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- (F) Literature Search (badania literaturowe)

**dr inż. Olimpia Grabiec** <sup>A B C D E F</sup>

*Wyższa Szkoła Humanitas w Sosnowcu*

**mgr Joanna Jędraszczyk-Kałwak** <sup>A B C D E F</sup>

*Urząd Gminy Pilchowice*

## **JOB SATISFACTION IN THE OPINION OF EMPLOYEES OF SMALL AND MEDIUM – SIZED ENTERPRISES**

## **ZADOWOLENIE Z PRACY W OCENIE PRACOWNIKÓW MAŁYCH I ŚREDNICH PRZEDSIĘBIORSTW**

**Abstract:** This article concerns the subject of job satisfaction. It presents theoretical formulation of the problem of job satisfaction of Poles. Moreover, authors presented results of own research. The main goal of this article is to define the level of job satisfaction of employees of small and medium – sized enterprises of Silesian Voivodship. Conclusions can be useful for employers, who wish to increase the level of job satisfaction of their employees.

**Keywords:** job satisfaction, management, small and medium – sized enterprises

**Streszczenie:** Niniejszy artykuł dotyczy tematyki zadowolenia z pracy. Przedstawiono w nim teoretyczne ujęcie problemu satysfakcji zawodowej oraz krótki przegląd dotychczasowych badań dotyczących zadowolenia z pracy Polaków. Ponadto autorki zaprezentowały wyniki badań własnych. Głównym celem opracowania jest określenie poziomu zadowolenia z pracy pracowników małych i średnich przedsiębiorstw województwa śląskiego. Wnioski z badania mogą przysłużyć się pracodawcom, którzy chcieliby podnieść poziom satysfakcji zawodowej swoich podwładnych.

**Słowa kluczowe:** zadowolenie z pracy, satysfakcja zawodowa, zarządzanie, małe i średnie przedsiębiorstwa

## Introduction

A key reason why people take up an employment is their wish to earn. By receiving a regular financial means it is possible to exist at a certain level as well as to constantly improve the quality of life. However, work should not only be associated with the wish to ensure one's stable income. An average employee spends 1/3 of a day at work and works an average of 7 hours and 34 minutes<sup>1</sup>. Being in a work environment is related to many different factors which constitute to the feeling of satisfaction or dissatisfaction of a particular employee. Employees who derive satisfaction from their professional life provide the force for organisation, which can, thanks to them, operate effectively. Concern for employees' job satisfaction is especially important due to the fact that the subordinates, who are not satisfied with their job, are considered to be potentially threatening for the development of an enterprise through different counter-productive actions.

### 1. Factors which determine job satisfaction

'Satisfaction' is ambiguous and can be approached in few contexts. According to the definition of E.A. Locke, job satisfaction is the extent to which employees expectations meet the outcomes they get in return<sup>2</sup>, which reflects in a positive or negative attitude towards the work, organisation and co-workers<sup>3</sup>. However, this definition does not indicate that the salary is the key reason for employees' satisfaction. It is necessary to refer to one of the best known theory of motivation by A. Maslow, according to which human needs are divided into five following categories<sup>4</sup>:

<sup>1</sup> *Badanie budżetu czasu ludności w 2013 r. – wyniki badań GUS*, Główny Urząd Statystyczny Departament Badań Społecznych i Warunków Życia, Warszawa 2014, p. 6.

<sup>2</sup> E.A. Locke, *Nature and Causes of Job Satisfaction*, [w:] Ed. M.D. Dunnette. Rand McNally, *Handbook of Industrial and Organizational Psychology*, Chicago 1976, p. 1297-1349.

<sup>3</sup> A. Bortnowska, H. Stankiewicz, *Kształtowanie wizerunku pracodawcy i reputacji przedsiębiorstwa a satysfakcja z pracy „klientów wewnętrznych”*, [w:] J. Stankiewicz (red.), *Oblicza współczesnego zarządzania organizacją*, Uniwersytet Zielonogórski, Zielona Góra 2005, p. 116.

<sup>4</sup> A. Czermiński, M. Czerska, B. Nogalski, R. Rutka, J. Apanowicz, *Zarządzanie organizacjami*, TNOiK Dom Organizatora, Toruń 2002, p. 309-312.

- physiological needs – these is the basis of Maslow's hierarchy of need, which includes needs such as food, water, rest or sex;
- safety needs such as security – for example stable material situation or protection against physical harm;
- social needs – all types of feelings (love, friendship) and the need of belonging to a group and acceptance of others;
- esteem needs – those of an internal character, such as self-respect and achievements and those of an external character such as social recognition, prestige or power;
- self-actualisation – according to its author opinion, the highest need which reflects in achieving one's full potential and intended objectives.

According to Maslow, the highest level needs can be met only after lower level needs are met. This finding has however not been confirmed by other researchers<sup>5</sup> and currently it is assumed, that human needs are sorted according to one's individual, subjective hierarchy<sup>6</sup>.

Needs which must be met to lead to one's job satisfaction are most of all those mentioned by A. Maslow, which also relate to other aspects of one's life. However, the level of satisfaction can be also influenced by different external conditions characteristic for an organisation, as well as employee's individual features and predispositions. Goals and mission of a company, its development strategy, organisational structure, work requirements, company's external environment, relations with customers and business partners or the significance of an enterprise in local environment can be distinguished as those features of an organisation, which condition the level of satisfaction of an employee. On the other hand, employee's interests, age, education, all types of skills, financial condition and life and professional experiences can be considered as individual factors of a unit<sup>7</sup>.

Many different authors divide all above mentioned factors which influence one's job satisfaction from work to direct factors, which are related to motivation area of a unit and its expectations in relation to the employer and to indirect factors, which refer to the area of human possibilities in the place of work. Despite mentioning so many different factors influencing job satisfaction. It is impossible to determine the level of importance of every element, as the feeling of satisfaction is an individual matter of every employee. Therefore it is hard to predict for the employer, which of their actions and to what extent will influence their employer's satisfaction.

Job satisfaction, as shown above, is a psychological phenomenon. It is related to feelings and individual perception of a unit in relation to their work. However, this term is within the scope of an interest of management, as recognizing the factors

<sup>5</sup> W. Chojnacki, A. Balasiewicz, *Człowiek w nowoczesnej organizacji. Wybrane problemy doradztwa zawodowego i personalnego*, Wydawnictwo Adam Marszałek, Toruń 2006, p. 232.

<sup>6</sup> D. Schultz, E. S. Schultz, *Psychologia a wyzwania dzisiejszej pracy*, PWN, Warszawa 2002, p. 295.

<sup>7</sup> G. Bartkowiak, *Człowiek w pracy. Od stresu do sukcesu w organizacji*, PWE, Warszawa 2009, p. 104-105.

which influence job satisfaction of particular people employed in an enterprise can lead to an effective human resources policy. Researchers point out to different types of dependencies coming out of employers' satisfaction, such as work commitment<sup>8</sup>, fluctuation of employees<sup>9</sup> or occurrence of counter – productive behaviours<sup>10</sup>. For the above reasons, job satisfaction of people employed in an organisation influence the productivity of all the enterprise<sup>11</sup>.

Table 1. Division of the factors, which influence job satisfaction

Tabela 1. Podział czynników wpływających na zadowolenie z pracy

DIRECT FACTORS	INDIRECT FACTORS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– needs and attitude of an employee</li> <li>– sociological-demographic features (sex, age, education, profession)</li> <li>– employer's interest</li> <li>– features of an enterprise (mission, goals and strategy, organisational structure, resources, possibility of ensuring one's development)</li> <li>– compliance between human's features and organisation features</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– employee's skills</li> <li>– qualifications and competences</li> <li>– life and professional experience</li> <li>– organisation features related to work requirements ( external environment, work conditions)</li> <li>– functional compliance between possibilities of a unit and requirements determined by regulations and standards in an organisation.</li> </ul>

Source: Self – study based on A. Bańka, Z. Łącała, C. Noworol, Z. Ratajczak, *Zarządzanie uczelnią. Efektywność i satysfakcja w pracy administracyjnej*, Uniwersytet Jagielloński, Kraków 2002, p. 11-12.

Research conducted by M. Gableta and A. Bodak<sup>12</sup> allowed to distinguish 1- factors influencing job satisfaction. These are:

- stability of employment;
- level of remuneration and the possibility of its increase;
- possibility to raise qualifications;
- improvement of the material elements of working environment;
- concern for the safe and hygienic working conditions;
- possibilities of promotion;
- development of social activity;

<sup>8</sup> M. W. Kopertyńska, *Motywowanie pracowników. Teoria i praktyka*, Placet, Warszawa 2008, p. 247.

<sup>9</sup> B. Rutherford, J. Boles, G. Hamwi, R. Madupalli, L. Rutherford, *The role of the seven dimensions of job satisfaction in salesperson's attitudes and behaviours*, „Journal of Business Research” 2009 no. 62(11), p. 1146.

<sup>10</sup> M. Macko, *Poczucie sprawiedliwości organizacyjnej a zachowania pracowników*, Wydawnictwo Naukowe Wydziału Nauk Społecznych UAM, Poznań 2009, p. 86.

<sup>11</sup> M. Armstrong, *Zarządzanie zasobami ludzkimi*, Dom Wydawniczy ABC, Kraków 2000, p. 72.

<sup>12</sup> M. Gableta, A. Bodak, *Odpowiedzialność społeczna przedsiębiorstwa – ustawodawstwo wspólnotowe – satysfakcja pracowników*, [w:] J. Stankiewicz (red.), *Społeczno-kulturowe i organizacyjne problemy zarządzania współczesnym przedsiębiorstwem*, Uniwersytet Zielonogórski, Zielona Góra 2007, p. 135.

- readiness to participate in decision-making process;
- improvement of internal institutional communication (horizontal and vertical);
- increased recognition.

On the other hand, activists from the American Association of Human Resources Management pointed out to 47 factors, such as autonomy, job security, good relations with supervisors, supervisor's availability, freedom of choice of work methods, remuneration, mutual help and respect, diversity of skills, social status, work content, identification with performed tasks, integration events and friendly atmosphere at work and flexibility in combining professional and private life<sup>13</sup>.

In Poland, job satisfaction surveys are provided regularly. In 2014 CBOS interviewers received answers from 723 respondents. This research showed that 63% of respondents are satisfied with the course of their professional work. 24% of the surveyed population was only partly satisfied and 9% declared their dissatisfaction in this area of their life<sup>14</sup>. To compare, in 2016 similar research has been conducted through the platform badaniaHR.pl. According to this research only 33% of the respondents feel satisfied with their job and ¼ of the surveyed population declared their dissatisfaction<sup>15</sup>.

## 2. Methodology of the research

Research results have been obtained throughout the course of the project titled *Motivation as an important element of human resources management process*<sup>16</sup>. The analysis carried out for the needs of this task aimed most of all at helping to answer the following questions:

- which factors and to what extent influence the choice of work?
- which factors and to what extent influence the level of job satisfaction?
- how employees evaluate their working conditions?

Organisation of the research was divided into five stages:

- stage 1 programming in research – determining the goal, scope, sources of information, type of statistical data, preparation of techniques and research tools,
- stage 2 observation – conducting surveys,
- stage 3 control, organisation, grouping and processing collected information,
- stage 4 analysis of the elaborated data,
- stage 5 drawing conclusions on the basis of collected information.

<sup>13</sup> E. Essen, *Job Satisfaction Pool*, Society for Human Resources 2002, Menagement [za:] G.. Wudarczewski, *Wymiary i składniki satysfakcji z pracy w świetle wybranych koncepcji oraz perspektyw badawczych*, Zeszyty Naukowe WSB we Wrocławiu 2016, t. 16 no 2, p. 134-138.

<sup>14</sup> Zadowolenie z życia, Komunikat z badań CBOS, Warszawa 2015, p. 2.

<sup>15</sup> <https://badaniahr.pl/files/pdf/podsumowanie-raportu-satysfakcja-zawodowa-polakow-2016.pdf>

<sup>16</sup> The project was carried out by employees of the Institute of Management and Economics in 2017, within statutory research of Humanitas University in Sosnowiec, financed from Polish Ministry of Science and Higher Education funds.

In order to obtain reliable results, the primary data collected during the quantitative research by the use of surveys have been analysed. The research tool was a questionnaire. Additionally, in chosen entities, a pilot direct interviewed has been carried out, which allowed making the questionnaire more specific. The adoption of these research techniques allowed collecting statistical data (quantitative, economic) as well as qualitative (perception, value judgments, opinions, knowledge of facts).

The research has been conducted in the period of May – June 2017 in a group of small and medium-sized enterprises of Silesian Voivodship. The tool used to carry out the research was a questionnaire consisting mostly of closed questions. The questionnaire has been sent to 103 small and medium enterprises with a request to be filled by the employees. 219 complete and properly filled in questionnaires has been accepted for the purposes of this analysis.

The area of this research was not only the issue of job satisfaction, but also many different aspects related to job performance. The results presented in this elaboration is only a part of the research titled *Motivation as an important element of human resources management process*.

### 3. Job satisfaction in the view of own research

A total of 219 employees of small and medium enterprises of Silesian Voivodship voluntary took part in this research. Among these, 37,81% were women and 62,19% were men. Employees aged 36-41 (39 %) and aged 26-35 (nearly 28%) were the most numerous group of respondents (table 2). In terms of respondents' education, the most numerous group was the one with vocational education (slightly more than 34% of all respondents) and with a university degree (slightly more than 25% of all respondents). In terms of the professional experience of respondents, the most numerous were those between 5 and 10 years (39,42%) and those up to 5 years (nearly 33%). Among the respondents, the largest group were physical workers (37,24%) and officers (29,36%).

Table 2 shows the characteristics of a surveyed population as regards age, education, professional experience and the position.

Table 2. Surveyed population characteristics in terms of age, education, seniority and position  
 Tabela 2. Charakterystyka badanej zbiorowości pod względem wieku, wykształcenia, stażu pracy i zajmowanego stanowiska

Feature	Structure in %				
Age	up to 25 years	26 to 35 years	36 to 45 years	46 to 55 years	over 55 years
	15,89	27,89	39,05	9,26	7,91
Education	Primary	Vocational	Secondary	Post-secondary	University degree
	4,34	36,21	22,05	12,22	25,18
Seniority	up to 5 years	5 to 10 years	11 to 20 years	21 to 30 years	over 30 years
	32,87	39,42	19,10	8,15	0,46
Position	physical worker	customer service	officer	management	upper management
	37,24	9,12	29,36	15,27	9,01

Source: self-study based on the research.

Literature and empirical research allowed identifying a number of factors which influence the choice of work. Another step was to point out the factors, which had a major impact on the choice of work in current enterprise and their subjective evaluation (results are presented in table 3).

Table 3. Subjective assessment of the factors, which affected the choice of job in current place of work, made by employees (in %)

Tabela 3. Subiektywna ocena czynników, które miały wpływ na wybór pracy w aktualnym miejscu pracy (udział %)

Factors	Assessment of the factors				
	High	Rather high	Rather low	Definitely low	With no meaning
Passions and skills for work	11,87	8,68	36,07	32,88	10,50
Learned profession	28,31	48,40	8,22	12,33	2,74
Interesting job	3,65	6,85	47,95	33,79	7,76
Place of work	10,50	19,63	32,88	9,13	27,86
Financial situation	39,73	51,14	3,65	3,20	2,28
Social prestige	8,68	13,24	34,70	31,05	12,33
Ease in finding the job	34,25	40,64	11,87	6,85	6,39
Attractive salary	29,22	36,07	14,15	13,24	7,32
Full information about job division	4,11	9,59	19,63	16,44	50,23
Possibility of promotion	21,46	43,38	16,89	9,59	8,68
Positive approach to maternity	28,77	14,15	4,57	10,50	42,01

Possibility of professional development	30,14	26,94	19,63	12,33	10,96
Social benefits	10,50	12,33	26,48	12,79	37,90
Job security	26,94	37,90	19,18	6,85	9,13
Regular working hours	12,33	15,52	21,92	36,99	13,24

Source: self-study based on the research.

The research shows that the factors which are most commonly mentioned as those taken into account when choosing a job are: financial situation (over 90% of the respondents), learned profession (nearly 77%), ease in finding the job (nearly 75%), job security, attractive salary and the possibility of promotion (nearly 65%), possibility of professional development (57%). On the other hand, factors considered to be less important were: full information about job division (nearly 67% of surveyed population), positive approach to maternity (over 52%), regular working hours, social benefits (mentioned by more than 50% of respondents), passion and skills for work and social prestige (over 43%).

Table 4. Assessment of the factors which affect job satisfaction (in %)

Tabela 4. Ocena czynników mających wpływ na zadowolenie z pracy (udział %)

Factors	Assessment of the factors				
	High	Rather high	Rather low	Definitely low	With no meaning
In-organisation communication	23,42	33,40	14,32	15,89	12,97
Readiness to participate in decision-making processes	15,50	23,63	29,78	8,42	22,67
Social prestige	15,17	30,24	19,80	17,05	17,74
Attractive salary	37,22	33,09	10,15	8,24	11,30
Full information about job division	7,12	8,59	29,63	18,45	36,21
Possibility of promotion	27,36	30,47	19,32	4,57	18,28
Improvement of the elements of material working environment	18,37	25,35	9,32	12,32	34,64
Concern for safe and hygienic working conditions	24,07	30,22	9,82	9,33	26,56
Possibility of professional development	34,14	25,94	9,73	10,33	19,86
Social benefits	11,27	27,39	16,78	17,98	26,58
Job security	32,74	38,97	8,17	4,75	15,37
Regular working hours	7,33	14,34	19,92	11,99	46,42

Source: self-study based on the research.



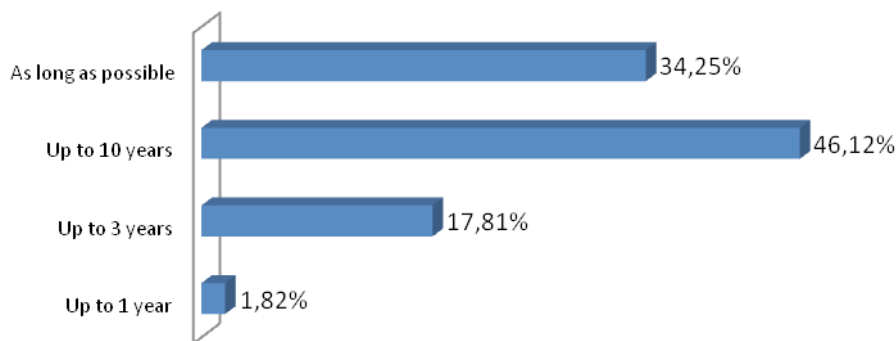
To evaluate, which elements of working environment had an influence on employers' satisfaction, eleven variables have been distinguished (table 4). Another step was to point out factors which had determining influence on the level of satisfaction from work in current place of employment and their subjective judgment.

Results confirmed that the most significant factors which influence employees' satisfaction are attractive salary (more than 70% of respondents) and the possibility of professional development (more than 60%). These factors are also ranked as high in an international research conducted by Peter Warr in the respect of employees' satisfaction<sup>17</sup>. Highly rated factors were also: in-organisational communication, social prestige, possibility of promotion, improvement of the elements of material working environment, concern for safe and hygienic working conditions and social benefits. Factors which have been mentioned as the least influencing job satisfaction of employees of small and medium – sized enterprises were the following: full information about job division and regular working hours.

Next, the respondents were asked to answer what would they do if they had a possibility to move to a different company. Most respondents answered that the decision needs consideration (42,47% of the respondents), 23,74% would make their decision with no hesitation, and 33,79% is not interested in changing their job. The fact that 1/3 of respondents is not interested in changing their job should be considered as a good sign, as this is probably the result of feeling satisfied at the current job position. This has also been confirmed by the results of a research where more than 34% of respondents stated that they intend to work in their current company as long as possible (figure 1).

Figure 1. Employees' plans concerning the time, which they intend to spend working in particular enterprise (in %)

Rysunek 1. Plany pracowników dotyczące czasu, jaki zamierzają spędzić pracując w danym przedsiębiorstwie (% udział)



Source: self-study based on the research.

<sup>17</sup> P. Warr, *Work Values: Same Demographic and Cultural Correlates*, "Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology" 2008, s. 762.

One of the objectives of this article was an attempt to assess working condition by employees of investigated enterprises (table 5). It is important to mention that the assessment is a subjective feeling of the respondents. 1 was the lowest and 5 was the highest possible score.

Table 5. Subjective assessment of work conditions made by employees (1 – the lowest, 5 – the highest)

Tabela 5. Subiektywna ocena przez pracowników warunków pracy (1 – ocena najniższa, 5 – najwyższa)

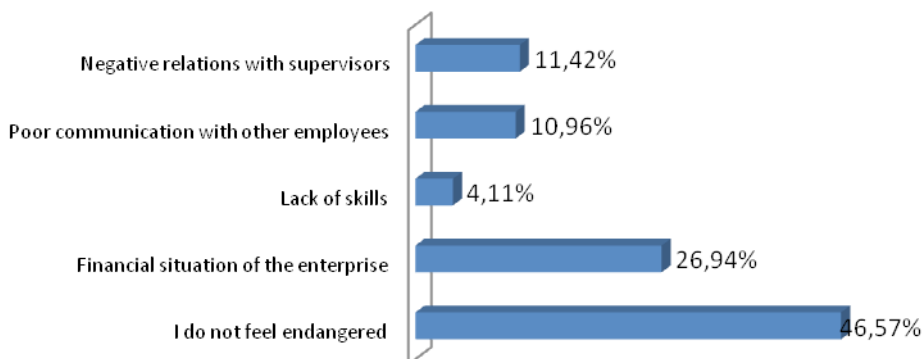
	1	2	3	4	5
Modern equipment	11,42	10,05	37,90	30,58	10,05
Working conditions	16,89	38,81	33,33	8,23	2,74
Working environment	13,24	16,90	12,33	44,29	13,24
Ergonomic requirements	10,50	32,88	35,16	12,33	9,13

Source: self-study based on the research.

More than 40% of the respondents ranked modern equipment and working environment (nearly 56% of the respondents) as high factors. On the other hand, working conditions (nearly 56%) and ergonomic requirements have been ranked as relatively low.

This analysis allowed to point out to the reasons, which employers consider to be endangering at their current job position (figure 2).

Figure 2. Reasons on which employees feel that their current position is endangered (in %)  
Rysunek 2. Powody z jakich pracownicy czują zagrożenie w pracy na obecnym stanowisku (% udział)



Source: self-study based on the research.

Nearly half of the respondents (46,57%) do not feel endangered, which can be considered as a positive sign. On the other hand, more than 53% of surveyed popu-

lation does feel endangered at their current job position. The largest group of the respondents, which is 27%, feels endangered in relation to the financial situation of the enterprise.

## Summary

As presented in the introduction, an average employee spends 1/3 of a day at work and works an average of 7 hours and 34 minutes. Therefore, the factors which allow the employee to feel satisfied with performing their job, are so important. Results of surveys on the employees' satisfaction from their job show that the most important factors, which influence their satisfaction are: attractive salary and possibility of professional development. Other factors, which do not have a direct impact on material benefits, such as in-organisational communication, social prestige, improvement of the elements of material working environment, concern for safe and hygienic working conditions; have also been ranked as important.

It is important to mention that job satisfaction, despite it is an area of interest of management, concerns feelings and individual perception of a unit in relation to work, therefore the assessment of the factors influencing job satisfaction is subjective.

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#### ***Authors' resume:***

**Olimpia Grabiec, Ph.D.** – Ph.D., doctor of economics in the field of management studies. Assistant Professor and Deputy Director of the Institute of Management and Economy, Humanitas University Sosnowiec.

**Mgr Joanna Jędraszczyk-Kałowak** – graduate of the State Higher Vocational School in Raciborz and Silesian University of Technology in Gliwice with specialisation in general sociology, media and social communication and leadership and leading in public administration units. A public administration employee.

#### ***Nota o Autorach:***

**Dr inż. Olimpia Grabiec** – doktor nauk ekonomicznych w zakresie nauk o zarządzaniu. Adiunkt i zastępca dyrektora Instytutu Zarządzania i Ekonomii w Wyższej Szkole Humanitas w Sosnowcu.

**Mgr Joanna Jędraszczyk-Kałowak** – absolwentka Państwowej Wyższej Szkoły Zawodowej w Raciborzu oraz Politechniki Śląskiej w Gliwicach na kierunku Socjologia, w specjalizacji ogólnej, Mediów i komunikacji społecznej oraz Kierowania i przywództwa w jednostkach administracji publicznej. Pracownik administracji publicznej.

**Contact/Kontakt:**

*dr inż. Olimpia Grabiec  
Wyższa Szkoła Humanitas  
Instytut Zarządzania i Ekonomii  
ul. Kilińskiego 43  
41-200 Sosnowiec  
e-mail: olimpiagrabiec@gmail.com*

*mgr Joanna Jędraszczyk-Kałwak  
jedraszczykjoanna@gmail.com*

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