ACTA UNIVERSITATIS AGRICULTURAE ET SILVICULTURAE MENDELIANAE BRUNENSIS

Volume 65 194 Number 6, 2017
https://doi.org/10.11118/actaun201765061901

CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION THROUGH EYES OF ENTERPRISES

Sylvie Formánková[1], Andrea Hrdličková[1], Tomáš Grabec[1]

[1]Department of Economics, Faculty of Business and Economics, Mendel University in Brno, Zemědělská 1, 613 00 Brno, Czech Republic

Abstract

FORMÁNKOVÁ SYLVIE, HRDLIČKOVÁ ANDREA, GRABEC TOMÁŠ. 2017. Corporate Social Responsibility of Public Administration through Eyes of Enterprises. *Acta Universitatis Agriculturae et Silviculturae Mendelianae Brunensis,* 65(6): 1901–1909.

The present paper focuses on corporate social responsibility in public administration. The subject of interest is the South Moravia Region and enterprises seated there. The subject of the present research includes overall awareness of the inquired enterprises about corporate social responsibility and activities of the South Moravian Region Authority related to corporate social responsibility of the institution. The research has brought conclusions testifying a certain level of knowledge of the CSR concept among enterprises, albeit on the basic level only. The awareness of socially responsible activities of the regional authority was very low and therefore further steps of this institution must be considered to improve communication of CSR activities and develop an environment for better cooperation of the public and the private sector in this area. The research was based on secondary data drawn from annual reports of the South Moravian Region Authority and on primary data obtained by questionnaire-based inquiry among 384 enterprises doing business in the South Moravia Region.

Keywords: corporate social responsibility, public administration, South Moravian Region, enterprises, communication, sustainability, public sector

INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, the concept of corporate social responsibility (CSR) interests not only management theorists but also active managers. As Jablonski (2009) mentions in his book “for latter group, corporate social responsibility offers a certain potential which may lead to new areas of business, making it significant in the times of fierce market competition”. The Czech Republic currently tries to compensate the deficit in the area of CSR caused by the forty years of communist dictatorship. However, there is a tradition to follow. According to Skácelík (2010) the current status of CSR in the Czech Republic can be described as the “wake-up stage”, as the CSR theme begins to emerge publicly and enter social debate for the enterprises to realize more and more not only that something like that exists but also that it is beneficial and absolutely necessary for future success of corporate development (Skácelík, 2010).

The public sector is a major actor in the market and is directly relevant to many interest groups within society. (Cunningham, 2011 in Sánchez et co., 2017) Corporate social responsibility in the private as well as in the public sector go hand in hand through history. His opinion is also held by Koontz and Weihrich, according to whom attention needs to be paid not only to corporate social responsibility of enterprises but also to CSR and social perceptiveness of all other organisations (Koontz, Weihrich, 1993). The opinion of these authors is also shared by Formánková *et al.* (2016). This fact also follows from the definition and characteristics of public administration as such. Definition and characteristics of Czech public administration has been dealt for example by Brůna (2006); and development of Czech public administration has been analysed for example by Pomahač & Vidláková (2002). There are many reasons why public administration and governments care for CSR. First, governments are interested in CSR because the respective business efforts can help to meet policy objectives on a voluntary basis. Second, CSR policies are regarded as an attractive complement for hard-law regulations in cases where new regulations are politically not desirable or infeasible (in particular at the international level). (Steurer, 2010) Third, governments inevitably define CSR negatively with conventional social and environmental regulations because the 'voluntary business contribution to sustainable development' starts where the legal framework ends (McWilliams & Siegel, 2001 in Steurer, 2010). In addition, governments seek to play a more active role in defining the concept and also fostering the respective practices positively with softer, non-binding initiatives. Fourth, *"a look into the governance literature of recent years shows that the soft approach of CSR policies coincides with a broader transition of public governance altogether, which leads away from hierarchical regulation towards more network-like and partnering modes of self- and co-regulation (Kooiman 1993; 2003; Pierre 2000; Rhodes 1997; see also section 5). In this respect, "CSR is not simply a feature of the new global corporation but is also increasingly a feature of new societal governance" (Moon 2007, 302). Fifth and finally, since CSR is concerned with managing business relations with a broad variety of stakeholders, the concept obviously reshapes not only management routines but also the roles of, and relations between, businesses, governments, and civil society. In this respect, CSR leads to "shifting involvements of the public and the private" sectors (Hirschman, quoted in Moon 2002)."* (Steurer, 2010)

The first regional council and public administrative body in Czech Republic obtaining a CSR management certificate after a successful CSR audit was the South Moravian Region Authority in 2013. The South Moravian Region Authority – SMRA – is the management body of the South Moravia Region (SMR). As part of the Czech public administration the authority contributes to care of comprehensive development of the territory of the South Moravia Region and to assurance of catering for the needs of its inhabitants, protecting public interest and trying to put into practice principles of corporate social responsibility (CSR) as defined in the CSR Policy in the process. (Report on Corporate Social Responsibility, 2013) The award followed after long-term efforts of the SMRA to behave responsibly towards its surroundings and documents compliance with the requirements of the National Program for Correct Setting and Application of Principles of Corporate Social Responsibility in Everyday Practice of SM Regional Authority and became a commitment for continuous improvement in this area.

Based on many discussions the SMRA was not sure about the awareness of their activities. This paper presents results about the awareness of CSR and about the perception of SMRA activities in South Moravian Region.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The last 20 years have seen the growth of a rich conversation regarding the measures used to measure CSR performance. (Crane et. co, 2017) There are many tools that might be used for CSR evaluation. Nevertheless, we based our research on the typology used by the SMRA – the Triple bottom line approach. The purpose of this article is to find out about the awareness of corporate social responsibility term among enterprises in South Moravian Region and about the awareness of current CSR activities of SMRA in the business sector. The secondary data about SMRA CSR activities was gathered from their Social Responsibility Report.

For the purpose of quantitative research and analysis of the awareness an empirical study was used based on questionnaire technique. Organisations seated in South Moravia Region were addressed. They were selected from Amadeus database according to their registered seat. The research study period was between November 2015 and March 2016. The questionnaire included 28 questions. The questionnaire was self-completed (internet questionnaire). Each respondent was asked to respond to the same set of questions in a predetermined order.

Characteristics of Respondent Sample

The research involved 384 respondents representing companies seated in South Moravia Region. The respondents were classified on the basis of the following criteria: number of employees, field of company activity and the size of municipality where the company registered seat was situated.

Classification based on staff numbers was performed with the help of an auxiliary material used for specification of business size for the purpose of applications for subsidised from the European Structural and Investment Funds. According to that material the businesses are divided on the basis of their numbers of employees to: micro enterprise (1–10), small enterprise (11–50), medium-sized enterprise (51–250) and large enterprise (251 and more).

The results show that the research involved representatives of enterprises of all sizes distributed equally across the enterprise size scale. The lowest number of respondents came from large enterprises. This result can be explained by the small number of large enterprises in the economy. The structure of the sample according to the number of the employees working for the companies could be described as following: micro enterprises (34.7 %), small enterprises (39.9 %), medium sized enterprises (17.2 %) and large enterprises (8.1 %).

Classification by field of business activity was based on the classification by the Czech Statistical Office. Municipality size classification was based on five categories, with the population category "300,001 and more" only represented by a single municipality, the city of Brno. The city of Brno, the second largest city of the country and the centre of the region, provided the highest number of respondents. This result is also expectable for Brno is the seat of many local as well as foreign companies. For the purpose of the subsequent statistical analysis the population categories "20,001–100,000" and "100,001–300,000" were merged to one.

On the basis of consultations with Regional Council representatives areas of research were specified and subject to statistical analysis by the Pearson chi-square independence test.

The comparative analysis and evaluation of the questionnaire refers to and is based on found data on the respondents (their own relationship to and application of CSR) found by previous inquiries.

RESULTS

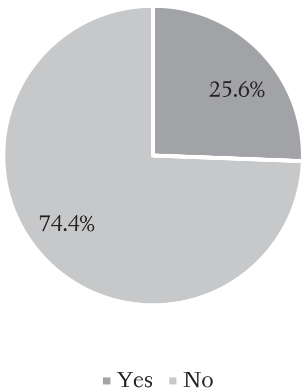
As most organisations observing CSR principles the Regional Authority of SMR has its activities divided into three basic pillars: economy, environment and society, and into internal and external activities (Report on Corporate Social Responsibility, 2013). In the economic field, internal activities involve the effective use of resources, functioning controlling system, the effective and quality performance of activities within the main mission of the South Moravia Region Authority. To the external activities belong the support for economic progress and increase of competitiveness of SMR economy, building of sustainable backbone transport and technological infrastructure of the region. Environmental area covers among internal activities the optimisation of the carbon print of the fleet and the buildings of the SMRA, improvement of staff environmental awareness. External activities cover the support for economic progress and increase of competitiveness of SMR economy, building of sustainable backbone transport and technological infrastructure of the region. Environmental area from the internal point of view is focused on the optimisation of the carbon print of the fleet and the buildings of the SMRA, improvement of staff environmental awareness. External activities could be found in the support for environmental education, sustainable water and energy supply, accident prevention and prevention of territorial damage of SMR by natural factors. Finally, the social area targets the respect for human rights, formation and development of culture of organisation, creation of appropriate working conditions, employee development in education and healthcare (internal activities). The external activities include the care of citizen safety, support for culture and education, support of families with children, seniors and co-existence of generations, support of employment in the region.

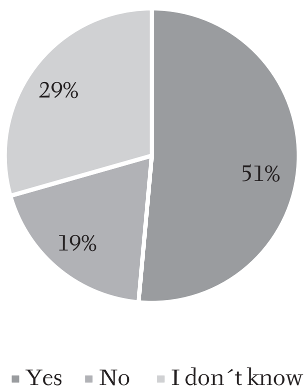
Awareness of CSR

The results of research on awareness of the concept of corporate social responsibility among South Moravia enterprises show that most enterprises have already been acquainted with the CSR concept.

Accordingly, the question of "Do you know what CSR means?" was answered in positive by 62.9% of the respondents. Also more than 50% of the respondents answered "yes" when asked "Do you apply CSR principles in your company?". Further to this question 30% of the respondents were not sure whether they applied CSR principles in their practice. This was caused by a lack of deeper knowledge of the concept, as the respondents only generally knew what CSR meant but were not sure what activities implemented by them in their company fell within the concept. This is related to the size of the company, though. Using the Pearson chi-square test of independence the assumption of existence of a relationship between the size of the organisation and application of CSR principles was studied.

Should application of CSR principles depend on the enterprise staff number then the real numbers





1: *Have you ever noticed any activity of South Moravia Region Authority related to CSR?*
2: *Do you apply CSR principles in your company?*
Source: In-house research

of enterprises applying CSR principles would be significantly different from the expected prevalence. The results clearly show a statistically significant difference between the actual and the expected values.

If hypothesis H_0 is formulated as "application of CSR principles in the enterprise does not depend on the staff number and thus on the company size" and hypothesis H_1 to the contrary as "the relation between these two variables is statistically significant" then on the significance level of 5% hypothesis H_1 cannot be rejected.

One can say then that **application of CSR principles in an enterprise depends on the staff number**. This statement is documented by result comparisons among enterprise groups by size (micro enterprises – 49 (36.8%), small enterprises – 80 (53%), medium-sized enterprises – 43 (65.2%), large enterprises – 24 (77.4%)). There is a clear trend of increasing application of CSR principles along company size growth.

Another important comparison was focused on the size of the enterprises with the highest CSR awareness. The hypotheses were formulated as follows: H_0 "CSR awareness does not depend on enterprise size" and H_1 "CSR awareness depends on enterprise size". The hypotheses were analysed by the Pearson chi-square test of independence.

On the significance level of 5% hypothesis H_1 cannot be rejected.

Hence the dependence between the selected variables can be seen as statistically significant. This hypothesis is confirmed by data classified by company size (micro enterprises – 65 (48.9%), small enterprises – 96 (62.7%), medium-sized enterprises – 53 (80.3%), large enterprises – 27 (87.1%)).

Another question tried to find out whether the enterprises had a responsible person or department for CSR principle application. The answers revealed that most enterprises had neither a responsible person nor a department for CSR principle assertion. Only 14% of the respondents reported a person/department responsible for CSR in their enterprise. Surprisingly enough, the highest number of positive answers were provided by representatives of medium-sized companies, representing 40% of the positive answers.

Perception of CSR Concept in Relation to South Moravia Region

Our research inquired whether the companies were aware of CSR in connection with South Moravia Region. Overall, only one fourth (25.6%) of the respondents realized any connection between corporate social responsibility and the South Moravia Region. When we compare the number of companies knowledgeable of the term CSR (241) with the number of companies connecting CSR to activities of South Moravia Region (88) we can conclude that only 36% of respondents who have ever heard of CSR were aware of CSR activities

I: *Statistical analysis of answers*

How many people are employed in your company?	Do you follow the CSR principles in your company? *No.*	Do you follow CSR principles in your company? *Yes.*	Do you follow CSR principles in your company? *I don't know.*	Line totals
0–10	34	49	50	133
11–50	27	80	44	151
51–250	7	43	16	66
251 and more	5	24	2	31
All groups	73	196	112	381

Contingency table/ Frequency of checked fields > 10/ Marginal sums not included
Source: In-house research

II: *Statistical analysis of answers – expected frequences*

How many people are in your company employed?	Do you follow the CSR principles in your company? *No.*	Do you follow CSR principles in your company? *Yes.*	Do you follow CSR principles in your company? *I don't know.*	Line totals
0–10	25.5	68.4	39.1	133.0
11–50	28.9	77.7	44.4	151.0
51–250	12.7	34.0	19.3	66.0
251 and more	5.9	15.9	9.2	31.0
All groups	73	196	112	381

Frequency of checked fields > 10/ Pearson chi-square: 26.8949, sv = 6, p = 0.000152
Source: In-house research

of the Region. This gap points to insufficient communication of CSR activities of the region and a big area for future improvement.

The result of inquiry about particular CSR activities of South Moravia Region was similar to the result of general awareness of CSR activities of the region. Although the region of South Moravia organises and funds a lot of CSR activities, most respondents were not aware of them, or were unable to classify them as CSR activities or CSR activities connected with South Moravia Region. Only 26% of the respondents reported noticing some activities of the region related to CSR. The fact that businesses are aware of activities of the region but are unable to classify them as socially responsible activities of the region follows from answers to the question: "Say whether you connect the following events/themes with South Moravia Region". The respondents chose their answers from 11 themes of regional CSR activities with practical examples of the activities and were asked whether they were aware of those activities. The mean score of knowledge and awareness of the activities was 36%. When comparing this value and the value of general awareness of CSR activities of the region we find a difference of 10 percentage points. The lowest was the number of respondents knowledgeable of the area of regional activity "CSR in general" (Prize of Governor of SM Region for CSR, conference "Corporate Social Responsibility in All Areas of Human Activity" etc.), where the percentage of awareness was mere 15%. The highest number of positive responses was obtained for the area of family policy where the awareness reached 75%. This result can be explained by the fact that the respondents met with these activities in their private life.

Another area of research concerned the source of information about CSR activities of South Moravia Region. The main source of information reported by more than one quarter of all respondents was the Internet, without the SM Region portal, which was subject of a separate answer. Another important source of information about CSR activities of the region was the press mentioned by nearly another quarter of the respondents.

Another question concerned the level of information of the respondents and their potential interest in obtaining more information about CSR activities of South Moravia Region.

The answers suggest a relatively low level of awareness of CSR activities of the region, already found out by earlier research. An important fact was however the level of interest in obtaining more information, mentioned in nearly one half of the answers. Statistical research further

III: *Statistical analysis of answers*

What is the population of the municipality you are seated in?	**Do you believe you are sufficiently informed about CSR activities of your region?** *No, but I would like to be informed better.*	**Do you believe you are sufficiently informed about CSR activities of your region?** *No and I am not interested.*	**Do you believe you are sufficiently informed about CSR activities of your region?** *Yes.*	**Line totals**
1–3,000	21	26	15	62
3,001–20,000	31	35	10	76
20,001–300,000	21	18	11	50
300,001 and more	95	75	24	194
All groups	168	154	60	382

Contingency table/ Frequency of checked fields > 10/ (Marginal sums not included)
Source: In-house research

IV: *Statistical analysis of answers – expected frequencies*

What is the population of the municipality you are seated in?	**Do you believe you are sufficiently informed about CSR activities of your region?** *No, but I would like to be informed better.*	**Do you believe you are sufficiently informed about CSR activities of your region?** *No, and I am not interested.*	**Do you believe you are sufficiently informed about CSR activities of your region?** *Yes.*	**Line totals**
1–3,000	27.3	25.0	9.7	62
3,001–20,000	33.4	30.6	11.9	76
20,001–300,000	22.0	20.2	7.9	50
300,001 and more	85.3	78.2	30.5	194
All groups	168	154	60	382

Frequency of checked fields > 10/ Pearson chi-square: 9.57536, sv = 6, p = 0.143711
Source: In-house research

tried to find out in which municipalities, by size, the interest in more information was higher and whether the municipality size affected the level of the interest.

If information of businesses about CSR activities of South Moravia Region was dependent on the size of the municipality where the business had its seat then the difference between the actual and the expected frequencies would be statistically significant. The result shows that the dependence of the actual and the expected frequencies was not statistically significant. Therefore mutual independence of the tested quantities may be assumed.

If we formulate hypothesis H_0 as mutual independence of awareness of businesses about CSR activities of the region and the size of the municipality of the registered seat of the business and hypothesis H_1 as mutual dependence of these two variables then hypothesis H_1 must be rejected on the significance level of 5%.

Dependence of these two variables was not proved. It may therefore be assumed that the impact of publicity and information tools on regional businesses is similar in different size municipalities.

Expectations of Businesses in Connection with CSR of South Moravia Region

This group of questions was focused on options of improvement of communication and CSR Activities of South Moravia Region towards businesses. The inquiry focused on the most appropriate communication channels between the SM Region and its businesses. More than one half of the respondents expressed preference for on line communication and information transfer. Rather surprising was the mere 10% preference of printed materials in relation to the current nearly 25% awareness of businesses about CSR activities of the region from the press. Hence although the respondents learn about CSR activities of the region from the press they would rather prefer on line communication.

Another important aspect of communication is the periodicity of information provision. Communication should not be non-proportionally frequent in order not to discourage the subjects of interest but on the other hand should not be sporadic either to keep continuity of communication. The most preferred frequencies reported by the respondents were monthly (39%) and biannually (26%), with missing quarterly frequency preference, although quarterly was mentioned in the verbal formulations several times. Therefore quarterly frequency may be expected most acceptable for businesses. A good instrument of the communication would be a newsletter, mentioned in the answers of 37% of the respondents out of the total 57% of the respondents expressing an opinion on this theme.

The respondents further commented on activities they would like to see as regional support of the CSR concept. In addition to the already mentioned newsletter the businesses expressed the greatest interest in joint projects for public benefit. Nearly half of the respondents expressed their interest in them. The greatest number of positive responses in this area was provided by representatives of small enterprises where interest in the joint projects was expressed by more than half of the respondents. Further questions concerned interest in potential meetings with other organisations over CSR themes.

Nearly three quarters of the respondents were not interested in such meetings. On the other hand 27% of the respondents, representing 104 answers, would welcome some form of meetings over CSR themes. The region should focus on these and provide them with space or a platform for meetings.

As for the themes for the discussions most respondents were interested in environment protection and responsible management. The question is why more than half of the respondents were not interested in cooperation with local community.

The last group of questions dealt with the Prize of the Governor of SM Region for CSR. South Moravia Region has held this competition since 2015. The purpose of our research in this area was to find out the level of awareness of the competition among South Moravian enterprises. As the year of our inquiry was the first year of the competition low awareness was expected.

Hypothesis H_0 was defined as awareness of the SM Region Governor's Prize for CSR not depending on the size of the municipality where the business is seated and hypothesis H_1 was rejected as awareness of the SM Region Governor's Prize for CSR that does depend on the size of the municipality where the business is seated. Hypothesis H_1 was rejected on the significance level of 5%.

The result of the Pearson chi-square test was rather tight, for if 10% significance level was selected then the dependence between the variable would already become statistically significant. On the level of 5% significance no statistically significant dependence was proven, though.

DISCUSSION

The research across the South Moravia Region confirmed the view that awareness of CSR among enterprises in general was still insufficient with a trend towards some improvement. A majority of respondents only possessed basic awareness of the CSR concept. Lack of knowledge of more detailed information also caused that the respondents were unable to link CSR to activities of the South Moravia Region, or to classify SMR activities as CSR activities. Thus dissemination of general awareness of the CSR concept should become the primary objective of SMR and SMRA representatives. Increased knowledge of CSR would also increase awareness of CSR activities of the South Moravia Region. Low corporate awareness of CSR was also confirmed by Skýpalová (2016) covering the whole Czech Republic. Skýpalová *et al.* (2016), focusing her research on SMEs across the Czech Republic, found that only 30% of micro and small enterprises in CR knew and used the CSR concept in its complexity, engaging in all the three CSR pillars. About 30% of them were only engage in one, mostly the economic pillar. 30% of them did not apply the CSR concept in their own activities at all. In the comparison to this research the enterprises in South Moravian region are more aware of this topic. Srpová and Kunz, 2007, concluded that especially representatives of small enterprises believed that their knowledge of CSR was insufficient and mostly provided intuitive answers on their understanding of CSR (Pavlík, Bělčík, 2010) A similar type of research was also implemented by Kuchtíková (2011), who was interested in the current status of CSR activities in seven enterprises seated in Brno and surroundings. Kuchtíková reported different results in the area of the level of overall awareness of the companies about the CSR concept. Her research showed that only one of the seven inquired businesses met with the term CSR for the first time. Statistically taken, only 14% of the businesses did not know the CSR concept. On the other hand the research performed by us found 37% lack of knowledge of CSR among businesses. The reason may be the selection of the companies enrolled in Kuchtíková's research, the small representative sample, or the content of the questionnaire. Interesting might be to observe the difference in attitude and awareness of CSR according to the legal form of the enterprise. We didn't evaluate it but a research among Slovakian companies done by Ubrežiová *et al.* shows that the corporate legal form has no impact on the application of environmental policy and CSR, but there is an impact of the number or employees, respectively SME size category. (Ubrežiová *et al.*, 2015) Another interesting categorization would be in family and non-family businesses. Zientara (2017) cited O'Boyle *et al.* (2010) in his article: "…members of family firms are more likely to view the business as an extension of themselves. As a result, they are more likely to avoid situations that may bring negative perceptions to their organizations" (O'Boyle *et al.* 2010, p. 4 in Zientara, 2017). This fact could be inspiring for another observation.

Our inquiry further focused on the themes from CSR area most interesting for our respondents. The results provided multiple types of information people were interested in. In order not to overwhelm all subjects with detailed information from all fields of activity it is not possible to communicate every piece of information. Only key formation should be provided with potential selection of more detailed information by field of activity. This issue was also addressed by Coombs and Holladay (2012), who say that „CSR communication is a challenging process requiring an understanding of stakeholders, their information needs, and communication channels". That is why our inquiry also targeted this area and proposed themes for communication on CSR on the basis of our findings. General awareness in the society is the basis for further development of this theme. In terms of corporate social responsibility of South Moravian Region, there are more topics to be discussed. In the economic area the South Moravia Region should focus on themes such as: activity-industry links, support to rural areas and agriculture, investment intentions, transparency of public procurement, detailed information about corporate economy, facilitation of doing business, streamlining of paperwork and reduction of bureaucracy, possible subsidies for citizens and enterprises (from EU and regional funds), such as the programme of replacement of obsolete heat sources. The following themes should be presented under the social pillar: support for education, technical and apprentice, activities of employee care, support for families and leisure activities, support for activities for children and youth, development of civic society, services for seniors, support for women on maternity leave, support of the handicapped and their employers. The environmental pillar should stress the following themes: the environment, urbanisation and suburbanisation, arable soil occupancy, soil erosion, weather extremes and their effect on the regional environment. This is only one of the approaches how to divide the areas for CSR evaluation and communication. Other attitude could be found e.g. in Crane and Glozer (2016). The authors introduce the 4Is model with four areas of focus: CSR integration, CSR interpretation, CSR identity and CSR image. This typology of research streams organizes the central themes, opportunities and challenges for CSR communication theory development, and provides a heuristic against which future research can be located. Research looking to advance knowledge in the area of CSR Integration will focus on internal stakeholders under the functionalist assumption that the purpose of communicating about CSR to employees is to integrate knowledge about specific CSR facts throughout the firm. The research space of CSR Interpretation also focuses on internal stakeholders but here researchers will be sympathetic to the role of managers and other internal stakeholders in actively constructing CSR reality through sensemaking, language performativity, and narrative. Researchers focusing on CSR Identity will return to the question of how firms can best devise effective CSR communication, but here the focus will be on external stakeholders. Finally, research on CSR Image will also focus on external communications about CSR, but here researchers will begin with the assumption that any attempt to inform or persuade external publics that there is a single incontrovertible reality about the firm's CSR practices or performance is untenable. (Crane, Glozer, 2016)

As in 2015 only the first edition of the Prize of South Moravia Region Governor for Corporate Social Responsibility was organised this competition is not yet part of general awareness. The nearly 90% of the respondents represent a great potential for increased awareness of the competition in the region. Increased awareness of the competition was also one of the main recommendations and desires of the respondents, who also showed interest in help of the region in fulfilment of the competition conditions.

Since December 2015 the South Moravia Region has been member of the Stakeholders' Platform organised by the Government of the Czech Republic. The members of this platform express their views, exchange experience and examples of good CSR practice. The SMR should inform the organisations about existence of this platform and support their membership. About one fifth of the respondents expressed interest in non-commercial cooperation with the South Moravia Region. Mutual meetings of these stakeholders over CSR themes are therefore more than desirable. This is also confirmed by Asbury and Ball (2016) who say that „the function of managing the relationships and expectations of the people and groups the organization is likely to affect is called stakeholder engagement. It includes consulting proactively with key stakeholders in order to decide how best to manage the organization's CSR-related impacts – in other words, in a way that mitigates negative impacts and maximizes the contribution of positive impacts." The time to catching up with Western and Northern Europe, North America, New Zealand and Australia in the level of CSR awareness and application of CSR concept may be a matter to discuss in this country and region, but the trend is positive, both in the Czech Republic and in its neighbouring countries. In the Czech Republic these trends are documented in the National action plan of CSR of organisations in the Czech Republic (2014). The same trend can be traced for example in Slovakia (Ubrežiová *et al.*, 2013), which logically follows from the long period of common history of the two countries.

CONCLUSION

The main finding of our research is low awareness of organisations seated in the region about South Moravia Region's activities in the area of CSR. A relatively large part of the respondents reported at least elementary awareness of the corporate social responsibility concept. Not all of them were sure whether their organisation applied those principles or not, though. The weak impact of CSR activities of the region is therefore not only caused by low level of awareness of the CSR theme. Another clear cause is insufficient communication of the South Moravia Region with subjects seated in the region. Therefore measures should be taken to promote CSR awareness among enterprises by the region, common meetings of stakeholders over CSR themes should be held and all these entities should develop more intense cooperation in this area.

REFERENCES

ASBURY, S. and BALL, R. 2016. *The practical guide to corporate social responsibility. Do the right thing.* 1st Edition. Routledge.

BRŮNA, M. 2006. *Public administration (with a focus on municipalities and regions)* [in Czech: *Veřejná správa: (se zaměřením na obce a kraje)*]. 2nd Edition. Praha: Institute for local administration.

COOMBS, W. T. and HOLLADAY, S. J. 2012. *Managing corporate social responsibility. A communication approach.* Blackwell Publishing.

CRANE, A. and GLOZER, S. 2016. Researching CSR communication: Themes, opportunities and challenges. *Journal of Management Studies*, 53(7): 1223–1252.

CRANE, A., HENRIQUES, I., HUSTED, B. W. and MATTEN, D. 2017. Measuring Corporate Social Responsibility and Impact: Enhancing Quantitative Research Design and Methods in Business and Society Research. *Business & Society*, 56(6): 787–795.

FORMÁNKOVÁ, S., STEVIK, K. and KUČEROVÁ, R. 2016. *Responsibility and Sustainability of Higher Education Institutions*. 1st Edition. Edinburgh Gate, Harlow, Essex: Pearson Education Limited.

JABLONSKI, A. 2009. *Corporate social responsibility in value based management.* Dabrowa Górnicza: Academy of Business in Dabrowa Gornicza.

KOONTZ, H. and WEIHRICH, H. 1993. *Management.* Praha: Victoria Publishing.

KRAJSKÝ ÚŘAD JIHOMORAVSKÉHO KRAJE. 2013. *Report on Corporate Social Responsibility 2012–2013*. [in Czech: *Zpráva o společenské odpovědnosti za rok 2012 a 2013*]. Jihomoravský kraj. [Online]. Available at: http://m.kr-jihomoravsky.cz/Default.aspx?PubID=218496&TypeID=7 [Accessed: 2017, March 15].

KUCHTÍKOVÁ, K. 2011. *[Analysis of corporate social responsibility of businesses in Brno and surroundings* [in Czech: *Analýza společenské odpovědnosti firem v Brně a okolí*]. Diploma thesis. Brno: Masaryk University.

MINISTERSTVO PRŮMYSLU A OBCHODU ČR. 2014. *National Action Plan of CSR of Organistaions in the Czech Republic* [in Czech: *Národní akční plán společenské odpovědnosti organizací v ČR*]. Praha: MPO.

PAVLÍK, M. and BĚLČÍK, M. 2010. *Společenská odpovědnost organizace CSR v praxi a jak s ním dál.* Praha: Grada Publishing, a.s.
POMAHAČ, R. and VIDLÁKOVÁ, O. 2002. *Public Administration* [in Czech: *Veřejná správa*]. 1st Edition. Praha: C. H. Beck, Beck Interdisciplinary Textbooks.
SÁNCHEZ, G. R., BOLÍVAR, R. M. P. and HERNÁNDEZ, L. A. M. 2017. Corporate and managerial characteristics as drivers of social responsibility disclosure by state-owned enterprises. *Review of Managerial Science*, 11(3): 633–659.
SKÁCELÍK, P. 2010. *Společenská odpovědnost organizací.* Praha: Českomoravská konfederace odborových svazů a Asociace samostatných odborů.
SKÝPALOVÁ, R., KUČEROVÁ, R. and BLAŠKOVÁ, V. 2016. Development of the Corporate Social Responsibility Concept in Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises. *Prague Economic Papers: Quarterly Journal of Economic Theory and Policy*, 25(3): 287–303.
STEURER, R. 2010. The Role of Governments in Corporate Social Responsibility: Characterising Public Policies on CSR in Europe. *Policy Sciences*, 43(1): 49–72.
UBREŽIOVÁ, I., KOZÁKOVÁ, J. and MALEJČÍKOVÁ, A. 2015. Corporate Social Responsibility and Perception of Environmental Pillar in the Selected Set of the Slovak Enterprises. *Procedia Economics and Finance*, 34: 542–549.
UBREŽIOVÁ, I., STANKOVIČ, L., MIHALČOVÁ, B. and UBREŽIOVÁ, A. 2013. Perception of corporate social responsibility in companies of Eastern Slovakia region in 2009 and 2010. *Acta Universitatis Agriculturae et Silviculturae Mendelianae Brunensis*, 61(7): 2903–2910.
ZIENTARA, P. 2017. Socioemotional Wealth and Corporate Social Responsibility: A Critical Analysis. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 144(1): 185–199.

Contact information

Sylvie Formánková: sylvie.formankova@mendelu.cz