

To United Nations Global Compact office
United Nations
By mail

Oslo, March 31st 2011

UN Global Compact – sustainability report 2010 Communication on Progress

1. About Econa

Econa is the Norwegian organisation for professionals with a degree in Master of Science in business administration (MSc). The organisation constitutes of 17,000 members including 3,500 students. Being an organisation of this kind, our report will deviate somewhat from standard.

Our wish and possibility to front the issues of CSR and the UNGC's 10 principles are based on the fact that more than 2 of 3 members of Econa define themselves to be in leading positions at their place of work. That makes Econa not only the leading organisation for MSc's in business administration, but even for leadership.

Econa's central administration in Oslo has 23 employees. The organisation publishes "Magma", Norway's largest magazine in the scientific business administration field. There is also a fully owned subsidiary (Ltd) "KAN" which organises courses and conferences for members and businesses in general.

Econa has 14 local branches around the country, all independently managed by members on a voluntarily basis.

Econa applied for membership in UN Global Compact last year and was registered participator from the 18th of August 2010 (then named "Siviløkonomene").

2. UN Global Compact's Ten Principles

Generally CSR and The Ten Principles are naturally integrated in Econa's wide activity centrally and locally, committees, meetings, conferences, articles in our magazine and on our web-sites. These are "*our means*" for debating important issues and obtain influence and results.

In 2010 one issue of our magazine focused on global challenges. Our annual flag conference was in 2010 dedicated to sustainability.

Econa has established committees or panels for work in the fields covered by The Ten Principles and related subjects as general CSR and ethics. This work, and the committee in charge, have been named "The Commitment" (est. 2009), and there are three subsidiary committees, namely for Ethics (est. 2010), Diversity (est. Jan 2011) and Sustainability (under establishment).

a. Human Rights

Both our committees on Ethics and Diversity have human rights as a guiding star. Human rights are more or less taken for granted in Norway and generally respected and followed.

b. Labour

Status in Norway is that we have two prohibition laws against discrimination which apply to all businesses and organisations. There are obligations to report activities and plans in this field.

An estimate is that no more than 50 % of the companies make a proper report, and most of the reports seem to be more window dressing than real commitment. Econa therefore plans an information campaign and use our means in order to contribute in making anti-discrimination a reality.

The remaining UVGC principles regarding labour are taken well care of in this country. The importing industry is generally satisfactory focused on abolition of child labour.

In our organisation we see to that our own purchases and suppliers follow the rules of abolition of child work and the ethics of good labour standards.

c. Environment

There is a constant focus on environmental issues in Norway. Highlighting and balancing economic aspects versus environmental issues will be one of the challenges for our coming Sustainability Committee. But a clear agenda and schedule for the committee's work and use of *our tools* has yet to be made.

d. Anticorruption

Anticorruption has been high on the agenda for many years in Norway, and is generally well regulated. However, breaches occur, both nationally as well as when working internationally as many Norwegian companies do. From Econa's perspective, we will use our means to focus on targeting our 17,000 members by keeping anti corruption on our agenda.

3. Adjacent and related CSR –challenges

Students

Recent studies show that non-ethnic Norwegians going for an MSc in business administration at one of our 10 universities, in average achieve better results than their fellow Norwegian students. Despite this fact, quite often they will not get relevant work. Choosing less qualified candidates for ethnic reasons is against the law of discrimination (see above) and Econa will give priority to and use our means in order to focus on this matter.

Whistle blowers

Several years ago, our organisation was among the first in Norway to address the problems for whistle blowers. The matter does constantly receive our attention.

Social entrepreneurship

Econa, as an organisation, does not have sufficient financial resources to support social entrepreneurs, but we do facilitate and offer free consultancy support within the scope of our profession on a voluntary basis from our members. Econa has established a close cooperation with another NGO, named Kavlifondet, which has funding availability, and we will evaluate different ways of working with partners going forward.

Local challenges

Our local branches have started to address local challenges as in infrastructure and public transport, hospital structure, inefficiency in local public administrations, etc. These subjects have drawn the general public to these meetings and gained attention in local media.

“Norway after the oil and gas era” – with local focus - has also been a recurring subject.

Survey on ethics and prejudices

We are planning a survey among our members on ethic attitudes and prejudices.

4. Promoting Global Compact

We encourage our members and the companies they represent to promote membership in UNGC and have recently started “a relay” where new members of UNGC challenge and follow up at least one other company in order to inspire them to apply for membership.

Econa prioritizes promotion of membership in UNGC in different ways during 2011. We will use the means that are accessible to our organisation for this task.

5. Summary

Our biggest asset is our 17,000 members. Results come from inspiring members and giving them necessary working tools. The essence of our work is by the use of our means to inspire and encourage their attitudes and in the second phase to change behaviour. This is an almost endless task. Econa is pleased to have joined UNGC. Our membership helps us to get a broader view on working with CSR and ethics.

On behalf of the board of Econa



Ole Chr Gulli
Chairman