



**CONFEDERACIÓN
DE CONSUMIDORES
Y USUARIOS**



“SA & CO” PROJECT

Conclusions

The ideas and objectives of CSR had been introduced in Spain quite late, the same as the implementation of the different mechanisms that motivate and certify it, even though, in a short time, we could see a noticeable evolution.

In 1999, CSR wasn't an interesting area for the boards and councils of directors of the biggest Spanish businesses and neither was the demand of activities related with it. Therefore, the Spanish companies didn't feel the obligation of making an effort to improve their relations with its stakeholders. From 2000 on the demand for CSR activities grow at international level and the Spanish companies are forced to take interest on this philosophy. Since then, there have been some milestones in the Spanish CSR scene: the first one in 2001, when the World Agreement of the United Nations was signed by INDITEX.

On the other hand, local authorities, and NGO's are also involved in passing on the expectations of the society in relation with the issue. Since 2002, the social responsibility issue is part of the agenda of the Spanish media.

Regarding the main players, we include the biggest companies of the country (among them the analyzed Telefónica, BBVA or Iberdrola) who, under the pressure of the international context, began to be concerned about their social image and decided to take some steps forward in the CSR scene. Authorities are also taking some actions in this area, urged by the increasing demand of the society and its spokespersons: consumer associations, different kinds of NGO's, trade unions and political parties.

In general, the main difficulty consumers find is to know and understand the involvement of the companies in the social responsibility issue, such as the lack of information some of them give about their production, working conditions and their environmental agenda. However, the

pressure of the big companies forces other major companies to, step by step, pose a more transparent image. On the other hand, we can find a dark hole in the activities of the medium and small companies which, because of their size, are under less pressure and are less determined to spend time and money in presenting their corporate image as a transparent one.

Therefore, the fact is that part of the population starts viewing positively the firms showing their activities and their compromises with some social value causes and those companies that consider publishing social reports as an added value to their products or services.

As we mentioned before, for a portion of the population it is important that companies show their compromise with social and environmental questions as an added value, nevertheless, we don't know if all those aspects influence the consumer to the point of choosing one product over another; It is possible that, in the cases in which the differences between the two products are minimal, the social compromise may play an important role on the decision. But it is more probable that the election comes from the price or other characteristics of the products. It's true that due to the action of the before mentioned players (consumer associations, NGO's, trade unions and other interested parties, there are more people concerned about the need of taking into consideration that aspect, but it is more probable that most people do not know the importance of their decisions and they do not realise, as a target group, that their choice is the clearest way to show their interest.

Methodology of the investigation and results

- An investigation was conducted to know what Spanish companies are publishing reports on Social Responsibility, Sustainability or Environment. They are the following:

- ASEPEYO
- BANCO DE SABADELL
- BANKINTER
- BBVA
- BSH
- CEPSA
- EL CORTE INGLES
- ENDESA
- GAMESA
- GRUPO EROSKI
- IBERDROLA
- INDITEX
- ACCIONA
- BANESTO
- BANSABADELL VIDA
- BP OIL ESPAÑA
- CAPRABO
- DIAGEO
- ENAGÁS*
- FREMAP
- GAS NATURAL
- GRUPO SOS
- IBERIA
- INDRA

- LA CAIXA
- NESTLE*
- RED ELECTRICA ESPAÑA
- REPSOL-YPF
- SOCIEDAD ESTATAL CORREOS-TELEGRAFOS
- TELEFÓNICA
- UNIÓN FENOSA
- MAHOU*
- PHILIPS IBERICA
- RENFE *
- SANTANDER CENTRAL HISPANO
- SOGECABLE
- TELEFÓNICA MÓVILES
- ZURICH ESPAÑA

* Company only publishes environmental report.

- Among those companies, we selected twelve for the project based on their size, image and/or influence in the country; all the selected companies have direct contact with the consumer in their daily activities. The companies are the following:

BANCO SABADELL	GRUPO SOS
BANESTO	IBERDROLA
BBVA	INDITEX
CAIXA	TELEFONICA
DIAGEO	UNION FENOSA
EROSKI	VODAFONE

- Twelve CSR reports were collected to prepare our work for this project; however seven of those companies supplied only part of the documentation required.
- There were phone calls made to these twelve firms to involve them in the project and from the beginning there were problems getting a reply from them; most often the operator didn't know which was the department in charge of the development of the social responsibility reports or which was the suitable one to do this kind of activity. Therefore, they passed the calls from one department to another until the right person was found (usually, the person in charge of the public relations department, sometimes a department specifically created for all the questions regarding CSR. Once in contact with the right person, the aim of the project was explained and their participation was requested. The answer was never affirmative in this first contact; they requested more information in writing.
- The person in charge of the CSR department asked all the queries they had about the questionnaire before filling it out and once answered, they filled them out. After the initial contacts and correspondence exchange, seven firms answered affirmatively.
- Once the companies accepted to collaborate, the project questionnaire was sent to them via e-mail. In general, the companies did not reply quickly and, in some cases, there was no answer and more e-mails and phone calls followed. In spite of that insistence, often it took few days to get in contact again with the person in charge. Companies that finally

didn't take part on the project claimed they had staff shortage due to the summer holidays or that the person in charge of the department was not at the office at the time.

- Finally, all the requested information from five companies was received; they also sent the short text requested, where they show their communication procedures with the consumer and the measures to improve their communication.
- In general, the language used in writing the reports is simple, although in some cases they used technical terms.
- The subjects treated in the consumer's section of every report describe in detail the actions that the company take to improve their client's service and to gather social aspects related with the consumer.
- In some cases there companies showed their commitment and procedures the company follows to fully satisfy the consumer. Also, there is some research conducted through consumer's satisfaction surveys that helps the companies to show their preferences.