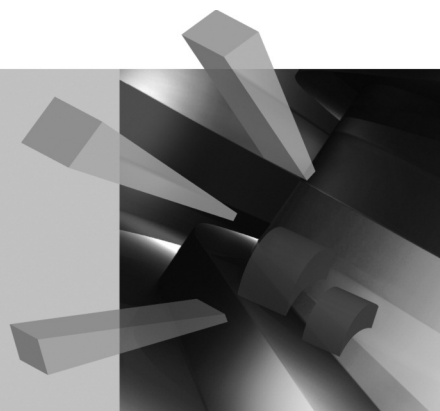


# **Human and work in a changing organisation. Management oriented on the employee interests**



edited by  
**Małgorzata Gableta**  
**Agata Pietroń-Pyszczek**



Reviewers: Halina Czubasiewicz, Aleksy Poczowski, Anna Rakowska,  
Agnieszka Sitko-Lutek, Lidia Zbiegień-Maciąg

Copy-editing: Marcin Orszulak

Layout: Barbara Łopusiewicz

Proof-reading: Barbara Łopusiewicz

Typesetting: Adam Dębski

Cover design: Beata Dębska

This publication is available at [www.ibuk.pl](http://www.ibuk.pl)

Abstracts of published papers are available in the international database  
The Central European Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities <http://cejsh.icm.edu.pl>  
and in The Central and Eastern European Online Library [www.ceeol.com](http://www.ceeol.com)

Information on submitting and reviewing papers is available on the Publishing House's website  
[www.wydawnictwo.ue.wroc.pl](http://www.wydawnictwo.ue.wroc.pl)

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced in any form  
or in any means without the prior written permission of the Publisher

© Copyright Wrocław University of Economics  
Wrocław 2011

**ISSN 1899-3192**

**ISBN 978-83-7695-159-1**

The original version: printed

Printing: Printing House TOTEM

# Contents

## Introduction.....

---

### Part 1. Employees and their interests

---

<b>Anna Cierniak-Emerych</b> , Legally protected employee interests and their observance in Polish economic practice.....	11
<b>Andrzej Bodak</b> , A cooperative as an employer. The specificity of employment in the context of employee interests and their observance .....	20
<b>Agata Pietroń-Pyszczyk</b> , Attributes of an attractive employer in the context of interests articulated by employees. Results of empirical studies .....	30
<b>Katarzyna Piwowar-Sulej</b> , Effectiveness of a project in light of its internal stakeholders .....	38
<b>Teresa Kupczyk</b> , Definition of professional success by the employees of Lower Silesian enterprises. Results of own research .....	45
<b>Agnieszka Żarczyńska-Dobiesz</b> , Factors of occupational stress among employees. Reflections after own research .....	53

---

### Part 2. The increase of openness to employee interests as a challenge for management

---

<b>Kazimierz Jaremczuk, Lidia Kaliszczak</b> , The indications of subjectivity of an employee in the changing organisation .....	65
<b>Stanisław Grochmal</b> , Paradigm of unity based on relational capital in the management of an enterprise.....	72
<b>Alicja Miś</b> , Generational identity in organisations. Challenges for human resources management.....	82
<b>Anna Rakowska</b> , Managerial well-being and job satisfaction. Research results illustrated by the example of selected coal mines in Upper Silesia .....	91
<b>Bogdan Nogalski, Agnieszka Szpitter, Marcin Opas</b> , Businessmen, managers, leaders. Why is it so hard to be an entrepreneur? .....	98
<b>Elżbieta Kowalczyk</b> , Job negotiations as a tool for framing a work–life balance .....	112
<b>Dagmara Lewicka, Lidia Zbiegień-Maciąg</b> , Discrimination in the workplace. The scale, symptom analysis, and preventive measures .....	123

## Streszczenia

<b>Anna Cierniak-Emerych</b> , Interesy pracobiorców chronione prawem oraz ich respektowanie w polskiej praktyce gospodarczej .....	19
<b>Andrzej Bodak</b> , Spółdzielnia jako pracodawca. Specyfika w kontekście interesów pracowniczych i stopnia ich respektowania .....	29
<b>Agata Pietroń-Pyszczek</b> , Atrybuty atrakcyjnego pracodawcy w kontekście interesów artykułowanych przez pracowników. Wyniki badań empirycznych.....	37
<b>Katarzyna Piwowar-Sulej</b> , Efektywność projektu w optyce jego wewnętrznych interesariuszy .....	44
<b>Teresa Kupczyk</b> , Definiowanie sukcesu zawodowego przez pracowników przedsiębiorstw z Dolnego Śląska. Wyniki badań własnych .....	52
<b>Agnieszka Żarczyńska-Dobiesz</b> , Czynniki stresu zawodowego pracowników. Refleksje z badań .....	62
<b>Kazimierz Jaremczuk, Lidia Kaliszczak</b> , Przesłanki podmiotowości pracobiorcy w zmieniającej się organizacji .....	72
<b>Stanisław Grochmal</b> , Kapitał relacyjny jako baza wprowadzenia paradygmatu jedności w zarządzaniu przedsiębiorstwem .....	82
<b>Alicja Miś</b> , Tożsamość generacji w organizacjach. Wyzwania dla zarządzania zasobami ludzkimi.....	91
<b>Anna Rakowska</b> , Dobrostan kadry kierowniczej a zadowolenie z pracy. Wyniki badań na przykładzie wybranych kopalń węgla kamiennego Górnego Śląska .....	98
<b>Bogdan Nogalski, Agnieszka Szpitter, Marcin Opas</b> , Przedsiębiorcy, menedżerowie, przywódcy. Dlaczego tak trudno być przedsiębiorcą? .....	112
<b>Elżbieta Kowalczyk</b> , Negocjacje w sprawie pracy jako narzędzie kształtujące równowagę praca – życie .....	123
<b>Dagmara Lewicka, Lidia Zbiegień-Maciąg</b> , Dyskryminacja w miejscu pracy. Skala zjawiska, analiza symptomów, działania zapobiegawcze .....	137

**Andrzej Bodak**

Wrocław University of Economics

---

## **A COOPERATIVE AS AN EMPLOYER. THE SPECIFICITY OF EMPLOYMENT IN THE CONTEXT OF EMPLOYEE INTERESTS AND THEIR OBSERVANCE**

---

**Summary:** Results of empirical studies on the observance of employee interests are presented. The research conducted in companies operating in Lower Silesia region helped identify a hierarchy of employee interests and observance of individual areas of those interests among both managerial and non-managerial employees. The analysis was based on the assumption that fundamental employee interests are similar across all companies, regardless of the form of ownership and legal-organisational formula of companies under study.

**Keywords:** cooperative, employer, employee, employee interests.

### **1. Introduction**

Most modern concepts of company functioning adopt the view that company operation and development requires proper observance and respect for the interests of various stakeholders. Company objectives are, in essence, a product of diverse interests within its structure. From the viewpoint of persons and groups exerting their influence on company as well as those subject to such influence in the course of company operation [compare: Freeman 1984, p. 55; Joker, Foster 2002, p. 118; Gableta 2003, p. 84], it may be assumed that activities of both groups are, for the most part, motivated by individual and group interests and oriented on the realisation of particular goals.

Interests and goals of individual participants of this “game of power and organizational resources” cannot be reduced to a common denominator, but the apparent relationship between individual survival and development and the survival and development of a company as a whole is a strong premise for the association of the two aspects [Piotrowski 1990, p. 9]. The game of interests should involve an exchange of “goods” related to various categories of interests. A company should react to expectations of all influence groups, and this reaction should be proportionate both to the level of influence and the consequences of this dependence [Gołębiowski 2001, p. 108].

From the viewpoint of a company as a whole, the most important interest groups are those defined as first-degree stakeholders, i.e., persons and groups directly related to company through a network of formal contracts and agreements. This group includes internal company stakeholders (insiders), further divided into – although not always distinctly separated – groups representing diverse interests and having diverse degree of influence upon socio-economic aspects of company operation, namely: owners, managerial cadres devoid of ownership rights, and employees of non-managerial level. This most important group of stakeholders, referred to as “consubstantial”, constitutes a company; without it, a company as a business entity would not exist [Rodriguez, Ricart 2002; after Jamka 2011, p. 41].

This paper presents results of empirical studies on the observance of employee interests in Polish economic practice.<sup>1</sup> The research, based on structured surveys conducted in companies operating in Lower Silesia region, was used to identify a hierarchy of interests articulated by employees as well as a degree of satisfaction of those interests. This paper focuses on selected group of companies under study, namely farming cooperatives. Those were analysed in relation to the overall results of all the companies under study, representing a wide assortment of organisational and legal forms of operation. The employees of the selected sector were analysed in two sections, one representing the managerial cadres, the other – non-managerial employees. In the farming cooperatives under study, the majority of respondents (*ca.* 75%) represented the non-managerial subgroup.

## 2. Interests articulated by employees and their observance

The research surveys on the observance of employee interests was based on a structured selection of companies to represent a broad variety of organisational forms and structures, including a representation of farming cooperatives [compare: Bodak 2011, pp. 28-37; Bodak, Gableta 2010, p. 382]. The sample consisted of 238 economic entities, with 16 farming cooperatives, mainly small and medium-sized, operating in rural areas. The cooperatives under study operated in the sphere of production and agricultural services as well as processing of agricultural goods.

Cooperatives, as institutions of social economy, should operate under the principle of “work over capital”, namely the limitation of profit to the benefit of social results, such as better satisfaction of interests across the broad group of internal stakeholders [Leś 2005, pp. 37-38]. The specificity of cooperative functioning stems from its dual nature of, first, a social organisation set up to satisfy the needs of its members and, second, an economic entity subject to the laws of the market. Members of cooperatives operating in rural areas combine the roles of owners, employ-

---

<sup>1</sup> The survey studies were conducted within the framework of research grant sponsored by Ministry of Science and Higher Education, No. NN 115 134434, “Employee interests and their observance in companies”.

ees, service providers, and service recipients. Research, both own and external, [e.g., Brzozowski 2004, pp. 40-45] demonstrates that the broad range of benefits resulting from cooperative participation includes (without limitation) the following expectations:

- earnings from share dividend,
- co-deciding on cooperative operation,
- preferential use of equipment and services,
- access to means of production at reduced price,
- sale guarantees on own products,
- preferential prices on sale of agricultural produce.

The interests of *stricte* employee character were addressed by respondents of both managerial and non-managerial group in the questionnaires (in this case, closed-type questions with structured responses). The survey, in line with the research principles set in the project, was anonymous and confidential. The list of employee interests presented to the respondents was collated based on professional literature and verified using a pilot study prior to the survey.

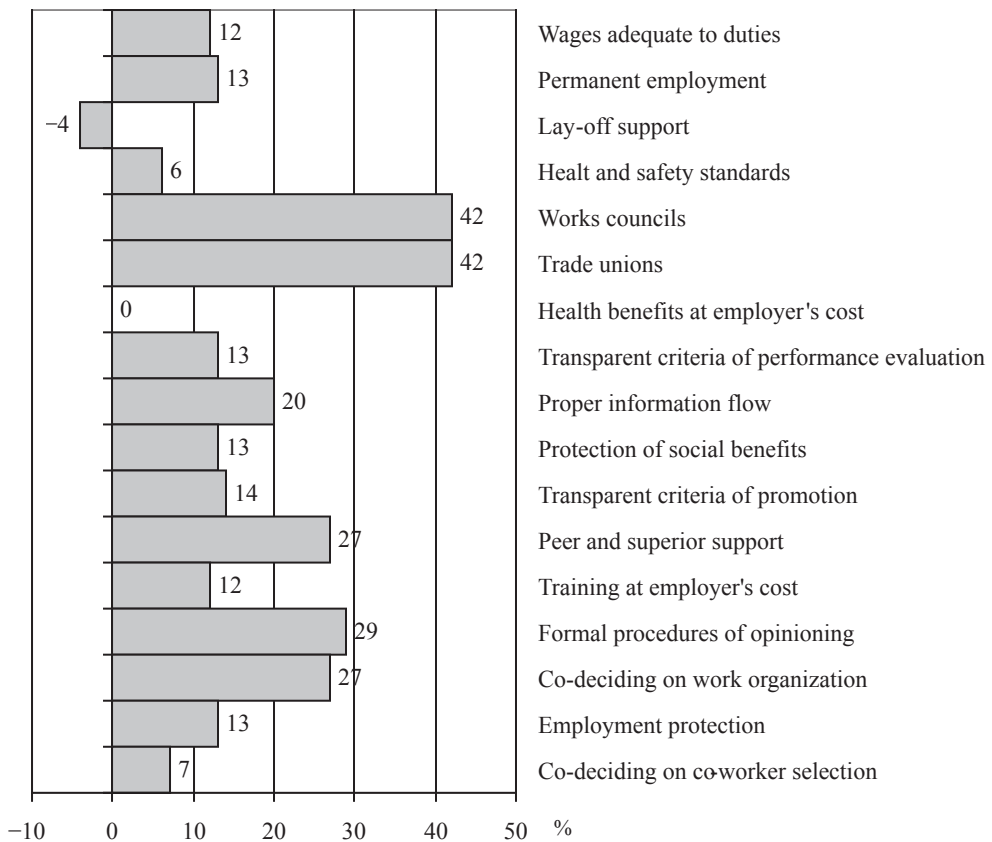
**Table 1.** Employee interests and their hierarchy of importance in the opinion of managerial and non-managerial employees\*

Interest	Respondents			
	Employees across the survey		Cooperative employees	
	Managerial	Non-man managerial	Managerial	Non-man managerial
Wages adequate to the range of duties	63	72	100	88
Health and safety standards	50	58	100	94
Permanent employment	48	57	100	87
Transparent criteria of performance evaluation	49	50	100	87
Employment protection	48	43	100	87
Proper information flow	44	44	100	80
Health benefits at employer's cost	38	40	100	100
Protection of social benefits	39	38	100	87
Transparent criteria of promotion	39	38	100	86
Training at employer's cost	39	36	100	88
Peer and superior support	37	34	100	73
Co-deciding on co-worker selection	36	28	100	93
Co-deciding on work organisation	29	25	100	73
Formal procedures of opinioning	24	21	100	71
Lay-off support	13	22	75	79
Formation of trade union structures	11	14	75	33
Formation of works councils	7	11	75	33

\* Percentage values represent the response of "very important".

Source: author's own research based on survey studies.

The hierarchy of articulated expectations of employees working in farming cooperatives is presented in Table 1. It must be noted that the list includes only those responses that ranked high in the survey (i.e., perceived as “very important” in the opinion of respondents). The results show that the expectations of cooperative employees typically covered the whole range of interests included in the survey. This trend is particularly evident in the responses of managerial employees. Apart from – symptomatic and somewhat surprising – the priority of health benefits at the employer’s cost, the most important interests revealed in the survey included health and safety standards, wages adequate to the range of duties, co-deciding on co-worker selection and transparent criteria of performance evaluation.



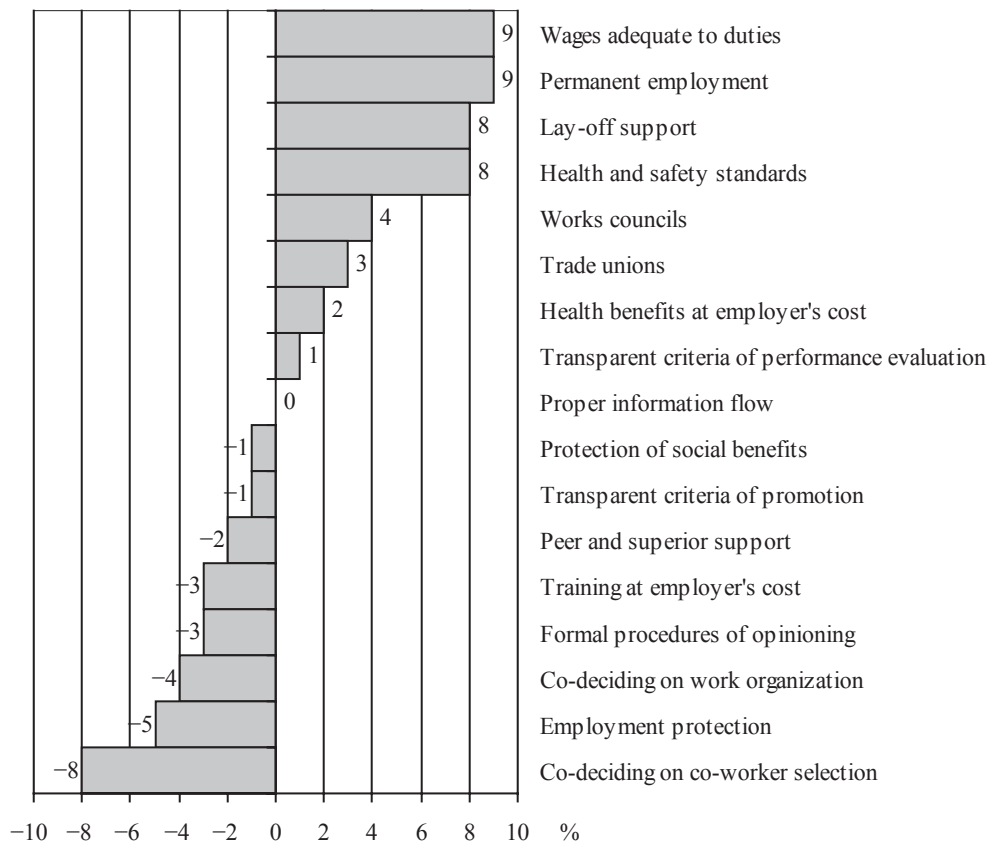
**Figure 1.** The concurrence of interests articulated by managerial and non-managerial employees in farming cooperatives (in %)

Source: author’s own research based on survey studies.

Similarly to the results obtained in other companies – of different ownership, legal and organisational structure – a relatively low value was attributed to the active



protection of own interests through such forms of indirect employee participation as trade unions and works councils. The expectations of cooperative managers in this respect are in striking contrast with the above and may raise reasonable doubt. To a certain degree of generalisation, it may be observed that respondents employed in farming cooperatives displayed a markedly higher percentage of top-priority responses compared to employees representing other forms of companies. The concurrence of responses in both groups of employees is presented in Figure 1 (cooperatives) and Figure 2 (across all forms of company organisation).



**Figure 2.** The concurrence of interests articulated by managerial and non-managerial employees across the surveyed companies (in %)

Source: author's own research based on survey studies.

Full concordance between managerial and non-managerial employees in cooperative setting (as measured by percentage of responses) was found only in respect to health benefits provided at employer's cost. The differences in responses to the placement of individual interests in the hierarchy of expectations were, in some

cases, as wide as 42%, as was the case of opinions on formation of trade unions and works councils. Apart from a relatively low placement of lay-off support, the respondents of the managerial group reported other interests notably more often, compared to the non-managerial group.

As found in the analysis of responses across the full range of companies included in the survey, rank differences between individual elements of interest hierarchy were neither clear-cut nor uniform (see Figure 2). The non-managerial employees – more often than the managerial group – reported such interests as wages adequate to duty load, permanent employment, lay-off support, health and safety standards. The employees performing managerial functions, on the other hand, displayed preference for such interests as: co-deciding on co-worker selection and protection of employment. Both groups under study were found similar in relation to the placement of such elements of employee interests as transparent criteria of performance evaluation and protection of social benefits. Full concordance between both groups was found in relation to a proper flow of information within company.

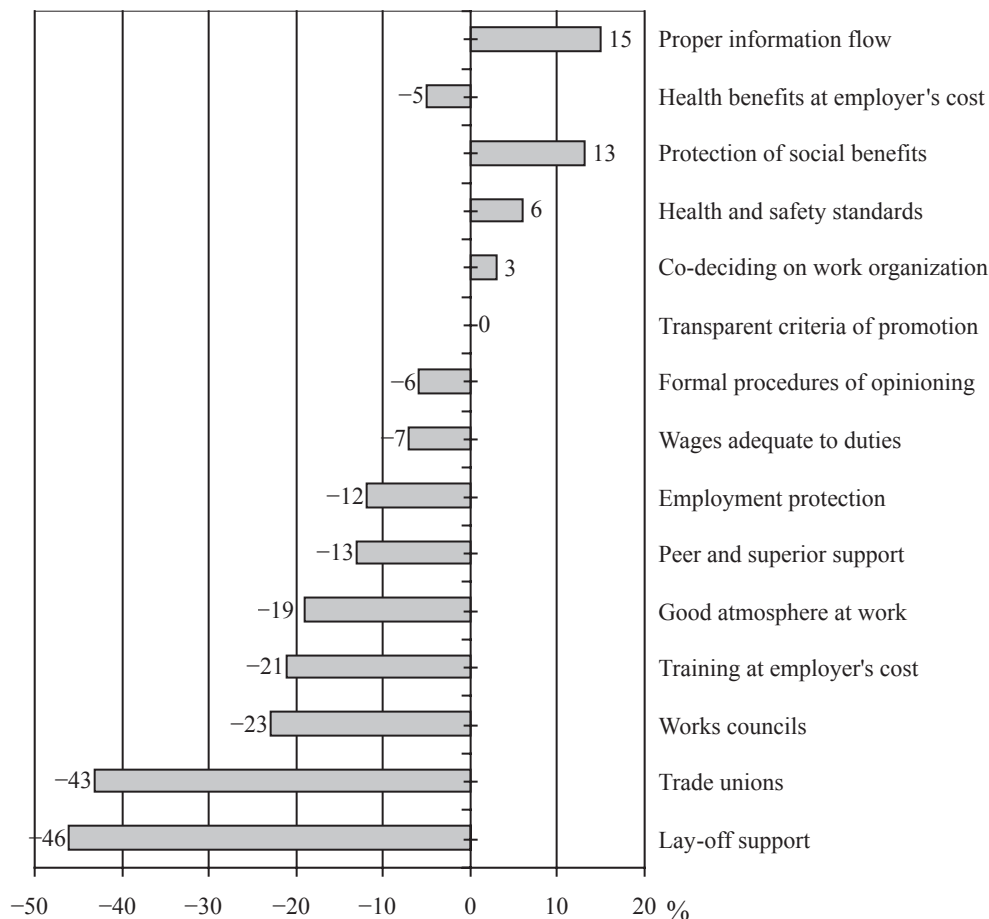
The observance of employee rights in companies under study was evaluated not so much through declarative statements provided by employers, but through verified opinions of employees, expressed in the survey. Table 2 presents overall results of survey studies across selected groups of respondents, including cooperative employees. It must be noted that cooperatives placed notably high in respect to such interests as health and safety standards and protection of social and health benefits.

**Table 2.** Observance of employee interests in respondents' opinion

Interest	Respondents			
	Employees across the survey		Cooperative employees	
	Managerial	Non-man managerial	Managerial	Non-man managerial
Proper information flow	77	62	50	62
Health benefits at employer's cost	66	71	50	57
Protection of social benefits	90	79	50	71
Health and safety standards	98	94	100	94
Co-deciding on work organisation	64	59	50	47
Transparent criteria of promotion	66	40	25	25
Formal procedures of opinioning	67	50	25	31
Wages adequate to the range of duties	86	61	50	69
Employment protection	78	67	50	63
Peer and superior support	93	83	100	79
Good atmosphere at work	93	84	100	87
Training at employer's cost	90	80	100	60
Formation of trade union structures	38	33	0	23
Formation of works councils	46	41	0	46
Lay-off support	43	35	0	43

Source: author's own research based on survey studies.

The most satisfying degree of employers' conformance with employee expectations, in the view of managerial-type employees, was reported in relation to such interests as provision of health and safety standards, good atmosphere at work, support from peers and superiors, training programs, and protection of social benefits. At the same time, the survey studies revealed a markedly higher level of approval of employers on the part of the managerial-type employees, as compared with the non-managerial group of respondents.

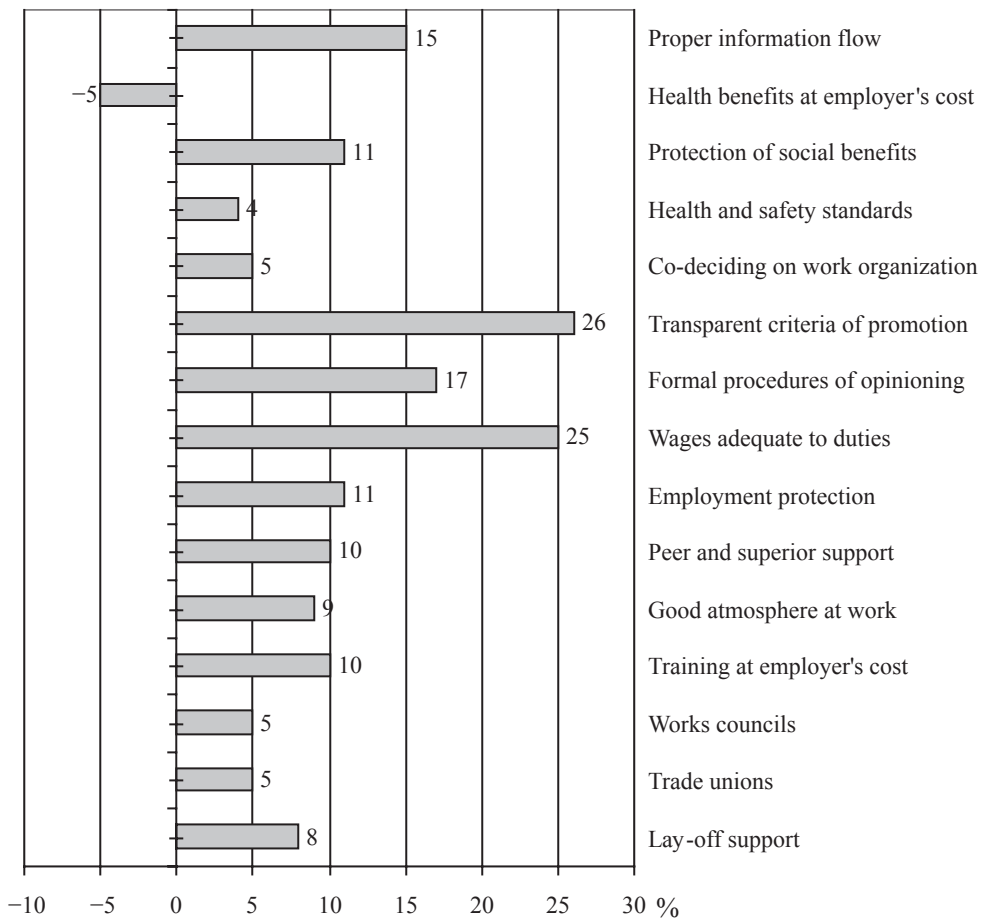


**Figure 3.** The concurrence of opinions reported by managerial and non-managerial employees on interest observance; data for cooperatives (in %)

Source: author's own research based on survey studies.

Taking into account the significant differences (in percentage values) between both groups of respondents in cooperative settings (see Figure 3), it must be noted that managers decidedly more often than their non-managerial colleagues show ap-

preciation for cooperative activities in respect to proper information flow as well as health benefits and protection of social benefits. On the other hand, the non-managerial employees showed markedly greater appreciation for such cooperative activities as lay-off support, training programs, and provision of good atmosphere at work. One significant disparity, related to cooperative support in formation of trade union structures and works councils, may be attributed to the absence of this item in the reported opinions of managerial group; hence. the apparent approval for this form of cooperative functioning should not be over-rated. An exceptional concordance of evaluation, as displayed by similar percentage of responses, should be noted in respect to cooperative provision of transparent criteria of promotion and mechanisms for co-deciding on work organisation.



**Figure 4.** The concurrence of opinions reported by managerial and non-managerial employees on interest observance; data across the companies under study (in %)

Source: author's own research based on survey studies.

Taking into account the percentage of both groups' responses across the whole sample of companies under study, the disparities in evaluation of employee interest satisfaction are significantly high (see Figure 4).

In particular, the non-managerial employees displayed significantly more criticism towards transparency of promotion criteria, adequacy of wages, formal procedures of opinioning, and information flow. These findings were later confirmed during in-depth interviews. Only in respect to satisfaction of health benefits, opinions expressed by the managerial employees are more critical than those of the non-managerial employees. Wages, as an important element in the hierarchy of employee interests, were evaluated positively by 86% of the managerial employees and 61% of the non-managerial employees, and placed sixth in the ranking of both respondent groups. However, due to delicate nature and emotional load associated with the evaluation of this particular element of motivational function of organisations, this level of approval cannot be evaluated on objective and unambiguous terms. This applies, in particular, to any attempts of negative evaluation.

### 3. Conclusions

With the introduction of market economy and as a result of restructuring, liquidation, and bankruptcy, the number of cooperative-type companies decreased significantly. Most of those still present and active on the market were saved from a fall not by founding members (farmers), but by employees concerned for protecting their jobs. Employees-members have dominated many a cooperative board. In such cases, cooperative assets were used not only for job protection, but also as source of income for the waning number of cooperative members. Among the phenomena associated with this form of activity – as confirmed in professional literature – there was a trend of raising the shares up to the limits of so-called prohibitive barriers, which could not be accepted by the majority of members [see: Drozd-Jaśniewicz, Wiatrak 2003, p. 89].

From the viewpoint of cooperative employees – as shown in the survey studies, in particular, the follow-up in-depth interviews – the very fact of being employed is considered an asset – a fact of considerable importance on difficult labor market of rural areas. Other important elements of employee expectations in this respect include proper health and safety standards, health benefits, and – understandably – wages adequate to work load. This configuration of interests perceived as the most important by respondents is therefore similar to the hierarchy of preferences expressed by employees across the whole sample under survey. Hence, the structure of ownership and legal-organisational forms seem to have little significance in the structure and hierarchy of interests articulated by employees in general. In the opinion of respondents, those interests are generally met, although not always in the hierarchical order of perceived importance.

Taking into account the observed trend of increasing the share of employees in the membership structure of many farming cooperatives, respect for and observance of their interests is an important determinant of effective and efficient operation of this particular form of a company.

## References

- Bodak A., Interesy pracowników na tle specyfiki zarządzania w spółdzielniach rolniczych, [in:] B. Olaszewska (ed.), *Zarządzanie w praktyce*, Prace Naukowe Uniwersytetu Ekonomicznego No. 164, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Ekonomicznego we Wrocławiu, Wrocław 2011.
- Bodak A., Gableta M., Problemy realizacji interesów pracowniczych w spółdzielczości rolniczej, [in:] K. Jaremczuk (ed.), *Uwarunkowania przedsiębiorczości – różnorodność i jedność*, tom 2, PWSZ Tarnobrzeg, Tarnobrzeg 2010.
- Brzozowski B., *Możliwości rozwoju polskiej spółdzielczości rolniczej w zintegrowanej Europie*, Roczniki Naukowe SERiA, tom VI, zeszyt 3, 2004.
- Drozd-Jaśniewicz I., Wiatrak A.P., *Spółdzielczość wiejska w gospodarce rynkowej*, Krajowa Rada Spółdzielcza, Warszawa 2003.
- Freeman R.E., *Strategic Management: A Stakeholder Approach*, Pitman, Boston 1984.
- Gableta M., *Człowiek i praca w zmieniającym się przedsiębiorstwie*, Wydawnictwo Akademii Ekonomicznej we Wrocławiu, Wrocław 2003.
- Gołębiowski T., *Zarządzanie strategiczne. Planowanie i kontrola*, Difin, Warszawa 2001.
- Jamka B., *Czynnik ludzki we współczesnym przedsiębiorstwie: zasób czy kapitał? Od zarządzania kompetencjami do zarządzania różnorodnością*, Wolters Kluwer Polska, Warszawa 2011.
- Joker J., Foster D., Stakeholders excellence. Framing the evolution and complexity of stakeholders perspective of the firm, *Corporate Social Responsibility and Environmental Management* 2002, Vol. 9, Issue 4.
- Leś E., Nowa ekonomia społeczna. Wybrane koncepcje, *Trzeci Sektor* 2005, nr 2.
- Piotrowski W., *Gry i interesy w teorii organizacji i zarządzania*, PWE, Warszawa 1990.
- Rodriguez M.A., Ricart J.E., Towards the sustainable business, *Revista de Antiguos Alumnos* 2002, No. 85.

## **SPÓŁDZIELNIA JAKO PRACODAWCA. SPECYFIKA W KONTEKŚCIE INTERESÓW PRACOWNICZYCH I STOPNIA ICH RESPEKTOWANIA**

**Streszczenie:** W opracowaniu przedstawiono wyniki badań empirycznych dotyczących respektowania interesów pracowniczych. Badania prowadzone na terenie Dolnego Śląska pozwoliły zidentyfikować hierarchię interesów pracobiorców i stopień ich realizacji w przekroju grup pracowniczych – kierowników i tzw. pracowników wykonawczych. Przyjęto, że podstawowe interesy pracownicze nie odbiegają od oczekiwań typowego polskiego pracobiorcy, a więc nie zmieniają się pod wpływem typów własności przedsiębiorstwa oraz jego formy prawno-organizacyjnej.

**Słowa kluczowe:** spółdzielnia, pracodawca, pracobiorca, interesy pracownicze.