



## **RESULTS OF MAJOR RESEARCH PROJECT ON CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY**

### **INSEAD and the European Academy of Business in Society (EABIS) Announce Important Findings at Conference 12 October in Fontainebleau, France**

**Brussels, Belgium**, 9 October 2007 – The European Academy of Business in Society (EABIS), Europe's reference point for corporate responsibility knowledge development and learning and leading Business School INSEAD, together with Copenhagen Business School, Bocconi University, the Leon Kozminski Academy and IMPACT, will announce the findings of Project RESPONSE, a unique, three-year, European Union -sponsored global research project on Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), at a conference to be held Friday, 12 October 2007 at the INSEAD Europe campus in Fontainebleau, France.

More than 150 senior representatives are expected to attend and engage in an in-depth dialogue on RESPONSE's pioneering results and what they mean to corporate leaders, stakeholders, policy-makers and future scholars. Prominent speakers include **Günter Verheuegn**, EU Commission Vice President and Commissioner of Directorate General Enterprise; **Richard Evans**, CEO, Alcan; **Jean Philippe Courtois**, Chairman, Microsoft International; **Sandy Ogg**, Chief Human Resources Officer & Global Board Member, Unilever; **Lise Kingo**, Executive Vice President & Chief of Staffs, Novo Nordisk; **Mario Monti**, former EU Commissioner, President of Bocconi University; **Frank Brown**, Dean, INSEAD; **Simon Zadek**, CEO, AccountAbility; **Chris Marsden**, Chair, Amnesty International Business Group; **Gilbert Lenssen**, President, EABIS.

RESPONSE marks the first attempt to systematically investigate, quantify and explain the gap between managers and stakeholders in terms of their understanding of a company's responsibilities towards society and to advance evidence-based knowledge of how companies can better align their managers' decisions and behaviour with the role society expects of them.

"RESPONSE addresses questions that are at the very heart of European policy on CSR. The findings should provide sound evidence base for companies to combine a progressive approach to sustainability with high performance and competitiveness" said Günter Verheuegn, Vice-President and Commissioner for Enterprise and Industry European Commission.

Gilbert Lenssen, President EABIS, added "Project RESPONSE is the most comprehensive CSR study ever done in terms of its research design. EABIS is pleased to support the academic research team in its efforts to learn more about how to make the relationship between business and society a productive one."

RESPONSE advocates that closing the gap between managers' and stakeholders' understanding of what constitutes their company's responsibility towards society will require:

- **Rethinking CSR as a fundamental internal change challenge**, rather than simply as a stakeholder engagement one. This challenge involves changes across strategy-making processes, organizational structures and incentive systems, operating procedures and organizational culture, aimed at integrating principles of responsibility and sustainable development.
- **Establishing a new form of in-depth collaboration** among companies and their stakeholders aimed at helping each other design and execute the deep internal change programmes required to embed responsibility in every decision made and each action taken.
- **Focusing on the individual** rather than solely on the organizational aspects of corporate responsibility. Unless and until there is greater understanding about *how* managers can

develop sensitivity about the social impact of their decisions and actions, no real progress can be made on the alignment of business conduct with society's expectations.

- **Changing fundamentally** the way managers are educated, including a shift from standard, awareness-building, executive development approaches to deep introspection and inner change coaching processes

### **A Unique Business/Academic Collaborative Effort**

Project RESPONSE is the flagship research initiative of the European Academy of Business in Society (EABIS) knowledge development and learning programme. It has been carried out through an innovative partnership between EABIS academic members and corporate founding partners IBM, Johnson & Johnson, Microsoft, Shell and Unilever. Supported financially by the European Commission under the Sixth Framework Program, RESPONSE is led by INSEAD in partnership with Copenhagen Business School, SDA Bocconi School of Management, Leon Kozminksi Academy, and IMPACT.

At a time when consensus continues to grow that business needs to be more conscious of society's expectations, the findings of Project RESPONSE show there is still a wide gap between how managers in multinational companies and external stakeholders view the role of business. In many cases, the stakeholder CSR initiatives are surprisingly ineffective in addressing this gap.

The findings are based on 427 interviews, approximately 1,000 questionnaires and direct observations, engaging 20 global companies and 180 stakeholder organisations.

"Project RESPONSE has been a novel, cooperative effort between business and academia which can potentially improve both the way we think about and the way we practice CSR. It has combined academic rigor with managerial relevance to understand the factors that might help businesses and stakeholders to proceed in the same direction" said Frank Brown, Dean of INSEAD.

**For the complete conference program and to register, please visit:**

[www.insead.edu/ibis/events/response](http://www.insead.edu/ibis/events/response)

The summary of key findings are attached (Executive Briefing).

To consult the full report to the European Commission please visit:

[www.insead.edu/ibis/responseproject](http://www.insead.edu/ibis/responseproject).

### **About INSEAD: The Business School for the World**

As one of the world's leading and largest graduate business schools, INSEAD brings together people, cultures and ideas from around the world to change lives and transform organizations. The unique global perspective and multicultural diversity of INSEAD are reflected in all aspects of its research and teaching. Currently, at the school's two comprehensive and fully connected campuses in Asia (Singapore) and Europe (France), 143 renowned faculty members from 31 countries inspire more than 880 MBA participants, 55 executive MBAs, over 7,000 executives and 64 PhD candidates. On both campuses, faculty conduct leading edge research projects with the support of 17 Centres of Excellence. The INSEAD-Wharton Alliance extends the reach of INSEAD business education and research across three continents. More information on INSEAD can be found at [www.insead.edu](http://www.insead.edu).

### **About The European Academy of Business in Society (EABIS)**

Established in 2002 by leading companies and business schools in partnership with the EU Commission, EABIS aims to integrate corporate responsibility into the mainstream of business theory and practice in Europe. EABIS funds collaborative research, education and training projects and hosts numerous events and workshops across Europe to develop more and better knowledge and learning on corporate responsibility. It also leads the EU Commission funded 'European Platform for Excellence on CSR' (CSR Platform) project as the designated centre for excellence on CSR Research under the Sixth Framework Programme. With a European focus, but a global outlook, EABIS' membership currently numbers 80 organisations, spanning four continents and 19 countries. The

network includes some of the world's largest global corporations, such as Shell, Unilever, IBM, Johnson & Johnson and Microsoft and the majority of Europe's top business schools such as INSEAD, IMD, ESADE, IESE and the London Business School. [www.eabis.org](http://www.eabis.org).

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Several of the keynote speakers are available for interview.

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