

Rethinking Human Capital Management in the Age of Generation Z

Tomasz Kawka
Srećko Goić
Joaquim Pinto Contreiras
Diogo E. Matias Bento

Rethinking Human Capital Management in the Age of Generation Z

A CROSS-CULTURAL
PERSPECTIVE
FROM POLAND
CROATIA
AND PORTUGAL

Gdańsk University Press
Gdańsk 2025

Reviewer

Dr hab. Tomasz Rostkowski, prof. SGH

Proofreading

Joanna Miler-Cassino

Technical Editor

Anna Roman

Cover and Title Pages Design

Filip Sendal

Typesetting and Page Layout

Maksymilian Biniakiewicz

This book is financed by the Vice-Rector for Research
at the University of Gdańsk as part of the Gdańsk Humanities Programme

© Copyright by Uniwersytet Gdański, 2025

Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Gdańskiego

ISBN 978-83-8206-791-0

Gdańsk University Press

ul. Armii Krajowej 119/121, 81-824 Sopot

tel. +48 58 523 11 37, tel. kom. +48 725 991 206

e-mail: wydawnictwo@ug.edu.pl

wydawnictwo.ug.edu.pl

Online bookstore: wydawnictwo.ug.edu.pl/sklep/

Printed and bound by

Zakład Poligrafii Uniwersytetu Gdańskiego

ul. Armii Krajowej 119/121, 81-824 Sopot

tel. +48 58 523 14 49

Table of contents

Preface	9
INTRODUCTION	10
CHAPTER 1	
Responding to Changes: The Evolution of the HR Function	16
1.1. Operational Model of Personnel Management: The Early 20th Century (Taylorist and Fordist Era)	17
1.2. The Human Relations Movement – Transformation of the Personnel Function from the 1930s to the 1980s	20
1.3. Strategic Human Resource Management – Transformation of the Personnel Function in the 1980s and 1990s: The Resource-Based Approach	23
1.4. The Human Capital Model: A Contemporary Strategic Approach (Since 2000)	27
CHAPTER 2	
Generational Differences in the Context of Contemporary Human Capital Management	38
2.1. The Essence and Significance of Generational Identity	38
2.2. Characteristics of Generational Cohorts	41
2.3. Generational Specificities in the Context of Contemporary Labour Market Challenges	48
2.4. Focus on Generation Z: Key Challenges and Strategic Implications for Human Capital Management	51
2.5. Intergenerational Management	53
CHAPTER 3	
Key Components and Determinants of Human Capital Management in the Age of Generation Z	55
3.1. The Key Determinants	55
3.2. Organisational Culture Centred on Purpose and Values for Gen Z	58

3.3. Flexible and Hybrid Work Models	59
3.4. Personalised Development and Continuous Learning	61
3.5. Digital-First Employee Experience	62
3.6. Mental Health and Well-Being Integration	63
3.7. Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) as a Norm, Not Trend	64
3.8. Feedback-Driven Performance Management.....	65
3.9. Employer Branding and Authentic Communication	67
3.10. Leadership Style: Empathetic and Inclusive	68
3.11. HCM Model for Gen Z	69

CHAPTER 4

Organisational Culture Typologies and Their Impact

on HCM Practices.....	73
4.1. Defining Organisational Culture	73
4.2. Four Types of Organisational Culture According to the Competing Values Framework by Cameron & Quinn	75
4.3. Where Values Meet Strategy: How Culture Shapes Human Capital Management.....	78
4.4. HR/HCM Practices from the Perspective of the Clan Culture.....	80
4.5. HR/HCM Practices from the Perspective of the Adhocracy Culture	81
4.6. HR/HCM Practices from the Perspective of the Hierarchy Culture.....	81
4.7. HR/HCM Practices from the Perspective of the Market Culture	82

CHAPTER 5

Organisational Culture as a Framework

for Managing Generational Diversity	85
5.1. Generational Shifts and Their Cultural Implications.....	85
5.2. Matching Culture to Gen Z Needs in Organisations.....	87

CHAPTER 6

Cultural Dimensions of the Labour Market in Poland,

Croatia, and Portugal: A Hofstede Model Perspective.....	92
6.1. Hofstede Legacy	92
6.1.1. Power Distance Index (PDI)	94
6.1.2. Individualism vs. Collectivism (IDV)	95
6.1.3. Masculinity (MAS)	95
6.1.4. Uncertainty Avoidance Index (UAI).....	96
6.1.5. Long-Term Orientation (LTO).....	96
6.1.6. Indulgence vs. Restraint (IVR)	96
6.2. Hofstede Perspective for Poland, Croatia, and Portugal	97
6.3. Comparative Analysis of Organisational Cultures in Poland, Spain, and Portugal Using the Competing Values Framework	98

CHAPTER 7

The Case of Poland: Transforming the Labour Market and Organisational Culture.....	102
---	------------

CHAPTER 8

The Case of Poland: Labour Market Dynamics in the Context of Generation Z	112
8.1. Demographic Profile of Generation Z in Poland	112
8.2. Labor Market Participation of Generation Z	113
8.3. Labour Market Trends and Challenges for Generation Z in Poland	115

CHAPTER 9

The Case of Croatia: Labour Market Overview.....	125
9.1. Demographic Trends and Labour Force Dynamics	127
9.2. Unemployment Trends and Labour Market Tightness	132
9.3. Labour Market Characteristics	136
9.4. Policy Responses and Labour Market Reforms	138
9.5. Challenges and Future Outlook	139

CHAPTER 10

The Case of Croatia: Labour Market Dynamics in the Context of Generation Z	142
10.1. Youth Labour Market Outcomes: Unemployment and Inactivity	142
10.2. Barriers to Youth Employment.....	145
10.3. Policy Responses and Active Labour Market Measures	146
10.4. Outcomes and Remaining Challenges	147
10.5. Recommendations and Future Directions.....	147

CHAPTER 11

The Case of Portugal: Labour Market Dynamics in the Context of Generation Z	149
11.1. The Portuguese Economy: Retrospective, Current Situation and Future Prospects	149
11.2. Gen Z on Labour Market in Portugal	153
11.3. Culture Fit to Cameron Quinn Model	164

CHAPTER 12

Cross-Country Comparison of Determinants in the Labour Market for Generation Z.....	167
12.1. Percentage of Active Population by Gender and School Level	168
12.2. Percentage of Active Population with Higher Education by Gender (Aged 15–24)	170
12.3. Employed Population Trends	172

12.4. Consumer Price Index	174
12.5. Emigration Trends	176
12.6. Total Employees per Professional Group	177
12.7. Job Group Distribution per Gender	179
12.8. Conclusions	181

CHAPTER 13

Research Model and Presentation of Survey Results	184
13.1. Research Model	184
13.2. Research Hypotheses	185
13.3. Research Methodology	185
13.4. Research Instrument	186
13.5. Sample Characteristics	187
13.6. Time and Place of the Study	187
13.7. Data Analysis Approach	188
13.8. Cultural and Organisational Attitudes and Behaviour	196
13.9. Assessment of the Relevance of Career Success Factors	200
13.10. Cross Result Discussion	201
13.11. General Conclusion – Quo Vadis: HCM and Gen Z Workforce	203

CHAPTER 14

Final Findings and Future Recommendations	205
14.1. Integrating Empirical Insights into the Future of Human Capital Management	205
14.2. Human Capital Management in a Cross-Cultural and Generational Context	206
14.2.1. Digital Fluency and Human-AI Symbiosis, Technology and Human Capital Transformation	207
14.2.2. Work-Life Integration and Mental Resilience	208
14.2.3. Inclusive Leadership and DEI Beyond Symbolism	208
14.2.4. Reconfiguration of Organisational Culture	209
14.2.5. Career Personalisation and Developmental Transparency	209
14.3. Rethinking HCM: Preparing for Generation Z in the Workforce	210
14.3.1. HCM and Employee Wellbeing Management	212
14.3.2. Technology Integration in HCM	213
14.3.3. Measuring the Effectiveness of HCM Practices	213
14.3.4. HCM and Intellectual Capital Management	214
Summary	216
References	218