

EABIS AND ESADE ANNOUNCE RESULTS OF RESEARCH PROJECT EXAMINING THE CORPORATE RESPONSIBILITY POLICIES OF EUROPEAN GOVERNMENTS

The One-Year Study is the First Systematic and Comparative Examination of European Government's Corporate Responsibility Policies

Brussels, Belgium – 29 June 2006—The European Academy of Business in Society (EABIS), Europe's leading alliance on corporate responsibility research, education and training, today announced the public availability of the results of a comprehensive one-year study it has led on the corporate responsibility policies of European governments. The report, which is an output of the broader research project titled "*The Changing Role of Government in Corporate Responsibility*", examines three diverse European government models—Italy, Norway and the United Kingdom—as a sample group to explore each corporate responsibility policies set within the context of the evolving role of government in society.

The research was carried out by ESADE Business School in Spain, the Bocconi School of Management in Italy and the Norwegian School of Management and was funded by EABIS and its five founding business partners (IBM, Johnson & Johnson, Microsoft, Shell and Unilever) as part of EABIS' Corporate Funded Research, Education and Training Programme.

The Practitioners Report and the Relational State

The debate on the role of governments as promoters and drivers of corporate responsibility has been running since the early 1990s and the systematic approach of this research represents the first objective and academic look at the facts and realities of government positions on corporate responsibility in Europe.

As the welfare state model of governance faces increasing pressure from globalisation, competition, environmental issues and changing social needs, states are increasingly being forced into a Relational State model where societal governance is based on a set of increasingly complex and interdependent relationships with businesses, constituencies and civil society organisations. With these new relationships come new expectations which need to be addressed by governments to develop more effective public policies on corporate responsibility.

New Insights for Governments and Society

To help facilitate this new relationship, this research project was designed as an analysis of the socio-economic and environmental indicators that contribute to a better understanding of the specific challenges facing governments as well as broader societal needs. After months of dedicated effort from the ESADE-led international team of academics, various important trends and preliminary conclusions were identified. The results of the research can be used by governments to formulate more effective corporate responsibility policies.

Specifically, these focused on:

- Trends in the perceptions of government role in corporate responsibility
- Drivers for corporate responsibility in public policy
- The legislative versus voluntary approach

- Specific analysis of the Italian, Norwegian and British government's approach to corporate responsibility

According to Josep Maria Lozano, Chair of ESADE's Institute for the Individual, Corporations and Society (IPES), "countries coincide in terms of discourse, but not in terms of practice." Lozano believes that "regarding public policies, to take corporate social responsibility to a future reality, we must be aware of each society's culture and complexity and social context."

"Comparative research on governments' policies and CSR is important from a number of perspectives", said Prof. Gilbert Lenssen, President of EABIS. "Firstly, it allows for further comparative theory building around the various social contracts in existence (and in change) in Europe. Secondly, it allows for comparing the changing role of government in the Business-Society-State social contract triangle. Thirdly it allows for comparative policy research and thus for informing policy development.

"The research focus, methodology and quality of the research of the team have produced an excellent understanding of the current realities, for all their disparities, of European government's policies on corporate responsibility, providing them an ideal opportunity to develop more effective policies for enhancing CSR."

Download the Report

The Practitioners Report is now available to the public at the EABIS [website](#).

About The European Academy of Business in Society

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 on corporate responsibility. It also leads the EU Commission funded 'European Platform for Excellence on CSR' project as the designated centre for excellence on CSR Research under FP6. With a European focus, but a global outlook, EABIS' membership currently spans four continents and 19 countries and includes some of the world's largest global corporations including Shell, Unilever, IBM, Johnson & Johnson and Microsoft and Europe's top business schools such as INSEAD, IMD and the London Business School. www.eabis.org.

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