



PRESS RELEASE

13 June 2013

Transparency and integrity in lobbying practices: a new Corporate Responsibility challenge

The first international study reporting Vigeo's observations
of 745 American and European companies.

Stakeholders are increasingly questioning the transparency and integrity of companies' lobbying practices, which are material Corporate Responsibility challenges.

Investor and NGO coalitions in Europe and North America have launched demanding campaigns, asking companies to report about the contents, objectives, costs and results of their lobbying practices.

In 2010, Vigeo made public its decision to rate « the transparency and integrity of influence strategies and practices » of listed companies. The definition of this new sustainability driver was developed in cooperation with Transparency International France.

Three years later, **Vigeo has analysed and compared how 745 European and American listed companies implement responsible lobbying policies.**

What are the main findings of the study?:

- For all European and American sectors, listed companies still need to improve the transparency and integrity of their influence practices towards elected representatives and decision-makers,
- Companies operating in North America, where the legal context is more demanding for companies, turn out to be more transparent with regards to their influence practices,
- The Electric and Gas industry and the Chemical sector are the most advanced performers.

This study completed by Vigeo includes the principles of action defining corporate responsibility in terms of influence practices.

It also identifies innovative managerial strategies and practices and **provides detailed rankings, by country and by sector, of companies that report evidence of transparency and integrity in their lobbying practices** through their managerial processes.

Fouad Benseddik, Director of Methodology and Institutional Relationships, notes : *«Most companies' lobbying practices are not aligned with their other CSR principles, standards and processes. This gap can be threatening, especially for companies whose social responsibility commitments are the most advanced. Indeed, the credibility of their CSR practices could suffer from it».*

Anne-Marie Ducroux, Member of the Board of Transparency International France adds that *«the study completed by Vigeo points out that, in the USA alone, lobbying expenses have increased by 100% in the past 14% years. As these additional resources are being spent, questions arise over the role these meetings between lobbyist and public policy makers are playing in democratic societies. These practices are increasingly under the watchful eye of society. Despite this, with regards to Corporate Responsibility and democratic challenges, the study reveals predictably weak levels of transparency on lobbying practices.»*

For further information or to receive the complete study, please contact:

For Vigeo :

PARIS	Anita LEGRAND (FR/EN)	+33(0)1 55.82.32.44	anita.legrand@vigeo.com
BRUSSELS	Jordi LESAFFER (FR/NL)	+32.2.206.11.17	jordi.lesaffer@vigeo.com
CASABLANCA	Zineb BELYMAM (FR)	+212.522.87.14.77	zineb.belymam@vigeo.com
LONDON	Lindsay SMART (EN)	+44 (0) 203.402.6401	lindsay.smart@vigeo.com
MILAN	Simonetta BONO (IT)	+39 02 27 72 71 40	simonetta.bono@vigeo.com

For Transparency International France :

PARIS	Julian NEVO (FR/EN)	+33(0)1.84.16.95.65	julian.nevo@transparency-france.org
-------	---------------------	---------------------	--

About Vigeo

Vigeo is the leading European expert in responsible performance. Founded in 2002 and headed by Nicole Notat, Vigeo measures the performances and risks of more than 2000 companies, local and countries in the world with regard to six areas of corporate social responsibility: environment, human rights, human resources, business behavior and corporate governance.

Vigeo offers two lines of services through two business brands:

- *Vigeo rating –the way to responsible investment-* offers a broad range of products and services to investors seeking a sustainable and responsible performance of their investments ;
-
- *Vigeo enterprise –the way to responsible management-* conducts global CSR audits and benchmarks in organizations of all sizes, public and private, support teams and integrate CSR/SRI criteria into business functions and strategic operations.

Vigeo rating's research meets high quality standards and is externally certified to the Arista standard.

Vigeo is present in Paris, Casablanca, Brussels, Milan, London and Tokyo and has more than a hundred employees.

www.vigeo.com

About Transparency International France

Transparency International France is the French section of Transparency International. The global civil society organisation leading the fight against corruption.

Through more than 100 national chapters worldwide and an international secretariat in Berlin, Transparency International works with partners in government, business and civil society to put effective measures in place to tackle corruption.

www.transparency-france.org