

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

What measures are listed companies taking to protect, respect and promote human rights ?

A comparative analysis of corporate strategies in Europe, North America and Asia Pacific

The study analyses the behavior of nearly 1500 north American, European and Asian listed companies regarding the respect for human rights between 2009 and 2012.

This research, based on Vigeo's ratings, reveals that the topic, respect for human rights, is now part of most corporate companies' public discourse. The commitments they take are becoming more and more visible and relevant, as companies show their will to support principles and goals of international conventions announced by UN, ILO and OECD. Despite this, the implementation of measures, such as processes dedicated to respecting human rights, remain modest and often criticized. For instance, this study reveals that almost one company out of five (21.5%) have faced at least one allegation over the past three years related to respecting human rights standards and preventing violations. The analysis highlights that freedom of association and the right to collective bargaining are the fundamental rights least addressed.

The most committed companies are not only able to implement strong risk prevention, but can also positively distinguish themselves in terms of reputation, human capital cohesion, efficiency of their organization and legal security.

The methodology covered the following sustainability drivers:

- Respect for human rights standards and prevention of violations

- Respect for freedom and the right to collective bargaining
- Non-Discrimination and promotion of equality
- Prevention of social dumping in the supply chain

For each driver this study lists the obtained results per region and per sector having analysed each company’s commitments and reported measures, plus the number of companies that faced allegations and the number that undertook corrective measures, as well as highlighting best practices...

Vigeo also identified, for each driver, the 30 companies that demonstrate, through their commitments and management processes, exemplary standards and embody the most advanced performances.

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