



CSR IN THE EUROPEAN UNION

Recent Developments
and
Future Plans

RECENT DEVELOPMENTS



- Lisbon European Council (March, 2000)
- Green Paper on “Promoting a European Framework for Corporate Social Responsibility” (July, 2001)
- EC Communication on “Corporate Social Responsibility: A business contribution to Sustainable Development” (2002)
- EC Communication on “Making Europe a Pole of Excellence on Corporate Social Responsibility” (March, 2006)

EUROPEAN ALLIANCE FOR CSR



- Voluntary alliance for enterprises
- Objectives:
 - promote CSR as a business opportunity creating win-win situations for companies
 - forming new partnerships among CSR promoters
 - Establishing a basis for mobilizing the resources and capacities of businesses and stakeholders
- Business contribution to achieving the goals of the re-launched Lisbon Strategy and the revised Sustainable Development Strategy of the European Union.

EUROPEAN ALLIANCE FOR CSR



FOCAL AREAS:

- Raising awareness and improving knowledge on CSR:
 - Exchange and disseminate best practices and tools;
 - Promote multi-disciplinary research on CSR at European level;
 - Integration of CSR related topics in the university curricula.
- Ensuring an enabling environment for CSR through:
 - Taking advantage of equivalent alliances developed at national level; and
 - Supporting the organization of review meetings with all stakeholders to evaluate the progress made in relation to the recommendations of the European Multi-stakeholder Forum on CSR and of other trends, developments and innovations in that respect.

EUROPEAN ALLIANCE FOR CSR



FOCAL AREAS:

- Mainstreaming and developing coalitions of cooperation through:
 - Fostering innovation and entrepreneurship in sustainable technologies, products and services addressing societal needs;
 - Supporting SME development;
 - Assisting enterprises to integrate social and environmental considerations in their business operations in supply chains;
 - Improving working conditions;
 - Promoting innovation in the environmental field
 - Enhancing pro-active dialogue
 - Addressing the transparency and communication challenges
 - Operating outside the borders of the European Union.

FUTURE OUTLOOK



KEY AREAS OF FUTURE CSR DEVELOPMENT

- Awareness-raising and best practice exchange:
 - emphasizing on SMEs and on Member States where CSR is a less spread, as well as in acceding and candidate countries.
 - Promotion of voluntary environmental instruments (environmental management systems, the Eco-label scheme)
 - create awareness on the impact of consumption and investment choices of citizens.
- Support to multi-stakeholder initiatives
- Cooperation with Member States and acceding countries
- Consumer information and transparency
- Research
- Education
- SMEs
- International dimension of CSR

EU'S APPROACH TOWARDS CSR IN SMES



- SMEs are the predominant form of enterprise (absolute numbers, contribution to GDP, contribution to employment)
- Importance of encouraging these companies to engage in the CSR movement
- CSR in supply chains
- Need for SME-specific tools and appropriate support schemes

EU'S APPROACH TOWARDS CSR IN SMES



- Promoting CSR amongst SMEs → one of the priority areas of EU policy on CSR
- The European Commission's Green Paper on CSR
 - highlighted the need to involve SMEs in the debate and to promote CSR among those enterprises throughout Europe. This strategic direction is also important to countries in that are interested in joining the EU.
- Project on “Mainstreaming CSR among SMEs”
 - aims at assisting entities that support the uptake of CSR among SMEs (*small business advisors, SME representative organisations, trade/sector organisations, chambers of commerce, larger companies that work with SME suppliers, as well as public authorities, trade unions and NGOs*).

EU'S APPROACH TOWARDS CSR IN SMES



- Project on 'Responsible Entrepreneurship'
 - launched in 2002 by the European Commission
 - compiled a collection of case studies from SMEs across Europe, providing evidence that small businesses can and do practice CSR, and that doing so helps them to become more successful.
- 'Pan-European Awareness Raising Campaign on CSR for SMEs'
 - Supported by the European Association of Chambers of Commerce and UEAPME (European Association of Craft, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises)
 - produced an introductory toolkit on CSR for SMEs