



EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

2009 - 2014

Committee on Legal Affairs

2012/2097(INI)

18.12.2012

OPINION

of the Committee on Legal Affairs

for the Committee on Employment and Social Affairs

on corporate social responsibility: promoting society's interests and a route to sustainable and inclusive recovery
(2012/2097(INI))

Rapporteur: Raffaele Baldassarre

PA_NonLeg

SUGGESTIONS

The Committee on Legal Affairs calls on the Committee on Employment and Social Affairs, as the committee responsible, to incorporate the following suggestions in its motion for a resolution:

1. Stresses the mutual benefits to be gained from cooperation between business and civil society, which can facilitate efforts to establish joint strategies, share knowledge and compare expectations; endorses wholeheartedly, therefore, the commitment made by the Commission to set up multi-stakeholder CSR platforms to step up cooperation between business and society on key social and environmental matters; stresses that corporate social responsibility may require statutory framework provisions and that voluntary measures can complement, but in no way replace, existing provisions regarding the protection of workers, the efficient monitoring of compliance and the imposition of any penalties which may be necessary;
2. Is concerned that the economic crisis may have had an adverse impact on the way in which work is organised; calls on the Commission, in close cooperation with the social partners, to use the multi-stakeholder platforms as an additional measure to promote efforts to find sustainable solutions guaranteeing full respect for the rights of workers in connection with equal treatment, the organisation of working time and precarious employment;
3. Agrees with the Commission Communication that compliance with the relevant legislation and with collective agreements between the social partners is an essential precondition for CSR; notes also that social responsibility necessarily involves properly conducted trade union relations, in particular respect for trade union rights, ongoing information for workers and the associations representing them, and the involvement of these associations in corporate decision making;
4. Notes that, in assessing the social responsibility of a company, account must be taken of the conduct of those companies forming part of its supply chain as well as that of any subcontractors;
5. Draws attention to the strategic role SMEs can play in fostering the uptake of CSR, owing to their close links with the areas in which they operate; calls on the Commission to develop, in conjunction with national authorities and multi-stakeholder platforms, sector-specific arrangements for cooperation between SMEs that will enable them to take joint action on social and environmental problems;
6. Emphasises the importance of framing Union CSR policies in line with international standards, so as to avoid disparate national interpretations and any risk of competitive advantages or disadvantages emerging at national or international level;
7. Calls on businesses to encourage their employees to do international voluntary work, with a view to promoting synergies between the public and private sectors in the development cooperation field; calls on the Commission to provide support, through the future European Voluntary Humanitarian Aid Corps, for action taken by businesses in this area;

8. Calls on the Commission, in particular DG Justice, to present proposals regarding the extraterritorial jurisdiction of EU courts in cases of human rights violations on the part of EU companies or their subsidiaries, subcontractors or trading partners;
9. Acknowledges the importance of increasing CSR practices and policies within large companies; calls, therefore, on the Commission to highlight the importance of introducing CSR as a topic in education and training, especially within business and management schools.

RESULT OF FINAL VOTE IN COMMITTEE

Date adopted	18.12.2012						
Result of final vote	<table><tr><td>+: </td><td>12</td></tr><tr><td>–: </td><td>0</td></tr><tr><td>0: </td><td>0</td></tr></table>	+:	12	–:	0	0:	0
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Members present for the final vote	Raffaele Baldassarre, Sebastian Valentin Bodu, Françoise Castex, Marielle Gallo, Klaus-Heiner Lehne, Alajos Mészáros, Bernhard Rapkay, Evelyn Regner, Rebecca Taylor, Cecilia Wikström, Tadeusz Zwiefka						
Substitute(s) present for the final vote	József Szájer						