

# FIBS CORPORATE RESPONSIBILITY SURVEY 2017 SUMMARY

© FIBS 2017

The publication is accessible in PDF format at [www.fibsry.fi](http://www.fibsry.fi) > Palvelut > Tutkimukset

Quoting the content of the survey is allowed when appropriately attributed (FIBS). Extensive copying, sharing or selling of the publication in its current form or in modified form is prohibited without permission given by FIBS. The instructions in the publication are to be applied and be consistent with the internal practices and duty of care of the organisation. FIBS is not liable for any damage caused by applying the content of the publication.



---

FIBS helps companies make better business: we provide information on new innovative ways to develop sustainable business and offer unique networking opportunities with companies from different sectors as well as with other organizations. Our services include events, training, thematic groups, news and information services, and Diversity Charter Finland. FIBS has currently nearly 300 members, most of which are large companies. Read more: [www.fibsry.fi](http://www.fibsry.fi)

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Background of the survey	4
To the readers	5
8 key results	6
Why do businesses invest in corporate responsibility	7
What do businesses do to achieve corporate responsibility in practice	8
The greatest challenges businesses face regarding corporate responsibility	10
The significance of corporate responsibility for the future of businesses	11
Conclusions and recommendations	12

# BACKGROUND OF THE SURVEY

FIBS Corporate Responsibility Survey is the most extensive phone survey on the topic in Finland. The survey offers a comprehensive review of the corporate responsibility (CR) practices, challenges and the future outlook for large and medium-sized Finnish companies.

The survey questionnaire is partly based on the international ISO 26000 corporate responsibility standard. The yearly survey was first carried out in 2013.

## Implementation of the 2017 survey

A total of 200 managing directors and directors and experts responsible for corporate responsibility issues in Finland's Top 1000 companies were involved in the Survey (Suomen Asiakastieto Oy's database and FIBS member companies). The sample meets the criteria for a reliable sample.

The Survey was carried out by conducting telephone interviews. The interviews were made during the period from 5 Jan 2017 to 8 Mar 2017. The 2017 survey was carried out by T-Media.

## Comparing results

- The respondents were sent the interview questions in advance by email and in printable format, if they so desired
- The number of respondents was 200 in 2017 (202 in 2016)
- The structure of the sample regarding the type of businesses represented is similar to the previous year: 23% (27%) of the businesses represented by the respondents were public limited liability companies, 68% (69%) were limited liability companies and 9% (4%) were others
- In 2017, the share of corporate responsibility directors and experts was slightly larger than that of managing directors: 43% of the respondents were managing directors (56% in 2016) and 57% were corporate responsibility directors (44% directors or experts responsible for corporate responsibility issues)
- A slightly larger share of respondents represented businesses with turnover exceeding €500 million, correspondingly, the share of respondent businesses with turnover in the range of €40-99 million was smaller than before
- The division into industry sectors differed slightly from that of 2016

**T | MEDIA**

## TO THE READERS

# CORPORATE RESPONSIBILITY IS NOT ABOUT QUICK TRADE, IT IS A PREREQUISITE FOR SUCCESS

According to FIBS's fifth Corporate Responsibility Survey, corporate responsibility (CR) is now primarily seen as ensuring operating prerequisites and success factors for the future.

The change in the driving forces of corporate responsibility is dramatic. In earlier years, in an equivalent phrasing of a question, the most important reason for focusing on corporate responsibility was reputation. In this year's survey, reputation is placed fourth among the driving forces when focusing on corporate responsibility.

There is still a way to go. For businesses, integrating corporate responsibility throughout the entire business is seen as the greatest challenge in corporate responsibility management. Although most of the respondents reported that in their organisation, top management is the strongest driving force of corporate responsibility, regarding management practices corporate responsibility is linked to the management incentive and reward systems in only one in three companies.

Businesses have become aware that short-term trade that pays only lip service to corporate responsibility is not possible. CR is about the credibility of the entire company and its products or services.

Only 8 percent of respondents still believe that corporate responsibility directly increases sales. In 2016, the equivalent figure was 16 percent.

In contrast, in this year's survey, 41 percent reported that corporate responsibility forms the basis of all their company's business. Hence, it is clear that it is essential to develop innovative products and sustainable business models that generate added value for stakeholders.

The investments made by businesses on social responsibility issues have increased significantly in the past two years according to all indicators, including personnel equality and the protection of customer data and the privacy of customers. Meanwhile, a third of companies reported that they invest in human rights risk analysis and the due diligence process, and this year about a fifth of all companies will take accessibility and Design for All perspectives into consideration.

The larger the company, the more is done in practice. All respondent businesses with turnover exceeding €200 million reported that they use corporate responsibility management practices, however this is not always the case in smaller companies. Nearly one in three companies with a turnover of less than €40 million reported that they do not apply any corporate responsibility management practices.

This summary contains the key results of the survey; more detailed information is available in our survey reports as well as seven sector reports, which you can order online (see page 13 for further information). In addition, our survey reports from previous years are now available also to non-members.

**I wish you inspiring moments with our survey!**

**Helena Kekki**  
Leading Specialist, FIBS  
helena.kekki@fibsry.fi



## 8 KEY RESULTS

1. **Ensuring operating prerequisites for the future was the most important reason for investing in corporate responsibility** – reputation building dropped to fourth place as a motive for conducting corporate responsibility.
2. **Integrating corporate responsibility throughout a business is the greatest challenge facing corporate responsibility management** – corporate management is seen as the most important driving force in the creation of corporate responsibility. However, management reward and incentive systems are linked to corporate responsibility in only one in three companies.
3. **Ever fewer companies see corporate responsibility as a short-term business opportunity** – only 8% report that increasing sales is the most essential benefit gained from corporate responsibility work, for 3% it is about enhancing the development of products and services and for another 3% it is about enhancing innovation.
4. **Ever greater numbers of companies primarily see corporate responsibility as a way to enhance risk management** – in the previous year, fewer than one fourth of all businesses considered risk management the most important reason for investing in corporate responsibility, now, one in three thinks that way.
5. **All indicators show that investments in social responsibility issues have increased significantly** – e.g. 79% of companies invest in the equality and diversity of staff and 72% of companies invest in the protection of customer data and ensuring the privacy of customers.
6. **Human rights continue to be the least essential corporate responsibility issue**; only 21% of companies consider it essential – despite the fact that more than one third report that they abide by UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights.
7. **Ever greater number of companies invest in supply chain issues** – 67% set requirements for their suppliers through their procurement and purchase contracts and decisions.
8. **Smaller companies missing the corporate responsibility train?** The larger the company, the more corporate responsibility management practices are used; there is a difference of up to 30% in the application of some practices when compared with smaller companies.

## WHY DO BUSINESSES INVEST IN CORPORATE RESPONSIBILITY

# ENSURING FUTURE OPERATING PREREQUISITES IS THE MOST IMPORTANT REASON FOR INVESTING IN CR

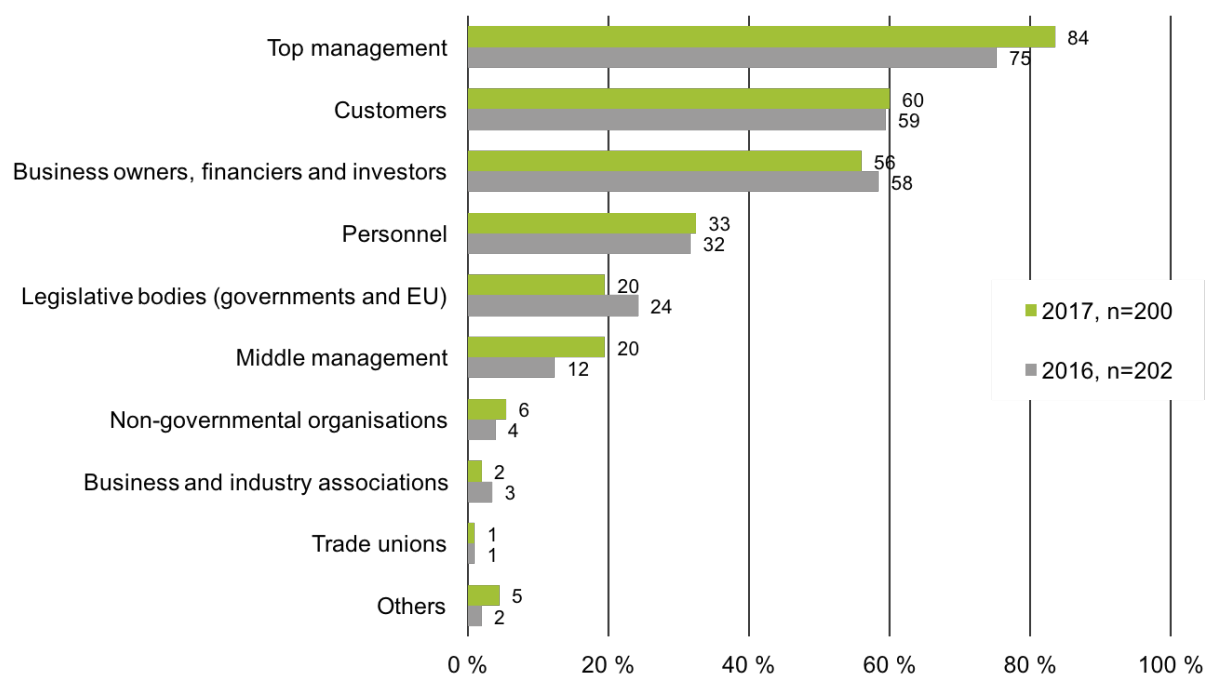
From 2013 to 2015, reputation building was the most important reason for businesses to invest in corporate responsibility, thus it was seen as the most essential benefit of corporate responsibility. This year, **reputation dropped** by 10 percentage points to fourth place compared with the previous year. Currently, **ensuring future operating prerequisites** is the most important reason for investing in CR, with nearly half of the companies surveyed reporting it as the most essential aspect of CR.

The result also indicates that **ever fewer Finnish companies see corporate responsibility as a short-term business opportunity**. Only 8% (16% in 2016) say that increasing sales, 3% (12%) enhancing product and service development and 3% (4%) enhancing innovation is the most essential benefit gained from responsibility operations. **Instead, the significance of corporate responsibility to the enhancement of risk management has increased considerably**. In the previous year, less than one fourth of the companies considered risk management the most important reason for investing in corporate responsibility; now 34 percent of respondents do.

**Top management has an increasingly central impact on the commitment of companies to corporate responsibility**. The impact of customers, as well as business owners, financiers and investors has also remained strong.

### Who are the driving forces of responsibility operations\*

Choose 3 central factors



\*) Actors with the greatest impact on how committed the company is to responsibility

## WHAT DO BUSINESSES DO TO ACHIEVE CORPORATE RESPONSIBILITY IN PRACTICE

# A CLEAR INCREASE IN CORPORATE RESPONSIBILITY OPERATIONS

There has been a steady increase in the investment of businesses in practical measures in the past three years – and this year this was true for all the measures included in the questionnaire.

**There has been a significant increase in the investment of businesses in social responsibility issues** – it could be said that this has become a central corporate responsibility issue alongside environmental responsibility, which traditionally held the top position.

Like the previous year, most of the investments in responsibility operations were made in labour practices, i.e. occupational safety and occupational welfare, waste management, re-cycling and the utilisation of recycled materials. **Proportionately, the greatest increase in investments was in operations to ensure responsible procurement criteria and to protect customer data and privacy.**

**Accessibility and Design for All principles in product and service development are the areas receiving the least investment.** This year's survey asked (for the first time) if companies take UN Sustainable Development Goals into consideration: one in three businesses said they do.

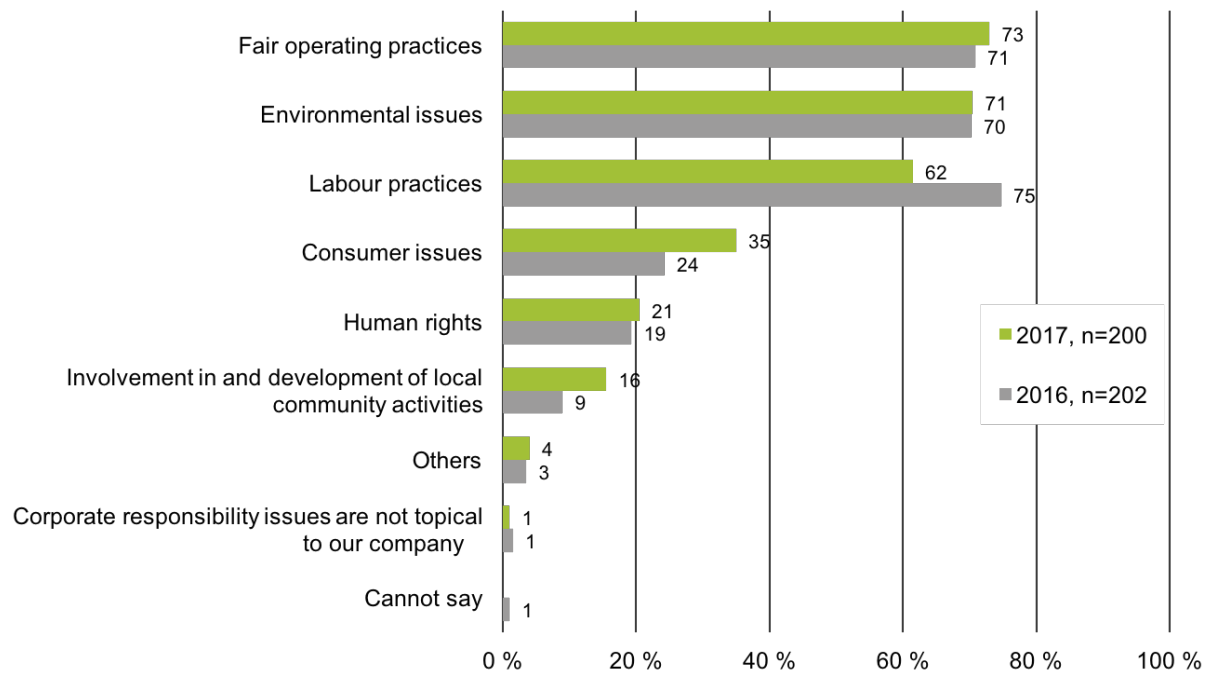
Along with practical operations, there is also **an increase in corporate responsibility management practices** and especially **investments in competence and resources**, which indicates that the quantity and depth of CR operations has increased considerably compared with the previous year. Ever greater numbers of companies have a director or manager in charge of corporate responsibility, most of the companies set qualitative and/or quantitative targets for corporate responsibility and nearly one in two companies have a corporate responsibility strategy. **Nevertheless, only one in three companies include corporate responsibility in their management incentive and reward systems and fewer include them in their personnel incentive systems.**

On the other hand, the results indicate that **the number of management practices correlates strongly with the size of the company**: the larger the company, the more corporate responsibility management practices it has.

Fair operating procedures, in other words, ethical business practices, fair competition, responsible supply chains and economic responsibility (e.g. tax issues) have become **the most crucial corporate responsibility issues**. Despite an increase in social responsibility measures, labour practices – the most essential issue last year – now occupies third place.



**Which corporate responsibility issues are the most essential for companies**  
Choose 3 of the most essential ones



## THE GREATEST CHALLENGES BUSINESSES FACE REGARDING CORPORATE RESPONSIBILITY

# SUPPLY CHAIN MANAGEMENT IS AN INCREASINGLY CHALLENGING CORPORATE RESPONSIBILITY ISSUE

**Supply chain management** has been the most challenging corporate responsibility issue for businesses in the past three years and this year even more companies find this to be true: currently, 34% (28% in 2016) of companies report supply chain management as their most challenging issue.

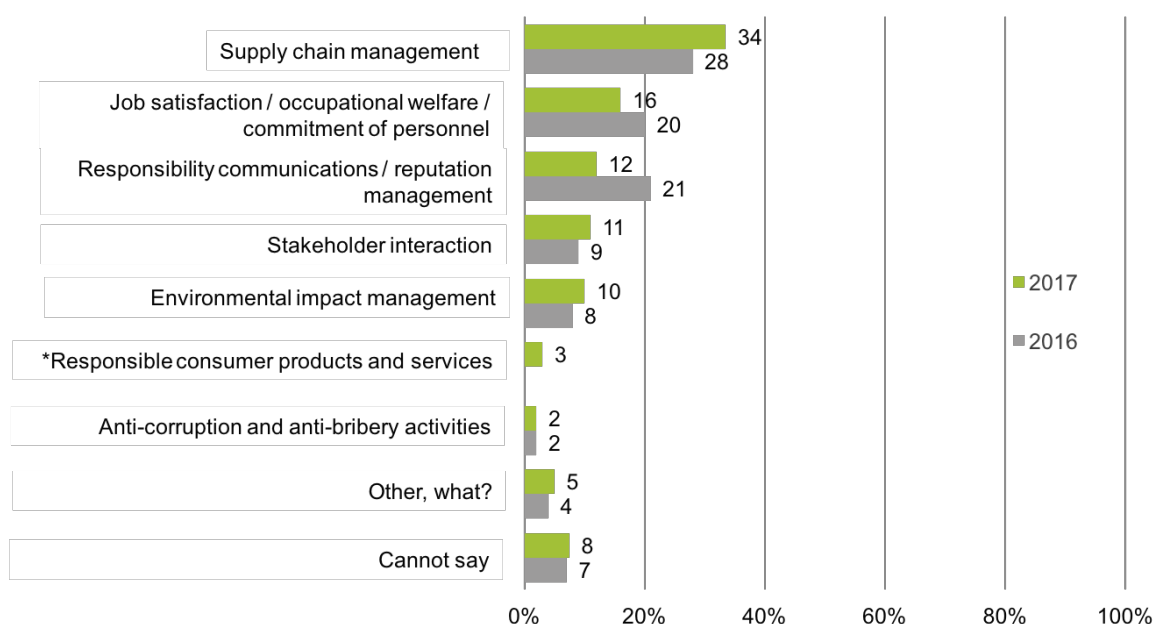
**Workplace issues**, on the other hand, are now better managed by companies; Companies have invested heavily in this issue year upon year and management practices and skill and knowledge have evolved accordingly.

The greatest improvement seems to have occurred in **responsibility communications and reputation management**: only one in ten companies reports this to be challenging, whereas in the previous year the figure was one fifth.

As in last year, the **strategic integration of corporate responsibility with business was found to be the greatest management challenge** and this year 62% consider corporate responsibility integration the most challenging management issue – last year this was true for less than half. Most companies also find corporate responsibility impact measurement and monitoring a challenge.

### What is the most challenging corporate responsibility issue for your company?

Select 1



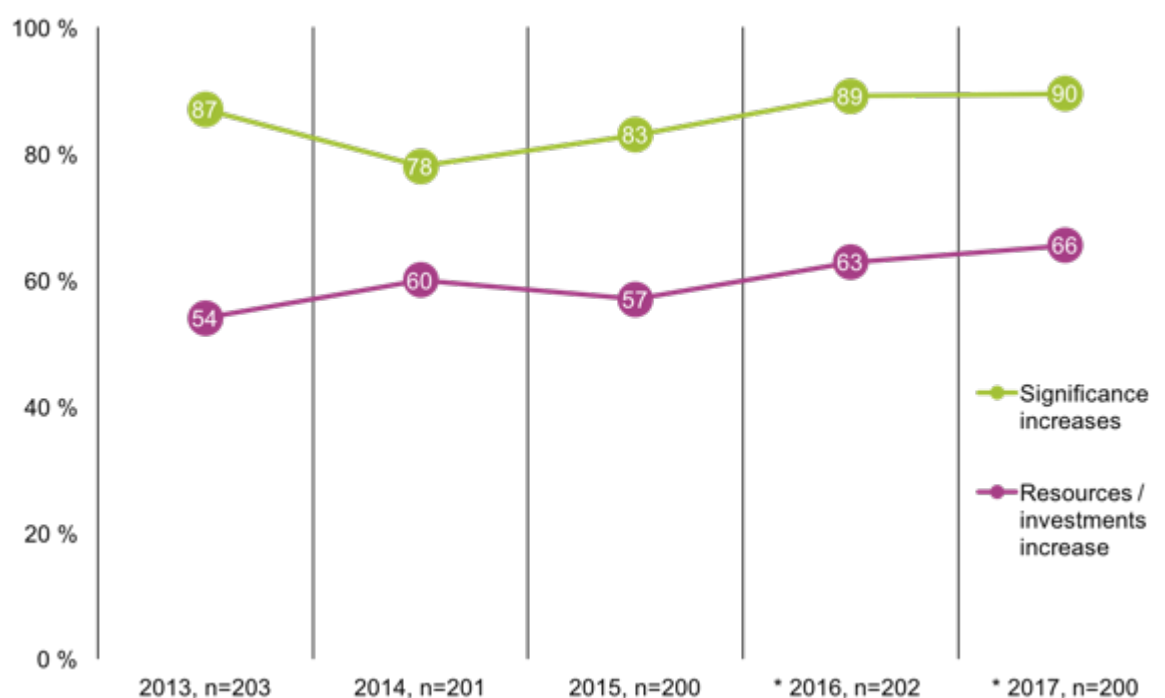
Note! The wording of reply alternatives has changed.  
\*New alternative in 2017

## THE SIGNIFICANCE OF CORPORATE RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE FUTURE OF BUSINESSES

# ESTIMATES OF THE INCREASE IN THE SIGNIFICANCE OF CR AND CR RESOURCES AT ALL TIME HIGH

In a five-year comparison, the companies' estimates of the increase in the significance of corporate responsibility and the expected increase in corporate responsibility resources in the next five years is now at an all time high: 90% of all the surveyed companies believe that the significance of corporate responsibility will increase for their business and most (62%) say that the resources used for corporate responsibility will increase somewhat in the coming years.

**Estimate the change in the significance of corporate responsibility for your company's business / the change in resources used for corporate responsibility within the next 5 years (2013-2017)**



\*) 2016 and 2017: Significance increases = significance increases to some extent + significance increases considerably.  
Resources / investments increase = Resources / investments increase to some extent + increase considerably

# CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

**Corporate responsibility operations no longer aim at short-term benefits – the most important reason for investing in CR is to ensure operating prerequisites and future success factors**

Ensure the long-term significance of corporate responsibility by including it in all central business processes as well as management and personnel reward and incentive schemes.

**For a growing number of companies, CR is primarily a way to enhance risk management – fewer companies now see CR as a short-term business opportunity**

UN Sustainable Development Goals are an opportunity for Finnish companies to develop and innovate successful new products and sustainable business models that can generate added value for shareholders and stakeholders alike.

**There is ever more investment in CR and supply chain issues – human rights are still considered to be one of the least important corporate responsibility issues**

The positive development in CR issues needs to be further developed as should enhancing the awareness of the human rights impact of one's own businesses. The best way to manage supply chain responsibility is to benefit from and use the systematic training, networking and learning gained from the best practices and solutions developed by others.

**Competence and resources have been invested in, thus the quantity and depth of responsibility operations has been considerably enhanced**

For the benefits of responsibility operations to be reflected in visible results, CR should be professionally planned and managed with dedicated resources. Consequently, please ensure that your company has a person in charge of CR and make use of their expertise. Also consider who your CR manager or director reports to. Do that because this says more about the significance of CR to your company than is commonly believed. Also make sure that there is CR competence and expertise within your executive board and board of directors; only then will CR become a strategic success factor for your company.

**Smaller companies missing the corporate responsibility train?**

CR management practices can also generate significant added value for smaller companies: start with the most essential issues genuinely benefitting your company and use the expertise of business networks and organisations to analyse your business. CR consultants should develop CR management tools that are tailored to assist smaller businesses and help them in initiating, measuring and monitoring the impact of CR.

---

## Further information about FIBS Corporate Responsibility Survey

**Helena Kekki, Leading Specialist, FIBS**  
Tel. +358 50 3451 966 | [helena.kekki@fibsry.fi](mailto:helena.kekki@fibsry.fi)

# FIBS CORPORATE RESPONSIBILITY SURVEY 2017

A COMPREHENSIVE IMAGE OF THE CR PRACTICES, CHALLENGES  
AND FUTURE OUTLOOK OF FINNISH COMPANIES

## INFORMATION FOR STRATEGIC PLANNING AND FOR DEVELOPING RESPONSIBILITY PRACTICES

→ COMPARE  
CR PRACTICES  
IN DIFFERENT  
INDUSTRIES

### **FIBS CORPORATE RESPONSIBILITY SURVEY**

is the most extensive phone survey in the field in Finland. Altogether 200 CEOs and CR and sustainability experts in Top 1000 companies are involved in the survey yearly.

→ TIPS FOR  
DEVELOPING  
RESPONSIBILITY  
PRACTICES, AND FOR  
COMPETITOR  
ANALYSIS

**THE SURVEY REPORT** offers a comprehensive image of the responsibility practices of Finnish companies. You can find answers to all of the survey questions in the form of bar charts and pie charts from all sectors combined, comparison information to previous years and FIBS' comments, conclusions and recommendations for companies.

Price: 500 € - Free of charge for FIBS members

→ BACKGROUND  
INFORMATION FOR  
PERSONNEL TRAINING  
AND INTERNAL  
COMMUNICATION,  
SALES AND  
MARKETING

### **SECOR REPORTS OFFER BENCHMARKING**

**INFORMATION** in seven industries: food industry, energy, chemical industry, mechanical and metal industry, business consulting, building industry and retail industry, including comparison information to current overall results to in the form of bar charts and pie charts.

Price: 750 €/pc, FIBS members 400 €/pc

VAT will be added to the prices.

The reports are available in Finnish only

### **READ MORE AND ORDER:**

[fibsry.fi](http://fibsry.fi) > Palvelut > Tutkimukset

# FIBS HELPS COMPANIES IN MAKING BETTER BUSINESS: MORE PROFITABLE AND MORE SUSTAINABLE FOR BOTH COMPANIES AND SOCIETY.

**There are already almost 300 movers and shakers in the FIBS network: in addition to companies, NGOs, educational faculties, public sector actors, and many more social influencers. With the help of FIBS you can develop your operations alongside other corporate responsibility (CR) and sustainability experts, while you build your organization's reputation as an economically, socially and environmentally responsible company.**

## EVENTS

Seminars, workshops and other events have been a base of FIBS' member services since the year of establishment in 2000. At our events, you can get information on the field's practices, innovative solutions and future trends.. You can grow your network and gain publicity for your corporate responsible actions as a guest speaker or a host of an event.

## TRAININGS

FIBS' trainings are a great possibility for companies to deepen their know-how of current CSR issues, learn about solutions and practices of other companies, and discover new potential benchmark partners. In addition to trainings that last for 2-4 days, we organize annually theme workshops as both separate events and on side of seminars.

## THEME GROUPS

In FIBS's Human Rights Group and other theme groups participants can exchange knowledge on the best practices, spar each other through mini group conversations and practical group works, and discuss confidentially with actors of different sectors about everyday challenges of responsibility leadership.

## NEWS & VISIBILITY

In addition to our events we share current information on responsible and sustainable solutions and practices via our newsletters, social media, newsroom and data base on our website, and videos. All the communication channels of FIBS are also for the members, and are an excellent opportunity to grasp visibility among new target groups.

## RESEARCH & PUBLICATIONS

FIBS' annual CR Survey provides a vast and broad picture of the state of corporate responsibility in Finland. The members of FIBS gain access to the report free of charge and to sector specific reports for a special member's price. From FIBS' handbooks and workbooks you can find background information and guides for integrating different sustainability themes to business.

## DIVERSITY CHARTER FINLAND

In FIBS' Diversity Charter Finland seminars and workshops you will learn how to build innovative, productive and responsible working culture by leveraging your organization's personnel's different backgrounds, abilities and skills. You will learn about practical examples of best diversity management practices from recruitment to R&D, and you can work on your own practices alongside other members of the FIBS network.

WELCOME ABOARD! | [WWW.FIBSRY.FI](http://WWW.FIBSRY.FI)