

Kalina GRZESIUK\*

## **DIVERSITY AS A CHALLENGE FOR AN ENTERPRISE: AN ANALYSIS OF THE DIVERSITY CHARTERS IN POLAND**

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Diversity Management (DM) is said to be the new source of competitive advantage among enterprises conducting their activities in a contemporary, turbulent environment. This article aims at identifying the characteristics of these Polish companies that declared the implementation of DM. The paper begins with the theoretical introduction presenting the categories of diversity, its main sources and DM practices in contemporary enterprises. One of the practices is the Diversity Charter (DC). DC is a part of the European Union Commission's initiative called "Building the European Area of Justice" and it was implemented in 17 European Union countries. Institutions joining this program sign a voluntary declaration of including DM in their organizational strategy and practices. The empirical analysis is based on a review of information about the 196 Polish companies that joined the DC. The studies performed by the author of this article led to the identification of the basic features characterizing Polish signatories, including their size, legal form, geographic location and Multi-National Corporation affiliation. The conclusion of this paper contains the author's evaluation of DM's popularity among the specified companies.

**Keywords:** diversity management, Diversity Charters, Polish companies, competitive advantage, turbulent environment

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

Contemporary organizations have to deal with a complex, interconnected and very changeable turbulent environment (Josefy et al., 2015). It is a great challenge especially for the business companies that have to compete with each other in order to survive. They constantly keep looking for any new ways to make themselves more distinctive on the market and, in this way, influence the buying intentions of

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\* John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin.

the consumers. One of the difficulties the turbulent environment poses is how to deal with the diversity in the many aspects of the company's activities. However, some enterprises try to use this challenge as a new source of their competitive advantage on the market, because an effective diversity management (DM) leads to a better perception of the company and might be a way to stand out on the market (Bassett-Jones, 2005).

Diversity is a very complex phenomenon that emerges in various areas of the company's operations (Nishii, 2013), but it is the most prominent in the social layer of organizational life. Researchers often study the employees' diversity in relation to the discrimination and equal opportunities policies (DiTomaso, Post, Parks-Yancy, 2007). However, diversity is a much broader term and it is not precisely defined by any code of law. It is rather more of a voluntary initiative of an enterprise that commits to recruitment, employment and development of employees representing diverse social, demographic, ethnic, economic or religious groups. There are numerous categories of diversity and their classification will be described in one of the following parts of this paper.

## 2. CATEGORIES OF DIVERSITY

People vary in many aspects. There are similarities we all share but there are also some biological and environmental differences that make people a very diverse collective of individuals. These differences have certain consequences as they lead to the emergence of the differences in values, the career opportunities, the perceptions of self and the work environment and the way that people establish groups (Cox, Blake, 1991).

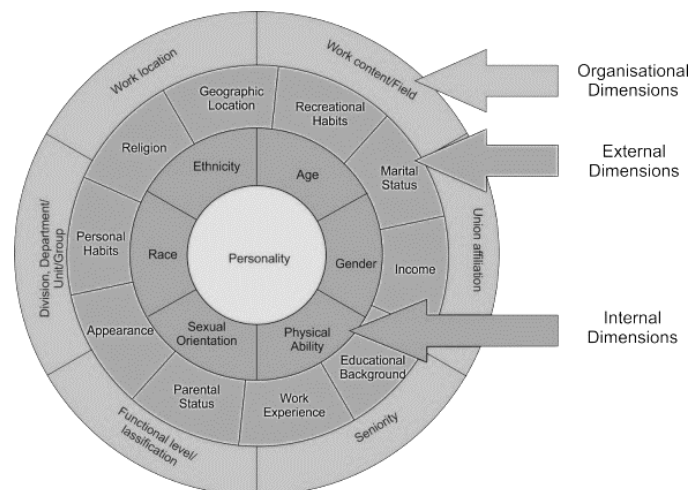


Fig. 1. The four layer model of diversity. Source: Ardakani et al., 2016, 414

Ardakani et al. (2016) presented a model consisting of four layers of the differences between the individuals that emerge from the various diversity criteria groups (Fig. 1). They comprise a concentric circle with the employee's personality as the first layer. The differences in this dimension usually concern people's various characteristics such as The Big Five including Neuroticism, or Emotional Stability; Extraversion; Openness to Experience; Agreeableness; and Conscientiousness (Colbert et al., 2004). As numerous studies show, these features of the employees' personality influence their behavior, work performance and the decision-making processes on the market (e.g. Barrick, Mount, Judge, 2001; Bruck, Allen, 2004; Mulyanegara, Tsarenko, Anderson, 2009).

The second layer consists of the criteria concerning age, gender, physical ability, sexual orientation, race and ethnicity. These characteristics are sometimes labelled "internal" or "primal" as we are all born with them and, in most cases, they cannot be modified. They constitute the core of the individual's identity. In contrast, the third layer contains the criteria that emerge as a result of the choices that people make in their lives. They are labelled as external or secondary (Mazur, 2010). They involve some personal life and work related features of the employees, such as their marital status, parental status and religion, but also income, educational background and work experience. They are more changeable, less visible and varied in the way they influence people's lives. The last layer the authors described consists of the organizational dimensions (Mor Barak, Cherin, Berkman, 1998). They concern an employee's job specifics and the position in the company.

All these layers characterize and differentiate not only a company's employees but also the consumers on the market and in order to deal with these differences the enterprise must introduce some special practices in both their Human Resource strategies and the Customer Relations Management System (Martín-Alcázar, Romero-Fernández, Sánchez-Gardey, 2012). It is not an easy task, but it can be facilitated by joining the European Union (EU) initiative that supports the effective implementation of DM in organizations – The Diversity Charter.

### 3. MAIN SOURCES OF DIVERSITY

All the contemporary companies face challenges related to diversity. The main sources of this phenomenon are external and derive from the firms' environment. They include the economic, technological, demographic and institutional factors characterizing their market reality. However, it seems that the demographic changes are the most significant as they are both inevitable and very difficult to manage in a short-term perspective. That is why the description of demographic trends in this paragraph is more extensive and thorough than that of the other diversity sources.

The main economic challenge leading to the diversity of the companies' operations is globalization. The ongoing trend to globalize affects the firms' activities in

various ways (Lozano, Eserich, 2017). Firstly, it is an important source of finding new markets for the companies' products and services. The companies are able to conduct their business all over the world and sell their products and services to the customers in the global economy. This gives rise to the challenge of learning how to deal with very diverse groups of customers that have highly differentiated needs and expectations as they represent various cultures, ethnic groups or religions (McKay et al., 2011). In order to satisfy the needs of all these segments of customers, a company has to make some strategic decisions concerning the diversification of its offer and making it either universal or offering the different product lines to the different groups of clients.

However, the global market presents the companies with certain challenges. The most prominent one concerns the globalization of the competition (Shah, Shah, 2010). If one company can operate globally, so can others. Therefore, the company must face the challenge of competing with the offer of other firms from all over the world and keep coming up with brand new ideas for building the competitive advantage. The globalization processes lead to a higher level of diversity for all the companies involved because it requires dealing with diverse customers, suppliers and employees.

The globalization of the world economy also leads to a diversification of the workforce (Mor Barak, 2015). The opportunity to operate on the global market requires the globalization of companies' operations and often leads them to start new ventures in many countries all over the world. Thus, a company must deal with diversity among its employees, and that requires adopting new practices in its strategic Human Resource Management systems (Noor, Khalid, Rashid, 2013).

The diversity of the workforce is also caused by the demographic trends on the labor market (Sippola, Smale, 2007). They will be described in a more detailed way in one of the following paragraphs, but it should be stressed that the processes of globalization offer certain opportunities for coping with the negative demographic trends that lead to the emerging of the "employee market". If the pool of the job candidates available in one country is not sufficient for the company's needs, it can search for the employees on the global labor market and attract candidates from all over the world as long as they have the qualifications needed for the job.

The opportunity to employ candidates from abroad is also facilitated by the emergence of technological solutions that allow people to telecommute (Shachaf, 2008). It makes it possible for them to do the job from their own homes and avoid having to travel to work or move to a different part of the world. The emergence of ICT has changed the way the business world operates nowadays. It simplified the communication processes and made it possible to reach people in the remote parts of the world in a relatively cheap and fast way (Huysman, de Wit, 2004). The technological progress also influenced scientific advances in medicine and that lead to the emergence of new demographic trends (Bieling, Stock, Dorozalla, 2015). The demographic structure of today's societies is changing in a rapid way. The advances in medicine allow people to live longer and in good health. The percentage of people

aged over 65 varies in various countries (Fig. 2), but it is especially high in highly developed countries (United Nations Population Fund ..., 2012).

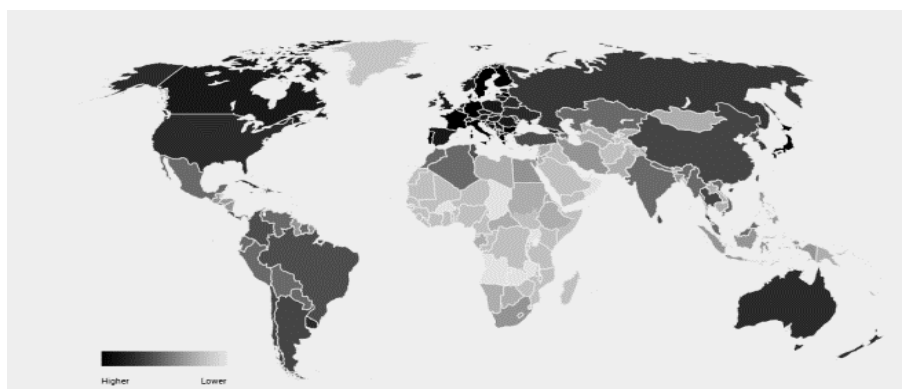


Fig. 2. Percentage of the population 65+.  
Source: United Nations Population Fund ..., 2012)

The median age of people is increasing in all the countries, but it is also especially high in the developed countries (Fig. 3). The projection of the trend line shows that the median age in about 20 years will be even higher in Poland than in the European Union (Eurostat; United Nations, World Population Prospects, 2017).

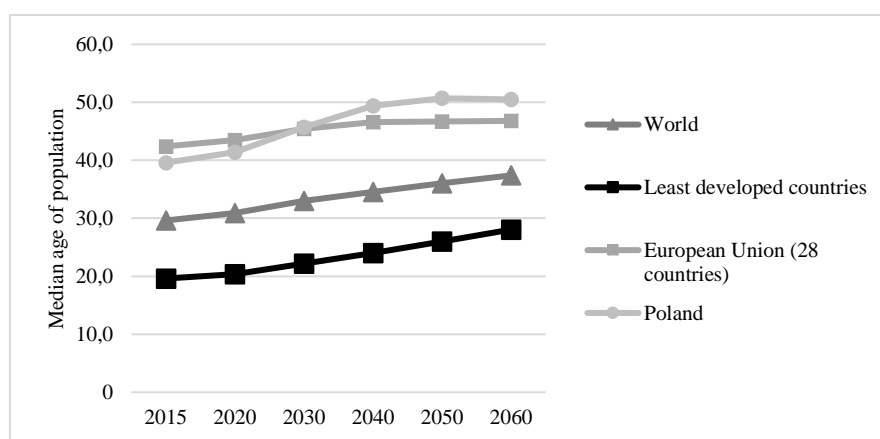


Fig. 3. Projection of the median age of the population.  
Source: Eurostat; United Nations, World Population Prospects, 2017

This tendency is also accompanied by the low fertility rate and that leads to the emergence of changes in the demographic structure of societies in various countries. One of the measures of this phenomenon is the dependency ratio of the popu-

lation aged 65 years and more in relation to the population aged 15–64 (Eurostat; United Nations, World Population Prospects, 2017). The analysis of the current situation and the future projected trend lines leads to the conclusion that although the ratio is increasing in all the countries, it is again especially high in all the highly developed countries (Fig. 4).

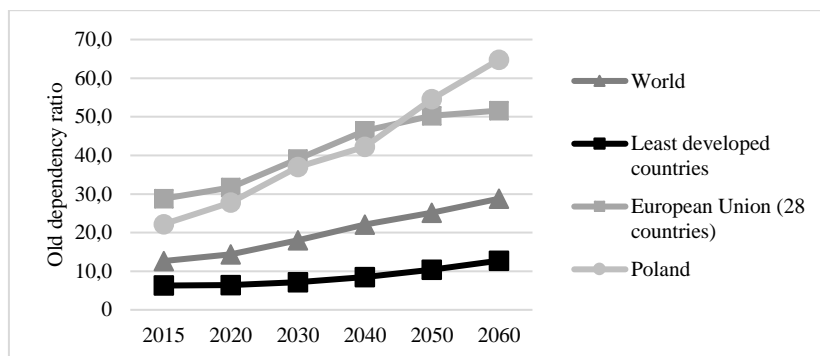


Fig. 4. Projection of the old dependency ratio (population aged 65 and more to population aged 15–64).  
Source: Eurostat; United Nations, World Population Prospects, 2017

All of the demographic trends mentioned above influence the labor market. The emerging changes include the increasing age diversity as phenomena such as active ageing and the labor participation of older workers emerge. More employees decide to stay in their jobs even if they reach the retirement age (Bieling, Stock, Dorozalla, 2015). The employment rate of older workers in the EU grows year-on-year and although the level of the indicator in Poland is still lower than the average in the EU, the rate of increase is greater (Fig. 5).

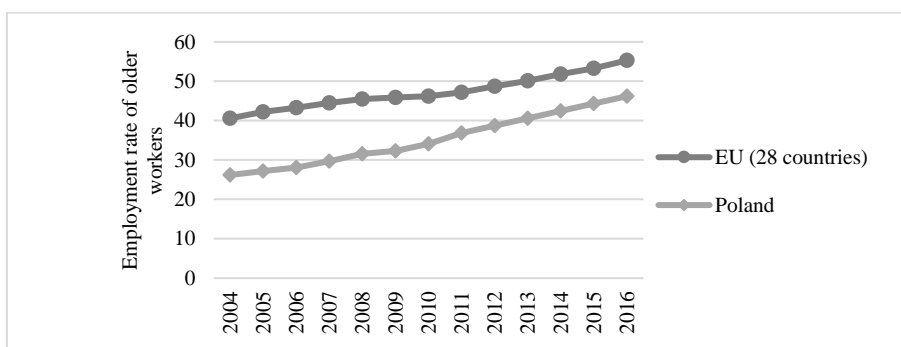


Fig. 5. The employment rate of the older workers.  
Source: United Nations Population Fund ..., 2014

As a result of these demographic changes and the growing role of the institutional sphere of the companies' environment, various institutions also place a particular emphasis on managing diversity and adopting the equal rights policies (Cole, Salimath, 2013). Many formal mechanisms, such as the legal protective acts, are introduced in the legal system of the EU as a whole but they are also present in each particular member country's regulations. These legal pressures ensure protecting the human rights of all the employees and they allow imposing penalties on the organizations that do not obey the law. Selected EU and Polish regulations are listed in Table 1.

Table 1. Selected legal acts regarding diversity

Legal act	Examples of regulations concerning diversity
Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union (2000/C 364/01)	<p><b>Article 21</b> Non-discrimination Any discrimination based on any ground such as sex, race, colour, ethnic or social origin, genetic features, language, religion or belief, political or any other opinion, membership of a national minority, property, birth, disability, age or sexual orientation shall be prohibited.</p> <p><b>Article 22</b> Cultural, religious and linguistic diversity The Union shall respect cultural, religious and linguistic diversity.</p> <p><b>Article 23</b> Equality between men and women Equality between men and women must be ensured in all areas, including employment, work and pay. The principle of equality shall not prevent the maintenance or adoption of measures providing for specific advantages in favour of the under-represented sex.</p>
Directive 2006/54/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council	Directive 2006/54/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 5 July 2006 on the implementation of the principle of equal opportunities and equal treatment of men and women in matters of employment and occupation (recast).
The Labour Code in Poland	<p><b>Art. 94.</b> Duties of the employer. The employer is obliged in particular to: <b>2b)</b> act against discrimination in employment, in particular in respect of sex, age, disability, race, religion, nationality, political belief, trade union membership, ethnic origin, creed, sexual orientation, as well as on grounds of employment for a definite or indefinite period of time, or in full or part-time.</p> <p><b>Chapter IIa. Equal treatment in employment</b></p> <p><b>Art. 183a.</b> Prohibition against discrimination in employment.</p> <p><b>Art. 183b.</b> Violation of the principle of equal treatment.</p>

Author's own elaboration.

There are also some normative pressures put on the organizations by their stakeholders. All the companies are expected to behave in a certain way even though it is not directly stated in the law system and these behaviors are an important source of their social legitimization (Martin, Johnson, French, 2011). It can be shown on the example of Carroll's CSR Pyramid, a model that presents four levels of the companies' responsible activities in relation to their stakeholders (Carroll, 1991). Two bottom levels of being responsible require the companies to act in accordance to their economic and legal obligations, but the top two levels concern their ethical and philanthropic responsibility. As Carroll states, these are the norms that are not stated directly in the legal acts but they are the expected behaviors that the stakeholders perceive as fair and they often precede the establishment of law. The customers have certain standards of expectations that they set for the companies and they are able to impose various penalties like the negative opinions or the customers' boycotts if they are not met (Mor Barak, 2015).

The consequences of making the decision to ignore the existing stakeholders' expectations might also be significant for the company's effectiveness. These negative results include the emergence of the intergroup conflicts in the organization (van Knippenberg, Schippers, 2007; Hinds, Mortensen, 2005), a limited access to the talented employees (Matuska, Sałek-Imińska, 2014), lost opportunities for cooperation with other companies, costly lawsuits (Hirsh, Cha, 2017) and a deteriorated reputation and image of the company (Harbaugh, To, 2014). As in the globalized economy, the companies and other institutions are interconnected by various ties, the information about the company's misbehavior is spread throughout the network and it reaches even remote parts of it, thus influencing the perception of the company on the global market (Smith, 2006).

#### **4. THE DIVERSITY CHARTER**

The Diversity Charter (DC) consists of "a short document voluntarily signed by a company or a public institution". It outlines the measures this organization will undertake to promote diversity and equal opportunities in the workplace, regardless of race or ethnic origin, sexual orientation, gender, age, disability and religion (European Commission, 2017). It is an international initiative supported by the European Union. The DC was introduced in 2004 and 17 European countries have become members of this program since then. They are: Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Spain, Holland, Ireland, Luxemburg, Germany, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, Sweden, Hungary and Italy.

The main objectives of introducing the Diversity Charter in European countries were (Hajjar, Hugonet, 2015b):



- Increasing the awareness of the diversity issues and their impact on the companies and their stakeholders;
- Building support for diversity issues among many stakeholders: companies, local governments, non-government institutions etc. It requires for all of them to cooperate in order to deal with diversity challenges;
- Promoting diversity among Small and Medium Enterprises (SME);
- Supporting the signatories in: productivity and performance, quality of life, compliance with the law;
- Exchanging good practices.

The diversity Charter in Poland was signed during the conference in the Chancellery of the Prime Minister in 2012. The signatories of Polish DC agree to conduct their activities with tolerance, respect and consideration that they demonstrate in relation to each person's particular characteristics: gender, sexual orientation, disability, age, religion or belief, racial or ethnic origin, political convictions, labor union membership, family status, style of life, legal form of employment and other cooperation types.

Polish Diversity Charters signatories' obligations are as follows (Karta Różnorodności):

- Creating an appropriate atmosphere and an organizational culture;
- Introducing the institutional internal diversity procedures in the company;
- Preparing and implementing the equal treatment practices in the workplace;
- Implementing anti-discrimination and anti-mobbing monitoring;
- Sustaining a dialogue with the employees;
- Yearly reporting of the diversity activities;
- Promoting and promulgating the diversity management in Poland.

## 5. THE ANALYSIS OF THE DC SIGNATORIES

The activities of the Diversity Charters signatories are monitored by the European Union Commission of Justice and the latest report on diversity implementation in the EU was published in 2014 (European Commission – Directorate-General for Justice, 2014). The description of Polish business DC signatories presented in this paper offers the results of the author's analysis of the information about the organizations listed on the webpage of the non-government institution Forum Odpowiedzialnego Biznesu, which is responsible for the coordination of the Diversity Charters in Poland. The information all of the analysis is based on was acquired at the end of October 2017. The list of DC signatories in that period consisted of 196 organizations. The information concerning the type, legal form, sector of economy and geographic location of the organizations was based on the information published in the National Court Register and the size of the companies was

based on the information available on the register money.pl and the organizations' websites.

The number of organizations becoming signatories of the Charter varies not only yearly but also if we take into consideration the first or the second half of the year (Fig. 6). The analysis shows that the organizations are more open to the idea of joining the initiative in the first half of the year and the difference between the halves of the year is significant. The popularity of the diversity charters initiative varied in time. The application of the moving average trend line (with period 2) analysis shows that there was a significant decrease in the number of organizations joining the DC initiative in 2014–2015, but the trend reverses at the beginning of 2016 and in the first half of the year there was a record number of new signatories.

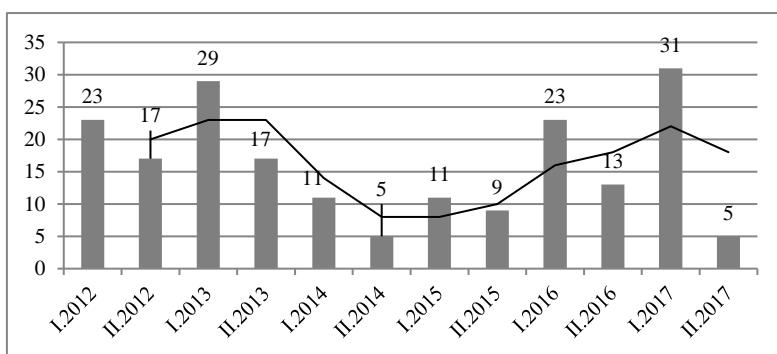


Fig. 6. Number of the Diversity Charter signatories by date.  
Author's own elaboration

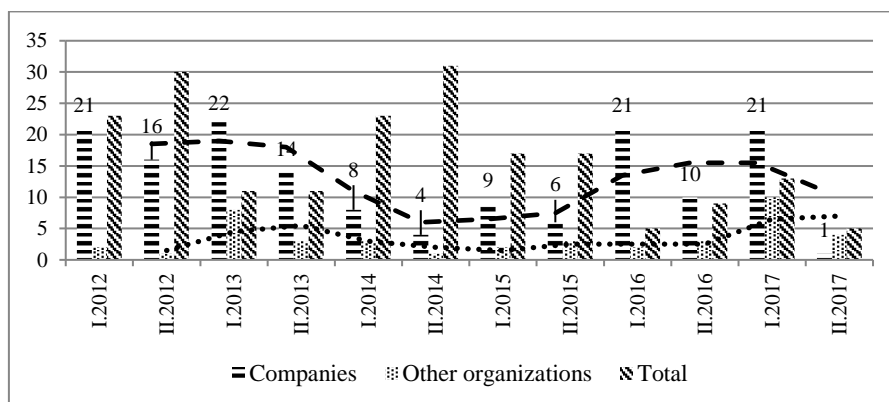


Fig. 7. Number of companies versus other organizations.  
Author's own elaboration

The signatories joining the DC initiative mostly consist of the companies ( $n = 152$ ) as compared to 44 other organizations. However, the number of non-commercial organizations joining DC was higher than the number of enterprises in the last half-year analyzed (Fig. 7). The data were gathered on 31 October 2017, so there might still be a change before the end of this year, as it has not ended yet. The analysis of the moving average timeline shows that the trend line for both the companies and the non-commercial organizations is in a significant decrease in the years 2014–2015. The Author's proposal for an explanation of this phenomenon will be offered in the Conclusion.

In accordance with this paper's title, the following, more detailed analysis was concentrated on the 152 enterprises being DC signatories on 31 October 2017. The first characteristic taken into consideration concerned the size of the companies that had decided to get involved in the DC initiative (Fig. 8). The results of the research prove that diversity management is a concept that is applied mostly by large companies. The size structure of the signatories analyzed is very distinct from the structure of the companies in the National Economy. The Polish private entrepreneurs' sector in 2017 consisted of micro and small enterprises in 99.52% and large companies accounted only for 0.07% of all the businesses. In contrast, half of the list of DC signatories consists of large firms and the micro and small enterprises only account for 30% of it.

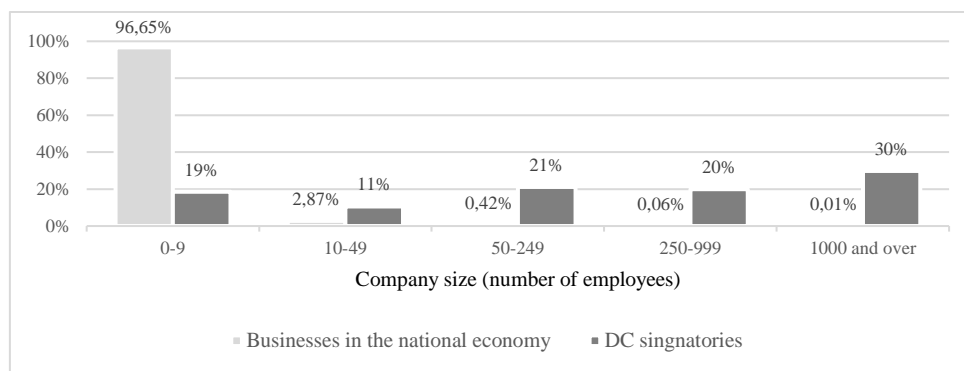


Fig. 8. The structure of the DC signatories and the structure of companies in the National Economy in relation to their size.

Author's own elaboration; Central Statistical Office in Poland

Although the legal form of DC signatories varies (Fig. 9), the majority of them (85%) are limited companies in the form of the limited liability companies (54%) and the joint stock companies (31%).

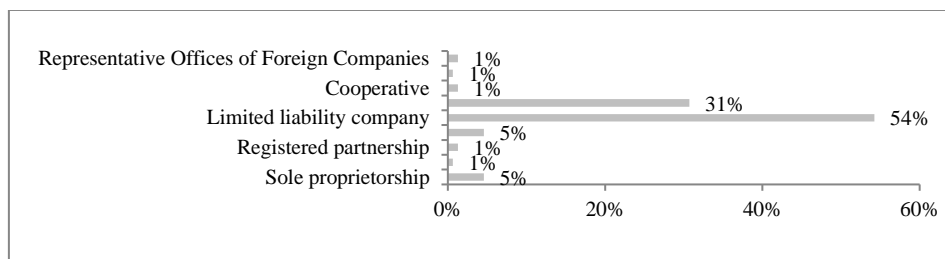


Fig. 9. Number of companies by their legal forms. Author's own elaboration

This result is consistent with the conclusion emerging from the size structure analysis above, as these legal forms are dedicated to the largest companies and the possibility to choose the simplified legal form is restricted mostly to micro and small entrepreneurs. That is the reason why only 14% of the companies analyzed were conducted in the form of sole proprietorship, private partnership, registered partnership, limited partnership or co-operative.

The analyzed companies conducted their activities in a variety of sectors of the economy (Fig. 10). However, there are some important differences if their sector structure is compared with the structure of the sectors in the National Economy.

Of all the signatories, 70% conducted their business in just five sectors. These were: Manufacturing (19%); Wholesale and Retail Trade (17%); Professional, Scientific and Technical Activities (14%); Financial and Insurance Activities (11%) and Administrative and Support Service Activities (9%). In most of these companies their share exceeds the representation in the National Economy, wholesale being the exception.

The geographic location of the signatories explicitly shows that The Masovian Province is the leader of the business sector in Poland (Table 2); 51% of all the companies involved in DC initiatives were located in this voivodeship. This province is also the leader if one considers the structure of the National Economy, but the difference is not so significant. It is also worth stressing that there are two provinces without any representatives among the Diversity Charters: Subcarpathia and Swietokrzyskie. In order to combine the information about the location of companies that signed the DC and the number of the companies conducting their business in each of the provinces one can consider using the index presenting the number of signatories by 100 thousand companies registered in a particular voivodeship. The Masovian Province is still a leader but the difference is not so significant. This index shows that the concept of DM is also more popular among the companies in Pomeranian, Podlachian, Lower Silesian, Opole, Warmia-Masurian and Silesian Provinces. It is very interesting that the Greater Poland Province is so underrepresented if we consider that index and the surprisingly high results of Podlachian and Pomeranian Provinces.

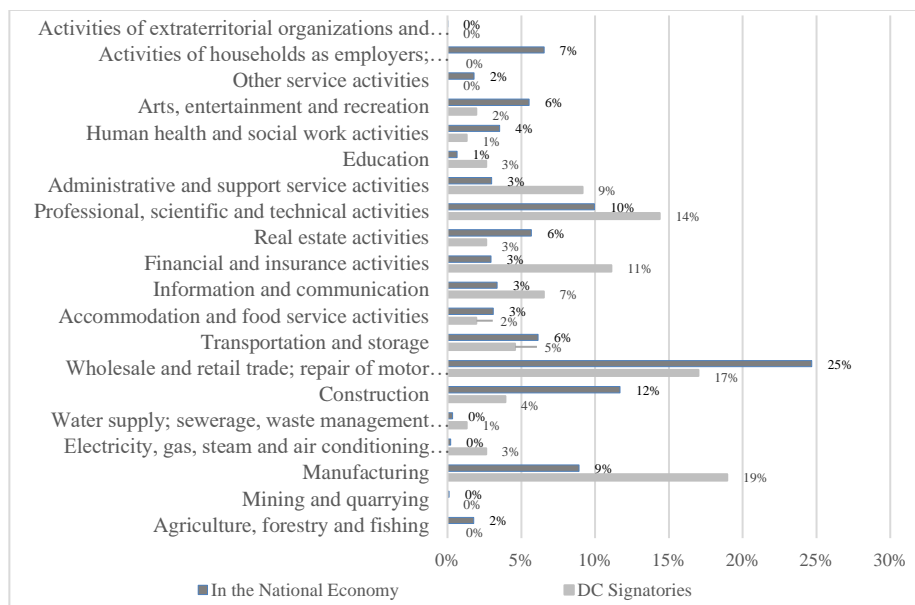


Fig. 10. Percentage of companies representing respective sectors of the economy (based on PKD 2007 classification) among DC signatories and in the National Economy.

Author's own elaboration; Central Statistical Office in Poland

Table 2. Number of companies by their geographical location

Province	Number of DC signatories	% of DC signatories	Number of companies in the National Economy	% of companies in the National Economy	Number of DC signatories by 100 thous. companies
Masovian	77	51%	806,083	19%	9.55
Pomeranian	15	10%	292,938	7%	5.12
Lower Silesian	13	9%	367,606	9%	3.54
Lesser Poland	11	7%	378,631	9%	2.91
Silesian	10	7%	469,228	11%	2.13
Greater Poland	8	5%	421,257	10%	1.90
Podlachian	4	3%	101,148	2%	3.95
Kuyavia-Pomeranian	3	2%	195,458	5%	1.53
Opole	3	2%	100,492	2%	2.99
Warmia-Masurian	3	2%	125,351	3%	2.39
Lodzkie	1	1%	176,753	4%	0.57
Lublin	1	1%	112,690	3%	0.89
Lubusz	1	1%	245,461	6%	0.41
West Pomeranian	1	1%	223,181	5%	0.45
Subcarpathian	0	0%	170,659	4%	0.00
Swietokrzyski	0	0%	112,322	3%	0.00

Author's own elaboration; Central Statistical Office in Poland.

Table 3. MNC affiliation of the company (in %)

Size of a company	Number of companies	Number of MNC affiliated companies	Percentage of MNC affiliated firms
1000 and more	45	37	82.22%
250–999	30	21	70%
50–249	31	16	51.61%
10–49	16	5	31.25%
0–9	30	6	20%
Total	152	85	55.92%

Author's own elaboration.

The last of the aspects taken into consideration in the analysis of the DC signatories was their affiliation in a Multi-National Corporation. In the author's opinion, this aspect is a very important one because in the globalization era new concepts and trends in management are often spread by the ties that companies have with other firms and especially with their strategic partners. This isomorphism of management practices emerges naturally in the capital groups. That is why probably some of the signatories implement DM as part of their parent company's requirements. The results of the analysis seem to confirm that because almost 55% of all the companies had the affiliation with the Multi National Corporation (Table 3). The majority of them were the largest corporations.

## 6. CONCLUSION

Diversity Management becomes an increasingly important challenge for operating in the contemporary global environment. All the sources of diversity described in one of the previous sections of this paper are also visible in Poland. However, the majority of Polish enterprises, especially the SMEs, do not perceive using DM as a source of competitive advantage in this turbulent situation. It may seem even more surprising if one takes into consideration that the percentage of SMEs in some other European countries is significantly higher. Among these are France (80% of all signatories are SMEs), Hungary (89%), Italy (64%) and Luxemburg (41.5%).

The results of this research show that the EU Diversity Charter initiative is getting more popular each year, but there was a significant decrease in the number of new organizations in 2014–2015. The economic situation of the companies and their environment in this period was stable. All the indexes describing the current situation were on a satisfactory level and that is why it seems that the economic factors do not explain the decrease of interest in diversity management. However,

some political factors strongly influenced the situation in Poland in that period. The most significant political factor emerging in this period was the uncertainty caused by the coming Presidential and Parliament elections in 2015. This is the time when all the organizations await the forthcoming changes and delay making any significant strategic decisions for the time the government constitutes and announces its economic policy. This example proves that the turbulence of the companies' environment influences their managerial decisions concerning the concept of diversity.

In reference to the aim of this article, it seems that the DC is more interesting for the companies than other, non-commercial organizations, although the latest results show that this structure might be changing. The majority of companies involved in the DC initiative are large firms, conducted in the form of private limited liability company or the joint stock company. They typically operate in the manufacturing, wholesale or professional services sector of the economy and they operate in Masovian Province. Certain groups of Multi-National Corporations affiliate the majority of them.

One of the basic conclusions of the research is that although the main objectives of EU Diversity Charter initiative aim at SMEs, the reality shows that it is not altogether successful. Even though there are numerous books, articles and brochures designed to help SMEs in diversity management implementation (Hajjar, Hugonet, 2015a; Hajjar, Hugonet, 2015b; European Commission – Directorate-General for Justice, 2009) the results are disappointing. Considering the number of employees, the process of implementing the Diversity Management of the companies involved in the Diversity Charters initiative is still more popular among large companies. SMEs and non-commercial organizations are not really interested in getting involved.

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## **RÓŻNORODNOŚĆ JAKO WYZWANIE DLA PRZEDSIĘBIORSTWA: ANALIZA SYGNATARIUSZY KARTY RÓŻNORODNOŚCI W POLSCE**

### Streszczenie

Zarządzanie różnorodnością (ZR) jest postrzegane jako nowe źródło przewagi konkurencyjnej przedsiębiorstw funkcjonujących we współczesnym turbulentnym otoczeniu. Celem artykułu jest wskazanie cech charakteryzujących polskie firmy deklarujące wdrożenie zasad zarządzania różnorodnością. Opracowanie rozpoczyna się od teoretycznego wprowadzenia zawierającego opis głównych kategorii różnorodności, źródeł tego zjawiska oraz praktyk stosowanych we współczesnych przedsiębiorstwach. Jedną z nich jest „Karta Różnorodności”, która powstała jako inicjatywa Komisji Europejskiej mająca na celu budowanie europejskiej przestrzeni sprawiedliwości i została wdrożona w 17 krajach Unii Europejskiej. Instytucje włączające się w ten program podpisują dobrowolne zobowiązanie do uwzględnienia zarządzania różnorodnością w stosowanych strategiach i praktykach. Następnie zaprezentowano wyniki badań empirycznych oparte na przeglądzie i analizie informacji dotyczących 196 polskich sygnatariuszy tej Karty ze szczególnym uwzględnieniem grupy przedsiębiorstw. Analiza uzyskanych wyników prowadzi do określenia najważniejszych cech charakteryzujących polskich sygnatariuszy, w tym wielkości firm, ich form prawnych, geograficznej lokalizacji działalności oraz przynależności do korporacji międzynarodowych. W podsumowaniu zawarto wnioski wynikające z popularności idei zarządzania różnorodnością w badanych przedsiębiorstwach.

**Słowa kluczowe:** zarządzanie różnorodnością, Karta Różnorodności, polskie przedsiębiorstwa, przewaga konkurencyjna, turbulentne otoczenie