **The international guidelines for Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)**

The CSR standards and norms were created in response to the needs in the field of recommendations of CSR implementation methods in everyday corporate activities. Additionally, they were created because of the demand for indicators, methods, evaluation tools and communication practices relating to environmental, social and ethical aspects of the business activity. The main purpose of each of these instruments is to create a specific basis for CSR practices. In addition, they are to be the factor driving the continuous development and improvement as well as the creation of more advanced programmes and strategies.

Guidelines for corporate social responsibility are outlined in the documents such as the UN Global Compact, the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises, the SA 8000 standard and the ISO 26000 standard.

The first one - UN Global Compact is an initiative of the Secretary General of the United Nations Kofi Annan and was presented on January 31, 1999 at the World Economic Forum in Davos, and officially signed on July 26, 2000. This is the world's largest voluntary UN initiative for corporate social responsibility and the promotion of sustainable development. The Initiative has more than 12,000 members from 145 countries. The Global Compact Initiative is based on ten key principles of human rights, labour rights, the environment protection and anti-corruption activities. The idea of the Global Compact is based on the assumption that by applying the principles of corporate social responsibility, the business world can significantly participate in solving the economic problems of the modern world, reduce the effects of globalization and contribute to the sustainable prosperity of the world economy [UNGC 2014].

The next document - the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises has been developed in 1976 and amended in 2000. Apart from presenting a comprehensive catalogue of entrepreneurs' principles and commitments, it also contains a proposal for the institutional and procedural system of their implementation. The principles relate to human rights, relations between employees and employers, competition, consumer interests, transparency, taxes and environment [Overview OECD 2004].

The third initiative is the SA 8000 standard (Social Accountability 8000). It is an international standard for corporate social responsibility introduced by the New

York-based organization - Social Accountability International (SAI) in 1998. It refers to the universal values arising from the international human and labour rights conventions. It also refers to the ISO 9001 standards of quality and ISO 14000 standards of environmental management. Its universal character enables the companies located around the world and operating in various industries to implement and meet the standard's requirements. The main element of the SA 8000 is the concept of CSR including social and environmental aspects in company management [MALON GROUP 2014]. The SA 8000 standard encompasses nine areas such as child labour, forced labour, health and safety, freedom of association and collective bargaining, discrimination, disciplinary practices, working hours, salary and management systems [Adamczyk, 2009, pp. 181-183].

Another important initiative is the ISO 26000 international standard which was created in 2010. A Polish language version appeared in 2012. ISO 26000 is a universal handbook containing guidelines and recommendations; it is not the technical standard and is not subject to certification. It is dedicated to all business, administrative, government and third sector organizations. It provides guidelines for terms and definitions relating to corporate social responsibility which introduces order in terminology. It presents description and trends of corporate social responsibility; the rules and practices concerning CSR, identification and engagement of the stakeholders, implementation and promotion of socially responsible behaviour in the organization and its environment; the way of communicating the commitment and accomplishments related to CSR, the list of supplementary literature assisting in deeper understanding of CSR [Adamczyk, 2009, pp. 184-185, Makuch 2011, p. 20].

The main part of the standard is defining the areas of corporate social responsibility. ISO 26000 outlines the areas such as corporate governance, human rights, employment relationships, natural environment, market practices, consumer issues, as well as the community involvement and the development of the local community. ISO 26000 provides the basic principles of corporate social responsibility. These include the principle of accountability, transparency, ethical behaviour and respect for human rights, stakeholders' interest, and international standards of conduct [PKN 2014].

### **Tools for the implementation of the concept of CSR**

A set of tools to implement the concept of corporate social responsibility includes a variety of activities. A company, before choosing the right tools, should take account the specificity of the business, i.e. its size, the number of employees, the number of markets it operates on and the number of its products and services. It is also necessary to define the groups of stakeholders and clear

objectives that the company intends to achieve by fulfilling the idea of CSR. Properly developed and correctly applied tools can contribute to i.e. increase of the competitiveness [Bargiel 2010, pp. 4-6].

The most frequently used tools include actions directed to the local communities that support local institutions, individuals, children and youth initiatives, and the investments in a given area. Another tool is the social campaigns aimed at changing attitudes and behaviour or increasing awareness of a particular problem. An important thing when conducting social campaigns is to combine them with the company's activity. Programmes for employees are activities related to investing in the development of the company's personnel. The tool is implemented by means of trainings, courses, programmes for equal opportunities i.e. creating best working conditions for pregnant women, eliminating discrimination or implementing facilities for people with disabilities. Among the actions related to the personnel, the employee voluntary work is also taken into account. The employee voluntary work is voluntary engagement of the company's employees into the social projects. Pro-environmental actions are another tool aimed at minimizing the impact on the natural environment. The initiatives include the implementation of environmental policy, waste sorting, environmental education of employees and consumers. Another tool involves social reports or publications depicting the way of managing the company and the implementation of the company's strategy adjusted to the concept of corporate social responsibility. In the implementation of the CSR concept, clear and effective management systems and marking of products, including social and eco-labelling are extremely helpful [PARP 2014].

The above tools are an essential element in the implementation of the strategy involving corporate social responsibility. Measurable results for the company and its stakeholders can be achieved only by a well developed strategy.

### **Selected CSR activities in the hotel management**

Corporate social responsibility is not only limited to major international hotel chains. In fact, it is the big companies that have initiated the implementation of CSR principles into the business strategy. However, sometimes also smaller hotels notice the benefits of this activity. Below are the examples of good practices adopted by the Polish hotel group, in the facility being a part of one of the international hotel groups and belonging to a private owner.

The selection of CSR activities was motivated by the previous achievements of certain hotel groups or facilities operating on the Polish hotel market, particularly in Kraków.

The first example is one of the oldest and most renowned Polish brands - Orbis S.A. It is the largest hotel chain in Poland and in Central Europe. It offers 10.5 thousand rooms at nearly 60 hotels in 24 Polish cities and in Vilnius, Lithuania.

In 2000, after privatization, Orbis acquired a strategic partner in the form of one of the largest international hotel groups - Accor. Orbis Hotel Group consists of brands such as Sofitel, Mercure, Novotel, Ibis, Ibis budget and 4 Orbis Hotel brands.

Orbis S.A. together with Accor Group seeks to link its own development with respect for local communities and the environment. In order to do this, they launched an international programme PLANET 21 which encourages all the hotels and customers to participate in it. The programme is based on the Agenda 21, a document adopted in 1992 at the UN Conference on Environment and Development in Rio de Janeiro. The strategy of PLANET 21 consists of 21 commitments in seven areas, such as:

- Health - in the era of life threats in the form of various epidemics or obesity, the Orbis Group provides healthy interiors, which are equipped with the eco-labelled products, promotes balanced nutrition by preparing food using local and natural products, and participates in the international programme against HIV/AIDS – Act – HIV in 6 steps;
- Local development - the area referring to the protection of children against sexual abuse, the protection of ecosystems and support for responsible commerce;
- Work - actions within this area are focused on promoting the development of employees and their skills, the improvement of the quality of working life and on promoting diversity. Orbis Hotel Group has introduced the Accor “International Diversity Charter” that defines the priorities such as the diversity of origin, gender, age diversity, disability and dialogue in all the hotels in Poland.
- The actions are focused on conducting the transparent and open business. It manifests itself i.a. through the publication of periodic reports, as well as through engaging the suppliers and franchised and company managed hotels into the idea of CSR activity;
- Natural environment - this area includes commitments on reduction of the use of water, biodiversity preservation and waste recycling;
- Carbon dioxide - the activities in this area are based on the reduction of energy consumption and carbon dioxide emissions as well as on increasing the use of renewable energy;
- Innovation - the activities are based on the promotion of sustainable building, stimulation of ecological design and application of sustainable technologies.

So far, the Orbis Group has taken up and implemented several important projects related to the corporate social

responsibility. One of the most important and ground-breaking ones is signing of The Code of Conduct whose purpose is to combat the sexual abuse of children. Within the Code, the Orbis Group committed itself to formulate internal policies to counter the sexual abuse of children, to train the staff in the field of the rights of the child and introduced policies, to inform the tourists and local environment about the existing problem of sex tourism, and to include a clause about the measures taken against this form of child abuse in the contracts with their suppliers.

In the framework of CSR good practices, the Orbis Group has partnered with several institutions and organisations active in this field. In this respect, the Orbis Group employees played a special role, as owing to their initiative, the Accor foundation paid €41,000 to finance the project “Spółdzielnia MaM” in 2011 (the Polish social project aimed at counteracting the exclusion of women from the labour market and the society). Then the first Polish social co-operative of mothers was created in order to prevent social exclusion of single mothers, minors and permanently unemployed. The project provided its participants with vocational and psychological training. For two years, fifteen single mothers were learning handicrafts with elements of folklore. Manufactured local products were sold by the women through the created co-operative. The project created by employees of the Orbis Group is still functioning and helping mothers at risk of social exclusion.

“Accordeon” is another social project launched by the Group employees and implemented in collaboration with Nobody’s Children Foundation (pl. Fundacja Dzieci Niczyje) Accor Foundation. The idea is to help young people who grow up in orphanages and dysfunctional families to enter the labour market. Young people are involved in a three-stage process: personal development training, workshops related to functioning within a company and paid internships in partner organizations. 7 companies from different industries participated in the programme. Participants could cooperate with L’Oreal Professionnel, Sodexo, GEFCO, Norauto, Dalkia, Novotel Warsaw Centre and Novotel Warsaw Airport, and some of them received proposals for permanent employment.

Orbis Hotel Group also takes into account the environmental aspect in its activities. During the Earth Guest Day, a programme run by Accor Group, more than three thousand Orbis Group employees were involved in environmental activities. Apart from planting trees and flowers and cleaning the forests, the lectures for children and adults about healthy eating, waste segregation and ecosystems were held. In addition, the environmental activities are supported by the OPEN operational programme which controls the consumption of energy, water and waste management.

Another major action is Women at Accor Generation network which brings together women from Orbis Group and Accor in Poland and from all over the world. The Orbis Group is at the forefront of a worldwide community of Accor because it employs up to 41% of women at the executive positions. The WAAG’s main objective is to promote the development of vocational training for women. The programme is responsible for organising meetings in Cracow, Gdansk, Poznan and Warsaw which are the forum for providing participants with tools to efficiently manage their own career.

Orbis Hotel Group as an employer provides its workers with a clear bonus system, the possibility of signing up to the group life insurance, private health care and it supports the employees’ leisure by offering preferential prices for the Orbis services. In addition, Orbis Group cares about their development by offering internal development programs and trainings.

One of the most active tourist accommodation facilities in the area of CSR is Radisson Blu Hotel Kraków. The hotel belongs to Radisson Blu Hotels & Resorts brand which is a part of the Rezidor Hotel Group. The philosophy of the brand is based on one short sentence - “Yes I can!”

Radisson Blu Hotel is a 5-star business hotel located on 17 Straszewskiego street next to the Planty Park (the network of parks in Cracow surrounding the city centre) and near the Main Market Square. The hotel has 196 rooms including standard rooms, business class rooms and suites, 5 rooms for guests with disabilities and 4 restaurants. Among the additional services, the hotel offers a fitness centre, 24-hour room service, business centre, concierge, Beauty Studio, Baby Blu services intended for children, free bikes, breakfast-to-go option and quick checkout. Hotel creates favourable conditions for small and large business meetings in eight multifunctional conference rooms.

Radisson Blu Hotel Krakow, as a part of Rezidor Group which takes into account the sustainable development, takes actions within the framework of corporate social responsibility in the area of three programs:

- The Think Planet programme draws attention to minimizing the ecological footprint.
- The Think People programme is oriented towards health and safety of guests and employees.
- The Think Together programme is related to accepting and complying with the ethical and social norms in the company and the local community.

The Radisson Blu Hotel Kraków CSR strategy is carried out under the banner of “Blu Loves Green”. Radisson Blu Hotel Krakow is a responsible event organiser. In 2011, the Forbes magazine awarded Radisson Blu Hotel Kraków the title of “Sustainable Development Leader” for acquiring the BS 8901 certificate.

BS 8901 certificate is a British standard developed by the British Standard Institute in 2007, updated in 2009. It was created for the event industry. It is a standard connected to organisation of sustainable gatherings and events. It is related to the theory and practice of sustainable development and corporate social responsibility. The standard does not refer solely to the issue of environmental protection, but obliges the company to diligently check all relevant economic, social and environmental issues associated with their activities [Hotelarz].

However, this is not the only certificate awarded to the hotel. It was also given the The Green Key certificate for implementation of the policy of economical resources management. The Green Key is an international certification scheme for hotels and other tourist facilities offering the conference organisation services. The programme's objective is the promotion of responsible business in the tourism industry and granting the international certificate to the objects that meet the requirements of The Green Key. He is currently the world's largest accommodation industry ecotag.

The Green Conference package is a proposal for business customers who can organise conferences and banquets in tandem with the principles of sustainable development. The package was created based on the BS 8901 certificate. It contains guidelines connected to responsible meetings management, eco conference materials as well as balanced and healthy menu. After the event, the organiser receives the report covering the used materials and waste produced during the conference as well as the Green Meeting Certificate confirming that the event was organised in accordance with the principles of sustainable development.

In the framework of CSR good practices, Radisson Blu Hotel Kraków has partnered with Jan Brzechwa's Orphanage in Krakow. Organisation of the Christmas event with Christmas tree full of colourful decorations and children's letters to Santa Claus has become the hotel's permanent annual initiative. Guests, choosing the letter, donate a certain amount of money so that the kids' dreams come true. Building the image of a socially responsible hotel is also visible through organizing one-time events such as the collection of books for the primary school library in Wiatowice or the bracelets sale which financially contributed to donations for the mentioned orphanage.

Kraków Bussines Run is another project that fits the CSR strategy. It is a charitable sporting event co-organised by the Radisson Blu Hotel Kraków whose staff take an active part in the run. The participants, by paying entry fees, collect money to support Poza Horyzonty Foundation created by Jasiak Mela (a Polish explorer who, as a teenage double amputee, was the

youngest person to reach the North Pole in 2004, and eight months later the South Pole).

The Radisson Blu Hotel's mission is inspiring and engaging their stakeholders in environmental and social activities. In order to do this, the hotel organized an educational event "Blu Loves Green" designed to encourage business partners to take action for the benefit of the local community and protection of the environment. During the event, the local artists performed, recycled furniture was arranged in the underground parking, information about healthy diet and saving water and energy was presented. Local subcontractors were invited to help in preparing the event.

Another example of a hotel implementing principles of CSR is a 3-star Hotel Polski Pod Białym Orłem Sp. z o.o. (Under White Eagle). It is one of the oldest hotels in Krakow, located on the 17 Pijarów street right in the very centre of Krakow. It combines the atmosphere of the historical Old Town with the conveniences of the modern world. The origins of the hotel date back to the beginning of the 19th century when it functioned as an "Under White Eagle" Inn. The owner of the building and the name of the hotel changed several times to finally be handed back to its rightful owners in 1991. From that point on, the hotel is run under the Hotel Polski Pod Białym Orłem name. Elements of the old architecture are preserved until today in the hotel interiors. It offers 57 rooms, including one room for people with disabilities which can be connected with the neighbouring room. Another convenience for the blind and visually impaired is a lift with numbers written in Braille. Pets are welcome at the hotel. Among the additional services, the hotel offers transportation from the airport and the railway and bus station, a babysitter for children, a café, a beauty salon and hairdresser as well as a shop with handmade souvenirs. It has two fully equipped conference rooms. Hotel Polski Pod Białym Orłem has been awarded the Family Friendly Hotel certificate.

Hotel Polski Pod Białym Orłem takes into account the social responsibility. Its activities mainly support the ecological initiatives. Among the actions to the community include the promotion of Polish culture and tradition and the protection of the national heritage. In 2004, as one of the first hotels in Poland, it has been awarded a Clean Tourism certificate.

In the framework of CSR good practices, Hotel Polski Pod Białym Orłem together Gminny Dom Kultury in Lipnica Murowana (a local culture centre from Lipnica Murowana) organizes the annual happening "Lipnickie Palmy w Krakowie". The happening's aim is to present and promote the Easter palms produced in Lipnica Murowana (a small village near Krakow). The event takes the form of a colourful parade with folk music and costumes.

The hotel also co-organizes Małopolska Calligraphic Contest for children and teenager where they compete for the title of "Golden Pen". In turn, the ecology activities relate to three areas, that is: energy, water and waste. In addition to the basic environmental solutions such as the disposal of used batteries or waste sorting, the hotel equipped its bathrooms with shower handsets with faucet aerators, public parts of the hotel with motion sensors and hotel rooms with control valves used in currently vacant residential units in order to control the temperature. The hotel uses biodegradable cleaning agents for cleaning the rooms. Hotel Polski Pod Białym Orłem regularly conducts environmental trainings for its employees. The guests are informed about the environmental policy of the hotel and are motivated to join the eco activities carried out by the hotel.

All the aforementioned hotel facilities take into account the idea of corporate social responsibility in their day-to-day activities. The implementation of CSR principles in a business strategy brings significant economic and environmental benefits for the company itself as well as for the workers and the local community. Among the potential economic benefits are the increase in competitiveness, higher current liquidity, wiser use of fixed assets and human capital. It also raises the level of corporate culture and builds the image of a responsible and socially involved company.

The employees of a socially responsible hotel can count on timely payments of salaries, permanent professional development due to the availability of courses and trainings, elimination of discrimination in the recruitment process and high quality social facilities. A hotel acting in accordance with the concept of CSR builds its positive image among employees, becomes a trustworthy working place which affects gaining new employees and retaining the best ones it has.

A hotel which reasonably manages the natural resources and waste reduces its negative impact on the environment. It's immediate surrounding also benefits from the promotion of eco ideas among business partners of a socially responsible hotel.

The potential benefits for the local community are i.a. increased job security, the growth of culture and education, stimulation of the economic development of local entrepreneurs [Kos 2011, pp. 77-79].

## Conclusions

CSR activities in the hotel industry are focused on the health and safety of employees and guests, reducing the negative impact on the environment and respecting the social and ethical norms in the company and the local community.

Analysing CSR good practices in the hotel industry on the Polish market, particularly in Krakow, it has been noticed that the hotels belonging to the sector of small and medium-sized enterprises focus their activities on the environment protection while neglecting or underestimating direct actions for the benefit of the local community and their own employees. Very often it is associated with low financial and organisational capacity of small and medium-sized hotel facilities.

The situation is different when it comes to international hotel groups that have developed specific CSR programmes taking into account both the environmental aspects and issues relating to their stakeholders.

The hotels that implement the CSR concepts will not solve the social macro problems such as unemployment, poverty, social exclusion and demography. However, they can contribute to the reduction of problems on the local scale. Such an approach is consistent with the statement "Think globally, act locally". Bearing in mind the global environmental and social issues, small and medium-sized hotels can detect local community problems and take actions tailored to the needs of the community.

For example, a hotel is not able to solve the problem of the lack of family policies in the country, but it can provide favourable conditions of employment and flexible working time enabling work-life balance.

The people in Poland are more and more aware that the companies need to play active and positive role in the society. Their focus must not be directed solely at prices, but also at the social and environmental consequences of their activity.

The CSR good practices, recognized as a long-term investment, not a cost, are eventually beneficial for both for the hotel and for the society together with each party engaged.

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