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КОРПОРАТИВНА СОЦІАЛЬНА ВІДПОВІДАЛЬНІСТЬ ТА ЕКОНОМІЧНА БЕЗПЕКА ПОЛЬСЬКОГО БІЗНЕСУ: МЕХАНІЗМИ ЗНИЖЕННЯ РИЗИКІВ І СТРУКТУРНО-ФУНКЦІОНАЛЬНА МОДЕЛЬ

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CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY AND THE ECONOMIC SECURITY OF POLISH BUSINESSES: RISK REDUCTION MECHANISMS AND A STRUCTURAL-FUNCTIONAL MODEL

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Анотація. Корпоративна соціальна відповідальність (КСВ) набуває значення для управління ресурсною залежністю, кадровою стійкістю, взаємовідносинами із зацікавленими сторонами та екологічними й регуляторними ризиками підприємств. Для польського бізнесу ці питання особливо актуальні в умовах високих витрат на енергію, дефіциту кваліфікованих працівників і порушення ланцюгів постачання. Мета дослідження полягає у визначенні механізмів можливого впливу КСВ на економічну безпеку підприємств та розробленні підходу до оцінювання пов'язаного з нею зниження ризиків. Об'єктом дослідження є економічна безпека підприємств, що працюють у Польщі, а предметом є зв'язок відповідальних бізнес-практик із фінансовою, операційною, кадровою, ринково-репутаційною та інституційною складовими безпеки. Методологія поєднує теорію зацікавлених сторін із системним, структурно-функціональним і ризик-орієнтованим підходами. Дослідження застосовує порівняльний аналіз документів та описовий аналіз опублікованих статистичних даних і опитування Європейського інвестиційного банку за 2025 рік, не змішуючи дані з різними генеральними сукупностями. Серед опитаних у 2025 році польських компаній 94% повідомили про заходи зі скорочення викидів парникових газів, 63% проводили енергетичний аудит, а 45% встановлювали цільові показники скорочення викидів. Водночас 64% зазначили вплив фізичних кліматичних ризиків, 46% впроваджували заходи кліматичної адаптації, 86% вказали на витрати на енергію та 81% на дефіцит кваліфікованого персоналу як перешкоди для інвестицій. За даними Статистичного управління Польщі, чиста рентабельність обороту охоплених спостереженням нефінансових підприємств зростає з 3,4% у 2024 році до 3,7% у 2025 році. Наведені показники характеризують бізнес-середовище, але не доводять причинного впливу КСВ на рентабельність. Дослідження пропонує авторське визначення економічної безпеки, орієнтованої на КСВ, та п'ятикомпонентну структурно-функціональну модель. Вона пов'язує відповідальне використання ресурсів, розвиток персоналу, перевірку постачальників, взаємодію із зацікавленими сторонами та прозоре управління з можливим зниженням фінансових, операційних, кадрових, ринкових і регуляторних ризиків. Практичне значення моделі полягає у виборі заходів КСВ за суттєвістю економічних загроз та оцінюванні результатів за вимірюваними показниками витрат, безперервності діяльності, кадрової стійкості й дотримання нормативних вимог. Подальші дослідження мають перевірити запропоновані зв'язки на рівні підприємств із урахуванням розміру, галузі та початкового фінансового стану.

Ключові слова: корпоративна соціальна відповідальність, економічна безпека, польський бізнес, КСВ, управління зацікавленими сторонами, стійкість підприємства, ризик-менеджмент, сталий розвиток, фінансова стійкість.

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Abstract. Corporate social responsibility (CSR) increasingly shapes how enterprises manage resource dependence, workforce continuity, stakeholder relationships, and exposure to environmental and regulatory risks. For Polish businesses, these issues are particularly relevant amid high energy costs, shortages of skilled employees, and disruptions to supply chains. This study aims to explain how CSR may influence enterprise economic security and to develop a framework for assessing the relevant risk-reduction mechanisms. The research examines the economic security of enterprises operating in Poland, with a focus on the relationship between responsible business practices and financial,

operational, human capital, market-reputational, and institutional security. The study combines stakeholder theory with systemic, structural-functional, and risk-oriented approaches. It applies comparative document analysis and descriptive analysis to published Polish enterprise statistics and the 2025 European Investment Bank Investment Survey; it does not treat datasets with different populations as a single firm-level sample. Among Polish firms surveyed in 2025, 94% reported measures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, 63% conducted energy audits, and 45% set emissions targets. At the same time, 64% reported exposure to physical climate risks, while 46% implemented climate adaptation measures; 86% identified energy costs and 81% the availability of skilled staff as investment obstacles. Statistics Poland reported that net turnover profitability among the non-financial enterprises covered by its surveys rose from 3.4% in 2024 to 3.7% in 2025. These indicators describe CSR-related practices and economic conditions but do not establish that CSR caused the change in profitability. The study proposes an original definition of CSR-oriented economic security and develops a five-dimensional structural-functional model. It links responsible resource use, workforce development, supplier due diligence, stakeholder dialogue, and transparent governance to potential reductions in financial, operational, personnel, market, and compliance vulnerabilities. The model's practical value lies in helping managers select CSR measures according to material economic risks and evaluate them using observable cost, continuity, staffing, and compliance indicators. Future firm-level research should test the proposed relationships while accounting for enterprise size, sector, and initial financial condition.

Keywords: corporate social responsibility, economic security, Polish businesses, ESG, stakeholder management, enterprise resilience, risk management, sustainable development, financial stability.

Formulas: 0; **fig.:** 0; **tab:** 3; **bibl.:** 12

Introduction. The role of corporate social responsibility (CSR) in enterprise economic security extends beyond philanthropy to environmental responsibility, employee welfare, stakeholder engagement, and corporate governance. By addressing resource dependence, workforce shortages, supply chain disruptions, and regulatory risks, CSR may strengthen organisational resilience. However, its economic contribution must be assessed against implementation costs and measurable outcomes. The OECD (2018) likewise emphasises the identification and mitigation of adverse impacts associated with business activities and relationships.

Poland provides a relevant context for this analysis. According to the European Investment Bank (2025), 86% of surveyed Polish firms identified energy costs as an investment obstacle, 81% reported shortages of skilled staff, 60% cited access to finance, and 59% experienced difficulties complying with new trade regulations. Although Mushafiq and Prusak (2023) identified an association between CSR and lower corporate default risk, its economic effects may differ across enterprises.

The research therefore examines the mechanisms through which CSR may contribute to the economic security of Polish businesses when integrated into resource management, stakeholder relationships, and risk management, with particular attention to measurable organisational and economic outcomes.

Literature Review. The relationship between CSR and enterprise economic security is grounded in stakeholder theory, corporate sustainability, and risk management. The OECD (2018) identifies due diligence as a mechanism for preventing and mitigating adverse impacts associated with business activities and relationships. These procedures may also help enterprises identify operational, reputational, and regulatory vulnerabilities, although responsible business conduct and economic security remain distinct concepts.

Velte (2022), reviewing 54 quantitative meta-analyses, identified a generally positive relationship between CSR and financial performance. Mushafiq and Prusak (2023), analysing 24 publications, reported an inverse association between CSR and corporate default risk, while Mushafiq et al. (2024), examining 497 S&P 500 companies over 2007–2021, highlighted the importance of firm and industry heterogeneity in interpreting this relationship.

Evidence from Poland is similarly differentiated. Buła et al. (2024), analysing Warsaw Stock Exchange companies over 2013–2022, did not establish an unequivocally positive relationship between aggregate ESG ratings and financial performance. Matuszewska-Pierzynka (2024), examining 21 WIG-ESG companies, identified positive associations between environmental sustainability and sales revenues, as well as between governance sustainability and return on sales. These findings indicate that

individual CSR dimensions may have different economic implications and that results for listed companies cannot automatically be generalised to all Polish enterprises. The European Commission (2026) also highlights the growing institutional significance of sustainability reporting, although compliance alone does not demonstrate improved economic security.

Despite these contributions, the mechanisms connecting CSR practices with the financial, operational, human capital, market, and institutional dimensions of economic security remain insufficiently integrated. This research addresses that gap by developing a structural-functional model that distinguishes CSR implementation, intermediate risk-reduction mechanisms, and measurable economic outcomes.

Aim and Methodology. The aim of the study is to develop a structural-functional model of the potential influence of corporate social responsibility (CSR) on the economic security of Polish enterprises. The research examines economic security as its object and the relationship between CSR practices and its financial, operational, human capital, market-reputational, and institutional dimensions as its subject.

The methodology integrates systemic, structural-functional, and risk-oriented approaches to identify the mechanisms through which CSR may reduce economic vulnerability and strengthen organisational resilience. Its theoretical foundation draws on the OECD (2018), Velte (2022), Mushafiq and Prusak (2023), Buła et al. (2024), and Matuszewska-Pierzynka (2024).

The empirical analysis uses secondary data from the European Investment Bank (2025), Statistics Poland (2025, 2026), and the Responsible Business Forum (2025, 2026). The research identifies CSR-related indicators, examines economic vulnerabilities and financial performance, and systematises their potential relationships within the proposed model. As the sources differ in their populations and measurement methods, their data are analysed separately. The study

distinguishes observed statistical results from previously established empirical relationships and theoretically proposed mechanisms, which require subsequent firm-level validation.

Results. The assessment of CSR as a potential factor influencing economic security requires consideration of both the implementation of responsible business practices and the vulnerabilities experienced by enterprises. These characteristics should be examined separately because the presence of CSR initiatives does not independently demonstrate a reduction in economic risk.

The Responsible Business Forum documented 957 responsible business practices submitted by 265 enterprises in its report covering 2024 and 932 practices submitted by 263 enterprises in the subsequent report covering 2025 (Forum Odpowiedzialnego Biznesu, 2025, 2026). Since these reports are based on voluntary submissions, their figures cannot be interpreted as representative estimates of national CSR adoption. Nevertheless, they provide evidence of responsible business initiatives covering environmental protection, employee development, community engagement, and corporate governance.

Additional statistical information is provided by the European Investment Bank Investment Survey 2025, which characterises responsible business practices, climate-related vulnerabilities, and investment constraints among Polish enterprises. Selected indicators are presented in Table 1.

The data presented in Table 1 demonstrate that the implementation of environmental measures coexists with considerable economic and climate-related vulnerabilities. Although 94% of surveyed Polish firms reported measures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, smaller proportions had established emission targets or implemented climate adaptation measures. This difference indicates that individual environmental initiatives should not be equated with comprehensive sustainability or risk management.

Table 1

Selected indicators of responsible business practices and economic vulnerability among Polish enterprises, 2025

Indicator	Poland, %	EU, %
Firms implementing measures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions	94	92
Firms undertaking energy-efficiency measures	63	53
Firms conducting energy audits	63	56
Firms setting and monitoring greenhouse gas emission targets	45	47
Firms reporting physical climate risk exposure	64	68
Firms implementing climate adaptation measures	46	53
Firms identifying energy costs as an investment obstacle	86	75
Firms identifying access to finance as a long-term investment obstacle	60	45

Source: Compiled from European Investment Bank (2025), *EIB Investment Survey 2025: Poland overview*. The indicators refer to the survey populations and question-specific definitions used in EIBIS. The figures are value-added weighted

The scale of formalised environmental management also differs across enterprise size categories. According to the European Investment Bank (2025), emission targets were established by 62% of surveyed large Polish firms compared with 23% of SMEs, while energy audits were reported by 82% and 37%, respectively. These differences indicate uneven formalisation of sustainability management but do not establish that smaller enterprises are inherently less socially responsible.

Consequently, the contribution of CSR to economic security should be evaluated according to the capacity of responsible business practices to address material vulnerabilities rather than the number or formal complexity of implemented initiatives. Such an approach is consistent with the principle of proportionality underlying the

OECD (2018) guidance on responsible business conduct.

The financial dimension of economic security reflects an enterprise's capacity to maintain liquidity, fulfil financial obligations, generate cash flows, and finance necessary investment. Official statistics provide information about the financial environment in which Polish enterprises implement responsible business practices, although they do not independently establish the economic effects of CSR.

According to Statistics Poland (2025), total revenues of surveyed non-financial enterprises decreased by 3.0% in 2024 compared with the previous year, while investment expenditure declined by 7.8%. In 2025, total revenues increased by 2.9%, and investment expenditure increased by 3.2% (Statistics Poland, 2026). The corresponding financial indicators are presented in Table 2.

Table 2

Financial performance of surveyed Polish non-financial enterprises, 2024–2025

Indicator	Poland, %	EU, %
Firms implementing measures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions	94	92
Firms undertaking energy-efficiency measures	63	53
Firms conducting energy audits	63	56
Firms setting and monitoring greenhouse gas emission targets	45	47
Firms reporting physical climate risk exposure	64	68
Firms implementing climate adaptation measures	46	53
Firms identifying energy costs as an investment obstacle	86	75
Firms identifying access to finance as a long-term investment obstacle	60	45

Source: Compiled from Statistics Poland (2025, 2026), *Financial results of non-financial enterprises in 2024 and 2025*. The indicators concern enterprises included in the respective official statistical surveys, not the entire population of Polish businesses

The indicators presented in Table 2 demonstrate an improvement in the aggregate financial performance of the surveyed enterprises in 2025. In particular, net turnover profitability increased from 3.4% to 3.7%, while the cost level indicator declined from 95.7% to 95.4%.

However, these results do not establish whether enterprises implementing CSR practices achieved greater improvements than those without such practices. Their interpretation must account for differences in enterprise size, sector, financial structure, and exposure to external risks. The findings of Buła et al. (2024) and Matuszewska-Pierzynka (2024) further indicate that individual sustainability dimensions may be associated with different financial outcomes.

Accordingly, the national statistical indicators provide a contextual basis for examining CSR-oriented economic security but do not constitute direct evidence of a causal relationship. Such a relationship requires consistent firm-level observations linking responsible business practices with financial and operational outcomes over comparable periods.

An exclusively financial interpretation of economic security does not fully reflect the dependence of enterprise viability on operational processes, human capital, stakeholder relationships, and institutional conditions. The integration of CSR into economic security analysis makes it possible to examine whether responsible business practices contribute to preventing vulnerabilities that may subsequently affect financial stability and business continuity.

The OECD (2018) emphasises preventive management of adverse impacts associated with corporate activities and relationships. Velte (2022) identifies the relevance of governance, legitimacy, and interactions between financial and non-financial performance, while Mushafiq and Prusak (2023) and Mushafiq et al. (2024) provide evidence of the relationship between CSR and financial vulnerability under different organisational and industry conditions.

The synthesis of these approaches provides the basis for the following original definition:

CSR-oriented economic security of an enterprise is the condition and adaptive capacity of its financial, operational, human capital, market, and institutional systems to maintain economic viability, fulfil obligations to stakeholders, prevent material losses, and recover from adverse events through the systematic integration of responsible business practices into strategic and operational management.

The proposed definition establishes four fundamental characteristics of CSR-oriented economic security: its multidimensional nature; the dependence of economic outcomes on identifiable risk-management mechanisms; the significance of implementation costs and organisational conditions; and the importance of adaptive capacity in maintaining business continuity and recovery.

An essential methodological distinction is therefore established between CSR as a system of responsible business practices and CSR-oriented economic security as a potential organisational outcome of their implementation. The existence of CSR policies or individual initiatives cannot be regarded as sufficient evidence of improved economic security. Their contribution should be assessed through observable changes in intermediate risk factors and corresponding economic indicators.

The proposed structural-functional model considers CSR as a set of management practices that may influence enterprise economic security through specific risk-reduction mechanisms. Its methodological foundation combines the responsible business conduct framework developed by the OECD (2018), the relationship between CSR and financial performance examined by Velte (2022), and evidence concerning CSR and corporate default risk presented by Mushafiq and Prusak (2023).

The findings of Buła et al. (2024) and Matuszewska-Pierzynka (2024) additionally substantiate the need to distinguish individual

sustainability dimensions and their potential economic effects. Accordingly, the model identifies five interconnected dimensions of

CSR-oriented economic security: financial, operational, human capital, market-reputational, and institutional security.

Table 3

Structural-functional model of the influence of CSR on enterprise economic security

Economic security dimension	CSR practices	Potential risk-reduction mechanism	Suggested evaluation indicators
Financial security	Responsible investment, resource efficiency, transparent financial and sustainability disclosure	Reduction of resource-related costs, improved financial transparency, prevention of avoidable expenditure	Operating cash flow, liquidity ratios, energy costs as a share of revenue, debt-service coverage
Operational security	Environmental management, responsible procurement, supplier due diligence, resource conservation	Lower exposure to resource shortages, supplier disruptions, environmental incidents, and operational interruptions	Supplier concentration, production downtime, energy intensity, recovery time, critical supplier continuity
Human capital security	Occupational health and safety, responsible employment, training, employee welfare, equal opportunities	Reduced employee turnover, improved continuity of critical competencies, prevention of workplace-related losses	Staff turnover, absenteeism, occupational incidents, training coverage, vacancy duration
Market-reputational security	Consumer protection, responsible marketing, product quality, stakeholder dialogue, community engagement	Stronger stakeholder relationships, reduced reputational exposure, more stable customer and partner relationships	Customer retention, substantiated complaints, supplier continuity, revenue concentration
Institutional security	Ethical governance, anti-corruption measures, responsible reporting, regulatory compliance, stakeholder accountability	Prevention of compliance failures, improved decision transparency, reduction of legal and contractual uncertainty	Compliance incidents, material audit findings, corrective action completion, verified disclosure accuracy

Source: Original conceptual development based on OECD (2018), Velte (2022), Mushafiq and Prusak (2023), Bula et al. (2024), and Matuszewska-Pierzynka (2024)

The principal methodological distinction of the model presented in Table 3 lies in the use of economic vulnerability as the criterion for determining the functional contribution of CSR practices. Rather than classifying responsible business activities exclusively according to their environmental, social, or governance orientation, the model identifies the dimensions of economic security potentially influenced by their implementation.

Resource efficiency may contribute to financial and operational security through reductions in operating costs and resource dependence. Responsible procurement may reduce supply chain vulnerability, while employee-oriented practices may support the retention of critical competencies. Stakeholder engagement may strengthen market relationships, whereas transparent governance

and effective compliance procedures may reduce institutional and regulatory exposure.

These relationships are potential rather than automatic economic effects. CSR implementation entails investment, organisational adjustments, and monitoring costs. Its contribution to economic security therefore depends on whether the resulting reduction in vulnerability and improvement in business continuity justify the associated expenditure.

Consequently, the practical application of the model requires the identification of economically material risks and the selection of CSR practices capable of addressing their underlying causes or mitigating their consequences.

The economic security implications of CSR for Polish businesses can be examined across five interconnected dimensions. First,

energy security and resource efficiency are particularly relevant, as 86% of surveyed Polish firms identified energy costs as an investment obstacle, while 63% implemented energy-efficiency measures (European Investment Bank, 2025). Such investments may reduce operating costs and exposure to energy price fluctuations, although their economic effectiveness depends on investment costs, payback periods, and actual savings (Matuszewska-Pierzynka, 2024).

Second, human capital security is affected by shortages of skilled employees, reported as an investment obstacle by 81% of surveyed firms (European Investment Bank, 2025). Responsible employment practices, occupational safety, and professional development may support workforce retention and business continuity, with their effects measurable through staff turnover, absenteeism, and recruitment costs.

Third, supply chain responsibility may reduce operational vulnerability. According to the European Investment Bank (2025), 38% of Polish firms experienced logistics disruptions, while 28% of Polish importers were diversifying their import sources. Supplier due diligence and responsible procurement may strengthen supply continuity and reduce contractual dependence, consistent with the OECD (2018) framework for responsible business conduct.

Fourth, institutional security depends on effective governance, regulatory compliance, and reliable corporate information. The sustainability reporting framework discussed by the European Commission (2026) reinforces the importance of proportionate reporting practices. Their economic contribution, however, depends on whether they improve risk identification and prevent regulatory or contractual losses.

Finally, responsible stakeholder relationships may contribute to market-reputational security by strengthening cooperation and limiting disputes. Although Velte (2022) and Mushafiq and Prusak (2023) provide evidence of potential economic benefits associated with CSR, these effects should be assessed through observable indicators, including customer retention,

supplier continuity, and substantiated complaints.

Overall, CSR may reduce economic vulnerability through distinct organisational mechanisms. Its practical contribution depends on the alignment of responsible business practices with material enterprise risks and the measurable economic outcomes of their implementation.

The proposed structural-functional model integrates CSR into enterprise risk management by linking material vulnerabilities with relevant responsible business practices and measurable economic security indicators. Consistent with the OECD (2018), its application should distinguish between the implementation of CSR initiatives, changes in intermediate risk factors, and subsequent economic outcomes. For example, energy-efficiency measures should be evaluated through actual energy expenditure, while employee development programmes should be assessed in relation to workforce retention and business continuity.

The model should be adapted to enterprise size, sector, financial condition, and risk profile, given the heterogeneous relationships between ESG dimensions and financial performance identified by Buła et al. (2024) and the importance of firm and industry characteristics emphasised by Mushafiq et al. (2024). Large enterprises may incorporate CSR indicators into existing governance systems, whereas SMEs may prioritise a limited set of economically material practices.

The principal limitation is the absence of a representative, linked firm-level dataset combining CSR indicators with financial and operational security outcomes for Polish enterprises. The available secondary statistics and previous empirical studies do not permit a direct causal assessment of CSR's contribution to economic security. Consequently, the proposed model remains a theoretical and methodological framework requiring validation through consistent firm-level observations.

Conclusions. The research substantiates the relevance of analysing corporate social responsibility within a multidimensional framework of enterprise

economic security. Responsible business practices may contribute to the management of financial, operational, human capital, market-reputational, and institutional vulnerabilities, although the corresponding economic effects depend on their implementation and require empirical verification.

The analysis of statistical information indicates that CSR-related practices coexist with substantial economic constraints in Poland. In 2025, 94% of surveyed Polish firms reported measures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, while 45% established emission targets and 46% implemented climate adaptation measures. At the same time, 86% identified energy costs and 81% identified skilled staff availability as investment obstacles (European Investment Bank, 2025). Official statistics additionally indicate an increase in net turnover profitability among surveyed Polish non-financial enterprises from 3.4% in 2024 to 3.7% in 2025 (Statistics Poland, 2026). However, these aggregate indicators do not establish a causal relationship between CSR and financial performance.

The principal scientific contribution consists of the original definition of CSR-oriented economic security and the development of a five-dimensional structural-functional model connecting responsible business practices with intermediate risk-reduction mechanisms and measurable economic outcomes. The model provides a methodological basis for integrating CSR into enterprise risk management while distinguishing the implementation of responsible initiatives from their potential contribution to economic viability and resilience.

Its practical significance lies in supporting the identification of economically material CSR priorities and the evaluation of their effects through financial and organisational indicators. Future research should employ consistent firm-level data and longitudinal methods to determine the direction and magnitude of CSR-related economic effects, account for enterprise and industry heterogeneity, and examine differences between SMEs and large businesses.

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Author Contributions. The author was responsible for the conceptualisation, methodology, data collection and analysis, development of the proposed model, writing, reviewing, and editing of the manuscript.

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