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Analysis of national policies on CSR,  
in support of a structured exchange of information on national CSR policies and initiatives  
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**CSR Awareness Raising –  
Summary of the case studies and conclusions**

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## Introduction

The survey results on CSR awareness raising initiatives in the EU Member States were presented in the CSR HLG meeting on 23 October 2006. This handout summarises the results of the three case studies on the following CSR awareness raising initiatives (part II of the final report):

- Knowledge and Information Centre on CSR in the Netherlands
- People & Profit in Denmark
- Globalt Ansvar in Sweden

Moreover, it highlights some conclusions drawn from the survey and the case studies (part III of the final report).

The Handout is an extract of the executive summary given in the final report “Raising Awareness for CSR in EU Member States: Overview of government initiatives and selected cases”. The final report will be available for download at the project website [www.sustainability.eu/csr-policies](http://www.sustainability.eu/csr-policies) soon.

## Case studies

### *Case study 1: Knowledge and Information Centre on CSR in the Netherlands*

In 2001, the Dutch government decided to set up an independent centre for CSR, focused on SMEs, in order to promote the transfer of knowledge and information about CSR. Due to changes of government and legal reasons, the “Knowledge and Information Centre on CSR”, however, did not start to operate until April 2004. The main objective of the Centre as established in 2004 was to disseminate knowledge on CSR to companies as well as to stimulate companies to initiate and implement CSR. The activities of the Centre are organised around four programme lines:

- To collaborate with the business sector trade organisation in order to have better access to companies and address their practical needs;
- To collaborate with regional institutions for entrepreneurs (e.g. chambers of commerce) in order to include CSR in all information material and activities of these institutions;

- To promote CSR activities with an international scope, like international trade relations of companies and international supply chain management;
- To distribute information about specific CSR topics, like transparency, CSR and marketing, human resource management, etc.

The Centre is managed by an organisation called CSR Netherlands (MVO Nederland). It was set up in order to guarantee independence from both, the government and different stakeholder groups. CSR Netherlands is managed by a director and consists of 15 staff members (12 full-time equivalents).

For the period 2005-08, the total budget of the Centre is €4.9 Mio, provided by the Ministry for Economic Affairs. If the Centre undertakes projects for other ministries or stakeholder groups, it allocates additional funding from these sources. From 2008 onwards, it has not yet been decided how the Centre will be financed. An evaluation in mid-2007 of the work of the Centre should help in deciding about its future.

### ***Case study 2: People & Profit in Denmark***

The programme “People & Profit” (P&P) started to operate in 2005 and it runs until May 2007. The main objective of the programme is to enhance the competitiveness of Danish companies, mainly SMEs, by providing them with the education and tools to integrate CSR strategically into their business activities. Although P&P is a ‘coordinating initiative’ which involves several activities, raising awareness and disseminating knowledge and information about CSR among SMEs is one of its major features. The project comprises the following activities:

- *Research*: generating knowledge about the link between CSR and practical business activities in SMEs;
- *Training*: developing a training and education programme for managers and employees of Danish SMEs, based on the findings of the research activities;
- *Dissemination/awareness raising*: widespread dissemination of information about CSR and the results of P&P research in order to inform various stakeholders and the public about the project.

P&P is managed by the Danish Commerce and Companies Agency (DCCA), which is part of and responsible to the Ministry of Economic and Business Affairs. The total budget of the project is €2.5 Mio, provided by the European Social Fund (ESF) and the Danish National Labour Market Authority Fund. P&P involves four full-time employees, one half-time employee and one special advisor.

### ***Case study 3: Globalt Ansvar in Sweden***

The Swedish Partnership for Global Responsibility, “Globalt Ansvar”, was launched in March 2002. It aims to improve the competitiveness of Swedish industry and to encourage international Swedish companies (mainly MNCs) to be ambassadors for human rights, decent labour conditions, anti-corruption and environmental protection. They are provided with information about CSR in the form of seminars, workshops, training programmes and awareness raising campaigns.

Companies can join the Globalt Ansvar partnership by expressing their will to adhere to the OECD Guidelines (<http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/56/36/1922428.pdf>) and the UN Global Compact (<http://www.unglobalcompact.org/>), and by committing to describe an example of their work on CSR. The company names are displayed prominently on the partnership’s

website. Currently, 18 Swedish companies are members of the Partnership for Global Responsibility.

Globalt Ansvar is managed by a team of five staff members from the International Trade Policy Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The operational budget of the partnership is of about €88,000 (SEK 800,000), not including personnel and office costs. The budget is negotiated on a yearly basis.

## Synthesis and conclusions

By synthesising the findings of the survey and the case studies, part III of the final report draws the following conclusions:

- A truly cross-sectoral institutionalisation and a better collaboration between ministries could improve CSR policies in line with other SD policies, and the triple bottom line principle that is shared by both concepts.
- Awareness raising is an important, but overall rather soft CSR policy approach.
- The target groups of the surveyed CSR policy initiatives do not match with the general assessment of target groups. Future CSR awareness raising initiatives should take this mismatch into consideration.
- Awareness raising initiatives should always explore possibilities of involving the media, including business-specific channels of communication, such as magazines or newsletters of chambers of commerce, as well as trade and labour unions.
- CSR initiatives should focus on companies' needs. One way of providing relevant practical information to different companies is to tailor it to company size and sectors.
- If new institutions (such as CSR centres and platforms) are established, they should cooperate closely with existing institutions and structures (chambers of commerce and regional trade unions in the Dutch case; embassies in the Swedish case; or , trade and labour unions). The intermediaries know both the needs and challenges of companies; they help in disseminating information, and they can provide resources (such as meeting places).
- Tailoring international standards and general information on CSR according to the needs of different companies (small and large, from different sectors, average performers and CSR front-runners) is a challenging (and costly) task as it requires collaboration with a broad range of intermediaries and the systematic use of different instruments.
- Like other more traditional policy fields, CSR is a politically contested topic, determined by government majorities (and ideologies), and the socio-political history of a country.
- International and EU developments can have a strong influence on national CSR policies, given that political signals are both persistent and consistent.