Who Cares?

A Comparison of Consumer Perceptions of CSR Between Western and Eastern Europe
Abstract

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is a topic that has been widely researched and is still a progressing and important subject to study. Many researchers have focused on the importance and risks of CSR but have been unsuccessful in conducting research that brings forth managerial implications regarding the challenges and complexity that comes from contextual differences. Furthermore, little attention has been assigned to consumer awareness, perception of CSR as well as analysing differences in related markets such as developed Western European countries (WECs) and emerging Post-Communist countries (PCCs) of Eastern Europe. This research is essential as theoretical ground and for managers to be able to successfully adapt and implement their CSR strategies to various markets, something that is beneficial for gaining a long-term competitive advantage.

This study wishes to fill the existing research gap by gaining an insight into the differences in perceptions of CSR between consumers from WECs and PCCs. The outcome of this study contributes to the existing frame of research regarding consumers’ perceptions on CSR and the importance of adapting a firm's CSR strategies to differentiating perceptions when operating in various international markets.

The research was executed by using a qualitative method, carrying out three focus groups with participants originating from the two different regions respectively, and later mixed in a third group. The outcome from these focus groups was analysed using related theoretical frameworks such as Carroll’s pyramid for corporate social responsibility (1991) and Dhanapal, Vashu, and Subramanian (2015), who explores influencers affecting consumer perception.

The findings conclude that CSR is gaining awareness among consumers across both regions, who agree that companies should be engaged in CSR, whereas members from PCCs desires a higher commitment than is currently done. Consumers are willing to pay a higher price when they know that the companies implement philanthropic projects. However, for WECs, this depends on the price of the product, and for PCCs, on whether the activities are locally implemented or not. Finally, this study concluded that companies can gain a competitive advantage by concentrating on social CSR in the PCC region and environmental CSR in the WEC region since the findings indicate that these are the most prioritised issues in each region. Furthermore, managers should adapt their CSR strategies based on these findings in order to relate to the consumer, create legitimacy, and gain trust.

Keywords
CSR, consumer awareness, consumer perception, marketing strategies, international business strategy, purchase behaviour, Western Europe, post-communist, Eastern Europe
Statutory declaration

We declare that this Master Thesis has been written by ourselves and we have not used any sources or resources without reference or declaration in the text. In addition, we declare that concepts and ideas of others or literal quotations are clearly marked. This Master Thesis is a unique piece of work and was not used in any other version for submission to an academic grading nor has it been published elsewhere.

Date: 21.5.2018
Place: Kalmar, Sweden

________________________ _________________ _______________
Adam Tkáč Josefine Persson Rozelin Çelik
Acknowledgements

The process of writing this master thesis, as a part of the master programme, was a very challenging experience, which improved our collaboration and communication skills, and has deepened our knowledge of CSR and consumer perception. It has also taught us how to conduct professional research while adhering to the highest academic standards.

Firstly, we would like to thank Dr. Susanne Sandberg, for her supervision of the thesis. She has provided us with a great amount of important advice and comments that were indispensable in the process of writing the thesis and staying on track. Secondly, we would also like to thank Dr. Per Servais, who was our examiner and provided us with a great feedback during our intermediary sessions. His feedback pushed us to look from a different perspective and helped us to create a solid and cohesive piece of work. Thirdly, our thanks also go to our opposition group, which have helped us to be more consistent, and pointed out even the smallest details.

Moreover, we would like to show our gratitude to all participants of the focus groups. Their insights on the perception of CSR were invaluable for this study, and the study would not have happened without their help.

Last but not least, we would like to thank our families for their support, not only in the times of the thesis but throughout our whole studies.

Thank you all!

Adam, Josefine, and Rozelin
# Table of Contents

Abstract ................................................................................................................................. I

Statutory declaration ............................................................................................................ II

Acknowledgements ............................................................................................................... III

## 1. Introduction .................................................................................................................... 1

1.1 Background .................................................................................................................... 1

1.1.1 CSR and its Growing Importance ........................................................................ 1

1.1.2 The Gap Between WECs and PCCs ..................................................................... 2

1.1.3 Differences in Consumer Perception of CSR ..................................................... 3

1.2 Problem Discussion ...................................................................................................... 3

1.2.1 Importance of Context .......................................................................................... 3

1.2.2 Research Gap ........................................................................................................ 5

1.3 Research Questions ...................................................................................................... 6

1.4 Research Purpose ........................................................................................................ 6

1.5 Outline of the Thesis .................................................................................................... 6

.................................................................................................................................... 7

1.6 Delimitations ................................................................................................................ 7

## 2. Literature review ........................................................................................................ 9

2.1 CSR and Common Practices ....................................................................................... 9

2.1.1 Carroll’s CSR Pyramid ....................................................................................... 10

2.1.2 CSR in Europe ..................................................................................................... 11

2.2 Influencers of Differences in Consumer Perception .................................................. 12

2.2.1 Marketing Strategies ............................................................................................ 14

2.2.2 Social Factors ....................................................................................................... 15

2.2.3 Cultural Influence ................................................................................................. 19

2.2.4 Psychological Factors .......................................................................................... 22

2.2.5 Personal Characteristics ....................................................................................... 22

2.3 Theoretical Synthesis .................................................................................................. 23

## 3. Methodology .............................................................................................................. 26

3.1 Research Approach ..................................................................................................... 26

3.2 Research Method ......................................................................................................... 27

3.3 Research Strategy ....................................................................................................... 27

3.4 Data Collection ............................................................................................................ 28

3.4.1 Focus Group Design ............................................................................................ 28

.................................................................................................................................... IV
## 3. Method of Analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>...</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## 4. Empirical Findings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>...</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## 5. Analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>...</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## 6. Conclusion and Contribution

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>...</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
6.1.3 Sub-Question 3 .............................................................. 62
6.1.4 Main Research Question .................................................. 63

6.2 Managerial Implications ..................................................... 66
   6.2.1 Europe-Wide Managerial Implications ................................... 66
   6.2.2 Managerial Implications for WECs ...................................... 67
   6.2.3 Managerial Implications for PCCs ...................................... 67

6.3 Theoretical Implications ..................................................... 67

6.4 Implications for Policy Makers ........................................... 68

6.5 Limitations ..................................................................... 68

6.6 Future Research ............................................................... 69

List of References .................................................................. i

Appendix ................................................................................. xiv
   Appendix A: Focus Group Questions ........................................... xiv
   Appendix B: Active Social Media Penetration in Europe .................... xv
   Appendix C: Share of Individuals Using the Internet in Europe ............... xvi
   Appendix D: Individual Scores for Hofstede’s Cultural Dimensions ........... xvii
   Appendix E: Content analysis - Word Frequency Table ......................... xvii

List of Tables

Table 1: Composition of focus groups............................................. 30
Table 2: Question Categories ....................................................... 33
Table 3: Word Frequency ............................................................ 50

Table of Figures

Figure 1: Outline of the Thesis ...................................................... 7
Figure 2: Carroll’s CSR Pyramid ................................................... 10
Figure 3: Influencers of Purchase Behaviour .................................... 13
Figure 4: Carroll’s CSR Pyramid and the CSR Dimensions ................... 24
Figure 5: Comprehensive Framework ............................................. 25
Figure 6: Structure of the Analysis ............................................... 36
Figure 7: Hofstede’s Cultural Dimensions ...................................... 49
Figure 8: Perceptual Positioning ................................................... 66
1. Introduction

This chapter establishes the ground of the study and introduces the concept of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), its growing importance and the separation between WECs and PCCs. It further describes the problem and the gap within this international context and focuses on both theoretical and practical background of the issue. The chapter itself is divided into six main parts: Background, Problem Discussion, Research Questions, Research Purpose, Outline of the Thesis, and Delimitations.

1.1 Background

1.1.1 CSR and its Growing Importance

Corporate social responsibility is a widely used term, that according to Carroll and Shabana (2010, p.86) describes ‘all concepts such as corporate citizenship, business ethics, stakeholder management or sustainability’. However, based on Schwartz and Carroll (2008), the elemental themes of CSR are value, balance, and accountability. However, the definition that guides this study is composed by European Commission (2018a), who states that CSR is a responsible approach of companies towards their impact on society. A responsible approach is characterized by compliance with the law and integration of environmental, social, ethical, human and consumer rights into their business models.

Regardless of the description, CSR is an important business driver in the era of globalisation, where companies continuously search for new markets in which they often focus on environmental and social issues to gain trust and legitimacy (Barkemeyer, 2011; Jamali and Neville, 2011). Businesses are now seen responsible, next to local governments and public authorities, for economic, social, and environmental development. Companies are leveraging sustainability of their businesses to benefit not only the shareholders, but all stakeholders in the society (Euaanant, Ayuwat, and Promphakping, 2011). The approach of companies towards CSR differs in nature. While in some cases, companies tend to engage in philanthropic activities by their free will, in other cases, companies are legally obliged to engage in CSR activities (Carroll and Shabana, 2010). There is a wide range of CSR fields and activities that companies engage in. According to Marano and Kostova (2016, p.30), some of the most common issues that businesses tackle are ‘[…] recycling, prevention of pollution, charity work, engagement in local communities, promotion of women and
minorities in organisations, or fair treatment of workforce’. All these activities are targeted towards sustainability, but this sustainable behaviour is also in many cases creating a competitive advantage. Formation of competitive advantage can be seen as a business improvement effort, creation of value, and is welcomed by the management because of the economic and competitive impact (Castka, Balzarova, Bamber, and Sharp, 2004).

More importantly for businesses, CSR has an impact on their image and performance. Hadjikhani, Lee, and Park (2016) claim that CSR gives a long-term competitive advantage, influences both competition, financial performance and market image by increasing their reputation and trust. Zbuchea (2014) argues that impactful CSR strategies improve companies' financial performance, due to increased loyalty, advocacy of consumers and a boycott of the competition. Moreover, Zbuchea (2014) add, that for companies to see such customer devotion, the CSR strategies have to be seen and recognised by the customers. In addition, in order to impact customer beliefs and engage in activities which are truly important in a local setting, companies need to know what CSR activities are the most important for given regions and adapt to these findings.

1.1.2 The Gap Between WECs and PCCs
The focus of this study is to understand the relationship between CSR and consumers from PCCs and WECs. These two regions are analysed because of the historical development and its close distance. Even though these two regions are bordering each other, their development has been separate and so has the forming of norms, beliefs, and values. These factors are an important driver for CSR evaluation and perception from the consumer perspective since they form individual opinions. After World War II, Europe was split into two spheres of influence, between US and Soviet Union (Stoianovich, 1984). WECs were under the sphere of influence of the US and developed their democratic system, which was complemented by capitalism and a free-market economy. Based on this established scheme, the economy started growing and consumerism became a prevalent behaviour of people in the WECs. The free market ensured independence for entrepreneurs and wide choices for consumers (Conway, 2002). On the other hand, PCCs were under the influence of the Soviet Union, who introduced socialism and communist ideology (Stoianovich, 1984), a regime that was relatively restrictive and was limiting the human liberty. This regime was connected to the centrally planned economy, meaning that all market decisions were made by the government, rather than by businesses and consumers (Vecernik, 2008). However, this system was not
very favourable for consumers, because of the common shortages in supply and the limited consumer choices (Wilson, 1980). But after the 1989 revolutions and forward, the majority of the PCCs have joined the direction of WECs, and in the past 20 years, they have worked hard to catch up with them (Rupnik, 2000).

1.1.3 Differences in Consumer Perception of CSR
Kim, Hur, and Yeo (2015) propose, that a consumer's view of a company and its brand image is highly influenced by the perception of CSR because social responsibility has become an important attribute for purchase driving decisions. Moreover, according to Potepkin's and Firsanova's (2017) hypothesis, factors like historically different economic systems, culture, and CSR norms are in some countries driving the change in customer perceptions. However, the findings of Potepkin and Firsanova (2017), suggest only an insignificant difference in consumer perception of CSR between two historically different countries. It is argued, that CSR might be a unifying factor across borders, no matter what the historical development is. Nevertheless, Chaudary, Zahid, Shahid, Khan, and Azar (2016) present contradictory findings, where culture and country background has a notable impact on the consumer perception of CSR.

Based on the historical development of the countries under analysis, it can be seen that there has been a wide gap between the mentality of both regions and the norms, values, and beliefs are mostly different. Therefore, it is important to analyse the situation, in order to find out if the consumer perceptions of both sides differ almost 30 years after the transformation of PCCs; especially in a time when the majority of these have joined WECs in the EU (European Commission, 2018b). In addition, the theory and research on consumer perception of CSR have been inconclusive, as modern research both support and oppose theories that see culture and historical development as a moderating factor of consumer perception of CSR.

1.2 Problem Discussion

1.2.1 Importance of Context
CSR practices aim to contribute to society in form of social, environmental or philanthropic work. Although, scholars consider achieving legitimacy as one of the prior goals for the companies use of CSR. In this case, legitimacy can be defined according to Meyer and Scott
(1983, p.201) as '[...]' the degree of cultural support for an organisation-the extent to which the array of established cultural accounts provides explanations for its existence, functioning, and jurisdiction [...]' Furthermore, Panwar, et al. (2013) state that companies aim to derive legitimacy through CSR practices. The authors stress the importance of legitimacy for companies by arguing that it provides protection against unsystematic variation in stock prices, helps to gain loyalty and trust by stakeholders, as well as to enhance their attractiveness and authenticity as a company in general (Panwar, et al., 2013; Jansson, 2008). However, Panwar, et al. (2013) conclude, that if an organisation is perceived as legitimate or not is depending on contextual social values and beliefs, which is why one general CSR strategy may not succeed in all markets, especially if the organisation has a previous reputation of being dishonest. Moreover, Kostova and Roth (2002) together with Williams and Aguilera (2008) argue that since institutions vary between different countries, so do organisational practices such as CSR.

Consequently, organisations have to take both the national institutional environment of the host country as well as the industry, community and their home country into consideration, and that in turn generates difficulties in deciding which expectations to prioritise. According to Meyer and Rowan (1977), companies are often pressured by laws and regulations, social knowledge, and social norms to exert legitimacy by adapting to institutionalised structures, processes, and practices. In order to cope with these expectations, companies ought to vary their CSR strategy and adapt to the country-specific conditions (Williams and Aguilera, 2008). This observation is confirmed by Jamali and Neville (2011) who outline a theoretical framework on a multi-level model of institutional movements which highlights the convergence on common ways of organisation, consumption, and politics driven by global institutional pressures. How common these practices will become are however dependant on the strength of national business systems and local institutions such as political, financial and cultural; factors that will mitigate this effect. This way of context-bound perceptions of CSR is similarly explained by Barkemeyer (2011), who further underlines the risk of failure and misallocation of resources in the case of not matching the local perceptions, therefore, it is highly important that companies realise the local values, norms, and practices.

In addition to this, Hadjikhani, et al. (2016) focus on the difference between emerging markets who differ considerably regarding business, culture, and their rapidly changing environment compared to developed countries. This is why it is highly important that
companies operating in these markets gather enough information about them to be able to adapt their CSR strategy in the right manner, to allow them to enter and develop successfully in these markets.

1.2.2 Research Gap
As already mentioned a large amount of research has been done on this topic and CSR is still an important subject to study. Prior research has mainly been focused on which ways CSR activities can benefit both companies and society, but also what risks these procedures can generate and the importance of adapting and tailoring different CSR strategies to the actual context, meanwhile taking several different actors, perceptions and values into account. What can be distinguished from the theoretical background is that previous researchers have failed to bring forth adequate research for firms and managers to actually allow them to handle the challenges and complexity of the contextual differences, in this case, the PCCs and WECs. The lack of theory concerning consumer awareness and perception of CSR is striking; moreover, no research has analysed differences in related markets like developed WECs and emerging PCCs. Such knowledge is key both as a theoretical ground, as well as actionable insight for execution of CSR strategies and their adaptation towards local context. Therefore, this thesis seeks to contribute to the theoretical and practical field of CSR.

The only previous research that yields more practical formulated managerial implications is Hadjikhani, et al. (2016), but as they follow a single case of an MNCs entry and expansion in an emerging market (China), it has limitations in not being able to generalise the findings to other markets. Consequently, the managerial implications extracted from this study limit managers operating in alternative markets since the strategic tools may differ. Therefore, there is a need to conduct more in-depth studies about CSR perception using this type of business perspective.
1.3 Research Questions

From the problem discussion and research gap outlined above, one main research question followed by three supportive sub-questions have been extracted:

1. What differences in perception of CSR exists between consumers from Western Europe and Post-Communist countries of Eastern Europe and why?
   a. How aware are consumers of companies’ CSR activities?
   b. What involvement regarding CSR do consumers expect from companies?
   c. What type of CSR activities do consumers perceive as the most important, and how do these activities influence their purchase decisions?

1.4 Research Purpose

The purpose of this study is to explore consumer views and gain a deeper understanding of existing differences regarding the concept of CSR, in order to create a CSR perception profile of WECs and PCCs. The study further seeks to identify the CSR concepts deemed most important by consumers from across the selected target regions. The outcome of this specific study will fill the research gap as it serves as an enhancement and contribution to the existing frame of research, specifically on consumers’ perceptions on CSR and the importance of adapting a firm’s CSR strategies when operating in various international markets.

1.5 Outline of the Thesis

The following figure illustrates the outline of this study. Chapter 1, introduces the subject, content, and structure of the thesis. Following, chapter 2 introduces the reader to the theoretical framework of this study and describes the core matters such as CSR, consumer perception and influencers of differences in consumer perception of CSR. In chapter 3 the methodology including research approach and method, research strategy and data collection as well as data analysis and considerations of research quality will be described. In connection with that, the findings and results will be presented in chapter 4. These findings and results will then be analysed and discussed in chapter 5. Finally, the conclusion and contribution of this study will be stated in chapter 6, as well as a reflection consisting of managerial and theoretical implications, in addition to implications for policy-makers, limitations of the study and suggestions for future research.
1.6 Delimitations

The scope and purpose of this study are delimited by various aspects. First of all, the existing research is not supposed to take a critical stand on CSR. This means that the subject CSR is mainly defined and presented regarding general CSR theories and consumer perception. Certainly, different consumer perceptions on CSR are considered, whether negative or positive. However, no discussion targeting differing opinions on CSR by scholars was realised. Therefore, this study has an objective view on this matter and only seeks to acquire...
a deeper understanding of the consumer perceptions itself. In addition, no analysis or recommendations regarding the development or design of a conclusive CSR strategy will be carried out. Instead, this study seeks to give managerial implications concerning the overall approach on CSR in WECs and PCCs. Moreover, the research only takes the targeted regions into consideration, since they are the focus of this study. Lastly, this research is conducted regardless the industry, hence, the consumer perception will be analysed on general CSR rather than CSR in a certain industry.
2. Literature review

This chapter will present the main relevant theoretical frameworks and concepts of the specific field of research. Initially, CSR and common practices are introduced, followed by Carroll’s pyramid of CSR and the current disparities in Europe. Thereafter, five influencers of differences in consumer perception are described, which have been derived from a literature review of previous research. Finally, the theoretical synthesis is developed which guides the analysis of empirical data gathered in the research process.

2.1 CSR and Common Practices

As companies are currently becoming more internationalized, continuously searching for new markets in which they often focus on both environmental and social problems, CSR activities are undertaking issues that before was to a larger extent done by public actors. In the light of this fact, companies have the ability to bridge the governance gaps by directing their endeavours to ease specific problems regarding, for instance, human rights and employment rights or discrimination, environmental and corruption issues (Barkemeyer, 2011; Jamali and Neville, 2011). CSR is often implied to consist of voluntary actions from companies and how they respond to different societal demands which go broader than what the laws demand. These management practices are however not exclusively left to the decision of managers but are moulded by other establishments and stakeholders, including governments, which hold a legitimately authentic and powerful role (Steurer, Martinuzzi, Margula, 2012). Governments have the potential of establishing enforced minimum standards, as well as shaping the meaning, and encouraging CSR practices from companies by exploiting different non-mandatory policy instruments, used as a complement to assist the hard laws or as a compensation of non-existing laws for example on behalf of social and environmental standards (Albareda, et al., 2008; Müller and Siebenhüner, 2007; Steurer, 2010).

As previously mentioned, CSR practices cover a wide range of social and environmental fields. This includes common activities such as recycling, community engagement, pollution prevention, charity, promotion of women and minorities in organisations, and fair treatment of unionized workforce (KLD Research and Analytics, 2008; Marano and Kostova, 2016). In Carroll’s study from 1991, a framework was developed
that structures the main possible CSR responsibilities. This framework, which is constituted as a pyramid, will be presented in the following subsection.

2.1.1 Carroll’s CSR Pyramid

Carroll’s (1991) views on CSR and especially the pyramid of CSR have become an essential element regarding CSR research. The author states that a company seeks to take responsibilities in four different manners: economic, legal, ethical and philanthropic. These four components of CSR are put in a hierarchical order which indicates the importance of each component (Figure 2).

![Carroll’s CSR Pyramid](source: Carroll (1991, p.42))
The economic responsibilities lay the foundation of the pyramid, hence, are the most crucial for the companies. These consist of the ability for a business to be profitable, create jobs and contribute to the economic development of the society. The second block notion: legal responsibilities, demand businesses to obey the law and stick to the rules of the market. In the context of societies, the legal responsibilities are considered as very critical since the 'law is society's codification of acceptable and unacceptable behaviour' (Carroll, 1991, p.42). The third layer of the pyramid is represented by the ethical responsibilities a business has to take. Hence, a business should always do what is right, just and fair as well as avoid, or at least minimise, harm to any stakeholders and the environment. Lastly, a business is supposed to be philanthropic. A company is expected to be a good corporate citizen by contributing 'financial and human resources to the community and to improve the quality of life' (Carroll, 1991, p.42).

2.1.2 CSR in Europe

When comparing the markets in WECs with PCCs, some differences can be discovered. Nevertheless, it is still to say that seven CSR dimensions are established as laying the foundation of companies’ strategies. According to Balzarova and Castka (2012), these dimensions would be organisational governance, human rights, labour practices, environment, fair operating practices, consumer issues, and finally, community involvement and development. Along the lines of this, Elkington (1994) considers environmental, social, and stakeholder issues as most important.

Moreover, studies show that Western European governments are more supportive of CSR activities than governments in PCCs, which itself represent the differences in popularity of CSR between the two regions, where CSR has had a significantly higher importance in the majority of WECs (Midttun, Gautesen and Gjolberg, 2006; Steurer, et al., 2012). A higher number of WECs are also documenting their environmental and social activities in sustainability reports, which is still done to a more moderate extent in the PCCs. The main explanation for this variation on CSR management practices is due to firms’ strategic or instrumental responses to pressures from firm’s stakeholders which, in the same way as cultures, varies between different regions in the world (Clarkson, 1998). PCCs are lacking CSR practices that are dealing with sustainable development (Steurer and Konrad, 2009) and Steurer, Martinuzzi and Margula. (2012) finds that, out of 212 CSR policies, only 40 were found in the PCCs. The interest of CSR is shown to be low both among stakeholders and
companies in these countries who rather copy what is done in WECs than set trends themselves (Steurer and Konrad, 2009; Mazurkiewicz, Crown and Bartelli, 2005a and 2005b) The main participators in CSR activities are export companies with great connections to Western Europe as well as other multinational companies (Lewicka-Strzalecka, 2006; Steurer and Konrad, 2009).

According to Steurer, et al. (2012), CSR has a weak position in those markets due to the socialist heritage. Majority of businesses and the public feel that it is primarily the responsibility of the government to take care of social and environmental issues. Whereas the companies’ main responsibility, is mere to comply with their country-specific regulations, legal environment, and EU standards, which they rarely seek to go beyond. This stands in contrast to the Western European view, where the majority of companies partakes in voluntary CSR activities which goes beyond the legal requirements. However, there are pressures on the government in PCCs to support CSR activities of businesses by a raising awareness of the importance of CSR. The current engagement in CSR is highly varied, differing in motivations and degree of intensity. Companies are then mostly covering institutional voids by investing in social services and basic infrastructure, or are responding to cultural requirements and enhancing their reputation in the market (Doh, McGuire and Ozaki, 2015). According to Munro (2013), stakeholders in emerging markets have at times varied or confused understanding of CSR. Based on Munro's study, new broader definitions and descriptions of CSR concepts are needed, so that stakeholders can be able to understand companies’ sustainable strategies. In addition, the stakeholder's decision making is often led by religious beliefs, culture, or the country of origin.

2.2 Influencers of Differences in Consumer Perception

The following sections will describe five influencers that may affect and enhance differences in consumer perception between countries. These influencers have been extracted from a literature review of previous research. Moreover, these influencers are inspired by the theoretical framework of Dhanapal, Vashu, and Subramaniam (2015), which has been adapted to serve as a theoretical framework of this study. This theoretical framework with minor adaptations can be seen below (Figure 3).
Figure 3: Influencers of Purchase Behaviour

Source: Based on Dhanapal, Vashu, and Subramaniam (2015, p.117)

Studies focused on consumer views on particularly CSR, for instance, Agarwal (2014) who’s theory claims that CSR has an impact on consumer purchasing behaviour, have identified specific factors that impact the consumer’s perception of CSR. One of the main influencers of consumer perception and awareness of CSR is the media, which also exerts an essential impact on the corresponding corporate behaviour (Zyglidopoulos, et al., 2011; Baron, 2005; Berman, Wicks, Kotha, and Jones, 1999; Chen and Meindl, 1991; Fombrun and Shanley, 1990; Henriques and Sadorsky, 1999; Siegel and Vitaliano, 2007); therefore, the first set of influencers explained is marketing strategies, consisting of the role of social media.

The second set of influencers described is social factors. Social factors consist of two sub-categories: political and economic development. Regarding political development, Turkina and Surzhko-Harned (2014) emphasise how the development of a country has an impact on individual norms, values, beliefs, and perceptions. This is enhanced by Jung, et al. (2017) who state that the political ideology might influence purchase behaviour. In addition, Frank and Enkawa (2008) claim that customer satisfaction is not only affected by the company’s performance itself but is also strongly impacted by the country’s economic development.

According to a study conducted by Gănescu, Gangone, and Asandei (2014), a significant impact of the national culture on CSR activities towards consumer perception can be statistically proven. In line with this statement, many scholars have researched the correlation of national culture on consumer perception (Thanetsunthorn, 2015; Halkos and
Skouloudis, 2016; Gallén and Peraita, 2017; Fisher, 2017), where Sirmon and Lane (2004) have identified that the national culture defines a nation’s value system which in turn influences people’s attitudes. Depending on these attitudes, consumers’ individual perception and response to CSR activities are determined (Ho, Wang and Vitell, 2011). Therefore, culture is the third influencer, where the focus is on the six dimensions developed by Hofstede, Hofstede and Minkov (2010), as the majority of previously mentioned studies incorporate these in their research. In addition, the religion and norms of a society are included in this influencer since they play an important part for both the cultural dimensions as well as the purchase behaviour in general (Rahman, Albaity and Maruf (2017). Psychological factors have been described as the fourth influencer since psychological factors significantly influence the purchase behaviour and as values are connected to trust and personality (Kotler, et al., 2005). This is followed by the fifth and final influencer - personal characteristics like age, level of education and gender; as Tuzcu (2014), Peréz and Rodríguez del Bosque (2016) and Rahman (2012), claim that these three factors are the most correlated to consumers’ perception of CSR.

2.2.1 Marketing Strategies

*The Role of Social Media*

The access to media, especially social media, enables the consumer to individually judge a company’s CSR activities and policies since the media is the main legitimate source of asymmetry and reduced information (Zyglidopoulos, et al., 2011; McWilliams and Siegel, 2001; Siegel and Vitaliano, 2007). Therefore, scholars in the past have connected the consumers’ increasing awareness of CSR with the role of the consumer within the stakeholder theory (Zyglidopoulos, et al., 2011; Cummings and Doh, 2000; Mitchell, Agle and Wood, 1997). The stakeholder theory, according to Freeman (1984, 1994), argues that long-term economic success goes in line with satisfying the often-conflicting demands of diverse stakeholders (Zyglidopoulos, et al., 2011).

Based on this statement and the increased consumer awareness of CSR activities via media, researchers argue that the consumer as a stakeholder has gained significantly more importance over the years (Zyglidopoulos, et al., 2011; Ettenson and Klein, 2005; Friedman, 1991, 1999). This implies that companies which operate in societies with intensive usage of media outlets experience higher pressure by their customers to participate in CSR activities (Zyglidopoulos, et al., 2011).
2.2.2 Social Factors

**Political Development in WECs**

The end of World War II gave a political direction for further development in Europe. At Yalta conference in February 1945, it was decided that Europe would be divided into two spheres of influence. On one side, Western Europe under the influence of the USA, and on the other side, Eastern Europe under the influence of Soviet Union. The influence of the USA on Western Europe had a strong impact on its later development in trade cooperation and its continued democratic political direction (Stoianovich, 1984).

According to Conway (2002), the most remarkable political situation or even triumph occurred in Western Europe, when all countries acquired the same single political model - parliamentary democracy. There were differences between individual countries, in terms of other ruling bodies such as royal families from previous monarchies, but the parliament was introduced in these countries and the political powers became democratic. As Conway (2002) proposes, this popularity of democratic tendencies was motivated by three main factors and moods in the society. First, the people were afraid of authoritarian regimes after the terrors of World War II. Secondly, capitalism and a free-market economy that emerged after the war were welcomed positively. And thirdly, the influence of United States over the post-war economic reconstruction was the third and a very strong driver of the political development in Western Europe.

As a response to the Soviet Union and its scope of influence, Western Europe with the help of USA formed North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO), a political and military alliance. The NATO was not the only organisation that united WECs after World War II. European communities that consisted of European Steel and Coal Community and European Economic Community, who later become the EU, were another political and economic formation that formed the political development of WECs. EU has helped their members with economic growth and introduction of certain legal regulations including environmental policies. (European Union, 2016a). Currently, Western Europe and the EU as a whole is facing several problems, including financial crisis recovery, rise in Euroscepticism on national levels, dilemma of how to take care of people who are fleeing their home countries and seeking refuge in the EU, but also the threats of terror attacks that have been on the rise in the EU (European Union, 2016a).
Political Development in PCCs

As already mentioned, Europe has been divided after World War II into Western and Eastern parts, under influence of the USA and The Soviet Union. The Soviet Union then started controlling the “Eastern Bloc” and implementing socialist and communist ideology all across this part of Europe (Stoianovich, 1984).

Communism as a regime was a very restrictive and limited human freedom. The idea of communism is to have a classless society in which building common society-wide goals is more important than individual needs. In communism, a strong working-class is the engine of the economy and pride of the society, in which blue-collar workers are leading the country towards better days. However, in reality, communism and the centrally planned economy was creating a lot of obstacles like shortages in supply, or limited choices, which were not favourable conditions for consumers (Vecernik, 2008).

These downsides of the system have gradually become unbearable for the majority of people living in these communist countries and their dissatisfaction lead to a set of revolutions in 1989. After the revolutions, the majority of Eastern European countries transformed into democracies and followed in the footsteps of Western Europe (Rupnik, 2000). As a result of the development and close relationships with the west, the majority of PCCs' have gradually become a part of the EU; with the peak in 2004, when 8 PCCs' joined the union (European Commission, 2018b).

Turkina and Surzhko-Harned (2014) argue, that the history and social development did not require only the change of the legal and political system, but also had an impact on norms, values, beliefs, and perceptions of individuals and the society. Turkina and Surzhko-Harned (2014) claim that the experience of historical events might have an effect on people's perceptions, and may influence even whole generations; especially in formative years of maturing. The researchers also observed a trend, where countries that later joined the EU have shown more unified norms and values across all age groups, than countries that did not join the EU. Today, out of the 28 EU members, 11 members are PCCs’ (European Commission, 2018b). Because of these changes, the countries have become fully democratic states, with functioning governments, elected in free and fair elections (Gwartney and Montesinos, 2018).
**Economic Development in WECs**

Since the US had a strong influence on the post-war development in Western Europe, it managed to build free-market economies across all the countries and introduce capitalist mindset which is driven by consumerism (Conway, 2002). Since 1950's, the European Coal and Steel Community started uniting WECs to cooperate politically but mainly economically; later, in 1957 the European Economic Community was established and so was the “Common market” (European Union, 2016a). The common market was key to the growth of the economy. The common market is “one” market without barriers, that would be imposed on businesses in form of bureaucracy, technical or legal restrictions. “one” market gave a significant opportunity to businesses that suddenly gained access to consumers in multiple countries; and in addition, these EU countries have become very attractive for foreign direct investment (European Union, 2016b).

The establishment of EU had a direct impact on economic development in Western Europe. According to European Union (2016a), 1960's were a time of economic growth for the EU, since the countries abolished custom-duties for member states. The union also started a joint control of food-production that resulted in food surpluses and economic success. The economic policies have been met with success, but significant production has taken a toll on the environment; therefore, the fight against pollution has become a significant issue and the EU adopted laws to protect the environment. The most significant factors of EU are the four freedoms that have been completed in 1993, establishing the freedom of movements of goods, services, people, and money. These freedoms are crucial for economic growth. (European Union, 2016a). However, not every WEC is part of the EU. Switzerland, a safe place for investors, and Norway, a country rich in natural resources, are examples of countries outside the EU that are independent and prosperous.

Nowadays, the region of Western Europe is one of the richest in the World. Germany, France, UK, and Italy are all in the top 10 highest GDPs in the world (Statista, 2017). Additionally, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Ireland or Norway are some of the leading countries with the highest GDP per capita (Cia.gov, 2018). Also, in the ranking of the highest average wage, nine out of ten leading countries are from Western Europe (OECD, 2018).
Economic Development in PCCs

In the communist era, the regimes in countries of the Eastern Bloc were restrictive by means of personal consumption; and the economy was centrally planned and controlled. Governments subsidised everyday items while imposing price burdens on luxury items to mitigate class differences. The clothing industry and other consumer goods were highly standardised and its production was inferior to the production of “state-important” goods like coal, steel, machinery or arms. This centrally planned approach resulted in a negative situation for consumers having extremely limited choices, scarcity of basic products, or lack of durable products and household items (Vecernik, 2008; Hey and Karnoi, 1982). Moreover, the financial systems were poorly designed, underdeveloped, lacking sophisticated controls (Cojocaru, et al., 2015). Democratic revolutions in 1989 started a chain of events that lead to democratisation and establishment of free market economies, of previously communist countries with centrally planned economies (Rupnik, 2000, p.115). Suddenly, civic freedoms and human rights were re-established, people were allowed to travel, work abroad, and consumers got access to western material goods (Vecernik, 2008).

Nowadays, the majority of the PCCs’ are democratic, with capitalist free-market economies. Until the year of 2010, the FDI to GDP ratio steadily grew and the markets got stronger because of its economic liberty. This economic boom also resulted in stronger purchasing parity of consumers and higher disposable income (Gwartney and Montesinos, 2018; Kavkler, Borsic and Beko, 2012). The behaviour of consumers has transformed, much like the family consumer expenditure. Especially, between 1995 and 2004 the consumer spending raised by 50-90% in Central and Eastern Europe (Vecernik, 2008). Gurgul and Lach (2014) claim, that globalisation had a significant positive impact on the growth of PCCs’ economies. The growth of these economies and companies in those countries was facilitated by global demand and a pool of customers. The growth was also stimulated by the development of telecommunications, internet, and trade in newspapers. The researchers show the importance of reduction of trade barriers such as the development of tax policies and new inflows of foreign direct investments (FDI) as supporting drivers for this economic growth in Eastern Europe.

The Membership of 11 PCCs’ in the EU has helped strengthen trade relationships and output between these countries and Western Europe. Also, because of the continuous development, countries that joined the EU, continuously enjoy improved positions on the economic freedom of the world list; which is placing the majority of these states in the first two quartiles of the chart (Gwartney and Montesinos, 2018).
2.2.3 Cultural Influence

Since the core of this section will be dealing with Hofstede’s dimensions, the term culture will also be defined according to Hofstede: ‘Culture consists of the unwritten rules of the social game. It is the collective programming of the mind that distinguishes the members of one group or category of people from others’ (Hofstede, et al., 2010, p.174; Johnsen and Stokvik, 2014). The studies conclude differences in cultural behaviour by comparing nations via Hofstede’s cultural dimensions, power distance, individualism, masculinity, uncertainty avoidance, and indulgence. However, the sixth dimension long-term orientation will not be analysed since many scholars, such as Palihawadana, Oghazi, and Liu (2016), Vitell and Paolillo (2004), Bae and Kim (2014), and Fisher (2017), disagree on the impact of the long and short-term orientation of a society on the consumers’ perception of CSR.

**Power Distance**

‘This dimension expresses the degree to which the less powerful members of a society accept and expect that power is distributed unequally. The fundamental issue here is how a society handles inequalities among people’ (Hofstede-insights.com, 2018). In other words, societies exhibiting a high degree of power distance tend to accept the unequal power distribution and hierarchical order. Hence, countries with lower power distance show evidence of equality of every kind and fair distribution of power (Hofstede, et al., 2010; Gordon, 1960; Bae and Kim, 2014).

In the case of power distance, scholars agree on the statement that in the context of CSR perception, a higher degree of power distance means that societies are not questioning the companies’ activities and therefore are unwilling to request any social corporate engagement since these cultures are accepting unequally distributed power (Bae and Kim, 2014). On the other hand, societies with lower power distance seek justification of corporate activities and expect them to share their wealth because a high concentration of economic wealth is viewed as an unequal distribution of power (Bae and Kim, 2014).

**Individualism**

‘Individualism can be defined as a preference for a loosely-knit social framework in which individuals are expected to take care of only themselves and their immediate families’ (Hofstede-insights.com, 2018). Consequently, a high degree of individualism refers to the individuals’ prioritisation of self-interest over community well-being, hence, weak social ties
(Hofstede, et al., 2010; Triandis, 2001; Weigel, Hessing and Elffers, 1999, p.349; Palihawadana, et al., 2016). The opposite, collectivism, describes an ‘individual's concern for the welfare of others’ (Forsyth, 1992, p.462). According to Hofstede, et al. (2010), more collective societies also tend to show a higher sample of power distance (Bae and Kim, 2014).

In the context of CSR, consumers in more individualism-driven societies only support those CSR activities from which they directly benefit from (Leonidou, Katsikeas, and Morgan, 2013; Weigel, et al., 1999; Morales, 2005; Reed, Aquino and Levy., 2007; Russell and Russell, 2010). Whereas, collectivism leads to consumers more likely being aware of CSR and also more likely to perceive ethical and social responsibility as important in business practices (Palihawadana, et al., 2016; Vitell and Paolillo, 2004).

Masculinity
‘The Masculinity side of this dimension represents a preference in society for achievement, heroism, assertiveness, and material rewards for success. Society at large is more competitive. Its opposite, femininity, stands for a preference for cooperation, modesty, caring for the weak and quality of life. Society at large is more consensus-oriented’ (Hofstede-insights.com, 2018).

The study conducted by Fisher (2017) proves a negative relation between masculinity and CSR perception, which indicates that more assertive and competitive societies show the tendency of being less socially responsible and consider economic achievement and material success as the main focus of firms. On the contrary, feminine cultures consider it to be the duty of the society to help people in need and therefore expect companies to be socially responsible and active (Bae and Kim, 2014; Fisher, 2017).

Uncertainty Avoidance
‘The Uncertainty Avoidance dimension expresses the degree to which the members of a society feel uncomfortable with uncertainty and ambiguity’ (Hofstede-insights.com, 2018). Meaning that societies exhibiting strong uncertainty avoidance retain fixed and rigid codes of belief and behaviour. Furthermore, Hofstede describes uncertainty avoiding cultures as intolerant towards unorthodox behaviour and ideas. The opposite, societies with weak uncertainty avoidance maintain more relaxed and tolerating towards opinions differing from their own cultural norms and religion (Hofstede-insights.com, 2018; Fisher, 2017). In the scope of consumer perception, uncertainty avoidance is proven to be positively associated with CSR, which indicates that consumers from uncertainty avoiding societies tend to have
higher expectations regarding CSR than consumers having a lower uncertainty avoidance (Hofstede, et al., 2010; Bae and Kim, 2014; Fisher, 2017).

**Indulgence**

‘Indulgence stands for a society that allows relatively free gratification of basic and natural human drives related to enjoying life and having fun’ (Hofstede-insights.com, 2018). On the contrary, a restrained society ‘suppresses gratification of needs and regulates it by means of strict social norms’ (Hofstede-insights.com, 2018). In the context of consumer perception of CSR, this results in a higher demand in CSR activities by consumers living in an indulgence characterised society (Fisher, 2017).

**Religion and Norms**

It has been stated that the norms, beliefs, and values from the Eastern European population have become increasingly similar to Western Europe during the evolution; nevertheless, citizens from Eastern Europe tend to support intervention from the government and collectivist justice principles more than the citizens from Western Europe (Arts, 2003). According to Arts (2003), Eastern European countries are commonly characterised by being non-liberal and non-religious. In this research, Russia, Lithuania, Belarus, Estonia, and Latvia have the lowest numbers of both liberalism and religion. However, both Poland and Romania show to be less liberal and more religious. Furthermore, Arts (2003) explains in his research that large differences can be seen between Eastern and Western Europe when it regards socio-liberalism and autonomy, as Western European countries are considered being more liberal and autonomous. It appears to be that wealthier countries show a higher degree of levels of personal autonomy. The most typical countries characterised by social liberalism and religious-normative countries are Ireland, Northern Ireland, and Italy. Whereas for example, Sweden and Denmark are the two of the most liberal and non-religious countries. The category of unchurched people in European countries has recently increased, where the highest numbers of non-religious and atheists can be found in Estonia, Latvia, Czech Republic, Russia, Belarus, and Sweden. However, in Western Europe, the degree of religious inhabitants in the various countries tend to vary to a large extent, especially between northern and southern countries (Arts, 2003).
2.2.4 Psychological Factors

Values
Scott (1995) introduces the institutional theory, which provides grounds for norms and values of different countries and cultures. The author argues that the differences presented in the previous paragraph can be caused by the institutional background of the countries. Based on his paper there are three main substances that form the opinion and behaviour of consumers: cognitive, normative, and regulative substance. These substances provide stability and direction to social behaviour. The regulative substance is influencing the market as a whole since it is a set of rules and regulations that are universally applied. Normative substances are differing from regulative since they are not legally enforced, but they are seen as a universal standard that people obey by their will. Society is inherently connected to normative substances, and people do not need to use individual judgment to follow decisions. Cognitive substance, however, is very personalised, intrinsic and driven by individual judgment. Therefore, this substance differs from person to person based on experience, knowledge, and problem solving or decision-making skills (Scott, 1995).

2.2.5 Personal Characteristics

Age, Gender, Education
Many scholars suggest that younger consumers tend to be more tolerant towards unethical behaviour than older consumers (Ekin and Tezölmez, 1999; Tuzcu, 2014; Peréz and Rodríguez del Bosque, 2016). However, a cross-country study by Leveson and Joiner (2013) shows that younger generations prioritise CSR activities higher than the older generation, especially in connection with their jobs. In line with this, Kuron, Lyon and Schweitzer (2015), as well as Browning and Zabriskie (1983), argue that younger generations, in general, have higher ethical standpoints compared to older ones (Tuzcu, 2014).

The second impact factor is the gender distribution of a country. Scholars like Peterson (2014), Ravlin and Meglino (1987), Tuzcu (2014) as well as Peréz and Rodríguez del Bosque (2016) prove the influence of gender regarding the perception and importance of CSR activities. Hence, women put more emphasis on CSR, in particular, voluntary activities, and are also very bounded by the ethical standards a company identifies with. On the contrary, men are less actively aware of voluntary and social CSR and instead tend to focus on economical CSR implementations (Tuzcu, 2014; Peterson, 2014). Furthermore, Ravlin
and Meglino (1987) stress the higher willingness of women to be helpful in comparison to men.

Lastly, referring to Ekin and Tezölmez (1999) the level of education is related to the perceived importance of CSR activities. This argument is supported by Jones and Gautschi (1998) as well as Marz (1999) who indicate that a higher education level, especially university degree, is correlated with higher attention for CSR activities (Tuzcu, 2014).

2.3 Theoretical Synthesis

In order to give an overview of the theory, the two main theories, (1) Carroll's (1991) CSR framework and (2) the consumer perception framework of Dhanapal, Vashu, and Subramaniam (2015), dealt with in the prior section were put together and ultimately assembled into a comprehensive framework. First of all, the authors decided to merge the main three CSR dimensions by Elkington (1994) with two of the top CSR responsibilities by Carroll (1991). The intention behind this decision is to put the connection between the social, environmental and stakeholder CSR dimensions and the ethical, as well as philanthropic responsibilities, in perspective (Figure 4).

The two top responsibilities deal with issues concerning the ethical, hence right and fair, behaviour and actions of a company as well as the philanthropic activities, meaning that companies should be a good corporate citizen by contributing 'financial and human resources to the community and to improve the quality of life' (Carroll, 1991, p.42). The CSR activities matching these two components are the ones categorized as the social, environmental and stakeholder dimensions. However, since the three dimensions do not consider the economic and legal responsibilities these will be considered as an additional component called economic/legal dimension. On a further note, the authors decided to merge the stakeholder activities with the social and environmental dimensions since most of the activities regarding the stakeholders can be assigned to either social or environmental matters.
Finally, in the comprehensive framework (Figure 5) the dimensions are illustrated as the first component 'CSR Activities' of the process. The next step is to combine and generate a connection of the CSR activities including Carroll's CSR pyramid and the process of consumer perception, thus consumer's purchase behaviour. As mentioned in the literature review, CSR has an impact on consumers’ purchasing behaviour, therefore the authors decided to combine the CSR activities with the framework of Dhanapal, Vashu, and Subramaniam's (2015), which factors influence the consumer perception and purchasing behaviour. These influencers were put into the context of CSR.

Hence, the following comprehensive framework (Figure 5) illustrates the influencers that impact the observed CSR activities and lead to an individual consumer perception of the CSR activities and which then finally concludes with the purchasing behaviour of the individual.
Figure 5: Comprehensive Framework

Dimensions of CSR: Social, Environmental, Economic/Legal

CSR Activities

Influencers of Consumer Perception
- Marketing
- Social
- Cultural
- Economy
- Psychological
- Personal Charm

Consumer Perception of CSR

Purchase Behaviour

Source: Own creation
3. Methodology

This chapter describes the methodology of the conducted study and is developed to ensure the use of appropriate methods and procedures. The researched methodology starts with explaining the research approach consisting of an abductive approach with a deductive base. Thereafter, method and strategy are explained, followed by an explanation of the data collection and sampling process. The chapter finishes with the method of analysis and considerations of the research quality.

3.1 Research Approach

Based on theory, three different types of research approach can be identified. Referring to Alvesson and Sköldberg (2009), these three types are called inductive, deductive, and abductive. The inductive approach is described as a method based on empirical data in which theories are developed by obtaining consistency and patterns in the data collected. On the contrary, the main orientation and basis of the deductive approach are existing theories, which thereafter are translated and used in the research. Lastly, the combination of the two latter approaches is called abductive. Here, the empirical data is being analysed based on the previously reviewed theories. This means that the research falls back on the theoretical framework in order to examine the empirical data, meanwhile, the researcher gets the opportunity to revise the theoretical framework and alternate between this and the empirical findings. This type of approach often has the starting point either as inductive or deductive (Bryman and Bell, 2015; Alvesson and Sköldberg, 2009).

In relation to the description, the abductive approach is the most suitable for this study since a revision of the theory during the process is possible, which depictures the research process of this study. The starting point of the research consisted of a deductive approach as its set of with building a base on existing theories, including frameworks such as Carroll’s CSR pyramid in addition to different research to build the influencers of consumer perception. While collecting the empirical findings, the theoretical foundation has been modified and enhanced with the various findings as support. For example, after carrying out the focus groups, it was found that education had a significant importance in the perception of CSR, therefore the influencer “personal characteristic” was enhanced by adding education to the category, now including age, gender and education. In addition to this, the theoretical framework has at some point in the process been restructured and a theoretical framework
from Dhanapal, Vashu, and Subramaniam (2015) was added in order to put the specific influences into a more structured manner which would benefit the process of both empirical findings and analysis.

3.2 Research Method

Bryman and Bell (2015) explain three types of research methods; quantitative, qualitative and mixed research method. The quantitative method is characterised by using numerical data and statistics to explain a context. The approach that has been used in this study, however, is the qualitative method, which is associated with its high focus on analysing data in form of words and meanings rather than numbers (Bryman and Bell, 2015; Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2016). As the qualitative research method is described, this tries to examine and get an understanding of the social world by interacting with, and therefore, collecting and comparing the interpretations of individuals (Bryman and Bell, 2015). The third type of research method is the mixed method of research, which involves a combination of the former two approaches, this is however not linked to the type of research of this study.

The purpose of this study is to analyse and get a deeper understanding of existing differences regarding consumer perceptions, in addition to comparing these between the two different regions of focus. The aspiration is to find and compare recognisable patterns between the different regions in order to be able to explain a wider concept of the social world. Therefore, the qualitative method of research is considered appropriate for the field of research of this study, allowing a more exploratory way of research.

3.3 Research Strategy

Specific ways of collecting qualitative data include case studies, interviews, observation, and in this particular study, focus groups (Bryman and Bell, 2015). Focus groups are described as thoroughly organised discussions and interaction among participants in order to collect data in form of interpretations and perceptions on a specific area that is being examined (Carey 1994; Krueger and Casey, 2009). According to Bloor (2001) and McLafferty (2004), focus groups are the most favourable method when discovering norms, attitudes, and opinions. The advantages that can be harvested from using this kind of qualitative strategy includes the facilitation of discussion which can contribute to creating new ideas for the researcher (Franz, 2011), as well as providing a pleasant and relaxed environment,
specifically when gathering participants similar to each other, generating an increased likelihood of participants expressing their true thoughts and beliefs (Bloor 2001). By using this specific research strategy, deeper insights on consumers’ perceptions on CSR can be revealed.

Furthermore, arranging and implementing focus groups is a time-consuming process, but may nevertheless be rewarding due to the richness of the data, in addition to allowing a comparison between the different nationalities as well as to understand behaviour and realities of a cultural group (Carey, 1994; McLafferty, 2004).

3.4 Data Collection
Data can be characterised in two different ways, primary or secondary. Secondary data refers to already collected data and information regarding a specific topic, created for a different purpose than the one examined. This type of data can be differentiated into internal sources in form of publications within a company or organisation such as scientific web pages, online databases, and external sources, including books and articles (Kinnear and Taylor, 1996). This differs from primary data which is characterised by being collected directly by the researcher for a specific purpose (Bryman and Bell, 2015). This study has used a combination of secondary and primary data, where the secondary data has been collected by using relevant and reliable websites, databases, articles and publications. The primary data has been collected by arranging focus groups, further explained in the following sections.

3.4.1 Focus Group Design
Following the guidelines from Krueger and Casey (2009), the ideal design of focus groups is to conduct focus groups until you are no longer receiving new knowledge and thereby have gathered enough information to be able to answer your research question. However, three to four research groups are a common reasoning for when this point of saturation is reached. Therefore, this study has carried out three focus groups where a decision was made that, if saturation had not been achieved at this point, additional focus groups would be made. This was however not considered as needed.

When conducting focus groups, there is a high importance to make the participants feel comfortable in order to avoid reluctance when questions are asked (McLafferty, 2004), this has been avoided by not mixing people with different levels of power, for example, elderly with younger people, or students with teachers.
The focus group discussions have taken place in Kalmar in April and May 2018. The first group consisted of participants only from PCCs and met on 22nd of April 2018. The second group was formed out of participants only from WECs and took place on 24th of April 2018. The third and final focus group, which was organised on 1st of May 2018, was mixed and was represented by three participants from PCCs and three participants from WECs. All of the meetings were facilitated in a private room in Kalmar, which was isolated from distractions, and easily accessible by all participants. Refreshments were served, in order to establish an open and welcoming atmosphere that would allow a comfortable environment for discussion. The questions, responses and discussions were communicated in English since it was a universal language for the participants from across 14 countries. The length of each session was approximately 70 to 90 minutes and was recorded on multiple devices to secure a clear and high-quality audio recording from each focus group.

3.4.2 Sampling
When selecting the sample of respondents, non-probability sampling has been used, meaning that the sample has not been based on random selection from a population but rather chosen on convenience and subjective judgment. This technique of sampling is common when conducting a qualitative research method (Saunders, et al., 2016). With reference to this, the results generated from this study cannot be generalised on statistical grounds, as the participants have been selected on accessibility and as the whole population has not had the chance to get selected to the sample (Bryman and Bell, 2005; Kinnear and Taylor, 1996).

In order to gain enough data to be able to answer the research questions, a sufficient sample size, as well as an adequate sample, is necessary (Saunders, et al., 2016). Therefore, three focus groups were arranged with six participants in each, making a total of 18 participants, nine from each region. This sample size goes in line with Saunders (2012), who declares a guideline for sample sizes of semi-structured and in-depth interviews including 5-25 participants. This is further recognised by other authors, who say that groups should include four to eight participants (Twinn, 1998) or six to 10 participants (Howard, et al., 1989), in addition to McLafferty (2004) and Merton, et al., (1990) who argues that smaller groups are easier to manage and can be supportive of participation for the people taking part, which in turn may provide a richer source of information.
3.4.3 Respondents Profile

*Table 1* provides information about the composition of each focus group as well as the participants' profiles. The profiles include the respondents' age, gender and country of origin. In total, 18 individuals have participated in the focus groups, with a median age of 24 years. This is especially important since the sample is focused on young adults, so-called millennials which are in the age range of 18 to 33 years. The decision on this group of the population depended on two factors. First of all, the location where the focus groups were implemented is very international regarding the students that attend the local university, Linnaeus University Kalmar. Therefore, the authors had great access to international students, from both WECs and PCCs. Second, the young adults are the second largest consumer group in Europe which, in combination with the millennials’ strong presence in social networks or internet in general, makes them the most influential group of consumers. Hence, research on this topic is very beneficial for companies in order to understand their target groups (Pew Research, 2015; Fromm and Garton, 2013).

*Table 1: Composition of focus groups*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Nr. of participants</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Median age</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PCCs</td>
<td>Bulgaria</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Czech Republic</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Estonia</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hungary</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Russia</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Serbia</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Austria</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>France</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### 3.4.3 Data Recording

Seeing that transcribed interviews and focus groups serve as the foundation for the majority of existing qualitative research, a high focus on the transcript itself is vital (Gregory, *et al.*, 1997). Scott, *et al.*, (2009) explain the common technique of transcribing focus groups, where the researchers use audio recording during the interview moment and thereafter transform this into written text, with the ambition to capture what and how the participants answer, as precisely as possible. However, when gathering data by utilizing focus groups, the information collected will only be as valuable as the data formed in a written context.

When conducting these types of interviews and transforming them into written record, errors may occur due to factors such as poor sound quality, excessive background noise, vagueness in voices, as well as voice overlap in a large group of participants, which can make it difficult to distinguish different voices. These factors can be further aggravated in the case of the transcribe person himself not being present at the time of the interview session (Easton, *et al.*, 2000; Kidd and Parshall, 2000; Scott, *et al.*, 2009). Considering the factors that may lead to transcript errors, these have in been mitigated by arranging the focus groups in an environment with minimal background noises, and by using state of the art video recording technique. This has been helpful in order to correctly distinguish who is speaking and what is being said at all times. In addition, all three researchers have been present when performing the focus groups, thereby the potential of achieving an accurate transcript has been highly increased.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WECs</th>
<th>Germany</th>
<th>Italy</th>
<th>Sweden</th>
<th>Switzerland</th>
<th>The Netherlands</th>
<th>UK</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>14</strong></td>
<td><strong>18</strong></td>
<td><strong>8</strong></td>
<td><strong>10</strong></td>
<td><strong>24</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Own creation based on empirical findings*
3.4.4 Operationalization of Concepts

In this subsection, the operationalization of the theoretical framework will be presented. This is especially important for the study since a strong connection between the comprehensive model and the methodology, particularly the interview questions (Appendix A), has to be ensured in order to be able to confirm or deny the included theories.

Therefore, the questions for the focus group discussions were designed according to the theoretical framework which considers CSR activities, the factors influencing the perception of CSR and finally the resulting purchase behaviour of consumers. In order to grasp the needed data according to these framework components, the questions were narrowed down into three main categories. The first category is called 'Consumer Knowledge and Awareness'. This category seeks to gain information about the level of knowledge and awareness of consumers regarding CSR. The second category is called 'Perception of Responsibility and Involvement'. Here, the main purpose is to find out what views the consumer has on companies' responsibility concerning CSR and their involvement in CSR as well as the local laws and legislation regarding CSR. Lastly, the third category 'Drivers Affecting Purchase Behaviour' considers questions which aim to provide knowledge about how the consumer prioritise the CSR dimensions and whether and how CSR influences their purchasing behaviour. The following table 2 gives a summary of each question category, their purpose and the matching questions. Afterwards, each question category will be discussed in more detail.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Concept</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>Question Guide</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Category 1: Consumer knowledge and awareness** | • Gain insights into participants’ knowledge of CSR and related topics  
• Find out if participants can give any examples  
• Gain insights into the awareness of the participants of CSR and whether or not CSR topics have become more important in their countries  
• Find out if the use of the internet, especially social media, has had an impact on the increase in attention and awareness  
• Gain information on the knowledge and awareness level of the participants’ peers | Do you know what CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility) is? What kind of CSR activities do you know that companies use?  
Would you say that CSR has gained more attention and importance in your home country over the last years?  
How?  
Would your peers in your home country agree on your perception of CSR? |
| **Category 2: Perception of responsibility and involvement** | • Gain knowledge about the participants’ opinions on the division of responsibilities of social and environmental matters between the government and companies  
• Find out what the participants’ opinions on the involvement of the companies in social and environmental issues are  
• Find out what the participants’ views on the CSR laws and regulations in their own countries are  
• Find out if the participants are satisfied with companies which (only) stick to the applicable laws and regulations concerning CSR or if they expect engagement beyond laws and regulations | How would you divide CSR responsibilities between enterprises and the government?  
Who should be responsible for what?  
Do you think that it is enough if companies only follow the legal obligations and regulations?  
Do you think that companies have legitimate intentions behind their CSR activities or would you say it’s just a marketing tool? And how does this impact you? |
| **Category 3: Drivers affecting purchase behaviour** | • Gain insights into the participants’ priorities regarding the three dimensions of CSR and if these priorities are reflected in their purchasing behaviour  
• Acquire information on what factors drive the participants’ purchasing behaviour | Which kind of CSR activities are most/least important to you and why? For example, environmental, social and stakeholder.  
What are your main drivers for choosing a specific brand/product? |
Find out if certain CSR activities, e.g. brand image, is one of the drivers and what impact it has on the purchasing behaviour

Obtain knowledge on whether or not and why CSR has an influence on the participants’ views of a brand’s image

Gain information on the participants’ views and opinions on philanthropic activities of companies and if they would be willing to pay extra money in order to support the company in this matter

How does CSR influence your view of a company’s image? Do you think your knowledge about CSR activities has an impact on your purchasing behaviour?

Do you take philanthropic activities of companies into account, when making purchasing behaviour? (Lower prices, instead of extra CSR activities?)

Source: Own creation

**Consumer Knowledge and Awareness**

The first question category aims to gain insights into participants’ knowledge and awareness of CSR and related topics as well as find out whether or not the participants can give examples of CSR cases. Furthermore, this question category is deemed to gain information on the general awareness and importance of CSR topics in the participants' countries. In order to acquire information on how and why the attention and awareness of the participants' have increased, questions regarding the use of the internet and especially social media have been designed. In line with this, the category attempts to gain insights into the knowledge and awareness level of the participants’ peers.

**Perception of Responsibility and Involvement**

The second category revolves around the participants' opinion on the division of responsibilities of social and environmental matters between the government and companies. Additionally, the authors wanted to find out what the participants' views on the involvement of the companies in social and environmental issues are and how they perceive the collaboration of the government and companies on CSR. In connection with this, the questions were supposed to assist in gaining knowledge about what the participants’ views on the CSR laws and regulations in their own countries are, and find out if the participants are satisfied with companies which (only) stick to the applicable laws and regulations concerning CSR, or if they expect engagement beyond laws and regulations.
Drivers Affecting Purchase Behaviour

The last question category focuses on if, how and why CSR might have an impact on the purchase behaviour of the interviewees and acquire information on what factors drive the participants’ purchasing behaviour. Therefore, the authors sought to find out if certain CSR activities, e.g. brand image, is one of the drivers and what impact it has on the purchasing behaviour. Additionally, the questions appointed to Category 3 sought to obtain knowledge on whether or not and why CSR matters have an influence on the participants’ views of a brand’s image.

Furthermore, the authors wanted to obtain information on participants’ priorities regarding the three dimensions of CSR and if these priorities are reflected in their purchasing behaviour. In order to find this out, the participants were asked to rank the three CSR dimensions (social, environmental and economic/legal). This was also included in the presented Case 1, where the authors explained a scenario concerning two brands with the same product but where one pollutes the air and the other one employs children. The participants were asked to choose one of the products and explain their intentions. Lastly, the authors wanted to gain information on the participants’ views and opinions on philanthropic activities of companies and if they would be willing to pay extra money in order to support the company in this matter. This was also tested with a scenario (Case 2) where the interviewees were given the choice between two identical products, however, one product was 100€ more expensive but the company was engaged in philanthropic works and projects.

3.5 Method of Analysis

The collection of data is followed by a phase of interpretation and analysis by investigating the gathered information and extracting important observations from this (Alvesson and Sköldberg, 2009). Hence, data analysis is a crucial process for giving meaning to the collected information from the focus groups (Corbin and Strauss, 2008; Alvesson and Sköldberg, 2009).

Firstly, a content analysis, which investigates sign-vehicles, has been performed. As sign-vehicles can be considered things that carry any meaning (Stewart and Shamdasani, 2015). It is performed by a determination of the frequency of set objects. This type of analysis is perceived as an introductory analysis that will show trends in the responses or conversations of participants of the focus groups; moreover, the frequency of the objects can show the importance of subjects and the attention of the participants to particular topics.
(Stewart and Shamdasani, 2015). In addition, this designation analysis will examine only responses from the first and second focus group, since the third focus group is mixed and the responses would only distort the overall picture of the analysis.

Secondly, the empirical data will be analysed by having the conceptual framework as the main tool (Alvesson and Sköldberg, 2009; Saunders, et al., 2009). Therefore, the findings from the conducted focus groups (FG) will initially be analysed separately, where the findings will be divided into the same question categories (QC) as introduced in the methodology, applying the theories to each of the regional levels and therefore getting an understanding of the empirical results from both WECs and PCCs (Figure 6).

Lastly, a thorough comparison of the two different regions will be provided in chapter 6, Conclusion and Contribution, addressing the main research question; moreover, the conclusions investigate variations between consumer perceptions in the chosen regions, and also recognise the major influencers for the discovered differences.

*Figure 6: Structure of the Analysis*
3.6 Research Quality

Research quality includes reliability and validity. According to Saunders, et al. (2016), reliability address consistency as well as replication, whereas validity refers to how appropriate the measures and analysis of the outcome are, in addition to if the findings can be generalised. In a research process, valid and reliable data and findings in order to generate valuable output for future research are vital. This is done by researchers ensuring that their study, including the collection of data, as well as interpretation, analysis and findings can be perpetuated. A way to maintain the quality of a research is to establish a clear structure and guidelines for the research process, whereas trustworthiness of the research can be upheld by operating using ethical practices (Merriam and Tisdell, 2016). The different fragments embraced in displaying high research quality will be further developed in the following sections.

3.6.1 Internal Validity

In order to accomplish credibility and be able to present the greatest picture of reality, the research needs to be transparent and unbiased throughout the entire process to mitigate the risk of drawing incorrect conclusions from the collected data. Another condition for credibility is that the collected data is both relevant and correct (Merriam and Tisdell, 2016; Creswell, et al., 2003). When conducting qualitative research, the researcher will always be part of the process, but by making him or herself known and being conscious of any influences, the research can nevertheless be considered credible (Merriam and Tisdell, 2016; Yin, 2011). Credibility has in this study been ensured by avoiding leading questions to a specific result, and also by using a combination of closed and open questions. Throughout both, the collection of empirical findings as well as analysis and conclusion, the researchers have shown an objective approach to the research field.

3.6.2 External Validity

Transferability, or external validity, concerns to what extent the findings may be generalised and valid. Nonetheless, considering the absence of statistical data and the fact that this study utilises a smaller sample size, generalisability may not be an adequate measure of transferability. Referring to this, researchers have instead adopted the term transferability into a way to guarantee the quality of a study, to ensure that it can be of use for the public
domain and for other researchers to utilise and build on to (Merriam, *et al*., 2016; Saunders, *et al*., 2012). In this case, transferability has been ensured by specifying detailed descriptions of the methods of data collection in form of focus groups and secondary data, as well as a detailed description of an interview guide and the findings.

3.6.3 Reliability

When conducting research, it is vital to put high consideration into the conceptualisation of the undertaken study, including both methods of data collection and the analysis itself. Reliability concerns to what degree the findings of the research can be replicated, meaning that if the same research was made once more, the same results would have been generated. The problem in qualitative research is that it normally includes the social continuously changing sphere where individual behaviour can be very complex and dynamic, this means that exact reliability can be challenging (Merriam and Tisdell, 2016). Therefore, when conveying qualitative studies, researchers can instead confirm reliability and trustworthiness by ensuring that the research is operated in a consistent way, wherewith the results can be confirmed and supported by the presented data (Merriam and Tisdell, 2016; Yin, 2011).

For this particular research, reliability has been confirmed by operating in a systematic way, being careful when sampling, collecting, processing and analysing the data, in addition to recording and carrying out the interviews with the participants’ permission, which means that other researchers can corroborate the findings as reliable. Moreover, to enable comparability and replicability in future research, the questions to the participants in the focus groups have been carefully formulated in an easy way to avoid misunderstanding, making sure that all groups get the exact same questions. Nonetheless, the risk of divergence needs to be taken into account, as well as the fact that a small sample has been used which could hinder precise replication.

3.6.4 Ethical Considerations

When conducting a research, it is important to consider research ethics in order to uphold the values of the researchers. There are four main principles to follow when considering ethics within a study, these consist of ‘harm to participants’, ‘lack of informed consent’, ‘invasion of privacy’ and ‘involvement of deception’ (Diener and Crandall, 1978, pp.17-72). The ethics in this specific research have been upheld by always considering these four primary considerations.
Prior to the gathering of empirical data through conducting the three focus groups, a clear consent from the participants have been gained, where the participants have given an approval of being part of the focus group and our research, including being named in the research paper as well as being recorded during the focus group. It has been assured that the participants have not been misled regarding the purpose of the research by being given clear information regarding the specific field and purpose of research, reassuring that no misleading language has been used in this process. During the focus group, participants did not have to reveal or speak out opinions and information that did not feel comfortable for them and the researchers have ensured that harmful language was avoided to ensure the safety of the participants.
4. Empirical Findings

This chapter will present the collected empirical data. This has been divided according to the different focus groups, starting with the WECs, followed by the PCCs and finally the mixed group. Within the focus groups, the data has been divided into the three question categories: consumer knowledge and awareness, the perception of responsibility and involvement, and at last, drivers affecting purchase behaviour. Thereafter, the secondary data will be presented, consisting of the internet and social media usage from the two different regions, Hofstede’s cultural dimensions as well as the personal characteristics.

4.1 Focus Group PCCs

4.1.1 Consumer Knowledge and Awareness

The PCC focus group started by reviewing the general knowledge about CSR within the group and what particular CSR activities the participants were aware of that companies implement. The group showed an overall good knowledge of CSR, and the majority could give examples of specific CSR activities that are popular in their home countries. The main fields that were brought up regarded companies building and supporting schools and infrastructure. In the majority of PCCs, with the exception of Russia, an increased attention of CSR can be found during the last years and the participants also stated that they have become more aware of the importance of CSR when being abroad. They all also believe that their peers would agree with their opinion and the fact that they would prefer a brand implementing CSR rather than other brands if they earn enough money. This is mainly focused on the millennial generation and not so much on the older population, which still has a poor understanding of CSR and does not put much attention to the topic. For example, the participant from Hungary stated that people in her country do not care about, or do not prioritise the environment because they are not educated enough. Selective sorting boxes exist, but they all go to the same pile of garbage in the end and you cannot recycle the PET bottles or metal cans.

A consensus can be seen in the fact that the participants feel that there nowadays are more accessible and available information on the internet and social media, which in turn increases the awareness of CSR. However, information that comes straight from companies and social media is not always trustworthy and knowledgeable about CSR would be more reliable if the source is, for example, an employee of the company. Different opinions have
been shown regarding if the companies have legitimate intentions or not. Some participants believe that companies occasionally can have legitimate intentions but that it nevertheless does not seem to be a problem if it is used as a marketing tool.

4.1.2 Perception of Responsibility and Involvement
The group has reached a consensus of the opinion that there should be a combination of responsibility between the government and the companies. The government should play a role in encouraging and supporting companies to make it easier for them to operate in a socially and environmentally friendly manner. This could be done by using for example policies and regulations, as well as taxes. However, the opinion is also that the government cannot have the sole accountability but that companies also have to show an active engagement in the CSR work.

The majority of the participants pointed out that CSR can be legitimate but that it more often is a way to promote a product, as a marketing tool. Nevertheless, they do not see this as anything bad if companies actually do what they communicate to the public since it is a way to invest in the society at the same time as earning money. The participants add that there can at times exist contradicting activities such as companies paying the government a large amount of money with the outcome that they pay themselves out from the responsibilities, and they state that they cannot either entirely trust that taxes go to the right causes. It is also an issue that companies may make their CSR activities bigger in the media, by for example stating that they grow big forests in Siberia but it in reality only is a poor investment and does not properly contribute to the issue.

4.1.3 Drivers Affecting Purchase Behaviour
The focus group accords with the fact that quality is vital when making long-term purchase decisions, including investments such as cars or mobile phones. When purchasing everyday products within a lower price category a higher attention lays on price but is meanwhile depending on the specific product. Some product categories, such as food, are considered to have enough policies and restrictions set out by the government, meaning that even the cheaper products possess an adequate quality. Depending on distinguishing it with various viewpoints, for example, participants from Russia and the Czech Republic state that without companies being profitable and therefore focusing on the economic/legal dimension, they cannot manage any of the other two dimensions. However, viewing it from a consumer view,
participants from Russia, Bulgaria and one of the Czech participant highlights the social aspect as most important. Whereas the Hungarian and the other two participants from the Czech Republic considers the environment to be the most important dimension.

To go deeper into the subject of the dimensions of CSR, two case scenarios were presented to the focus group explaining how two different companies operate while selling the exact same product. The centre was to choose the most important dimension. Here, four of the six participants would prefer to buy products from a company who employs child labour rather than pollutes the environment. This was due to the fact that they believe that nobody forces children and they might need the money for them to survive or not get into for example prostitution. The participant who preferred buying products from the polluting company changed his decision if the company would pollute the local environment. The majority would also pay more if the company is operating their CSR activities in their local area, but not if they knew they are only helping communities in distant countries. However, this would only be the case if they have knowledge about their CSR activities and would not actively search for how the company is operating. There is also a higher attention to companies performing in an immoral manner than doing something extra good.

4.2 Focus Group WECs

4.2.1 Consumer Knowledge and Awareness
The term CSR and its meaning were highly recognised in the WEC focus group, with only one exception. Overall, the participants have shown a deep understanding of the topic and were able to give real-life examples from their own experience. The examples were focused on perceptions of companies and their products as well as the efforts of companies towards more sustainable business models. All the participants have agreed that the importance of CSR has gained importance in past years; moreover, some even state that there is a feeling of CSR-fatigue in the society since it is such a talked about topic. Some respondents have also pointed out that the current levels of CSR are of high standards, because they trust the systems in place, and believe that socially irresponsible companies would get pushed out of the market. The group also has an identical view on CSR being used for marketing purposes. The participants believe that only a few companies do CSR to make an impact, and a majority of companies just use CSR to promote themselves. But as the participants have pointed out, as long as the CSR activities are effective and are used for marketing, it is a win-win situation.
4.2.2 Perception of Responsibility and Involvement

The participants have agreed that the government should have the main responsibility in CSR. The government is an institution that creates rules and regulations, which companies need to obey, and the participants have the most trust in this scheme. Some of the participants see the government as a key player because they believe that the fundamental driver of companies is profit and CSR activities are seen purely as costs, which should be minimised. Therefore, the government is seen as a leader in the field of CSR, who gives direction to companies and markets. Besides, a large part of the focus group argues, that the responsibility of CSR is not the sole purpose of only the government, but also of the companies. Majority of the participants believe that the government should provide the basic outline of CSR responsibilities, and the companies should adhere to higher standards, which are inertly motivated. Some argue that companies that create extra CSR activities or adhere to higher standards, can create competitive advantage out of the CSR strategy.

4.2.3 Drivers Affecting Purchase Behaviour

The participants have all agreed that quality is the main key factor in their purchasing behaviour. Quality of food seems to be the most important because the participants pay close focus on what they are eating, and what impacts their health. Some participants are sceptical about the quality and thoroughly study packaging’s to understand the products and do not even trust positive brand images. In addition, the participants claim that a price is a significant factor too; many people might go for the cheapest option, just because they cannot afford quality. All the participants are currently students and the price to quality decision making is difficult, however, the participants agree that once they have jobs and earn money, the price will be no longer an important factor.

The participants from WECs prioritise environmental CSR over economic/legal and social CSR. The group believes that the environment is crucial to protect, in order to be sustainable and have healthy living conditions in the future. It is argued that with a polluted environment, there will be unrecoverable damage to our planet and no life to save. The Economic/legal approach is the second most important factor since the participants realise that without strong financial conditions, a company is destined to fail. Poor financial conditions result in an unfavourable social position of a company that might result in layoffs and consequently poor social CSR. Therefore, the economic/legal factor has been chosen over the social one, since it has a direct impact on it.
Just like in the first focus group, two case studies were presented in the WECs focus group. In the first case, a majority of the participants would choose a company that employs child labour rather than a company that pollutes the environment. It has been argued, that the children in developing countries do not have any other options, and at least make a little bit of money; while the environment is key for a sustainable and clean development. The minority in opposition, on the other hand, stressed the importance of child education and unequal conditions for children in WECs and the emerging countries. The second case has shown varied opinion to the ones about the general perception of CSR. It has also shown that participants are willing to support philanthropic CSR; nevertheless, this support heavily depends on the price of the product and the proportion of the price difference to a similar product.

4.3 Focus Group mixed PCCs and WECs

4.3.1 Consumer Knowledge and Awareness

In general, the mixed group showed sufficient knowledge about CSR to define it and also give examples. The examples given were all environment related, mostly from the hotel industry. Although, one participant from a PCC (Serbia) was not able to describe what CSR is or what certain CSR activities looked like. However, after hearing his fellow interviewees explain what CSR is he was able to give an example.

The participants lead their knowledge of CSR back to the increasing awareness of this topic in their country. All of the interviewees agree that increasing engagement by the government regarding the environment has been noticed. Hence, five out of the six participants discussed examples of their everyday-life and how governmental legislation and laws changed, for instance, garbage separation and the use of plastic bags. Some of the participants from WECs have mentioned that the older generation is not very aware of CSR, and if they act ethically, it is just for other reasons than CSR itself as a concept. Furthermore, the participants from the WECs emphasised the political discussion regarding CSR in their country and how CSR started gaining more awareness after the incidents in Chernobyl and Fukushima. On the contrary, the participants from the PCCs stated that they have realised an increase of CSR awareness, however, all three of them stressed that this only applies to the capitals and very large cities in their country and not the rural areas. Here, they argued that a lack of information and education is very noticeable. When asked about the impact of social media on the participants’ increase of awareness, the group has reached a consensus of the
opinion which is that the internet, especially social media, has a big impact on their consciousness regarding specific company activities, regardless of whether the activities are positive or negative. Four out of the six participants, mostly from the WECs, have already participated in online discussions or have gained new knowledge about social and environmental issues.

Finally, in connection with the awareness of CSR, the participants agreed that most their peers share their opinion and level of knowledge about CSR. Nevertheless, everybody of the mixed group mentioned that some of their friends care a lot, and some do not care about CSR at all.

4.3.2 Perception of Responsibility and Involvement
To the question how CSR responsibilities should be divided between the government and the companies, the participants had varying opinions. First of all, five (three from WECs and two from PCCs) out of the six participants agree that both, the government and the companies, have to take responsibilities regarding social and environmental issues. For instance, these five interviewees stated that the government should take the first initiative and be a good role model for companies and encourage them to be more involved. This also includes the participants’ expectation of the government regarding the introduction of new laws and regulations.

The participants think that CSR seems to be a trend rather than companies’ actual interest in social and environmental responsibilities and hence, the engagement of the companies will decrease as soon as CSR is not a highly discussed topic anymore. Therefore, the participants expect more laws that prevent short-term CSR activities and support or even force long-term activities. In line with this, the interviewees think that CSR activities carried out by the government are more legitimate, however, the governmental structures in most countries are very inflexible. This means that the implementation of CSR projects takes a very long time since many people are involved in a very complicated process of decision making. Companies, on the other hand, are able to react more quickly and are more efficient. This discussion led the participants to the conclusion of fairly divided responsibilities between the government and the corporations.

Although, one participant from Serbia stuck to his initial opinion which was that the government is primarily responsible for social and environmental matters because then actions will be taken in a legitimate manner. In addition to that, he thinks that companies
only engage in CSR subjects because of branding and marketing reasons and hence, they lack true intentions and will not be able to achieve sustainable change. Moreover, the participants from the WECs think that theoretically, it would be sufficient for companies to follow and stick to the laws and regulations, although, they do expect more engagement from the companies. These participants would even consider ‘shaming’ companies into doing more for the communities and the environment. On the other hand, the interviewees from the PCCs agree on the fact that laws and regulations do not reach the rural area, therefore, the companies are expected to take great responsibility in those neglected areas. Additionally, the interviewees think that only sticking to the laws is not enough since there are not enough or not sufficiently strict laws to make a change.

4.3.3 Drivers Affecting Purchase Behaviour
The discussion concerning the three CSR dimensions (social, environmental, economic/legal) showed that participants from the WECs tend to prioritize environmental issues over social, and lastly economic/legal. In the course of the discussion, the participants were able to identify possible reasons for this choice. The main reason for all three of them would be the already very good social conditions in their countries. Therefore, the environment is the more crucial issue for them at the moment.

On the contrary, the three participants from the PCCs agree on the following order of priorities: social, environmental, and economic/legal. The mentioned reason for this choice is the lack of social support in those countries, especially regarding education and life-standards. Interestingly, one participant from Serbia made a comment which turned out to be very important for the subsequent discussions. He explained to the group that the environmental state is dependent on the social problems since in many countries the social issues are the origin of the neglect of the environment. Hence, only if the people are being taken care of, the people can actually start to take care of their environment.

When asked about philanthropic company activities the participants had overall similar opinions. In general, the participants stated that they do not actively take philanthropic activities into account and even have sceptical views on such activities. The participants agreed that if the activity is philanthropic the company should not make the customer pay for it. Furthermore, participants tend to lack trust towards the companies concerning philanthropic matters.
In order to gain more in-depth knowledge about the participants' opinion and preference of the CSR dimensions, two cases were presented and discussed. Two participants, from Austria and the Czech Republic, decided to choose the product that pollutes the environment over child labour because they would feel very responsible for supporting a company that allows child labour. Furthermore, they state to have empathy for children. On the other hand, the rest of the participants choose the company which employs children for different reasons. The Serbian interviewee argued that those children need the jobs to survive and the people need to be taken care of before the environment since those people cannot take care of the environment if they are not in a safe state themselves. This discussion made the Swiss participant change his mind after understanding the fellow participant's argumentation. The last two interviewees (from the UK and Estonia) chose the child labour because the environment is more important to them in the long run. The additional modification of the case showed that only the Austrian participant would change her mind if the company would pollute her own hometown, whereas the Czech participant stayed with her decision.

The mixed focus group discussion showed that CSR does have an impact on the participants' purchase behaviour even though they might not notice it. For instance, the interviewees from Austria, the UK and Switzerland admitted to either stopped buying certain products because of negative CSR or started buying them because of positive CSR, e.g. use of palm oil and environmentally friendly production. This is also reflected in the participants' main drivers of their purchasing behaviour. Here, the majority of the participants (all except the Serbian interviewee) stated that they choose a product depending on a mix of all three aspects, price/quality/brand image. However, the Serbian participant cares only about the quality of a product. The participants also stressed that money is a big issue for them as students and that they would be willing to only pay extra for local and organic products or products and brands with better quality or brand image. In particular, the interviewees from the WECs mentioned being more aware of companies' CSR policies and that these definitely influence their purchasing behaviour which, for instance, led them to boycott specific products. However, all participants agree that some products and brands are very difficult to avoid. Furthermore, it was made clear that not all CSR activities are known to the participants and therefore, cannot influence their behaviour.

Nevertheless, the second case demonstrated that all participants would not be willing to pay an extra amount of money to support a company's CSR activity or project. The reason mentioned it that they expect the companies to pay themselves and not make their customers
pay for their social and environmental engagement. They also mention the lack of trust to be a reason for not buying the more expensive one since companies are not communicating their use of the charity money very transparently. Hence, all participants would rather donate extra money to a charity of their choice directly.

4.4 Internet and Social Media Usage
As can be seen in Appendix B, there is an overall higher active social media penetration in regions within WECs than PCCs, where the top 15 regions in the diagram belong to regions from WECs meanwhile the majority of PCCs only show a score of 50 percent social media penetration or less. This goes in line with Appendix C which shows the share of individuals using internet on a daily basis compared to the different European countries. As the previous chart showed, this chart is correspondingly showing how the top regions of using internet on a daily basis consist of WEC regions whereas the majority of people originating from the PCCs show a vastly lower usage of internet in general. However, countries such as Portugal, Croatia, Italy and Spain do not show a larger internet usage than the majority of the PCC region. Statista (2018a) further indicates how both the social media use by businesses as well as individuals have increased immensely during the last five years. This is equivalent to how both the social media usage, penetration as well as the overall internet usage is forecasted to continuously grow at a steady pace the forthcoming five years throughout Europe. (Statista, 2018b)

4.5 CSR Perception and Hofstede’s Cultural Dimensions
As mentioned in chapter 2.2.4, the theory claims a relation between cultural aspects and the perception of CSR. Hence, this section seeks to state possible differences in perception of consumers from WECs and PCCs by comparing their results of Hofstede’s dimensions on the two groups.

Hofstede’s tool does not compare regions, but only individual countries (Hofstede-insights.com, 2018). Therefore, this study presents a regional model that is averaging scores of individual countries that are represented in the focus groups. Hence PCCs values are calculated by averaging scores of Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Russia, and Serbia. While the WECs are represented by Austria, France, Germany, Italy, Sweden,
Switzerland, The Netherlands, and UK (Figure 7). The complete table of scores per individual country can be found in Appendix D.

Figure 7: Hofstede’s Cultural Dimensions

By considering the results, differences and agreements between the cultural orientations can be identified. For instance, the PCCs show a significantly higher score in power distance than the WECs. In the case of individualism, WECs generate a significantly higher degree of individualism than the PCCs, which are highly collectivism oriented. As for the masculinity and uncertainty avoidance dimension, the PCCs indicate a significantly higher degree of these two dimensions than the WECs. Especially Hungary shows a very high record of masculinity with 88 percent. On the contrary, the Netherlands, as well as Sweden, are revealed as very feminine societies with only 15 and 5 percent of masculinity. However, regarding the uncertainty avoidance, the WEC Germany (83%) shows similar scores to the results of the PCCs, for instance, Hungary with 82 percent. Finally, regarding the indulgence dimension, the WECs score a notably higher percentage of an indulgence than the PCCs. Again, the Netherlands (68%) and Sweden (78%) show the highest results. In the case of the PCCs, all countries demonstrate a very low score, especially Russia with only 20 percent. (Hofstede-insights.com, 2018).
5. Analysis

This chapter uses theoretical framework and literature review to analyse the empirical data of this study. It is divided into two main sections: content analysis, and core analysis. Firstly, the content analysis is opening up the chapter and introduces the issue; moreover, it quantifies the qualitative data from focus groups to understand the trends and importance of certain subjects. Secondly, the core analysis is the main phase of analysis. It interprets the focus group data by using theoretical framework and knowledge from the literature review. This second section is structured based on the research questions and analyses PCCs and WECs respectively.

5.1 Content Analysis

The words analysed for frequency have been divided into six categories which were chosen based on importance and value of the words during the discussions. The frequency of each category is presented below (Table 3). A detailed word frequency count is provided in the Appendix E. The figures in the table represent the number of times that words from a given category have been mentioned in the focus group discussion.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Categories (Factors)</th>
<th>PCC group</th>
<th>WEC group</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Environmental</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economical</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Governmental</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Media</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Company related</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Own creation based on empirical data

In the scope of the content analysis, the social aspect has been mentioned with the highest frequency in both groups. Respondents have been paying significant attention to employees, as well as the impact of companies on people in the vicinity. A very clear difference can be
seen in the PCC group, which has talked about social issues twice as much as about the environmental issues. This difference can be supported by the theoretical background, which expected people from PCCs to be more involved with social structures. According to Hofstede-insights.com (2018), people from PCCs are more collectivism-oriented, and therefore, are more interested in the well-being of others in their communities. On the other hand, participants from WECs had a proportionally balanced discussion about environmental and social issues. Both groups also have a balanced discussion about monetary issues such as price, money, or profit. Participants from PCCs have talked slightly more about governmental issues like taxes, laws, and policies. Marketing and branding have been discussed in both groups on the same level and has been grouped under the term media. Lastly, participants from WECs have talked almost twice as much about company-related subjects like quality or boycotts than the participants from WECs. The purpose of this designation analysis is to display the occurrence of given subjects in the focus group and highlight the frequency of discussed topics. This is just a preliminary analysis and serves as an introduction of tendencies in these focus groups.

5.2 Core Analysis

5.2.1 Consumer Knowledge and Awareness

*PCCs*

Steurer, *et al.* (2012) claim, that CSR has a weak position in the markets of PCCs; moreover, Munro (2013) adds, that consumers in emerging countries have at times different perceptions and understanding of CSR concepts. These theories have been proven wrong in most parts by participants in the focus groups.

The vast majority of participants had a clear understanding of what CSR is and could present clear real-life examples from their own experience. Nevertheless, it has been argued that such situation might not represent the whole society since people in rural areas have significantly different awareness and mindset than people from bigger cities. The participants have also proved the theory wrong, by agreeing that the position of CSR in PCCs has improved in recent years, and an increasing number of people start to perceive and are aware of CSR challenges. A correlative trend can be seen, in the case of participants that have a poorer understanding of CSR and its awareness. Jones and Gautschi (1998), as well as Marz (1999), argue, that the level of education is related to the awareness and attention towards
CSR by a consumer. Hence, a higher education level, especially university degree, is positively correlated with higher attention for CSR activities (Tuzcu, 2014).

However, this study has found out that not only the level of education but also the field of education influences the awareness and knowledge about CSR. The respondents studying education professions had a poor understanding of the CSR concepts, combined with lower awareness, whereas business students were well aware of most CSR problematics. Furthermore, Leveson and Joiner (2013) claim that younger people tend to care more about CSR and sustainability. This has also been proven true when the participants revealed that their parents and grandparents are much less aware of CSR and the issues surrounding this topic. This belief is contradictory to what Ekin and Tezölmez (1999), Tuzcu (2014), and Pérez and Rodríguez del Bosque (2016) believe. They claim that younger people do not mind unethical behaviour, and this claim has been disproved.

Zyglidopoulos, et al. (2011), Ettenso and Klein (2005) Friedman (1991, 1999) all claim, that media is the main driver behind increased consumer awareness. The data from focus groups confirm that media and especially social media are the main source of CSR information for the participants since the information is easily accessible and available. However, the respondents from PCCs are quite sceptical towards CSR marketing campaigns and information that is pushed out by companies, so they tend to check the reliability of sources and take into account only trustworthy information. In addition, the consumers appreciate CSR efforts when used as a marketing tool, as long as the efforts truly help to solve important issues.

**WECs**

Theories argue that WECs governments are very supportive of CSR activities and motivate companies and people to behave ethically (Midttun, et al., 2006; Steurer, et al., 2011). In addition, Zhu and Zhang (2015) propose, that the highest focus of WECs lies in environmental, and ethical issues. The responded views in the discussion of respondents from WECs confirm this theory. With one exception, everyone did know what CSR is, and could give real-life examples; moreover, the majority of examples were from personal experience in the participants’ job. Some respondents even addressed an issue of overwhelming or too invasive CSR campaigns that the theory is neglecting. Some WECs, like Sweden, pay a close attention to CSR awareness and want to entrench the sustainable values in their citizens. Since there are strict rules, regulations, and people are constantly informed about sustainability, some of the participants’ experience CSR-fatigue and do not deem CSR as too
important, because they trust the established systems and they think that enough is done in the CSR aspect. Some of the WEC respondents have also supported the theory of Kuron, et al. (2015). Hence, Kuron, et al. (2015) propose, that younger generations are more committed to CSR, and so the participants claimed that older people have less awareness of CSR and their activities are usually not governed by sustainable CSR choices. Trust is essential for the participants from WECs, because they believe their governments to take care of unethical behaviour of corporations, and therefore, they rely on the actions of governments and its communication towards the society. In addition, CSR tends to gain more awareness after negative or unethical incidents, just like nuclear power plants polluting the environment. However, much like in the case of PCCs, WECs awareness is also connected to the field of education, respondents studying tourism, education or teaching had slightly poorer awareness and had more difficulties giving examples than the business students did.

Just like in the theory by Zyglidopoulos, et al. (2011), Ettenson and Klein (2005) Friedman (1991, 1999), the respondents suggest that media play an important role in raising awareness and attention towards CSR. This situation is identical to the one in PCCs. It was argued that internet is a great tool for spreading CSR campaigns and information across the whole society. The WEC respondents are less sceptical about marketing campaigns used in media to promote companies through CSR, than their PCC counterparts. Furthermore, the participants believed that exploitation of CSR for marketing purposes create a win-win situation for the society and the environment.

5.2.2 Perception of Responsibility and Involvement

PCCs

Going back to the pyramid from Carroll (1991), there is a clear consensus that the first two levels are not enough according to the participants. There is not sufficient trust for either the companies or government that they are actually doing the correct actions, and the laws are not as strict as necessary in their countries to make a difference, leading to the belief that companies have to do more than solely follow the laws. Looking at the empirical findings from the focus group from PCCs, one can unmistakably see that there is a strong opinion that there should be a combination of responsibility between the government and companies. The participants’ reason that the government should encourage companies and create policies and regulations as a guiding tool, meanwhile companies have to show an active engagement in the CSR work. The participants also believe that companies need to take responsibility in
more neglected areas where the regulations from the government do not reach. This illustrates that the ethical and philanthropic responsibilities (Carroll, 1991) have a high significance, which could be generated from the fact that governments in these areas do not show high support for CSR activities (Midttun, et al., 2006; Steurer, et al., 2012), and that companies are not currently undertaking a high degree of voluntarily CSR activities (Steurer, et al., 2012), a fact that seems to be necessary to increase according to the participants from PCCs.

Examining the cultural influencer, the population from Eastern Europe show a higher power distance than the Western Europeans, according to Bae and Kim (2014) this means that they accept unequal power distance and hierarchical power, not questioning the companies’ activities and are not demanding any engagement in social corporate activities. This goes in contrast to the findings from the focus group who believe that companies should become more engaged in the society and specifically support rural areas. The same fact regards indulgence, in which PCCs have a low share, this should according to Fisher (2017) mean that they have a lower demand in CSR activities, which contradicts the findings from the focus group. Nonetheless, consumers showing a higher degree of uncertainty avoidance tend to also possess higher CSR expectations from companies, which is confirmed by the empirical findings from the focus groups with support from the dimensions of Hofstede.

Along with Steurer, et al. (2012), a weak position of CSR can be found in the PECs which he argues to be due to their socialist heritage. Continuously, he highlights how the population feels that the responsibility of CSR is mainly the government's responsibility and that companies only have to comply with the existing regulations. From the findings, however, there is an existing demand from customers to intensification these regulations and for companies to increase their CSR activities in order to solve country-specific issues. This could be due to the economic development, where the behaviour of consumers has changed and they have gained both a higher income and a stronger purchasing equality. (Gwartney and Montesinos, 2018; Kavkler, Borsic and Beko, 2012; Vecernik, 2008).

**WECs**

As can be seen in the pyramid from Carroll (1991), the second level includes the legal responsibilities. The representative opinion of the group believes that the main actor who should be responsible for CSR is the government as they are accountable for creating rules and regulations that the companies’ should follow, thereby, they should encourage and lead the way for the companies and prevent them from operating unethically. The importance of the legal responsibility is considerably high for the people from WECs as the majority
believes that it would be enough that companies only follow the laws and regulations. At the same time, they expect companies to have some kind of responsibility in addition to this, and that a company which partakes in CSR activities that goes beyond the laws and regulations could create a competitive advantage compared to a company which does not. This goes in line with Carroll (1991), showing that the ethical and philanthropic responsibilities are valuable, but not to the same degree as the legal responsibilities. As Western European governments are more supportive of CSR activities (Midttun, et al., 2006; Steurer, et al., 2011) and the majority of companies already partakes in voluntary CSR activities (Steurer, et al., 2012). This could explain why the participants from WECs believe that the government has the main responsibility to lead the ways but still expects the companies to do somewhat more than the regulations articulates. In addition to this, the ethical and philanthropic responsibilities was higher emphasised by the female participants, who regarded voluntary activities that go beyond the laws to be more important than the male participants, a finding that goes in line with previous research (Peréz and Rodríguez del Bosque 2016; Peterson, 2014; Ravlin and Meglino, 1987; Tuzcu 2014)

Considering the cultural influencer, WECs generally have a lower power distance, which according to Bae and Kim (2014), indicate that they expect companies to share their wealth, here in form of CSR activities. At the same time, according to the dimensions of Hofstede, WECs seem to be more individualistically driven, meaning that they are not as aware of CSR (Palihawadana, et al., 2016; Vitell and Paolillo, 2004) and only support those CSR activities that they will benefit from (Leonidou, et al., 2013; Weigel, et al., 1999; Morales, 2005; Reed, et al., 2007; Russell and Russell, 2010). In this case, the participants have a high awareness of CSR but it is at the same time confirmed that they expect companies to include CSR activities in their strategies and are also more supportive of activities being beneficial for themselves.
5.2.3 Drivers Affecting Purchase Behaviour

The analysis of the third question category shows that the empirical findings both confirm and deny the chosen theoretical frameworks of this study. First of all, Hofstede's study on cultural dimensions has shown that a high degree of individualism refers to the individuals’ prioritisation of self-interest over community well-being, hence, weak social ties (Hofstede, et al., 2010). The opposite, collectivism, describes individuals’ concern for the welfare of others (Forsyth, 1992, p.462). The literature review shows that in the context of CSR, this means that collectivism leads to consumers more likely being aware of CSR and also more likely to perceive ethical and social responsibility as important in business practices (Palihawadana, et al., 2016; Vitell and Paolillo, 2004).

The primary, as well as the secondary empirical findings, confirm both of the statements above. The focus group participants from PCCs statements on the importance of each of the CSR dimensions show that social issues matter the most and have priority over environmental and lastly economic concerns. The representative argumentation for this order would be the perceived lack of social support in those countries, especially regarding the rural areas. This argument can be supported by Vecernik (2008), who claim that the communist system and the centrally planned economy created a lot of social obstacles in the affected societies. According to Turkina and Surzhko-Harned (2014), political events like the communism have an impact on norms, values, beliefs, and perceptions of individuals and the society; therefore, psychological influencers might play a role in this context. The secondary data which was collected via the 6-Model comparison tool validates this observation. The average of all PCCs included in the focus groups shows a lower score (less than 50 percent) in the individualism dimension which indicates a society is rather collective (Hofstede-insights.com, 2018).

However, the comparison tool also showed that the degree of masculinity of these PCCs is rather low (less than 50 percent). In line with studies by Fisher (2017) and Bae and Kim (2014), a masculine society indicates a negative connection to social CSR and a more assertive and competitive society showing the tendency of being less socially responsible and rather considering economic achievement and material success as the main focus of firms. On the contrary, feminine cultures consider the society’s duty to help needy people as crucial and therefore expect companies to be socially responsible and active. Which, when analysing the focus group results can be confirmed. The interviewees from the PCCs consciously rated
the economic issues as the most insignificant matters. Based on the arguments and decisions regarding the participants' interests, Fisher's, as well as Bae and Kim's theory on the impact of less masculine societies on social and economic CSR, can be confirmed since the degree of masculinity is averagely low.

The insights above can partially be confirmed by the participants' opinion regarding the Case 1 of the focus group discussion. Here, the participants agreed to rather decide on a brand that allows child labour instead of a brand that pollutes the environment. The reason why this decision confirms the assumption to a certain extent is that the interviewees from the PCCs stressed on the fact that the children in third-world countries are depending on those jobs and would most likely not survive without them. Therefore, it is reasonable to assume that the participants show collective behaviour. Furthermore, it is arguable that environmental issues have an impact on the whole society; and therefore, the respondents are willing to overlook child-labour as long as they can pollute less and create a clean environment for the society as a whole. In addition, the theory also demonstrates that many of the PCCs have been able to improve their economic state and living standards since joining the EU and therefore, have started focusing on environmental matters too (Gwartney and Montesinos, 2018; Kavkler, Borsic and Beko, 2012).

The theory by Tuzcu (2014), Peterson (2014), as well as Ravlin and Meglino (1987) concerning the impact of gender on the willingness to pay more attention to voluntary or philanthropic CSR activities or contributing to them, cannot be confirmed based on the empirical findings. The authors claim that women are more aware of philanthropic activities and are also more bounded by the ethical standards a company identifies with than men. However, the focus group discussions regarding Case 2 showed that the gender did not have an influence on whether the participant would choose to pay extra money to support philanthropic CSR activities. In fact, both the female and male interviewees consciously decide to be willing to support philanthropic CSR.

Agarwal’s (2014) theory claims that CSR has an impact on a consumer's willingness to pay more money for brands that, for instance, support fair-trade, avoid child labour or are ethically correct in other ways. This assumption can be confirmed by the findings of this study since the participants from the PCCs have stated to have avoided a certain product/brand or ingredient because of social or environmental reasons or have supported a certain product/brand which have implemented CSR activities. Therefore, an impact by CSR on the consumer behaviour is traceable.
Nevertheless, the participants stressed that their consumer behaviour only changes if they are aware of CSR activities of companies. Additionally, the focus group discussions showed that respondents from the PCCs are less willing to spend more money on short-term purchases like food. The participants stated that they do not mind buying the cheaper groceries since good or a sufficient quality is already guaranteed by the food regulations and laws set in their countries. This argument is consistent with the theory that claims that living standards in PCCs have improved due to entering the EU because of more strict standards of food quality (Gwartney and Montesinos, 2018; Kavkler, Borsic and Beko, 2012).

WECs
Much like the analysis of the findings from the PCC focus group, the analysis of the WEC group shows similar outcomes. First, the participants' priorities concerning the CSR dimensions will be examined. Regarding the priorities, Hofstede's theory of cultural dimensions claims that societies of WECs tend to be individual-driven or egoistic. Hence, the individuals of an egoistic society prioritise self-interest over community well-being and therefore show weak social ties (Hofstede, et al., 2010). This goes in line with the assumptions of Leonidou, et al., (2013), Weigel, et al. (1999), Morales (2005), Reed, et al. (2007) as well as Russell and Russell (2010) who state that by the means of CSR, consumers in more individualism-driven societies only support those CSR activities from which they directly benefit from.

These theories can be confirmed to some extent. The existing study shows that the participants from the WECs think that environmental CSR is the most important, secondly, the economic responsibilities and the least important are the social issues. The participants argued that the environment is crucial to protect, in order to be sustainable and have healthy living conditions in the future. The economic/legal matters are more important than social because they think social CSR depends on the economic performance of a company. In addition, the respondents explain their choice by stressing the already very good social conditions in their countries. Therefore, the environment is the more crucial issue for them at the moment. When connecting these statements with the theory, one is able to argue that the participants are impacted by psychological influencers, which result in a more individual-driven or egoistic behaviour since they care more about the social safety and well-being of their national society only. This can be supported by the choice of choosing the economic/legal responsibilities over the social. This is also indicated by the comparison tool findings, where the WECs reveal a very high average in individualism.
Nevertheless, the participants showed great concern for the environment and the effects on the global well-being instead of just their own. This could be traced back to the history of the WECs. After the economic growth of the EU in the 1960s the drastic increase in production had taken a toll on the environment, therefore, the fight against pollution had become a significant issue and the EU adopted laws to protect the environment. European Union (2016a). Hence, environmental issues and concerns have been targeted and discussed early on in the WECs which resulted in the citizens being more aware of it. A further cultural dimension could be considered regarding the priorities of the participants. The masculinity dimension assumes that masculine societies show a negative relation to CSR perception, which indicates that more assertive and competitive societies show the tendency of being less socially responsible and consider economic achievement and material success as the main focus of firms (Bae and Kim, 2014; Fisher, 2017). Hence, this assumption is true in connection with the participants' choice of economic issues over social. The secondary data conducted from the culture comparison tool of Hofstede's dimensions prove that the WECs show less feminine degree and, therefore, show a higher tendency towards masculinity. The findings show that certain countries, such as Sweden and the Netherlands, are significantly less masculine than countries like Germany or Switzerland. However, it is arguable that the average degree (over 50 percent) indicates an accordance between the degree of masculinity and the participants' priorities of CSR dimensions.

The analysis of the Case 1 discussions of the WECs focus group participants agrees with that of the PCC group. Hence, the participants agreed to rather decide on a brand that allows child labour instead of a brand that pollutes the environment since the environment is more important in the long-run. The reason mentioned goes in line with the views of the PCC participants. The participants were aware of the fact that the children in third-world countries are depending on those jobs and would most likely not survive without them. Therefore, it is reasonable to assume that the participants show collective behaviour instead of strict individualism-driven. The analysis of WECs CASE 2 discussion also shows accordance with the one of the PCCs. Here, theory by Tuzcu (2014), Peterson (2014), as well as Ravlin and Meglino (1987) concerning the impact of gender on the willingness to pay more attention to voluntary or philanthropic CSR activities or contributing to them, cannot be confirmed based on the empirical findings. Regardless the gender all participants were willing to pay extra money for a brand which implements philanthropic activities. However, the participants stressed that it heavily depends on the price of the product and the proportion of the price difference to a similar product. Here, the economic orientation is clearly an important factor.
In the case of CSR’s impact on the consumers’ purchase behaviour, the analysis outcomes of the PCC group can be adopted since the group discussions show no differences. Hence, the theory by Agarwal’s (2014) claiming that CSR has an impact on a consumer's willingness to pay more money for brands that, for instance, support fair-trade, avoid child labour or are ethically correct in other ways, can be confirmed based on the findings.

Finally, it is very important to mention that the conversations in the mixed group had a significant impact on each participants’ opinion. Bringing together respondents from both regions of Europe made them interact and understand each other's views on CSR. For instance, the interviewees from the mixed group all stated to refuse on spending extra money on brands which engage in philanthropic activities. The reason is rooted in a discussion concerning companies who charge their customers for their collaborations with non-profit or charity organization. Hence, the participants felt used and shamed into paying additional money. This decision is an exception since all the other participants, both from the WEC and the PCC group, were willing to pay an additional amount of money.
6. Conclusion and Contribution

This last chapter concludes the whole study by answering the main research question along with the sub-questions that have been outlined in the introduction. Firstly, each sub-question is presented and answered with findings from the empirical part and analysis. Secondly, the main research question is tackled by combining answers from all three sub-questions. Thirdly, theoretical, managerial, and policymaker implications are drawn, followed up by the limitations of this study. And lastly, recommendations for further research on consumer CSR perception are suggested.

6.1 Answers to Research Questions

The answers to the research questions are based on both theoretical and empirical findings of this study. The main theoretical framework (Figure 3) was used to identify the main topics and scopes of CSR, which were used to assemble the interview protocol, gathering primary data. Primary data was used in combination with secondary data to perform an analysis and gain required knowledge and information, which was beneficial in order to be able to answer these research questions. The answers to the research questions are bringing new insights into the topic of consumer perceptions of CSR; moreover, the research questions serve as a ground for theoretical, managerial, and policy-maker implications.

6.1.1 Sub-Question 1

How aware are consumers about companies’ CSR activities?

1. This study suggests that the awareness of CSR activities in PCCs and WECs is on the same level. Both regions have shown similar knowledge of CSR, consumers perceive CSR activities of companies, and can critically analyse them. Moreover, the topic progressively gains importance on national levels across the regions, and the awareness is rising.

2. Personal characteristics, particularly age and education, are seen as moderating factors of consumer awareness. Across the regions, older generations tend to be less aware of CSR issues than the younger ones, who are more likely to change their purchasing behaviour based on the CSR perceptions of companies. In addition, also the field of education has an impact on the awareness of CSR. Consumers studying subjects in the business field have a much higher awareness of CSR than their non-business studying counterparts.
3. The last significant factor of CSR awareness is only connected to consumers in PCCs. The differences between cities, villages and rural areas in PCCs are considerable. High CSR awareness is closely connected to consumers from cities and heavily populated areas, while lower CSR awareness is linked to consumers living in villages and rural areas.

6.1.2 Sub-Question 2

What involvement regarding CSR do consumers expect from companies?

1. As can be found in the analysis, both the PCCs and WECs believe that there should be a mixed responsibility between the government and the companies regarding CSR activities. The government should encourage companies to engage in activities that benefit the society and environment and create regulations as a guiding tool. However, the responsibility is not solely restricted to the governments but companies need to actively show engagement in these types of matters as well.

2. Consumers from WECs believe to a higher extent that the governmental operations and regulations that companies are guided by can be sufficient, even if they often expect companies to partake in activities that go beyond these. Whereas the consumers from PCCs do not believe that the governmental regulations are enough and that companies, therefore, have to do more than only obey these regulations. Particularly, companies need to take responsibility in neglected areas where the governmental regulations and operations do not reach.

3. Consumers from PCCs seem to not show as much trust in the government or companies and feel that they cannot rely on the promises made by both parties. Consequently, both the government and companies need to make an endeavour to gain higher trust from the population.

6.1.3 Sub-Question 3

What type of CSR activities do consumers perceive as the most important, and how do these activities influence their purchase decisions?

1. This study has indicated that the priorities regarding the CSR dimensions differ between consumers from PCCs and WECs. The consumers from PCCs seem to appreciate social matters the most, secondly environmental and lastly economic/legal matters. On the contrary, consumers from WECs seem to think that environmental CSR is the most
important, secondly, the economic/legal responsibilities and the least important are the social issues.

2. For both consumer groups, an impact of CSR on the purchase behaviour is traceable. Majority of consumers are willing to pay additional money for brands which implement philanthropic projects. Nevertheless, for consumers from WECs, this depends on the price of the product and the proportion of the price difference to a similar product, whereas the consumers from PCCs stressed that this depends on whether the activities are locally implemented or not.

3. Consumers from both regions are likely to avoid a certain product/brand or ingredient because of social or environmental reasons or to support a certain product/brand which have implemented CSR activities. However, this depends on the knowledge and available information on CSR and whether it is a long-term or short-term purchase. The consumers from PCCs, therefore, are less willing to spend more money on short-term purchases like food.

4. However, the study has shown that when consumers from different regions are making a joint decision, the decision is impacted by both views and usually results in an unpredictable outcome. Surprisingly, the mixed focus group participants showed slight deviations regarding their willingness to pay.

6.1.4 Main Research Question

What differences in perception of CSR exists between consumers from Western Europe and Post-Communist countries of Eastern Europe and why?

1. CSR is gaining awareness across Europe with no difference between PCCs and WECs. The biggest drivers between differences of CSR awareness are the field of education, age and in case of PCCs, also the size of a municipality.

Media has a significant impact on CSR awareness; especially social media is the major source for consumers to access information about CSR activities of corporations. Therefore, the differences between regions are mitigated by the easily accessible information through the internet. Also, business students are educated about CSR in their regular programmes, and hence, they are more aware of CSR than other students. CSR is also a relatively new topic and therefore, younger people have better insights on the issue than older. Lastly, smaller towns,
villages and rural areas in PCCs are more isolated from current issues and therefore are less aware of trends such as CSR.

2. Both regions believe that companies should be committed to engaging in CSR activities. However, what can be noticed is that consumers from WECs are more used to companies participating in voluntary CSR activities and are therefore likely to take it for granted, whereas PCCs have a desire for companies to show more engagement than companies currently do in their region.

The reason for this could be due to social factors such as the economic and political development, as well as cultural influence. The high uncertainty avoidance in PCCs shows that they have higher expectations from companies CSR. Nevertheless, the high power distance and low indulgence should, according to previous theory, mean that PCCs have lower demand in CSR, which is contradicting to the result in this study.

3. By far the most noticeable distinction between the perception of consumers from PCCs and WECs is the favouritism of the CSR dimensions (social, environmental, economic/legal). Consumers from PCCs show more interest in social issues than the consumers from WECs who, on the other hand, prioritise environmental issues. Additionally, all the participants showed the willingness to pay additional money for brands which implement philanthropic projects. Nevertheless, for consumers from WECs, this depends on the price of the product and the proportion of the price difference to a similar product, whereas the consumers from PCCs stressed that this depends on whether the activities are locally implemented or not.

The focus group participants from the PCCs trace this back to their perceived lack of social support in their countries, especially regarding the rural areas. Whereas, the participants from WECs argued that the environmental and economic/legal matter are more important since the environment is crucial to protect, in order to be sustainable and have healthy living conditions in the future. The economic/legal matters are more important than social because social CSR depends on the economic performance of a company. In addition, the respondents explain their choice by stressing the already very good social conditions in WECs.
This study found out that consumers from PCCs prioritise social CSR over environmental and economic/legal because their societies show very strong tendencies towards collectivism.

Accordingly, the theory shows that collective societies lead to consumers more likely being aware of CSR and also rather perceive ethical and social responsibility as more important in business practices. On the contrary, the existing study found evidence for the WECs to be rather individualism-oriented than collectivism societies. This explains the chosen priorities of the consumers which are first the environmental, second the economic/legal and lastly the social issues, as the environmental issues would affect their own well-being. This guides to the assumption that the consumers from WECs have weak social ties and therefore leads to individuals’ prioritisation of self-interest over community well-being. Nevertheless, the participants showed very great concern for the environment and the effects on the global well-being instead of just their own. This could be followed back to the history of the WECs in which the fight against pollution had become a significant issue since the 1960's and the EU adopted laws to protect the environment ever since. Moreover, the psychological influencers are implied to have a moderating effect on individual perception.

The main research question is also supported by *figure 8*, which is graphically representing perceptions towards the three CSR scopes by consumers from both PCCs and WECs. As discussed above, consumers from PCCs are more socially oriented than WECs, who are environmentally oriented. This graph is based on question five of the focus group discussions where the respondents stated their priorities towards these three scopes. The relationship between each two scopes was calculated by allocating one point to first priority and half a point to the second priority. Finally, by comparing each two scopes, a percentual location was found and by triangulating the perception for each scope of a region, a final perceptual point was placed.
6.2 Managerial Implications

6.2.1 Europe-Wide Managerial Implications

The topic of CSR is gaining more awareness and consumers perceive its importance across all regions, thus Western and Eastern Europe. Due to the increased awareness and importance, companies cannot neglect this topic anymore and need to engage in CSR activities across all Europe, and address issues that are important for consumers in given regions in order to uphold competitiveness and customer loyalty. Moreover, the perceptions of CSR are varied across Europe; and therefore, companies need to adapt their CSR strategies based on their region of operations.
6.2.2 Managerial Implications for WECs
Since companies have been engaged in social responsibility in this region for a long time, consumers in WECs are well aware of CSR activities and hold them to a high standard. The issues that are important for consumers from WECs are mostly connected to the environment. Clean environment and green businesses are of the highest priority for consumers in WECs and they are willing to spend more money on products that adhere to their environmental values. In addition, consumers in WECs are not sufficiently informed about CSR activities that could influence their purchasing behaviour. The consumers state that if companies transparently share their impactful CSR activities, it can help them make their purchase decision and choose the socially responsible brand over the irresponsible. Therefore, companies should focus not only on performing CSR activities but also on communicating them to the end customer to raise awareness.

6.2.3 Managerial Implications for PCCs
The consumers in PCCs are aware of CSR activities and base some of their purchase decisions on the performance of companies in given CSR activities. The consumers desire companies to engage in CSR in their countries to improve the social and environmental infrastructure. In order to make an impact, target consumers, and capitalise on CSR activities in PCCs, companies should mainly focus on the social scope of CSR. Consumers in PCCs are mostly aware of social CSR and prefer companies that engage in such activities, nevertheless, companies should not neglect environmental CSR which is the second most important issue in PCCs.

However, consumers from PCCs have lower trust levels and need to have an evidence of a change in order to believe CSR activities, which they usually consider as marketing activities that might not have any actual impact. Therefore, when implementing CSR strategies in PCCs, companies need to show and present their results and be transparent, in order to gain the consumers' trust.

6.3 Theoretical Implications
This study has extended the theory about CSR perception by consumers in two main scopes. Firstly, the study suggests that not only the level of education influences the perception and awareness of CSR but also the field of education. Consumers that have a business-related
education are more aware of CSR than their peers. Secondly, the research found out that the size of the municipality is an important factor when assessing the awareness of CSR in PCCs. Consumers from larger municipalities like big cities and conglomeration are more aware of CSR than consumers from small towns, villages, and rural areas.

As the theoretical background showed, previous research has failed to emphasise the challenges and complexity of the differences between regions that managers are facing, which characteristics have an impact on how consumers perceive CSR. From this, a need was found to conduct further in-depth studies about CSR perceptions. This study has enriched the theory on differences between CSR perception between markets, specifically in the field of consumer awareness, and perception of the importance of CSR, in this case, between the PCCs and WECs. Consequently, this study has contributed to the theoretical and practical field of CSR.

6.4 Implications for Policy Makers
Evidence from this research implicates that governments, especially within the PCCs region lack trust from the population, they also have a shortage of regulations and policies addressed to companies CSR strategies. Consequently, a demand for enhancing the overall CSR activities exists and policymakers, therefore, need to adapt regulations for corporations. This will assist guiding companies on the right path and encourage them in participating in activities beneficial for both the society and environment.

6.5 Limitations
The primary limitation of the study refers to the small sample used in the process for making generalisations about the differences between PCCs and WECs. Richer findings and analysis would have been possible if implementing further focus groups, which would also have helped to generate more generalizable results. In addition to this, not all countries within PCCs and WECs are represented in the focus groups, neither are consumers within various different areas within the same country, a fact that further limits the study as the same study with participants from other countries or regions may generate different results. A broader geographic spread and larger sample size would moreover have reinforced the validity and credibility of the research.
Furthermore, the sample in this study consists of millennials alone, who are studying a higher education consisting either of a bachelor or a master degree. Although this sample size is sufficient to reconcile the research problem, the results may not be generalised to further demographics such as age classes or parts of the population who does not possess a higher education, leading to the actuality that the result from this study cannot represent the perception of the whole specific country of each participant. These existing limitations give incentives and encouragement to future research and will, in combination with the findings of the study, be considered in the following section.

6.6 Future Research

The differences in perception of CSR between consumers in PCCs and WECs have been presented in this research, however, as stated in the limitations the sample size is small and the participants are resembling in both age and education. The participants are not fully representing each area within PCCs and WECs or within their specific countries. Future research is therefore suggested to conduct a similar study but by using a larger amount of focus groups with a greater demographically spread sample. A possibility would furthermore be to conduct the study using a quantitative method, which would assist in enlarging the sample size in addition to improving the consistency and generalisability of the study. This research may likewise serve as a basis for further research on differences between CSR perceptions within various regions. However, theories are in the analysis merely partially supported and may, therefore, be needed to be modified.

One of the main findings of this research consists in the differences in the consumer perception of the importance of CSR activities regarding social versus environmental issues between the two regions. Consequently, we suggest future researchers to consider this difference and to analyse to what extent this would impact their purchase behaviour.
List of References


Fromm, J. & Garton, C., 2013. Marketing to millennials reach the largest and most influential generation of consumers ever, New York: AMACOM.


Merriam, S. B., & Tisdell, E. J. 2016. Designing your study and selecting a sample. Qualitative research: A guide to design and implementation, 73-104.


Appendix

Appendix A: Focus Group Questions

1. What is your age, level of education, and country of origin?
2. Do you know what CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility) is? What kind of CSR activities do you know that companies use?
3. How would you divide CSR responsibilities between enterprises and the government? Who should be responsible for what? (do you think that the government should have the main responsibility and that companies main concern then should be their own profitability?)
4. Do you think that it is enough if companies only follow the legal obligations and regulations?
5. Which kind of CSR activities are most/least important to you and why? For example, environmental, social and economic/legal.
6. Would your peers in your home country agree on your perception of CSR?
7. Would you say that CSR has gained more attention and importance in your home country over the last years?
8. What are your main drivers for choosing a specific brand/product? (price/quality/brand image)
9. How does CSR influence your view of a company’s image? Do you think your knowledge about CSR activities has an impact on your purchasing behaviour?
10. Do you think that companies have legitimate intentions behind their CSR activities or would you say it’s just a marketing tool? And how does this impact you?
11. Do you take philanthropic activities of companies into account, when making purchasing behaviour? (Lower prices, instead of extra CSR activities?)

Case questions

A. You need to buy a new laptop and can choose between two different brands that sell identical products. Brand A makes use of child labour in their supply chain which drives down their costs and the company can offer a competitive price. However, brand B does not use child labour, but to keep their costs low they have outdated production facilities that are polluting the local environment of the factory with toxic battery waste. (Second question: the company is located in your home town and pollutes the environment there.)

B. Both of the companies are not engaging in harmful activities anymore. Brand A is now investing in development of local infrastructure and hospitals but, their laptops cost 100 EUR more than the ones of Brand B, which is now also operating in an ethical manner.
Appendix B: Active Social Media Penetration in Europe

Source: Statista.com. (2018a)
Appendix C: Share of Individuals Using the Internet in Europe

Appendix D: Individual Scores for Hofstede’s Cultural Dimensions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Power distance</th>
<th>Individualism</th>
<th>Masculinity</th>
<th>Uncertainty avoidance</th>
<th>Long term orientation</th>
<th>Indulgence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bulgaria</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Czech Republic</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Estonia</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hungary</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Russia</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serbia</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Austria</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Switzerland</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Netherlands</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UK</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Own creation based on Hofstede-insights.com (2018)

Appendix E: Content analysis - Word Frequency Table

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Words</th>
<th>PCCs</th>
<th>WECs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Environmental factors</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environment</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sustainability</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organic</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eco</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clean</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pollution</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social factors</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employees</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labour</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charity</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suffering</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philanthropy</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economical factors</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economy</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Price</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Money</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Profit</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cheap</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expensive</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pay</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>47</strong></td>
<td><strong>44</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Governmental factors**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>8</th>
<th>12</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Government</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regulations</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taxes</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Law</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policies</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legal</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>25</strong></td>
<td><strong>19</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Media**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2</th>
<th>4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Media</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brand</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marketing</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Image</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>19</strong></td>
<td><strong>20</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Company related factors**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>8</th>
<th>15</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Quality</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reputation</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boycott</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>12</strong></td>
<td><strong>21</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Own creation based on empirical data