

Analysis of national policies on CSR,
in support of a structured exchange of information on national CSR policies and initiatives
(Tender No VT/2005/063)

Introducing the Research Institute for Managing Sustainability and the format of the policy analyses

Research Institute for Managing Sustainability – www.sustainability.at

The Research Institute for Managing Sustainability at the **Vienna University of Economics and Business Administration** is committed to tackling the societal, political and economic challenges which arise in the context of sustainable development (SD) with interdisciplinary approaches in research, education and consulting. It is an independent institute at **Europe's largest Economic University** with no affiliation to political parties, governments, businesses or stakeholder groups.

Our objective is to contribute to the achievement of SD on all societal levels (i.e. on the individual, corporate, municipal, regional, national and international level) by developing and applying scientific insight. By so doing we combine fundamental and application-oriented research in interdisciplinary research projects conducted by national and international teams.

We have been **putting interdisciplinary collaboration into practice** since the very beginning because we believe that complex issues such as SD and CSR require a holistic understanding of the challenges ahead. Our experience shows that holistic solutions result most likely from collaboration between a broad variety of scientists. Depending on the subject, we draw on the diverse expertise of our research team which includes business administrators, political scientists, landscape planners and geographers, our partners from other institutes or departments of the Vienna University of Economics and Business Administration and our national and international network partners.

What we offer:

- § **Research on CSR and SD** – ranging from large-scale EU to small national projects and studies;
- § **Consulting** – for policy makers, public administrators and businesses;
- § **Management of events and processes** – conceptualization, moderation, mediation and organizing stakeholder dialogues and other events in the context of CSR and SD;
- § **Communication** – publications, internet actions (such as www.nachhaltigkeit.at and www.sd-network.eu) and education.

Our strengths in brief:

- § We work **interdisciplinary**, i.e. we have a thorough understanding of the context in which public policies on CSR take place.
- § We approach **CSR from a private and a public sector perspective**.
- § We are experienced in conducting basic as well as applied **comparative research** and in **consulting public sector institutions**. Our aim is to intertwine the two fields of activities as closely as possible.
- § We are **international**, i.e. we have experience in working with public administrators (SD strategy coordinators) from all EU Member States and we co-operate with research institutions from most EU Member States.
- § We pay close attention to an **efficient project management** and an effective communication of results.
- § We propose a **policy analysis design** that reflects the purpose of the CSR HLG and that combines different methods of social science research.

Format of the policy analyses

Based on the functions of the CSR HLG and the objectives of the exchange of experience we will conduct a **three-step policy analysis** for all three issues to be analyzed.

§ The policy analysis starts with a systematic analysis of the compendium on national public policies on CSR in the EU and the literature on the issue in question. After discussing the issue with a panel of experts, we develop a questionnaire for a telephone survey on the selected CSR policy issue in close co-operation with the European Commission. The telephone survey will be conducted in all 25 Member States. The **key objectives of the first step** of the policy analyses are

- To amend the information given in the compendium,
- To characterize different policy instruments and approaches used in the Member States,
- To derive a typology of different policy approaches,
- To identify interesting or good practice cases and
- To get a first idea about success factors and challenges.

The general overview of a particular issue of CSR policies in the EU is documented in part one of the background papers.

§ In the **second step**, we narrow the research focus. Based on the survey results and in co-operation with the European Commission we select 3-4 interesting or good practice cases from different Member States and analyse them in more depth. In the case studies documented in part two of the background papers, we analyse relevant literature as well as policy documents in English and we conduct telephone interviews with the responsible administrators and with key stakeholders of the initiative. The **key objectives** of documenting interesting or good practice cases are

- To facilitate an in-depth discussion of different approaches,
- To facilitate the discussion on policy transfer and coherence among Member States, and
- To highlight relevant obstacles, drivers and success factors.

§ In the **third step** of the policy analysis we briefly synthesise the results of the survey and the case studies to hypotheses (or preliminary conclusions), with a special focus on success factors and challenges of different CSR policies and policy instruments. The **key objectives** of the synthesis documented in part three of the background papers are

- To facilitate an in-depth discussion by the CSR HLG and
- To direct subsequent in-depth analyses and assessments.

§ In order to make our work transparent and further analyses and assessments as easy as possible we document all relevant sources used in the background paper (i.e. literature, policy documents in English, websites, research studies etc.) in an **Annex**. The sources are listed for each part of the background paper.

The advantage of this three-step policy analysis is that it provides both a general overview on public policies on CSR in 25 European countries and in-depth information on selected cases.

Our methodological expertise:

§ We have used the methodology of **telephone surveys** very successfully in most of our research, evaluation and policy consulting projects.

§ We have conducted **case studies** on a broad variety of issues, including the CSR Austria Initiative, the Austrian Strategy for Sustainable Development or the EcoBusinessPlan Vienna (a voluntary municipal program that enhances CSR in Viennese businesses).

§ In our research and evaluation projects (including large-scale EU-FP projects), we often **combine different empirical methodologies**, such as (quantitative) surveys, qualitative interviews, and even hermeneutical document analysis in order to benefit from the strengths of each method.

§ We teach research methodologies in the context of sustainable development and environmental management.

**Annex: Selected projects conducted
by the Research Institute for Managing Sustainability**

Title	Duration	Funding source
CSR in Central-Eastern Europe in comparison with Western Europe	4/2006- 5/2007	Austrian National Bank
European Sustainable Development Network Office (sup- port mechanism of a network of public administrators work- ing in the field of SD; see www.sd-network.eu)	1/2006- 12/2007	Consortium of six European countries
Development of teaching material aiming at the integration of CSR into the curriculum of Austrian Universities	12/2005- 6/2006	CSR Austria
Evaluation of the 'ÖkoBusinessPlan Vienna'	1999-2006	City of Vienna (Environmental Department)
EASY-ECO 2005-2007 – Evaluation of Sustainability – EuroConferences and Training Events (www.sustainability.at/easy)	2005 -2007	European Commission FP6 Marie Curie Programme (Contract MSCF-CT-2004-51661)
Austrian Forestry Dialogue – process management and editing work	1/2003– 12/2005	Austrian Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Man- agement
Sustainable Development Reporting in Austria	3/2004- 6/2004	Austrian Federal Ministry of Economic Af- fairs
Evaluation of the business initiative sustainability	9/2005- 12/2005	County Styria
The Austrian National Strategy for Sustainable Develop- ment: Process management (development phase)	9/2002 - 12/2004	Austrian Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Man- agement
CSR-Austria guiding model – Process management and editing	6/2003- 12/2003	Austrian Federal Ministry of Economic Af- fairs, Austrian Chamber of Commerce, Austrian Industry Association
STARSUST – Stakeholder Relations for Sustainable Development	10/2002- 8/2003	Austrian National Bank
LISSTRA – Sustainable Development in an enlarged Union: Linking national strategies and strengthening European co- herence	1/2003 – 7/2003	Austrian Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Man- agement