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## Central Eastern European Landscape: Optimistic Czech and Pessimistic Polish Employees

*Czech employees are the most optimistic in the region while Polish are the most desperate; still Microsoft in Poland has been ranked in the first place in the regional Best Employers Study.*

**BUDAPEST – Hewitt Associates, a global human resources (HR) services provider, has just announced the results of the Best Employers Study in the Central and Eastern European region today. Hewitt surveyed 51 761 employees at 205 companies in 4 Central Eastern European countries regarding their quality of workplace in 2005. Hungarian, Czech, Polish and Austrian companies participated in the competition, racing for the title of the „Best Employers”. Microsoft in Poland is ranked first in the competition; the dominance of the service sector is tangible. No doubt, the war for talent has begun.**

Hewitt Associates has been conducting Best Employers studies for nearly a decade. During this time, Hewitt has evaluated the opinions of more than 750,000 employees worldwide from more than 2000 companies. Of these, 200 000 employees were from Europe, with more than 500 companies participating in the studies. The results may be used as an effective tool by the human resources experts and the leaders of the companies, during the development of the plans targeting the retaining of the employees and the improvement of their engagement and satisfaction. For the 2006 survey, Hewitt is expecting the participation of several hundred companies.

### HVG-Hewitt Best Employers Study 2006

Hewitt and the economic weekly HVG have been conducting the Best Employers Study with the protectorate of the Ministry of Employment and Labour.

The participation is free of charge for all companies.

The last years showed that not only the best companies should apply for the study, as all participants get tangible information about employee engagement and the efficiency of the human resources systems.

Performance in focus – what turns average results to outstanding achievements? Find out by nominating your company for the 2006 study!

Companies may still apply until the 15<sup>th</sup> June; further information can be found on the website: [www.legjobbmunkahely.hu](http://www.legjobbmunkahely.hu) or [www.bestemployerstudy.com](http://www.bestemployerstudy.com)

Argentina  
Australia  
Austria  
Belgium  
Brazil  
Canada  
Channel Islands  
Chile  
China  
Czech Republic  
France  
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Greece  
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Hungary  
India  
Ireland  
Italy  
Japan  
Malaysia  
Mauritius  
Mexico  
Netherlands  
Philippines  
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Singapore  
South Africa  
South Korea  
Spain  
Sweden  
Switzerland  
Thailand  
United Kingdom  
United States  
Venezuela

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Organizations employing more than 50 people with operations in the given country for at least two years are welcome to submit their application to the survey free of charge. For the first time this year, the survey will take place in 10 Central and Eastern European countries: Hungary, Bulgaria, Russia, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Slovenia, Turkey, Poland, Austria and Croatia.

## **The results of the Best Employers Study**

The dominance of the service companies on the list is conspicuous: 11 firms from the Best Employers are operating in the service sector (6 in IT/Telecom, 1 in the bank sector, 3 in the field of other services and 1 in media). „Every second Central Eastern European company feels that in the next years it will be a challenge to find, secure and retain the best and most talented workforce. It is not surprising that the need of talent is felt mostly by the companies in the human capital intensive sectors, so they consciously try to be a good workplace. They have no choice, as they have to maintain the level of service and remain in the competition”, says Rita Veres, business branch manager of Hewitt, the leader of the Best Employers Study in Central-Eastern Europe.

The Best Employers in the region show the “same level of quality”, the high engagement of employees is common among the Best Employers. Still each of them has its own characteristics that make them exceptional. There is no one universal Best Employer that would be a perfect choice for each and every employee. Still some of the Best Employers on the list have proven that it’s not impossible to become a “multi-country” Best Employer, like Microsoft, GlaxoSmithKline or Merck which have been Best Employers in several countries.

## **What makes a Best Employer, how to engage your people?**

Senior Leaders have more responsibility than one would think. Making wise investment decisions, manoeuvring narrow resources, managing shareholder relations, and standing the media is a great challenge in itself. But still, it’s not enough.. People, handling the machinery, using and developing company know how, and creating the added value for the Clients are the most important asset the company needs to manage – the numbers reflect that only 26% of employees feel treated like the most important asset at regular firms, while Best Employers reach 58%. Regardless of the country, regardless of the culture, relationship between senior leaders and employees appears to be a key factor in

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developing an engaged workforce. Open-doors policy, approachable leaders, listening to employee opinions and suggestions creates the positive “everyone counts” environment, which is responsible for higher business results. Our data shows that 72% of people feel the Leaders treat them fairly at Best Employers, while only 48% at others. People being listened to for their opinion tend to expect positive changes, paying attention to responding their suggestions yields the inevitable *trust* between parties who rely on each other: a successful company and its employees. Only 33% of employees feel, senior leaders care about employee opinions, and this rate at the Best employers are almost double.

## **Measure, reward, and boost performance.**

Only a company with a high performing workforce can perform high on the business aspects. Measuring people performance regularly, and aligning the company and individual goals keeps employees place company goals to first place. If their contribution is rewarded – both morally and fiscally – they tend to perform well in the next year as well, as pay proportionate ness to performance is among the first areas that increase people engagement. (*Recognition for performance* yields 20-30% more satisfied employees at the Best Employers.) Cooperation between organizational units, “oiled machinery” characterize 59% of Best Employers, only 32% at other companies feel they receive aid and freedom to bring the most out of their workplace.

## **The Landscape of the Region**

The four countries in the region have some common virtues and sins; still there are some eye-catching differentiating factors among countries.

The people working in the region generally are the most satisfied with the relations with their colleagues, their work environment and the support of their boss. The only problem is that the above-mentioned factors only help someone not to leave his/her workplace, but these are not enough to motivate someone, to inspire towards a better performance.

The workplaces of the region uniformly demonstrate the fields with the highest level of dissatisfaction: performance related pay and the lack of appealing career possibilities seem to be unavoidable problems at most of the workplaces. Naturally the above-mentioned factors may be treated as bottlenecks in the life of the company – there are no unlimited

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numbers of positions to satiate the career thirst of the staff and the payment demands are possibly also impossible to meet. But it is a question, why do not get the workers moral appreciation for their performance? – Almost every fourth employee clearly states, that he/she hardly gets any pecuniary compensation for his well-done work, but not enough praise, even.

On the other hand, the diversity is clearly visible from the results of the Study: while Czech workers are the most optimistic concerning their workplace, Polish and Hungarian employees are the most pessimistic. On the top of that Hungarian employees can be characterized by “greener grass across the fence” mentality. Employees’ engagement is more and more influenced by the perception of the company as compared to others. Therefore their engagement is looser: they keep the doors open, they are more ready for even a sudden change. For the Czech and Polish employees, company reputation is a key retaining factor, while for Austrians and Hungarians the love of profession seems to have more importance. Austrian employees are the ones who tend to have long term plans with their companies. It seems that it’s easier for Austrian employees to find the balance between their work and personal commitment. Austrians find their way to accomplish themselves in their work. Surely this phenomenon contributes to the fact that they are willing to devote themselves to their workplace even for longer term.

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| Rank | Company Name   | Country        | Headcount | Industry/Scope of operation             |
|------|--|----------------|-----------|---|
| 1    | Microsoft Poland   | Poland         | 148       | IT                                      |
| 2    | Sanoma Magazines Praha s.r.o.  | Czech Republic | 223       | Media                                   |
| 3    | EVAT - Eger Trust and District Heating Private Company Limited by Shares | Hungary        | 113       | Utility                                 |
| 4    | Sun Microsystems Czech s.r.o.  | Czech Republic | 400       | IT                                      |
| 5    | ComAp, spol. s r.o.  | Czech Republic | 76        | Electronics                             |
| 6    | GlaxoSmithKline Pharma (GSK)   | Hungary        | 196       | Pharmaceuticals                         |
| 7    | Storck Sp. z o.o   | Poland         | 140       | FMCG                                    |
| 8    | MAVIR Hungarian Transmission System Operator Company Ltd.                | Hungary        | 182       | Utility                                 |
| 9    | Merck GmbH   | Austria        | 270       | Pharmaceuticals                         |
| 10   | British American Tobacco (Czech Republic), s.r.o.                        | Czech Republic | 104       | FMCG                                    |
| 11   | Nextent Information Technologies   | Hungary        | 62        | IT                                      |
| 12   | Varpex Ltd.  | Hungary        | 105       | Construction                            |
| 13   | AVAYA Hungary Ltd.   | Hungary        | 110       | IT                                      |
| 14   | Bundy Bundy GmbH   | Austria        | 180       | Services                                |
| 15   | Hübner & Hübner Steuerberatung GmbH & CO KEG                             | Austria        | 140       | Consulting                              |
| 16   | The Central Bank of Hungary  | Hungary        | 929       | Central Bank                            |
| 17   | MICROSOFT s.r.o.   | Czech Republic | 271       | IT                                      |
| 18   | GlaxoSmithKline, s.r.o. (Pharmaceuticals)                                | Czech Republic | 207       | Pharmaceuticals                         |
| 19   | KÜRT Information Management Corp.  | Hungary        | 70        | IT/ Data Recovery, Information Security |
| 20   | Faurecia FS Sp. z o.o.   | Poland         | 1347      | Automotives                             |

## About Hewitt Associates

With more than 60 years of experience, Hewitt Associates (NYSE: HEW) is the world's foremost provider of human resources outsourcing and consulting services. The firm consults with more than 2,300 companies and administers human resources, health care, payroll and retirement programmes on behalf of more than 300 companies to millions of employees and pensioners worldwide. Located in 35 countries, Hewitt employs approximately 22,000 associates. For more information, please visit: [www.hewitt.com](http://www.hewitt.com).



## Best Employers

Central Eastern European Study 2006