

CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY MANIFESTO

As leading foreign companies operating in Serbia and members of the Foreign Investment Council, we are fully aware of our duty and obligation to support responsible business practice within Serbian society at large. By promoting and implementing the concept of corporate social responsibility (CSR), we are trying to build trust among citizens and demonstrate our ability and willingness to contribute to the society with our insight and expertise and, most of all, with our commitment to the local community.

We are very pleased to see that the idea of the corporate social responsibility in Serbia evolved in a very short time from a totally unknown concept to one of the most frequently mentioned topics, irrespective of the certain confusion surrounding the definition of the phrase. From our side we can contribute to the creation of a local definition of the term. CSR is not some additional programme or campaign aimed to charm or impress media or consumers. It is more about how we are doing our day-to-day business operations by taking responsibility for the impact of all our activities. This surpasses statutory obligations, existing legislation and activities aimed to build seductive corporate reputation. CSR is not about what we must, but rather what we want to do. It is about behaving ethically and contributing to economic development by improving the quality of life of the workforce and their families as well as of the local community and society at large, including the environment.

We are a part of the community, and as such we take responsibility for its development. Serbia is a country with great potential and it is our real pleasure and privilege to be here. The concept of corporate social responsibility also includes endeavours to preserve local traditional values, not only to impose global standards. From that point of view, we can say that we see corporate social responsibility as a perfect mixture of the sustainable growth, social philanthropy and responsibility for all social issues and problems that may or may not be considered as our liability as individual companies. The concept of corporate social responsibility goes beyond individual interests. The mutual interest all of us is to live in the responsible community that is capable to face any challenge.

In our opinion, one of the key qualitative changes in the understanding of socially responsible business in Serbia is reflected in the increasing shift away from the traditional corporate donations of the fine arts and established institutions, and towards addressing real social problems to have a meaningful impact on the society in which we are operating. Such issues include environmental concerns, as well as business diversity to incorporate the inclusion of socially marginalised groups.

Examples of best practice, such as Raising Awareness of Breast Cancer, For Clean Serbia, and Our Belgrade, which were implemented alongside strong media campaigns, were significant attempts towards managing acute societal problems. In these projects, the support of socially-aware companies, among which are numerous members of the Foreign Investors Council, was not reduced to mere donations of funds. These were excellent examples of how socially responsible companies can positively engage on critical issues.

Being part of the foreign investment community, we believe that it is crucially important to unify the available potential, achieve consensus on the appropriate role of business in society, and develop local methods to accelerate positive change. In this respect, we see the role of foreign investors who are ready to join forces with all who have will, power and desire to improve the quality of life for people in Serbia.

WE BELIEVE IN

- Introducing ethical obligations that each company in Serbia prepare annual CSR reports analysing its activities and their impact on the community;
- Improving dialogue at all levels of society, including competent government authorities, the media, non-governmental organisations, social groups and movements for the purpose of further promotion of the concept of socially responsible business in accordance with the principles of sustainable development;
- Analysing current legal regulation and proposing new legal solutions in accordance with EU standards and initiating the adoption of concrete measures that will stimulate socially responsible behaviour;
- Improving corporate governance standards in terms of business transparency and information availability;
- Active involvement in solving acute societal problems, such as employment policy, environmental programmes and similar;
- Creating of an efficient network that would include all actors on the social scene which are able to promote CSR, including relevant government institutions and non-governmental organisations;
- Initiation of university education programmes relating to CSR, sustainable development and other relevant issues.