

Chapter 9

Non-Financial Reporting Versus Corruption and Bribery – Practice of Polish Listed Companies

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9.1. Introduction

When conducting business, companies are required to report both on the state of their assets and the effects of their operations in publishing mandatory financial statements. In addition, they disclose non-financial information, most often in the form of a report on non-financial information because this is an important part of business entities' communication with the public. The scope and type of non-financial information disclosed is governed by balance sheet law. The growing interest in ethical issues, transparency and sustainability in the business environment also affects the growth of information needs in the field of anti-corruption, as corruption negatively affects economic development and public confidence. Security issues in the field of anti-corruption are important for the smooth running of business, which is why also in Poland business entities are obliged to report information on their activities in this regard. This is done specifically within the framework of non-financial reporting.

The purpose of the study was to diagnose the situation of companies in terms of reporting anti-corruption information as part of non-financial reporting. The subjects were Polish listed companies (WIG40), and the Orlen Group and Orlen SA were selected for the first stage. The author examined the information on anti-corruption and bribery revealed in the reports on non-financial information in the period 2017-2023 for the selected entities, including a case study for one of these entities. The following research methods were used to achieve the research objective: qualitative analysis, synthesis, deduction and induction, comparative analysis, and inference by analogy of phenomena.

The research process consisted of a preliminary study (the case study covered by this paper, preparation of proposals for areas to be evaluated for the preparation of a research tool, i.e. assessment questionnaire) and the study proper (the validation of the research tool on

a selected subject, diagnosis of the practice of Polish listed companies in the studied scope based on content analysis of non-financial reports).

The rationale for addressing this issue was the research gap due to the paucity of academic publications linking non-financial reporting issues to anti-corruption and bribery information (the result of a search in the Scopus database, according to the string: TITLE-ABS-KEY 'non-financial reporting' and 'anti-corruption', was found in ten publications). The nature of the study is cognitive (diagnosis of the reporting practice of listed companies) and applied (filling the information gap through the implementation of good practices of non-financial reporting in the field of anti-corruption).

9.2. Literature and Regulatory Review

Many publications on non-financial reporting issues can be identified in the literature (Baboukardos et al., 2023; Bąk et al., 2022; Bek-Gaik & Surowiec, 2020; Błażyńska, 2018; Krasodomska et al., 2018; Matuszak & Róžańska, 2021; Mysaka & Derun, 2024; Turzo et al., 2022; Yadav et al., 2024). Corruption issues, due to the nature of the problem, were also addressed, however there is a lack of research combining both areas. Analysis of the scope, type and manner of reporting of the effects of companies' anti-corruption and bribery activities is not often conducted. Note that in Poland legislative changes in the field of non-financial reporting also require some reflection. This indicates the type of research gap and the legitimacy of taking up this topic.

As already highlighted, the sheer scope of research on non-financial reporting is extremely broad, including literature reviews. Turzo et al. (2022) aimed to summarise the various research on non-financial reporting (NFR) practices and the evolution of NFR research by providing a review based on the most influential articles published between 2012 and 2020. They used bibliometric analysis to identify eight research areas: the content of non-financial reports, the integrated reporting (IR) framework, the relation of NFR with company-level variables, and between NFR and corporate governance, the theories behind NFR, NFR assurance, the relation between institutional context and NFR, and also environmental reporting (Turzo et al., 2022). In turn, the study by Mysaka and Derun (2024) was the first to compare the bibliometric characteristics of SR and NFR publications to determine the use of SR and NFR theoretical frameworks for implementing CR in the form of EU directives.

In Poland, research has been undertaken extensively in the years of implementation of EU Directive 2014/95/EU and national regulations as a result of the transposition (European Union, 2014). With the introduction of the regulations, certain groups of entities were required to disclose non-financial information on environmental, social and labour issues, respect for human rights, anti-corruption and anti-bribery activity. Hence, Matuszak & Róžańska (2017) analysed the scope and quality of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) reporting on companies listed on the Warsaw Stock Exchange (WSE) and their compliance with the new requirements, using a sample of 150 selected listed companies. At the time, according to the study, companies placed little emphasis on human rights and anti-corruption reporting. Their research continued in subsequent years with a sample of 134 selected companies, using content analysis and a disclosure index applied to measure the level of non-financial disclosure (NFD). The study compared non-financial reporting practices in the two years before (2015) and one year after (2017) the implementation of the directive. The results indicated that there was already a high level of compliance with European Union regulations. The coverage of the NFD in various

thematic aspects in the reporting media increased significantly between 2015 and 2017, particularly in the areas of human rights and anti-corruption. The research suggested that stakeholders should receive the more comprehensive information they need in their decision-making process (Matuszak & Różańska, 2017).

As the literature review showed, the experience of other countries is similar. Carmo and Ribeiro (2022) conducted an analysis of the content of non-financial disclosures made one year before (2016) and in the first and second year of implementation of Directive 95/2014/EU (2017 and 2018) in their country. The results showed that the greatest impact on the quality of non-financial disclosures was observed in the first year of the directive. Companies that had high quality voluntary reporting practices, such as a presentation of a sustainability report, the use of GRI standards and NFI certification (Mbanyele et al., 2022), maintained these practices after the introduction of the directive. However, there were still companies that did not mention the framework used or did not disclose information on sensitive issues such as human rights, anti-corruption and anti-bribery (Carmo & Ribeiro, 2022).

Non-financial reporting, strictly in the context of anti-corruption, has been analysed to a lesser extent. Aldaz et al. (2015) investigated whether companies' anti-corruption reporting practices reflected the respective anti-corruption systems implemented by the companies, or whether disclosure was merely a tool for these companies to improve their reputation and thus maintain their legitimacy, using both legitimacy theory and stakeholder theory (Aldaz et al., 2015). This still seems to be the case in the context of the division between values-driven CRS reporting or submissiveness-driven CSR (Roberts et al., 2008). Landis and Paglietti (2024) examined corporate anti-corruption disclosure (ACD) strategies during the regulatory debate surrounding European Directive 2014/95/EU. Using a legitimacy framework, they assessed whether companies proactively improved their voluntary ACDs during the transposition phase to accommodate potential regulatory changes (Landis & Paglietti, 2024).

In today's Poland, research in this area is also being published. Aluchna et al. (2024) examined the relation between company links with the external environment, proxied by board independence and ownership dispersion, and anti-corruption disclosure. The authors used a sample of 72 companies listed on the Warsaw Stock Exchange over the period of 2015-2019 that were subject to the NFRD legislation. The evidence from the Tobit model showed that the links with the external environment differentiated company reactions to the implementation of the mandatory reporting legislation. In particular, extensive company links via interdependent directors and ownership dispersion increase the scope of the anti-corruption (Aluchna et al., 2024). This phenomenon for the 2018 period was also studied by Skoczylas-Tworek (2020), who emphasised that the information covered by the statutory obligation includes data on anti-corruption and anti-bribery policies, the results of their application, as well as due diligence procedures binding in this respect, including the risks that may adversely affect them.

Questions arise as to what is the current practice of reporting anti-corruption information, especially with regard to legislative changes that apply to companies starting in 2025 (Ustawa z dnia 29 września 1994...) and how will the companies' experience to date may affect the practice of future reporting.

It is also worth noting that the issue of corruption in terms of reporting information on its prevention appears important from the perspective of state and business security, which in terms of the needs of stakeholders seems obvious. Countries are subject to evaluation within the framework of rankings, and thus in 2024, according to the Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI), Poland scored 53 points on a 100-point scale (100 being the lowest level of corruption perception,

which ranked it 53rd among 180 countries (Transparency International, 2024). The index is a leading global indicator of public sector corruption, providing an annual comparative overview of 180 countries and territories, based on 13 expert assessments and surveys of businesses.

Finally, in the aspect of the conducted research, it is necessary to define the phenomenon of corruption itself, around which all preventive activities of enterprises are initiated, namely corruption in the economic aspect, which within the meaning of Polish law is an act: “committed in the course of business activities involving the performance of obligations to a public authority (institution), consisting in requesting or accepting directly or indirectly by a person in charge of an entity not included in the public finance sector, or working in any capacity for such an entity, any undue benefit or accepting an offer or promise of such benefit to himself or to any other person, in exchange for an action or failure to act that violates his obligations and constitutes socially harmful reciprocation” (Ustawa z dnia 9 czerwca 2006...). In this way it is understood for reporting purposes.

In conclusion, it is worth stressing that in the era of using modern technologies, including artificial intelligence, the challenges facing companies and institutions in terms of sustainability are building an ethical framework for non-financial reporting (De Villiers et al., 2024; Moodaley & Telukdarie, 2023). Survey results, e.g. these of Cumming et al. (2024), confirm that clarity, lack of embezzlement, fairness, explainability, autonomy, privacy and bias require serious attention and postulate trust in algorithms based on a sustainability framework based on artificial intelligence ethics; this certainly influences and justifies the directions of ongoing research in this area.

9.3. Research Methods

The purpose of the survey was to diagnose the situation of companies in terms of reporting anti-corruption information as part of non-financial reporting. The subjects of the study were Polish listed companies (WIG40), and the Orlen Group and Orlen SA were selected for the first stage. The subject covered information on anti-corruption and bribery reported in non-financial information reports from 2017 to 2023 for the selected entities. The realization of the research objective required the use of the following methods: qualitative analysis, synthesis, deduction and induction, comparative analysis, and inference by analogy of phenomena.

The study was conducted based on selected information on anti-corruption (data collection required the development of a research tool in the form of a questionnaire). The research process consisted of a preliminary study (analysis of the case covered by this study, preparation of proposals for the areas to be evaluated for the preparation of the research tool, which was a self-assessment questionnaire) and the study proper (validation of the research tool on a selected entity, diagnosis of the practice of Polish listed companies in the studied scope on the basis of analysis of the content of non-financial reports using the developed questionnaire). In the research process, two hypotheses were verified: (H1) the reporting of information in the field of anti-corruption and bribery increases the information potential of companies and its structure is evolving; (H2) the implementation of non-financial reporting standards into Polish legislation influenced the development of non-financial reporting in the field of anti-corruption and bribery.

In the preliminary study these were verified via the survey of the selected entity (the Orlen Group and Orlen SA). The detailed terms of reference of the research process were as follows:

- development and validation of the research tool,
- a survey proper on a group of listed companies,
- comparative analysis using statistical methods,
- critical discussion and inference by analogy,
- recommendations to the model of information on anti-corruption and bribery, considering the conditions for Polish companies (proposal of indicators).

The realisation of the study required an expert analysis of the scope, type and presentation of information on anti-corruption and bribery disclosed in non-financial reports over the period 2017-2023 by the selected company (case study), included in this study. The adopted hypotheses for the subject of reporting information in the field of anti-corruption and bribery increases the information potential of Orlen Group and Orlen SA and its structure is evolving (see H1); the implementation of non-financial reporting standards into Polish legislation has influenced the development of non-financial reporting in the field of anti-corruption and bribery of the studied entity (see H2).

9.4. Results

This study qualitatively verified the non-financial information on anti-corruption and bribery in the Orlen Group and Orlen SA from 2017 to 2023. In order to select the most important information for comparison over time, the content of the reports in the area under study was analysed first, the findings are shown in Table 9.1. In accordance with the balance sheet law, the first period for which the company prepared a report on non-financial information was 2017, and the report for this period was only 27 pages long, including only one paragraph on anti-corruption information. It was about minimising the risk of fraud, for which the entity uses a model of three lines of defence. In the first line, risk management was carried out in the operational activities and control mechanisms implemented in the business area. In the second, the compliance of implemented processes with internal regulations was analysed and their risks assessed, whereas the third line was based on auditing and internal control, and supported the functioning of the prevention system (Orlen, n.d.). The company's anti-corruption action system was described in a separate area on risk management, where the types of risks were presented along with their characteristics. It should be noted that disclosures in this aspect, in the same way, were presented in the 2018 report (Table 9.1), but already in its dedicated sections and in an expanded scope.

Table 9.1. Non-financial information on anti-corruption and bribery reported by the Orlen Group and Orlen SA from 2018 to 2023

Type of information	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Number of pages in the report	5 pages A4 (53-57)	6 pages A4 (65-70)	9 pages A4 (138-146)	13 pages A4 (219-231)	20 pages A4 (285-304)	20 pages A4 (266-285)
The way the information is presented	narrative description with one diagram and one table	narrative description with one diagram and one table	narrative description with diagrams and drawings (photos)	narrative description by subject area, indicators, tables, diagrams, photos	narrative description by subject area, indicators, tables, diagrams, photos	narrative description by subject area, indicators, tables, diagrams, photos

[illegible]

Description of tasks and the scope of their details	narrow scope of tasks without elaborate structures, low level of detail	narrow scope of tasks without elaborate structures, low level of detail	narrow scope of tasks without elaborate structures, low level of detail	wide range of tasks, extensive structure, high degree of detail	wide range of tasks, extensive structure, high degree of detail	wide range of tasks, extensive structure, high degree of detail
Key policies (quantity/form) (Table 2)	14 (miscellaneous form)	17 (miscellaneous form)	17 (miscellaneous form))	18 (miscellaneous form)	16 (miscellaneous form)	22 (miscellaneous form)
The Enterprise Risk Management System (monitored, scheme, 3 lines of defence)	three lines of defence model: 1) Integrated Enterprise Risk Management System; 2) Compliance function and Integrated Management System; 3) Internal audit and control function	three lines of defence model: 1) Integrated Enterprise Risk Management System; 2) Compliance function and Integrated Management System; 3) Internal audit and control function	three lines of defence model: 1) Integrated Enterprise Risk Management System; 2) Compliance function and Integrated Management System; 3) Internal audit and control function	three lines of defence model: 1) Integrated Enterprise Risk Management System; 2) Compliance function and Integrated Management System; 3) Internal audit and control function	three lines of defence model: 1) Integrated Enterprise Risk Management System; 2) Compliance function and Integrated Management System; 3) Internal audit and control function	three lines of defence model: 1) Integrated Enterprise Risk Management System; 2) Compliance function and Integrated Management System; 3) Internal audit and control function
Types of risk (Table 9.4)	(A) Fraud and other Misconduct. (B) Employees' conduct resulting in violation of law. (C) Misconduct on the part of customers or employees	(A) Fraud and other Misconduct. (B) Employees' conduct resulting in violation of law. (C) Misconduct on the part of customers or employees	(A) Fraud and other Misconduct. (B) Employees' conduct resulting in violation of law. (C) Misconduct on the part of customers or employees	(A) Fraud and other Misconduct. (B) Employees' conduct resulting in violation of law. (C) Misconduct on the part of customers or employees	(A) Fraud and other Misconduct. (B) Employees' conduct resulting in violation of law. (C) Misconduct on the part of customers or employees	(A) Fraud and other Misconduct. (B) Employees' conduct resulting in violation of law. (C) Misconduct on the part of customers or employees

Source: own compilation based on analysis of reports on non-financial information from Orlen (n.d.).

As can be seen from the analysis, and also examining the trend of change shown in the table, the scope of information in the subject of the study and the degree of detail over the years has been steadily increasing (the number of pages with presented information is increasing). This is a result of the disclosure of a wider range of information in the analysed area. Although the main organisational units in the surveyed entity responsible for anti-corruption policy did not change, from 2021 the scope of their tasks has increased and their structure has become more complex, as also confirmed by the disclosures of the policies presented. The Orlen Group is developing new, modifying or updating existing policies, regulations, procedures, rules, etc. regarding anti-corruption activities (the scope of internal regulations is systematically increasing or undergoing modification, as detailed in Table 9.2).

Table 9.2. Type of anti-corruption and bribery policies applied by the Orlen Group and Orlen SA from 2018 to 2023

No.	Type of anti-corruption policies	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
1	Anti-corruption policy	X	X	X	X	–	–
2	Anti-corruption and anti-fraud policy	–	–	–	–	X	X
3	Values and principles of conduct	X	X	X	–	–	–

4	Conflict of interest management policy	–	–	–	X	X	X
5	Code of ethics	–	–	–	X	X	X
6	Compliance policy	–	–	–	–	–	X
7	Anonymous whistleblowing system (AZSN)	X	X	X	X	X	X
8	Gift acceptance and gift giving policy	X Rules	X Rules	X Rules	X Rules	X	X
9	Principles of organising the process of verification of contractors	–	–	–	X	X	X
10	Principles and instructions for countering money laundering and terrorist financing	X	X	X	X	X	X
11	Principles of regulatory risk management as part of compliance policy	X Rules	X Rules	X	X	X	X
12	Principles of corporate governance	X	X	X	X	X	X
13	Code of conduct for suppliers	X	X	X	X	X	X
14	Principles for managing the risk of loss of information security attributes	X	X	X	X	X	X
15	Regulations for conducting financial control	X	X	X	X	X	X
16	Standards for conducting financial audits	–	X	X	X	X	X
17	Regulations for conducting audits, consulting projects and analysis of business activities	X	X	X	X	X	X
18	Corporate risk management policy and procedure	X	X	X	X	X	X
19	Integrated management system policy	X	X	X	X	X	X
20	Rules for the conduct of inspections and verification proceedings	X	X	X	X	–	X
21	Principles of integrated security verification of contractors	–	X	X	X	–	–
22	Principles of monitoring business process security	–	X	X	X	–	–
23	Energy policy	–	–	–	–	–	X
24	Food policy						X
25	Lobbying rules as part of compliance policy						X
26	Principles of concession management as part of compliance policy						X
	Number of regulations in force	14	17	17	18	16	22

Source: own compilation based on analysis of reports on non-financial information from Orlen (n.d.).

The work on internal regulations should be linked to the Orlen Group's implementation of solutions in line with the Sustainable Development Goals (Nos. 10 and 16) from 2020, with the simultaneous application of GRI indicators (GRI, n.d.). The application of non-financial reporting guidelines has increased the comparability of information both over time and within an organisation, as is evident in the surveyed entity, and between different entities that have implemented similar solutions (Szadziowska & Shygun, 2023). The usefulness of the information to stakeholders is enhanced; the use of non-financial indicators makes it possible to assess trends of change in the selected area, as detailed in Table 9.3.

Table 9.3. Measures of information on anti-corruption and bribery (non-financial indicators) in the Orlen Group and Orlen SA from 2019 to 2023

Non-financial indicators used to measure anti-corruption activities by year
2019
No use of indicators. Measure: The number of people trained on-site and through e-learning – 4057 people were trained in the Group, including the Board of Directors. Number of policies applied (17).
2020
GRI 103-1 (Explanation of topics identified as important with an indication of limitations) GRI 103-2 (The approach to governance and its elements in the areas of environmental, social, human rights, anti-corruption ...) GRI 103-3 (Evaluation of the management approach) Measure: Indication of departments, offices, teams, etc. engaged in anti-corruption activities, with an indication of the scope of tasks performed.
GRI 205-1 (Percentage and total number of business units analysed for corruption risks and risks identified) GRI 205-2 (Communication and training on the organisation's anti-corruption policies and procedures) Measure: Number of risks (3 indications – inconsistent in their naming with those listed in the risk management section), including an indication of the number of processes identified in each type of risk (A-35; B-1; C-3). Number of risk assessments carried out at Orlen SA (493), number of controls tested (987) in (145) business processes, similarly, the result in the Group (678) (1818) (171). Use of ERM system – covered (10%) of Group companies. Number of people trained in the subject of the study, (279) employees in classroom mode and (200) people in e-learning training in Orlen SA. Provision of training in e-learning mode. Number of policies (17).
2021
GRI 103-1 (Explanation of topics identified as important with an indication of limitations) GRI 103-2 (Management approach and its elements) GRI 103-3 (Evaluation of the management approach) Measure: Listing of the units operating in the form of departments, offices, teams, etc. dealing with anti-corruption, with an indication of the scope of tasks carried out, their structure.
GRI 205-1 (Percentage and total number of business units analysed for corruption risks and risks identified) GRI 205-2 (Communication and training on the organisation's anti-corruption policies and procedures) Measure: Number of risks (3 - inconsistency in their naming with those listed in the risk management section), including an indication of the number of processes identified in each type of risk (A-34; B-1; C-3). Number of risk assessments conducted at Orlen SA (536), number of controls tested (1002) in (164) business processes, similarly, in the Group (191) (660) (95); ERM system covered 10% of Group companies. The amount of training in the subject of the study, (236) employees of Group companies were trained in stationary mode and 80 in e-learning mode at Orlen SA. Implementation of policies for detection and management of conflicts of interest was implemented through e-learning training – (976) company persons and (31) Group employees. Number of policies (18). 100% of trained individuals.
2022
GRI 11.20.1 (Management of material topic: anti-corruption) Detailed description of the anti-corruption policy in force with characteristics of other internal regulations. Measure: number of policies (16), number of post-inspection orders (177), of which (45) concerned Orlen SA and 132 concerned the Group.
GRI 11.20.2 (Percentage and total number of operations assessed for risks related to corruption; identified risks) Measure: The number of risks (3), including an indication of the number of processes identified in each risk type (A-37; B-24; C-3); the number of risk assessments conducted at Orlen SA (629), the number of tested controls (1027) in (195) business processes, similarly, in the Group (222) (723) (89). The ERM system covered 10% of the Group's companies. Detailed description of actions taken, their scope and location.
GRI 11.20.3 (Communication and training about anti-corruption policies and procedures) Measure: Indication in percentage terms of internal audiences to whom anti-corruption policies and procedures have been presented (100%) of governing bodies, employees, business partners, indication in percentage terms of people who have been trained in this area (100%).

GRI 11.20.4 (Confirmed incidents of corruption and actions taken) Measure: The total number and nature of cases of corruption, dismissals for this reason, termination of contracts and court cases, in each case the Group found none.
GRI 11.20.5 (Transparency of contracts and licences) Measure: The descriptive form stating that policies are implemented to ensure transparency in contracting, implementation of audits, without reference to quantitative or percentage.
2023
GRI 3-3 GRI 11.20.1 (management of material topic: anti-corruption) Detailed description of the anti-corruption policy in force with characteristics of other internal regulations. Measure: number of policies (22).
GRI 3-3 GRI 11.18.1 (Managing a relevant topic: conflicts and security) Description of security regulations and reference to risk management in this regard.
GRI 11.18.2 (Percentage of personnel responsible for ensuring security trained in the organisation's policies and procedures on various aspects of human rights related to its operations.) Measure: 100% of security personnel have familiarised themselves with the Code of Ethics and Regulations against Bullying, Discrimination and All Forms of Harassment. The indicator monitoring the process of improving staff preparation increased from (82.67%) in 2022 to (83.29%).
GRI 11.20.2 (Percentage and total number of operations assessed for risks related to corruption; identified risks) Measure: Number of risks (3), including an indication of the number of processes identified in each type of risk (A-36; B-23; C-3). The number of risk assessments conducted at Orlen SA (521), the number of tested controls (992) in (165) business processes, similarly, in the Group (638) (1607) (183). The ERM system covered 10% of the Group's companies. Detailed description of actions taken, their scope and location.
GRI 11.20.3 (Communication and training about anti-corruption policies and procedures) Measure: Indication in percentage terms of internal audiences to whom anti-corruption policies and procedures were presented (100%) governing bodies, employees, business partners, indication in percentage terms of people who were trained in this area (100%).
GRI 11.20.4 (Confirmed incidents of corruption and actions taken) Measure: The total number and nature of corruption cases, dismissals for this reason, termination of contracts. One court case against employees under Art. 305 of the Criminal Code (the company has the status of a victim). In each case, the Group found none.
GRI 11.20.5 (Transparency of contracts and licences) Measure: Use of Dok-system. The contracting procedure, the draft contract, is coordinated with various units, including legal, finance, tax and controlling departments, before being concluded.
GRI 11.20.6 (List of actual owner-beneficiaries) Measure: Rules for organising the process of verification of contractors.

Source: own compilation based on analysis of reports on non-financial information from the ORLEN (n.d.).

As can be seen from the analysis of the content presented in the table, the use of numerical, percentage, or possibly descriptive metrics (in accordance with the GRI guidelines) increases the comparability of information, enables an objective assessment of the entity's activities in each area, and enhances the transparency of the entity, which can translate into the way it is perceived by stakeholders. It is worth noting that this area of surveyed information has been significantly modified, but will require further standardisation. This justifies the need for continued research, and the evaluation of the reporting practices of other entities could enable the development of an information model in the area of anti-corruption measures taken. Reliability, comprehensibility, and comparability of information could increase business security, contributing to stakeholder confidence.

Risk management is another important topic area regarding the entity's activity in applying the anti-corruption policy. The Orlen Group has been identifying three types of risks since 2018, and from 2019 their characteristics are still developing, slightly affecting their overall

perception. A greater change in the reporting of risk information is evident in reports prepared from 2020. The measurement of risks, the assessment of their materiality, the changes after the application of control mechanisms and the probability of their occurrence are presented in the study, and the information is shown in tables and figures. Details can be seen in Table 9.4. The report also presents a detailed structure of the risk management system, along with the roles that each unit plays in the system.

Table 9.4. Information on Orlen SA's risk management against corruption and bribery

Risk description	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Fraud and other Misconduct (A)						
Detailed characteristics of the risk	Accepting financial benefits property from potential suppliers. Conflict of interest in making transactions.	Accepting financial benefits property from potential suppliers. Conflict of interest in making deals. Disclosure of confidential information. Falsification of information management or other documents.	Accepting financial benefits property from potential suppliers. Conflict of interest in making deals. Disclosure of confidential information. Falsification of information management or other documents.	Accepting financial benefits property from potential suppliers. Conflict of interest in making deals. Disclosure of confidential information. Falsification of information management or other documents.	Accepting financial benefit property from potential suppliers. Conflict of interest in making deals. Disclosure of confidential information. Falsification of information management or other documents.	Accepting financial benefits property from potential suppliers. Conflict of interest in making deals. Disclosure of confidential information. Falsification of information management or other documents.
Risk mitigation methods	Limited access to bids, monitoring of confirmation of impartiality to potential suppliers, supervision of the path acceptance path of supplier selection.	Methods of 2018, in addition, regulated and limited access to company-secret information, procedures for verifying documentation and management information.	Methods of 2018, in addition, regulated and limited access to company-secret information, procedures for verifying documentation and management information.	Methods of 2018, in addition, regulated and limited access to company-secret information, procedures for verifying documentation and management information.	Methods of 2018, in addition, regulated and limited access to company-secret information, procedures for verifying documentation and management information.	Methods of 2018, in addition, regulated and limited access to company-secret information, procedures for verifying documentation and management information.
Risk development trend	–	–	stable	stable	stable	stable
Materiality – the level of risk	–	–	average	average	average	average
The level of risk taking into account the control mechanisms used	–	–	low	low	low	low
Probability of occurrence	–	–	decrease (2-2)	decrease (2-2)	decrease (2-2)	decrease (2-2)

[illegible]

Risk mitigation methods	Periodic inspections of fuel stations and terminals, overseeing the ordering and issuance of product awards in accordance with regulations.	Periodic inspections of fuel stations, terminals, verification and monitoring of reports on compliance. Automatic process of blocking and unblocking of sales orders for customers.	Periodic inspections of fuel stations, terminals, verification and monitoring of reports on compliance. Automatic process of blocking and unblocking of sales orders for customers.	Periodic inspections of fuel stations, terminals, verification and monitoring of reports on compliance. Automatic process of blocking and unblocking of sales orders for customers.	Periodic inspections of fuel stations, terminals, verification and monitoring of reports on compliance. Automatic process of blocking and unblocking of sales orders for customers.	Periodic inspections of fuel stations, terminals, verification and monitoring of reports on compliance. Automatic process of blocking and unblocking of sales orders for customers.
Risk development trend	–	–	stable	stable	failing	stable
Materiality – the level of risk	–	–	average	average	average	average
The level of risk taking into account the control mechanisms used	–	–	low	low	low	low
Probability of occurrence	–	–	significant reduction (3-2)	significant reduction (3-2)	constant (1-1)	constant (1-1)

Source: own compilation based on analysis of reports on non-financial information from Orlen (n.d.).

Analysing the content of the table, one can see a trend of change similar to that in other areas, with the scope of disclosure being limited in the first periods, then increasing to take a stable form from 2020 onwards. The apparent stability in the approach to risk management means that in the Orlen Group the policy in this area has been formed and has not changed for years. This raises the question of whether, along with a change in the approach to corporate reporting, there should be a change in the approach to managing the risk of corruption fraud, or would this area similarly be monitored and controlled, whether there was an obligation to report it or not? However, a good signal, worth reiterating, is the changes in internal regulations. The entity regularly updates policies, takes into account changes resulting from external legislative changes and observations of other entities' practices. It should be remembered that the mere quantity of these does not necessarily imply quality, and the mere development of them does not necessarily imply their implementation, hence it would be worthwhile to measure the degree of implementation of such solutions. The question remains whether this would translate into risk minimisation and greater efficiency, thereby contributing to preventive action, preventing these phenomena. The fact is that with reliable reporting, the revealed issue can be investigated, monitored, analysed, and evaluated, which is important for the business environment.

Finally, note that the qualitative analysis of the report content should be complemented by an analysis and evaluation of the way the information is presented, in which narrative description predominates, over time supplemented by diagrams, tables, figures, which also increases the number of pages in the report. Effective communication with stakeholders requires greater flexibility as to the variety of forms of content presentation (narrative, numerical, pictorial). Stakeholders' information needs are different, as well as their

knowledge, experience, skills, sensitivity to perception. Meeting these needs therefore becomes crucial to effective communication.

9.5. Discussion

The analysis and evaluation of the content of the reports enabled the hypotheses set for the study to be adopted. According to the author, the reporting of information on counteracting corruption and bribery increases the information potential of the examined entity and its structure is evolving, and this development was influenced by non-financial reporting standards implemented in the Polish legislation. The objective of diagnosing the anti-corruption information reporting practice of the selected entity (Orlen Group and Orlen SA) was achieved. For the results of the study to be representative and for the diagnosis of reporting practices to include other industries and a representative research sample, conclusions and recommendations were formulated.

Conclusions from the analysis of the case study made it possible to identify aspects of non-financial reporting on anti-corruption subject to the assessment, considered when building the assessment questionnaire (research tool) used to collect data in the next stage of the study, to include:

- analysis of the number of disclosures in each area, together with the change in the number of disclosures of the other areas of information and of the report as a whole (number of pages, number of characters, percentage range – possibility of examining a trend);
- analysis of the degree of compliance – examination of the compliance of non-financial reports with the guidelines in terms of the applicable legislation;
- analysis of the types of internal regulations in the field of anti-corruption and the degree of their implementation (number, links, assessment of the degree of implementation, e.g. in percentage terms);
- evaluation of the type of thematic areas with detailed analysis of the way the information is presented (qualitative study in terms of evaluation of the degree of comprehensibility, clarity, usefulness, and forms of presentation – narrative description, numerical, tabular, graphic – photos, drawings, diagrams, according to the adopted scale);
- analysis of the degree of detail of the information (qualitative analysis according to the adopted scale, e.g. evaluation scale 1-5, where 1 – the degree of detail of the information is the lowest, 5 – the degree of detail is the highest);
- evaluation of the type and scope of indicators used in relation to the GRI standards (measuring the effects of the implementation of the anti-corruption policy – type of indicators, measures and units used).

It is recommended that a universal information model is developed around anti-corruption, the implementation of which in the non-financial reporting of entities from different industries, with different specificities of activity increasing the usefulness of non-financial reporting.

Finally, it should be emphasised that an assessment of the reliability of the presented information is not possible based on the reporting alone, it requires an examination of the entity through the prism of other information to which access is not always possible. Hence the introduction of an obligation to examine non-financial information carried out by audit firms or to assess the entity's reputation in the economic market. The example of the Orlen Group companies and Orlen SA itself, entities subjected to evaluation in the eyes of experts and the public, appears to be an appropriate example in the context of the possibility to

compare the adopted subjective opinions with the anti-corruption information that the company publishes in its reports.

9.6. Conclusions

The conclusions of the preliminary study allow for the adoption of the hypotheses set for the studied entity and are necessary for the study proper, the purpose of which was realised, the reporting practice for the selected entity diagnosed, whilst the information areas and the way to evaluate them in the proper study were proposed, and the solutions for reporting anti-corruption information recommended, however the disclosures were not always sufficient for the environment and do not always meet the information requirements of stakeholders. The research continues on a group of Polish listed companies, and the conclusions of this study provide the basis for further analysis and evaluation, the results of which will be published in the next study. It is also acknowledged that examining only entities from Poland may be a limitation, hence the recommendation to conduct the analysis on analogous groups of companies from other countries, in particular the Visegrád countries (4V).

In conclusion, it is important to stress that the results from the survey have socio-economic relevance, because corruption negatively affects economic development and social trust. These can be translated into non-financial reporting practices in other countries with similar development conditions (for example, the 4V countries), using the same survey questionnaire. The anti-corruption diagnosis presented in the non-financial reports supports the building of a more ethical business environment. Additionally, in terms of application, the diagnosis of the situation will identify a gap in reporting, but also reveal good reporting practices exemplary for other companies. This is particularly important in the context of the legislative changes introduced for Polish enterprises. The European Union published the CSRD Directive which entered into force in January 2023. In Poland this was implemented into the Polish legal order as of 1 January 2025 in accordance with the provisions of the Act of 17 December 2024 on the amendment of the Accounting Act, the Act on Statutory Auditors, Audit Firms and Public Supervision and some other acts (Ustawa z dnia 29 września 1994...), which are the most recent at this point. This will translate into transparency as a value, on non-financial sustainability reporting issues, expected from companies by their stakeholders.

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