

## SECTION I

# **Turbulent Environment**



# Introduction

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The landscape of business all around the world may today be characterized by one word: *turbulent*. Turbulent, because there are many uncertainties and threats related to political, legal, economic, social and ecological factors. Among these factors, ecological factors act silently and businesses tend to ignore them. Often, businesses invoke economic or social pressure when they postpone measures meant to protect the environment or to change their operations to be more pro-ecological. However, in the last decades, more and more businesses started to consider ecological factors in the core of their activity. Ignoring ecological factors from the business strategy means transforming *turbulence* from an acute to a chronic state.

This section provides a series of business case studies from Romania, Poland and Ukraine. The case studies present situations that show what the attitude towards pro-ecological behaviour is and what the barriers for encouraging or discouraging pro-ecological conduct are.

The first case study presents a situation where political factors have intervened in changing the law following pressure from different interest groups. There are situations in which laws related to environmental protection are considered too strict or impossible to apply because they induce economic burden. The case study describes the pressures exercised by large retailers from Romania

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because of a tax on recycling waste, and it demonstrated that companies have rather a reactive than a proactive attitude towards pro-ecological action when environmental protection is seen mostly as a cost, not a competitive advantage.

The second case study presented in this section shows a different situation: how a Ukrainian company strengthened its competitive position on the international egg market by adapting to the consumers' needs and by integrating international ecological standards into its production process. In this case, the company understood the importance of the ecological dimension and how this is a competitive advantage.

The third case study aims to evaluate a small Polish company's (including both the employees and management) awareness of the impact of technology on the pro-ecological decisions taken in the restructured enterprise. Using a survey and in-depth interviews, the study concluded that ecological awareness is demonstrated through management decisions and actions. However, most employees need further information about the pro-ecological measures, which could be provided through individual talks, an informational campaign about pro-ecological steps, or through the very simple method of using posters concerning the basic economic operations of the company.