

**EVALUATION OF THE CURRENT RESULTS OF THE KEGA  
PROJECT NO. 037STU-4/2012: IMPLEMENTATION OF THE  
SUBJECT OF “SUSTAINABLE CORPORATE SOCIAL  
RESPONSIBILITY” INTO THE STUDY PROGRAMME  
OF INDUSTRIAL MANAGEMENT IN THE SECOND DEGREE  
OF STUDY AT STU MTF TRNAVA**

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**Abstract**

*The article presents a partial result of the KEGA project No. 037STU-4/2012 Implementation of the subject “Sustainable corporate social responsibility” into the study programme of Industrial Management in the second degree of study at STU MTF Trnava. The main ambition of the article is to inform the public about the basic objectives of the project and their fulfilment.*

**Key words**

*sustainable development, sustainable corporate social responsibility, questionnaire survey*

**Introduction**

Nowadays, when science and technology are developing very quickly, education of employees is an important area to the business sector. Corporate social responsibility and sustainable behaviour represent a tremendous potential for change for the companies all over the world. Especially large enterprises actively present their actions in this area. Social responsibility has gradually become an effective tool of competitiveness and sustainable business growth.

Corporate social responsibility provides a systematic concept that helps to integrate social, environmental, economic and ethical criteria into the corporate strategies and decisions. This is the focus of the **KEGA project No. 037STU-4/2012. The aim of the project is the implementation of the subject of “Sustainable corporate social**

responsibility” into the study programme of Industrial Management in the second degree of study at STU MTF Trnava (<http://www.portalvs.sk/sk/prehľad-projektov/6838>).

Partial objectives of the project were defined as follows:

1. **Carrying out an analysis of available information sources on the issue of the education for sustainable development and corporate social responsibility.**  
Output:
  - *Conclusions from the questionnaire survey.*
2. **Designing a curriculum of the subject of “Sustainable corporate social responsibility”.**  
Output:
  - *The curriculum of the subject of “Sustainable corporate social responsibility”.*
3. **Writing a textbook for teaching the subject of “Sustainable corporate social responsibility”.**  
Output:
  - *The textbook “Sustainable corporate social responsibility”.*
4. **Experimentally verifying the quality of teaching the subject of “Sustainable corporate social responsibility”.**  
Output:
  - *Implementation of the subject of “Sustainable corporate social responsibility” into the study programme of Industrial Management in the second degree at STU MTF Trnava.*
  - *A questionnaire on the teaching quality of the subject “Sustainable corporate social responsibility”.*
5. **Optimising the curriculum “Sustainable corporate social responsibility” and the textbook.**  
Output:
  - *Optimised curriculum of the new subject of “Sustainable corporate social responsibility”.*
  - *Optimised textbook of the new subject of “Sustainable corporate social responsibility”.*

On the basis of our efforts for the inclusion of this subject into the educational process, we developed a questionnaire and, subsequently, we conducted a questionnaire survey. Respondents were the STU MTF students at all levels of the study. We asked the students for their views of sustainable development, corporate social responsibility, and for the proposed subject, through which students will gain knowledge of sustainable corporate social responsibility (SCSR). The information gathered from 281 students will be described in detail in the following sections of this paper.

**The questionnaire fastens on the** previously conducted two questionnaire surveys. The results of those surveys were published in “*Transfer inovácií*” (Transfer of Innovation) (<http://www.sjf.tuke.sk/transferinovacii/>) and “*Problemy razvitija territorii*” (Problems of Development of Territories) (<http://pdt.vsc.ac.ru/>) journals **and at the ISEI UNC RAN Conference** (<http://www.isei-ufa.ru/>, [http://www.isei-ufa.ru/?part\\_id=44&news\\_id=171](http://www.isei-ufa.ru/?part_id=44&news_id=171)):

1. **sustainable corporate social responsibility in business practice** (<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheet/viewform?formkey=dGpGQ1EtQk1ld1ltM2xfa0VucTVPRkE6MQ>) a
2. **sustainable corporate social responsibility in research and education at universities and colleges** (<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheet/viewform?formkey=dC0yUER3cHpXbmQ5bG8yU ndKYVVyaHc6MQ>).

## Characteristics of the conducted questionnaire survey

The questionnaire survey was based on the recommendations of the “*Úspešnosť Slovenska vo vytváraní podmienok pre spoločensky zodpovedné podnikanie*” (Slovakia's success in creating opportunities for corporate social responsibility) (Fifeková et al., 2011) and a document of the European Economic and Social Committee in the field of corporate social responsibility from January 2013: “*Správa o sociálnej zodpovednosti podnikov: zodpovedné a transparentné správanie podnikov a udržateľný rast*” (Report on corporate social responsibility: accountable, transparent and responsible business behaviour and sustainable growth) (Správa ..., 2013) as well as previous two questionnaires.

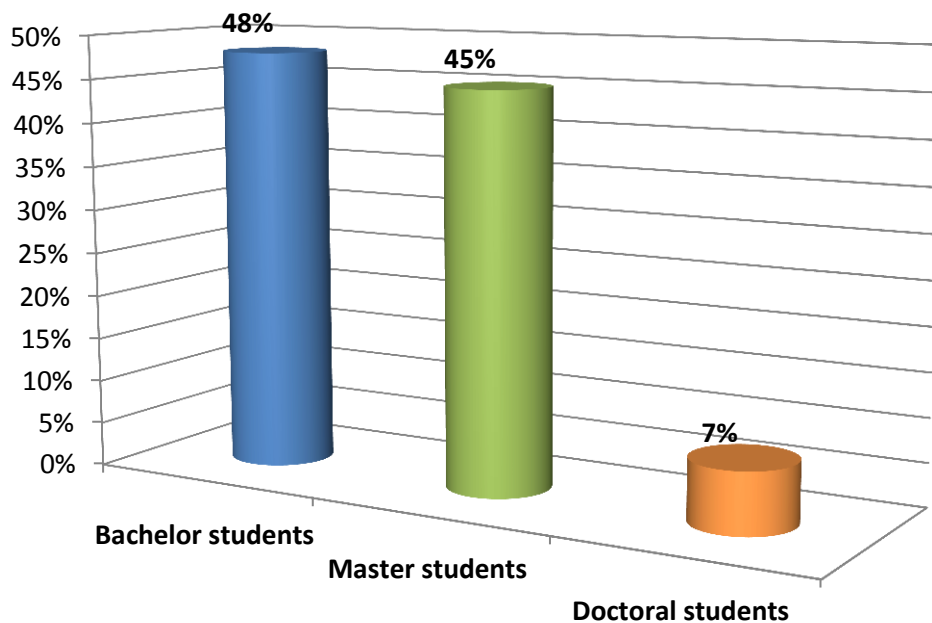
**The main aim of the questionnaire survey** was to identify the current state of perception of the concept and practice of sustainable development and corporate social responsibility among the students of STU MTF Trnava.

We compiled the questionnaire through the GoogleDocs application. It is available online on: [https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1CVLIjsj4d7m5Mk-Z9M4-5ngq0EbPFZiUd4aJUpbvh3\\_Y/viewform](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1CVLIjsj4d7m5Mk-Z9M4-5ngq0EbPFZiUd4aJUpbvh3_Y/viewform)

The survey was conducted from 15 May 2013 to 5 June 2013. We contacted the students of Bachelor, Master and Doctoral degrees. Out of 281 respondents, 51% were women and 49% were men.

**The structure of respondents who filled in the questionnaire is as shown in Figure 1:**

- 48% of Bachelor students,
- 45% of Master students,
- 7% of Doctoral students.



*Fig. 1 Results of the survey – structure of respondents (source: drawn by the authors)*

**Conclusions of the survey can be divided into three parts:**

- Familiarity with the term sustainable development (SD) and corporate social responsibility (CSR).*

- b) *Students' interest in the issue of sustainable corporate social responsibility.*
- c) *Syllabus and focus of the subject of Sustainable corporate social responsibility.*

#### **Ad a) Familiarity with the terms of sustainable development and corporate social responsibility**

Most of the STU MTF students are at least partially familiar with SCSR. Out of all respondents, *78% of students know the term SD and 68% of students know the term CSR.*

Nearly *46% of students* have encountered the issue of CSR and SD in one of the passed subjects. Students indicated especially the subjects such as Business Strategies for Small and Medium-sized Enterprises, Strategic Management and Total Quality Management. A smaller number of students indicated Ergonomics and Fundamentals of Environmental Science.

#### **Ad b) Students' interest in the issue of sustainable corporate social responsibility**

The questionnaire survey showed that *85% of students are interested in the subject and want to be more familiar with it.* Approximately *74% of respondents* stated that they *consider the area of SD and CSR important for their study.*

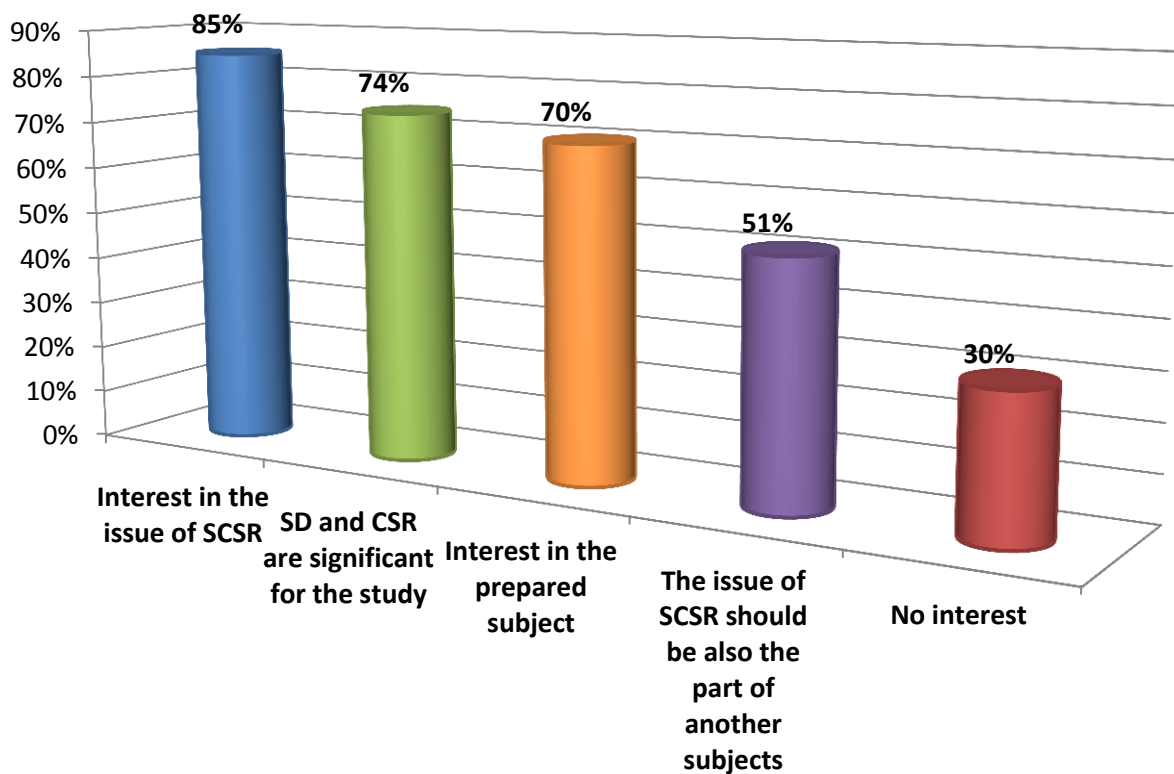
*Respondents* stated the following *reasons for interest in SCSR:*

- *“The topic sounds interesting, especially nowadays.”*
- *“It is the only alternative of survival on the planet Earth.”*
- *“It could be an interesting subject given the fact that I'm writing bachelor thesis on this issue.”*
- *“Corporate social responsibility has a significant role in the functioning of a company and in creating relationships between companies.”*

Nearly *70% of students declared their interest in the prepared subject of SCSR* within their studies at STU MTF. Approximately *half of the students (51%)* said that *other subjects should also include the issue of SCSR.*

On the contrary, *30% of students are not interested in the issue.* Respondents stated the reasons such as: the subject SCSR is better suited for the study programmes focused on management, health and safety at work, production management, not for technical programmes. *Students expressed the opinion* that *this society is focused on profit at any cost* and SCSR is the area not wide and important enough for the employability of future graduates and the demands of the market. They consider it quite sufficient, when the issue is included in one of the many subjects of the socio-economic nature. According to the students, *enterprises deal with other issues than SD and CSR in practice, especially their own survival.*

According to the obtained survey results, we can conclude that only a minority of students (30%) did not understand the concept of SCSR. SCSR means a paradigm shift of thinking towards sustainability at local and global levels, and therefore it is not intended only for a limited number of students or other people, but for all mankind, as shown in Figure 2.



*Fig. 2 Results of the survey – students' interest in the issue of sustainable corporate social responsibility (source: drawn by the authors)*

#### **Ad c) Syllabus and focus of the subject of Sustainable corporate social responsibility.**

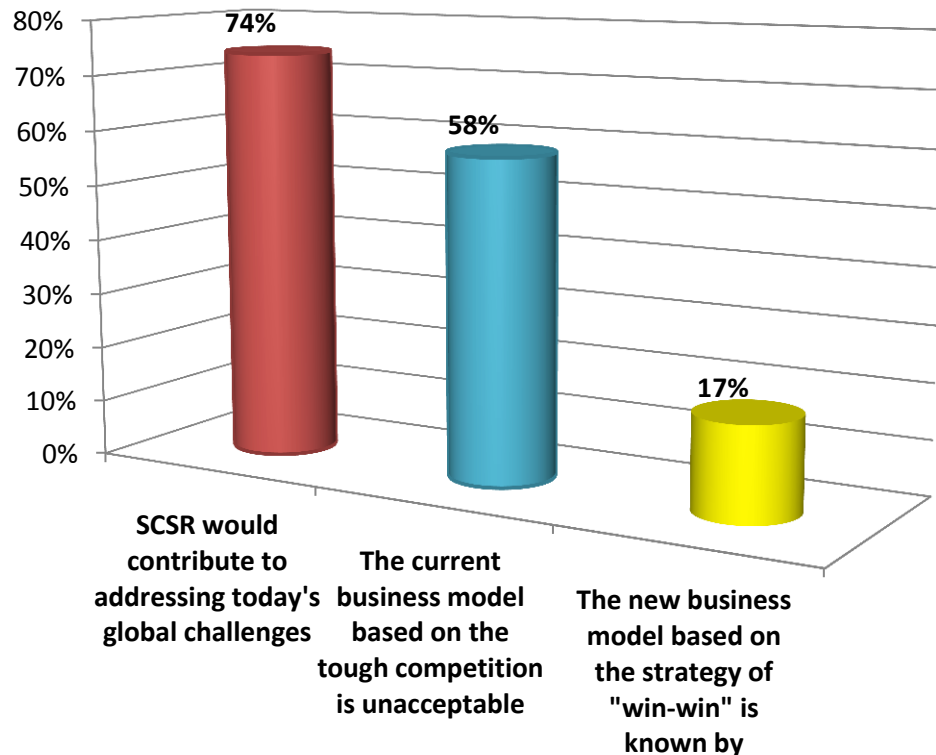
**We suggest the following syllabus of the subject:**

- 1. Strategic management and its paradigm for the 21st century, historical background of sustainable development, definition of sustainable development and its three pillars. Corporate social responsibility and experience with the application of the concept of strategy SCSR in Slovak and Czech enterprises.**
- 2. Sustainable science and education. Proposal of the motivation system for sustainable development in terms of industrial enterprises.**
- 3. Sustainable innovative development of enterprise. Sustainable production, consumption and logistics.**
- 4. Sustainable marketing and competitiveness. Analogy of social and natural systems as a basis for SCSR.**
- 6. SCSR integration into the management processes, the role of stakeholders. Sustainable risk management, audit and reporting of SCSR, barriers of the application of SCSR in the practise of enterprises.**
- 7. Integration of Cost Benefit Analysis (CBA), Balanced Scorecard (BSC) and HCS model 3E into the SCSR. Ergonomics and sustainable ergonomic program.**

Approximately 84% of students in the Bachelor, Master and Doctoral studies at STU MTF consider such *syllabus as appropriate*. Respondents expressed the need to focus on the practice, practical demonstrations, tasks and examples of the SD and CSR implementation.

Important is the fact that *74% of respondents believe that the concept of SCSR would contribute to addressing the current global challenges.*

*The current business model based on the tough competition is deemed acceptable in the 21st century by 42% of students and 58% considered the current business model as unacceptable, while only 17% of the students know a new business model based on the strategy of "win-win" ("non-zero-sum game") that solves the problem of creation and distribution of wealth on the planet Earth, while the remaining 83% of respondents do not know the strategy (Figure 3).*



*Fig. 3 Results of the survey – familiarity and understanding of the concept of SCSR (source: drawn by the authors)*

In the area of the final thesis - bachelor's, master's and doctoral - *68% of students expressed the conviction that topics of the final thesis should be directed to SD.*

### **Evaluation and comparison of the questionnaire survey results with the findings of previous surveys at universities and in business practice in the Slovak Republic**

*We found several facts resulting from the comparison of the results of three related surveys conducted within the KEGA project No. 037STU-4/2012 Implementation of the subject "Sustainable corporate social responsibility" into the study programme of Industrial Management in the second degree of study at STU MTF Trnava. In particular, the lack of knowledge and familiarity with the issue of SCSR and mainly the need to encourage an interest in SCSR among the general public, integrate SCSR in the theory and business practice, especially through completing the subject SCSR at all levels of education in the Slovak Republic.*

## 1. Questionnaire focused on business practice in the Slovak Republic

Nearly 57% of companies surveyed stated that they are *dealing with the concept of SCSR* in practice. *The main reasons* for the implementation of SCSR are *identification with the philosophy of CSR and the pursuit of SD of society as a whole* (28%) and *increasing the competitiveness of the company* (17%).

*Enterprises which do not deal with CSR* (43%) stated mainly the following reasons: *the lack of information* on the implementation of the CSR concept into the business, *professionals* in the field of CSR implementation and *financial resources*.

## 2. Questionnaire focused on universities and colleges in the Slovak Republic, including the survey conducted at STU MTF Trnava

Universities and colleges stated the following reasons for the lack of interest in the issue of SD and CSR as follows:

- “... *these issues are not a priority for the faculty teaching*” (92%),
- “... *the lack of information on this subject*” (17%),
- “... *the lack of professionals in this subject*” (8%),
- “... *the lack of interest of students*” (8%).

According to the survey results, faculties/institutes, which do not teach the issue of SD or CSR, mentioned in particular the fact that this area is not considered as a priority (92%) in teaching at the faculty/institute. Some of our students (30%) expressed also very similar opinion in the survey, mainly the students of technically oriented disciplines.

Currently, the issue of *SCSR is not a priority in teaching at several universities and colleges*. Approximately 39% of respondents in higher education *are not interested in the implementation of the concept of CSR and SD in the learning process*. *On the contrary, a part of students are interested in the subject*. Even 85% expressed their interest in the issue and 70% would accept SCSR as a subject in educational process. At the same time, we can note, that *students, who have encountered the concept of SCSR in one of the subjects during their studies or have defended the Bachelor's, Master's or Doctoral theses, identically state the importance of the issue SCSR for industrial enterprises in the Slovak Republic in the global economic space as objectively necessary business strategy based on a new business model for the 21st century*.

*This is also confirmed by the global response of citizens from individual regions of the planet Earth and retrospective measures by national governments and international institutions*.

According to the findings of our survey results, 43% of industrial enterprises in the Slovak Republic *do not deal with CSR*. *The reasons given include the lack of information and the lack of professionals* in the particular field.

*Business practice will therefore require such graduates who are skilled in the field of SD and SCSR*.

## Conclusions

The concepts of SD and CSR represent an important contribution to addressing the global and local issues. Therefore we consider the inclusion of the topic in curricula at all Slovak schools as beneficial.

**A lot of schools in the world have already taken this step by teaching subjects/courses, for example:**

1. *Corporate Social Responsibility at Harvard Kennedy School,*
2. *Corporate Social Responsibility at University of Calgary,*
3. *Corporate Social Responsibility at Lulea University of Technology,*

**and study programmes, for example:**

1. *Corporate Social Responsibility at University of Nottingham,*
2. *Business, human rights law and corporate social responsibility at Open University,*
3. *Corporate Social Responsibility with Environmental Management at University of York.*

According to the "*Sustainable corporate social responsibility*" project we also strive to insert the subject of *Sustainable corporate social responsibility* into the curriculum of the Master degree study in Industrial Management programme at STU MTF Trnava.

An important step towards improving the awareness and preparedness of graduates, not only at STU MTF Trnava, might be the monograph by the title "*Sustainable corporate social responsibility*" that is being prepared by the team of authors led by Prof. Ing. Peter Sakál, CSc. The monograph is a comprehensive teaching textbook approved by the Management of the Faculty on 15 January 2013 for the Industrial Management programme at STU MTF.

According to the survey, 70% of students **declared their interest in the forthcoming subject** of Sustainable corporate social responsibility.

This is beneficial for the future development of the issue of SCSR in the Slovak Republic and abroad as well as within the subject and in dealing with the Bachelor's, Master's and Doctoral theses at STU MTF Trnava.

*This paper was supported by the Slovak Research and Development Agency under the contract No. LPP-0384-09: "Concept of HCS model 3E vs. Concept of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR).*

*The paper is also a part of the submitted KEGA project No. 037STU-4/2012 Implementation of the subject of "Corporate Social Responsibility Entrepreneurship" into the study programme of Industrial Management in the second degree of study at STU MTF Trnava.*

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