

## Aleksy Poczowski, Beata Buchelt

# Trends and Issues in Human Resource Management in Polish Companies

The systemic changes that took place in Poland during the last two decades not only influenced the economy but also management systems within the companies that operate on the Polish market—both state-owned and private companies. The changes can be also noticed in the human resource management sphere. In addition, the companies that performed their activities before the 1990s modified their management system and introduced new solutions. Private companies, whose history is rather brief, must sometimes face questions relating to encompassing personnel matters within a certain framework that defines objectives, organizes processes and develops HR techniques. The objective of this paper is to present the changes that have occurred in the field of the HR-function after 1989 under conditions of the Polish economy. Efforts have been made to show them in light of changes in organizations and with respect to the HR-strategy, roles of HR-departments, and some HR-issues currently facing by many Polish HR-managers.

### I. Introduction

The systemic changes that took place in Poland during the last two decades have made their mark on the implementation of the company's personnel function. This applies to both state-owned and private companies. The former, by modifying their management system, are introducing new solutions in the sphere of employment. Private companies, whose history is rather brief, must sometimes face questions relating to encompassing personnel matters within a certain framework that defines objectives, organizes processes, and develops HR techniques.

The objective of this paper is to present the changes that have occurred in the field of the HR function after 1989 under conditions of the Polish economy. Efforts have been made to show them in light of changes in organizations and with respect to HR strategy, the roles of HR departments, and some HR issues currently faced by many Polish HR managers.

This article has mainly been written on the basis of two empirical studies conducted in the year 2006. The study tool used in both cases was a structured questionnaire. The first study was carried out by a team of staff members of the Human Capital Management Department of the Cracow University of Economics. The title of the study was “Restructuring of the HR Function in Poland: Diagnosis and Directions of Changes.” Research encompassed twenty companies from throughout the whole of Poland, mainly representing industry and trade. Most of them were private companies, where a half of them were companies with the participation of foreign capital. The second source of information used in this article was a study conducted among the participants in the seventh edition of the Human Resource Management Leader Competition organized by the Institute for Labor and Social Studies in Warsaw. The main objective of that Program is the promotion of best practices in the field of human resource management. The study encompassed twenty-two companies from different branches, mostly from industry and traditional services. Half of them were private Polish firms, a third of them were companies with the participation of foreign capital.

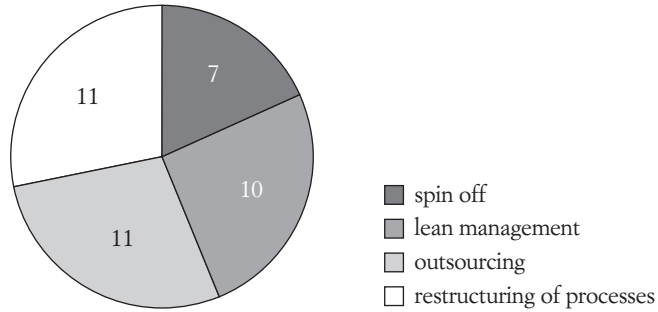
## 2. Changes in the HR Function as a Part of Restructuring Process in Companies

In the examined companies respondents were asked to define the types of changes that took place after the systemic transformation in Poland that was begun in 1989 [see Table No. 1]. Fundamental changes centered around the form of ownership according to the majority of the respondents. Most of the changes and modifications were partial. The following aspects were considered: size of the firm (division), organizational structure, tasks and functions, technology, personnel changes in the key positions, and ways of fulfilling the HR function.

**Table No. 1.** Types of organizational changes in the examined companies

Area of change	General change	Partial change	Minimal adjustment
Form of ownership	7	2	–
Size of the firm (division)	4	7	1
Organizational structure	4	11	1
Tasks and functions	1	11	3
Technology	2	12	2
Personnel changes in the key positions	6	12	1
HR function	7	8	1

Exhibit No. 1. Actions Taken by Companies during Restructuring Processes



In analyzing the responses, it is possible to note that in most of the firms the above mentioned changes were related to the following activities: spin off, lean management, outsourcing, and fundamental restructuring of the business processes [see: Exhibit No. 1].

The same research also showed that, in most cases, the changes were not realized individually by the companies. They were supported by consultants, who came from various sources—headquarters, consulting companies, and independent experts.

A total of 90% of respondents declared that there have been changes in the human resource management field in their companies during the last fifteen years. In most of the companies (65%) modifications took place recently, between the years 2001–2005. In fact, it is possible to assume that the changes have begun after the year 1996 on the basis of declarations. This means that at the beginning of transformation other fields of management were considered strategic issues. In most of the companies, the changes were both continual, and intermittent.

In part of the examined companies, the changes that took place in the HR function involved staff reduction in the HR department, which resulted from downsizing (35%) as well as decreases in the levels of management (delaying) (40%). Only a few of the companies applied outsourcing in the HR function.

### 3. Towards a New HRM Architecture

The impact of systemic transformation on the filling of the HR function in Polish companies can also be seen in the institutional dimension. The essence of these changes is revealed in the restructuring of tasks undertaken by individual entities and the molding of a new architecture for the HR function. Taking into consideration data delivered by a variety of research sources it is possible to notice general qualities emerging from this new architecture. The first is the change of meaning of the specialized HR units in companies.

The study performed in the year 2006 on a sample of Polish firms revealed that before the systemic changes, the HR department was considered supportive and minor. At present, its role has changed, albeit not dramatically.

In most of the companies it is still regarded as a supportive department, but in some it has started to be considered a strategic one. Nevertheless, almost all respondents declared that the department should possess key meaning in the organization in the future. The increasing significance of the HR department can be also noticed by changes in the organizational structure of firms.

**Table No. 2.** Position of HR Departments in the Examined Companies

Period	Position of the HR department		
	Major	Supportive	Minor
Before changes	1	9	9
Current	8	12	–
Expected in the future (in five years)	13	7	–

Taking into consideration the location of the HR department in the organizational structure, nationwide research has demonstrated that it was and is assigned to the CEO or general director. However, the position of the manager responsible for performing the HR function has changed. Prior to transformation the HR manager was assigned to middle level management. In the wake of systemic changes, the HR manager is now allocated among top managers in most of the researched companies. The analysis of data gathered from the companies which took part in the seventh edition of the Human Resource Management Leader Competition confirms the previously presented results. The person responsible for HR function is a top manager in 64% of the organizations that took part in the competition. In 9% of the firms, he or she belongs to the board of directors [Urbaniak, Bohdziewicz, 2006].

A second feature of the new HRM architecture is the progressive professionalism of specialized organizational units, which are becoming a business partner for both the executive board and line management. The professionalism of the HR department can be identified by an analysis of the roles played by the units in the organization. To this end, the multiple–role model developed by D. Ulrich [Ulrich, 1997, p.24] was adapted, where a role called “internal consultant” was added. Research revealed that before the systemic transformation, it was an administration role that was realized [see Table No. 3]. This means that the HR departments concentrated on the following activities: management of personal files and other employment related documentation, administrative services encompassing various certificates, vacation and sick leave settlement, Social Security Ad-

ministration documentation, and other statistical materials such as performing employment analyses. The other roles such as strategic partner, changes agent, employees’ champion, and internal consultant were implemented on only a minimum level. At present the situation is different. In most of the researched companies the HR department plays all of the mentioned roles.

**Table No. 3.** Roles Played by the HR Department Before and After Restructuring

Roles of the HR Department	Formerly			Presently		
	Level of the role fulfillment					
	High	Medium	None	High	Medium	None
Strategic partner	1	7	10	10	8	2
Change agent	2	9	7	13	4	3
Employee champion	4	12	1	13	7	1
Administration expert	17	1	–	17	3	–
Internal consultant	5	13	–	17	3	–

The third quality of the new organizational architecture in the area of the personnel function is the growing role of consulting services in creating value for stakeholders. Such services can vary due to their type, scope, and level of involvement of the consultants. In its narrow definition, “to consult” means the expression of opinions in specific matters. In the case of HR departments, “consulting” should be understood more broadly as the set of activities that involve the drafting of solutions to problems that have been identified and commissioned by the company. Based on data gathered from nationwide research, it can be noticed that there was a tremendous drift from the past. Prior to restructuring only a few companies considered the HR department as a source for advice. Today, almost all companies declare the use of consulting services performed by the HR department. However, worth noting is the fact that the efficiency and quality of in-house consulting services depends on the professionalism of employees working in the HR departments. Moreover, it should be underlined that systemic changes influenced the educational system in Poland. Thus, potential and present employees of HR departments have more opportunities to excel or develop their competencies. In parallel with internal consulting services, companies tend to purchase external consulting services. According to data gathered from nationwide research, 60% of the companies use external consulting services on an irregular basis. Twenty of the firms do it regularly and 20% do not use external consulting services. The data gathered during the seventh edition of the Human Resource Management Leader Competition are almost indistinguishable. Here, 22% of

the companies do not use external consulting services and 68% do use them [Urbaniak, Bohdziewicz, 2006].

A fourth feature of the new organizational architecture in the area of human resource management is the involvement of line managers as management actors. Comparison of data gathered from the sixth and seventh editions of the Human Resource Management Leader Competition showed that the involvement of line managers in the human resource management function increased. Among the companies that participated in the seventh edition, 97% declared that line managers play an active role in the implementation of human resource management processes. However, the scope and field of the involvement varies. In 78% of companies, line managers involve themselves on the regular basis. In 19%, this involvement is intermittent. The major areas of HRM that line managers are involved in are team management, conflict management, performance management, recruitment, and layoffs [Urbaniak, Bohdziewicz, 2006].

#### 4. Developing HRM Strategy and Procedures

The systemic transformation in Poland forced companies to change their approach to the market. The creation of value in order to achieve and maintain competitive advantage is the essence of strategic management, including in the area of the human resource function. This is the source of the need to shift the human resource management function from the operational to the strategic level. To formulate, implement, and monitor long-term action programs targeted at creating and utilizing human capital is a matter leading to the achievement of a competitive advantage. Empirical data from our research show that nearly every one of them have a business strategy, where most is in the form of a written document while in other companies it is in unwritten form. Additionally, all of the examined companies possess a human resource management strategy, among which 50% is in the form of a written document. The others have a strategy in unwritten form. In comparison, among the companies that took part in the seventh edition of the Human Resource Management Leader Competition, 91% possess a business strategy. A total of 73% of them have formalized that strategy in the form of a document, while 18% did not formalize their strategy. Furthermore, 81% of the companies developed a human resource management strategy, of which 64% in the form of a document and 18% in unwritten form [Urbaniak, Bohdziewicz, 2006].

The shift of HR function from operational to strategic level can also be noticed in the formalization of activities undertaken within HRM area. Here, the possession of procedures becomes a crucial factor in preventing the companies from undertaking unplanned and one-time actions. Taking into consideration the empirical data from our research, it is possible to notice that almost all of the companies formalized their human resource

management activities [see Table No. 4]. However, it is worth underlining the fact that some of the HRM processes still do not get enough attention—management in a multicultural environment, for example. Due to the fact that Polish companies are internationalizing their activities, it can be assumed that the process will be also formalized sooner or later.

**Table No. 4.** Formalization of HRM Activities

Name of HRM procedure	Presently		Formerly	
	Possession of formal procedures	Lack of procedures	Possession of formal procedures	Lack of procedures
HR planning	16	2	5	13
Recruitment	15	3	7	11
Adaptation	11	6	3	15
Decruitment	9	8	3	15
Training	18	–	9	8
Career planning	11	7	3	14
Employee evaluation	12	6	3	15
Remuneration	17	2	13	6
Administration	17	2	13	6
Conflict management	6	12	5	13
Multicultural management	4	14	1	16
Personnel controlling	8	10	3	15

**5. Current HR Issues**

The restructuring of the HR function can be also noticed in the task structure in the field of human resource management. Companies limit their administrative activities—mainly a source of costs—and concentrate on the development of actions that create greater value than the former. Among the actions that create greater value to organizations are change management, organizational and managerial staff development, professional career planning, the development of remuneration systems, and increased efficiency in communication processes within the organizations. While searching for value creation activities, companies replace the traditional functional model of personnel management by a process approach. In molding individual personnel processes, values that are a result of these processes and the optimizing of their costs become curtailed and should be defined in advanced. Rationalization of work costs is one of the priorities in the area of the

personnel function. However, it is worth stressing that creating value in the area of the personnel function should take place not only through the decreasing of work costs, but also through utilization of the leverage effect of human resources that are based on an improvement in work productivity.

## IT Systems

As mentioned above, an example of evidence that companies tend to increase the efficiency of the HR function is the dissemination of the application of modern technology in the personnel function. The expression “e–HR” adheres to this activity. Although it has no single definition, it is used to define new methods for solving personnel matters in organizations utilizing computers, the Internet, multimedia, and intranets. Taking into consideration data gathered during research, it was found that almost all the researched companies support remuneration and administration by means of IT systems. More than 50% of the companies support training, internal and external communication, and management (organization). Up to 50% of the researched companies maintain recruitment and employee evaluation with IT systems (see Table No. 5). In comparison, among companies that took part in the seventh edition of the Human Resource Management Leader Competition, 95% declared use of e–HR. Moreover, 73% declared use of integrated information systems and 23% other types. However, it is worth noting that among the companies that took part in the last four editions of the competition, the use of e–HR increased, especially when considering integrated systems [Urbaniak, Bohdziewicz, 2006].

**Table No. 5.** Use of IHRM Systems

<b>Name of the HRM function</b>	<b>Number of companies using IT systems</b>
Recruitment	9
Selection	5
Evaluation	8
Remuneration	19
Training	12
Administration	17
Internal communication	15
External communication	11
Management (organization)	10



### Outsourcing

Over recent years, improvement of personnel function effectiveness in organizations is connected with the outsourcing of some of its elements. This aspect was also identified in the research as a challenge for the nearest future. Among the general objectives of outsourcing, several are specific to the personnel function. These are a reduction of personnel functions costs, especially administrative ones, diversification of personnel risk through subdivision among business partners, increased access to new technologies and specialized know-how, concentration on key human resource management processes, the ones that add value, access to advanced technologies, and improvement of customer services.

The major trend in personnel function outsourcing activities is to exclude activities that generate high costs, while at the same do not add enough value. However, it is worth noting that if the companies that exclude certain HRM activities build strategic relations with outsourcing companies, then much more can be realized than just an increase in activity effectiveness. If the companies use outsourcing to realize other management functions and create strategic alliances among internal (strategic organizational units) and external (specialized companies) structures, then outsourcing may become the source of competitive advantage.

Taking into consideration the results of research, it is found that the activities that are usually outsourced by companies are (see Table No. 6) training, recruitment, wage analysis, employees satisfaction analysis, coaching, and administration.

Table No. 6. Outsourcing of HRM Activities

Name of HRM the function	Number of companies that outsource HRM activities
Administration	3
Training	9
Recruitment	7
Wage analysis	7
Employees satisfaction analysis	4
Coaching	4

### Flexible Forms of Employment

These changes can be seen in the change in the proportion between permanent, fulltime employment and time-related, part-time employment, where the second form is begin-

ning to dominate. Research evidence shows that permanent contracts are still the dominated form of employment. However, at the same time, companies tend to implement more flexible forms of employment. Among most popular forms of flexible employment used by companies are time-related contracts (85% of the researched companies), part-time employment (30% of the researched companies), and flexible working hours (30% of the researched companies).

It is worth noticing that tele-work still belongs among the marginal activities of companies. Even though the forms are still not dominant, their share in overall employment activities has increased when compared to the past. All of the above forms of employment are based on the Labor Code. There are, however, employment forms based on the Civil Code in Poland. These forms are also becoming popular among Polish firms. A total of 50% of the companies that took part in the nationwide research use job contracts. They also use internship agreements and cooperate with temporary work agencies. There was an increase in the tendency of that last form of employment noticed.

### Internationalization

The entrance of Poland into the European Union became one of the major factors that caused the labor market to differentiate culturally, and as a consequence companies started to experience this tendency. Taking into consideration the simultaneous trends of emigration by Polish specialists and the inflow of foreigners to Poland, it may be assumed that these trends create new challenges for human resource management. The challenge is to prepare employees to function in a multicultural environment. This becomes a strategic problem with regard to research that shows that a large portion of managers and specialists sent abroad to work outside main headquarters fail to fulfill their responsibilities. One of the most important reason for their failure is a lack of knowledge and ability to work in multicultural and varied environments. Moreover, not only managers, but also specialist are not able to handle “cultural shock.” They are unaware of the fact that appreciation of cultural diversity may not only limit potential conflicts, but can also become a source of competitive advantage. Research demonstrates that the preparing of employees for work in a multicultural environment is not a priority of human resource management. Only 20% of researched companies possessed related formal procedures. However, the improvement is noticeable. Prior to transformation only 5% had such procedures.

### Work Productivity

One of the greatest challenges in the area of the personnel function is an increase in the firms' competitiveness through productivity improvement and labor cost rationalization.

The importance of this problem flows from the fact that, in Poland, work productivity is at a level of about 60% of the average work productivity level in the European Union. Nevertheless, it is important to notice that during the last few years, the increase in work productivity in Poland has been higher than the average increase for the European Union. This however does not change the fact, that productivity is still lower. Because of this, it has become one of the key aspects of human resource management. Similarly, an important challenge is to find methods to increase the productivity of the economy as a whole. When improvements are realized through reductions in employment, the side-effect is an increase in unemployment and a fall in employment ratios.

The problem of work effectiveness was also noticed among the companies that took part in the research. In fact, it was recognized as one of the challenges of human resource management in the nearest future. The results of research point out that most of the companies analyzed labor costs and work productivity. The companies also underlined the necessity to implement systems that would improve measurement and analysis in the area of firm activities—SAP, BSC, and controlling, for example.

### **Corporate Social Responsibility**

In line with the modern company model, it may be assumed that a firm should not only be economically effective, but also socially responsible. This responsibility concerns shareholders as well as the environment in which companies perform their activities. This assumption is becoming a foundation for the growth of the modern company. A lot of the elements that build the social responsibility category are connected with clearly understood human capital management. The idea of corporate social responsibility can be identified in the company mission statement, procedures, and methods of management. The data are presented in Table No. 7. Based on data analysis, it is possible to state that almost all the companies refer in their mission statements to quality (90%) and customer needs (80%). These results are confirmed by information gathered during the HRM Leader Competition. Here, 95% of the companies refer to the above mentioned values [Urbaniak, Bohdziewicz, 2006]. The larger portion of the companies that took part in the nationwide research program also referred to employee needs and ethical values (65%). In the case of the already mentioned HRM Leader Competition, the percentage amounted 59% [Urbaniak, Bohdziewicz, 2006]. These facts point out that in addition to market-oriented mission statement elements, there are elements connected with a company's social responsibility. In fact, the social responsibility aspect is gaining company attention.

**Table No. 7.** Inclusion of Corporate Social Responsibility Elements in Mission Statements

Mission statement element	Presently	Formerly
Profit	12	7
Costs	11	9
Quality	18	9
Shareholder needs	10	5
Employee needs	13	5
Customer needs	16	6
Natural environment protection	9	3
Local society needs	7	4
Multiculturalism	9	2
Ethical principles	13	4

According to the research, most of the companies declared that they promote the social responsibility idea internally (75%) and externally (70%). The percentage of the companies promoting the idea increased during the last few years. Similar results to those of the nationwide research were gathered during the HRM Leader Competition. Here, 80% of the companies promote the idea [Urbaniak, Bohdziewicz, 2006]. The most commonly used activities connected with corporate social responsibility as realized by the companies that took part in the nationwide research are presented in Table No. 8. Among others, the following activities were realized:

- Support of local community needs (75% of the researched companies),
- Support for R&D activities (55% of the researched companies),
- Pro-environmental initiatives (50% of the researched companies) and their promotion (30% of the researched companies).

**Table No. 8.** Activities Taken by Companies in Line with the Corporate Social Responsibility Idea

Type of activity	Presently	Formerly
Pro-community	15	10
Pro-environmental	10	6
Entrepreneurship support	4	4
R&D support	11	5
Involvement in other initiatives that promote CSR policy	6	2

The results of the nationwide research are similar to these from the HRM Leader Competition. Here, companies realize initiatives such as pro-community (91% of the companies), promotion of the idea of corporate social responsibility (77% of the companies), support for scientific development (68% of the companies), pro-environmental initiatives (50% of the companies), and entrepreneurship support (36% of the companies) [Urbaniak, Bohdziewicz, 2006].

A symptom of implementation of the corporate social responsibility idea is, among others, research into employee opinions about varied work aspects. Based on nationwide research, the increase in interest in this field was noticed. A total of 70% of the researched companies confirmed implementation of this activity, of which 40% did so on a regular basis. In the past, adequate quantities amounted to 35% and 25%. The research subjects included employee work satisfaction, organizational climate and culture, employee self-realization, work involvement, employee development opportunities, and the work environment. In order to compare, it is possible to analyze information gathered during the HRM Leader Competition. Here, 95% of the companies undertook employee opinion research, 59% did so on a regular basis [Urbaniak, Bohdziewicz, 2006].

### **Work-Life Balance**

Dynamic changes in the external and internal environment of today's organizations create the need for employees to continuously adjust to the situation. Furthermore, employees experience employment destabilization and uncertainty in combination with that is often personal experience with employment reductions and new career models. Because of these aspects a large number of employees live under the influence of long-term stress. This is often responsible for a condition known as "professional burn out." More and more people experience anxiety stemming from the work environment that influences their private lives. Moreover, people who experience such situations come to the conclusion that work disorganizes or even destroys private life. Assuming that these influential circumstances will increase in intensity, it may be assumed that the aspect of work-life balance will become one of the challenges facing human resource management. Of course, it cannot be assumed that the best solution to this problem is to resign from work that destabilizes the balance. Such an assumption is obviously unrealistic, especially considering the difficult situation on the labor market and natural changes in content, conditions, and work tools. It is for this reason that instability of the work-life balance should become the subject of human resource management. Moreover, HRM actors should play an active role in the problem's solution, especially the employees themselves as well as line managers and human resource managers. It would be helpful if these actors could be supported by consultants. Nevertheless, it is essential for organizations to learn how to

deal with the problem. First of all, companies should learn how to identify the problem. Next, the causes of the problem should be pointed out and solutions prepared. Gaining an ability to identify even weak signals of the problem and dealing with it is becoming crucial for companies.

Work–life balance became the subject in our research project. The aspect was regarded as one of the major challenges of human resource management by 30% of the researched companies. Additionally, the companies included the work–life balance issue in official company policy. In comparison, 65% of the researched companies considered work–life balance as the individual problem of employees. Similar results were gathered in the HRM Leader competition [Urbaniak, Bohdziewicz, 2006]. The results of the research make it possible to assume that most of the Polish companies consider work–life balance as the individual problem of employees. The data gathered during research made it possible to identify activities conducted by companies in order to support employees in sustaining the balance. They include help in the problem solution (50%), specialist counseling (45%), teaching employees how to deal with the problem (25%), and helping to identify the problem (20%). Based on the information, it may be assumed that the aspect of work–life balance is actually present in the practice of human resource management of Polish companies. However, it is not sufficiently translated into action plans.

## 6. Closing Remarks

Evidence from empirical studies cited above, as well from other research projects in the area of human resource management in companies operating in Poland, leads to some generalizations on the current state of the HR function and some tendencies for change as observed. First of all, the awareness that improving human resource management works to achieve business objectives is growing. A consequence of this is an interest in improved standards of human resource management among companies, standards that go beyond business organizations and more and more apply to other organizations such as government administration and hospitals. Results of analyses point to the model–generating role of international companies in creating human resource management best practice, where the distance between them and domestic companies is being seen as shortening. Research shows that a decided bulk of companies participating in both studies have developed HR strategies and have at their disposal tools for implementing basic HR processes. Information technology systems for human resource management are universally used by the examined companies. More and more areas of human resource management are being subjected to economic and social analysis, especially work productivity and its costs, utilization of work time, organizational climate, and work satisfaction. The growing awareness of a company’s social responsibility can be observed, including such areas as

ethics, work–life balance programs, and outplacement programs. The above presented arguments suggest a conclusion regarding the growing rank of human resource management in Poland. Looking to the future, it may be argued that the place and importance of the HR function in the future will more and more be decided by the competence of modern technology use in the process of acquiring and utilizing knowledge to create value under conditions of progressing internationalization. This signifies a need to concentrate on the effective solving of current problems and anticipating future challenges in parallel for managers involved in human resource management.

## References

- Borkowska S. (2003), *Programy praca–życie a efektywność firm* [Work–life balance programs and a firm’s effectiveness], edited by, ILSS, Warsaw.
- Brewster C. (2003), “Międzynarodowe i porównawcze zarządzanie zasobami ludzkimi” [International and comparative HRM], *Zarządzanie Zasobami Ludzkimi* [Human Resource Management], No. 6.
- “HR doskonały – 10 przykazań. Diagnoza stanu obecnego i perspektywy rozwoju polskiego rynku zarządzania ludźmi. Raport jubileuszowy” (2002) [Perfect HR – The Ten Commandments, Diagnosis and development perspectives of HRM in Poland. Anniversary report], Instytut Zarządzania [Management Institute], Warsaw
- Pocztowski A. (Editor) (2002, 2003, 2004, 2005), *Najlepsze praktyki zarządzania zasobami ludzkimi w Polsce* [Best practices of HRM in Poland], Oficyna Ekonomiczna [Economic Publishers], Cracow.
- Pocztowski A. (Editor) (2006), “Restrukturyzacja funkcji personalnej w Polsce” [Restructuring of the personnel function in Poland], *Diagnoza istniejącego stanu i kierunki zmian* [Diagnosis of the existing state and directions of change], Akademia Ekonomiczna w Krakowie [Cracow Academy of Economics], Cracow.
- Ulrich D. (1997), *Human Resource Champions: The Next Agenda for Adding Value and Delivering Results*, Harvard Business School Press, Boston.
- Urbaniak B., Bohdziewicz P. (2006), “Zarządzanie zasobami ludzkimi. Kreowanie nowoczesności” [Human resource management: Creating modernity], Report 2006, ILSS, Warsaw.

---

A l e k s y P o c z t o w s k i – A full professor, Head of Human Capital Management Department at the Cracow University of Economics. Academic teacher and researcher in the field of Strategic and International Human Resources Management. The author and editor of more than 100 publications, e.g.: *Personnel Function: Diagnosis and Trends* (2007); *Human Resources Management: Strategies-Processes-Methods* (2003, 2007), *HRM in M&A* (2004), *International HRM* (2002); *Best Practices in HRM in Poland. Case studies* (2002, 2003, 2004, 2005). A former scholarship holder of DAAD and Volkswagen Foundation (Germany).

Beata Buchelt – Ph.D., a member of the faculty at the Human Capital Management Department of Cracow University of Economics. She acquired her doctoral degree in management. She is also a consultant and trainer in the HRM field. She has been collaborating with the Institute of Labor and Social Studies as auditor of the national Human Resource Management Competition.