



***Business and Human Rights:
suggestions to the” Norwegian Ethics Information Committee”***

Human Rights International Corner (HRIC) is pleased to support the Norwegian Ethics Information Committee sharing some recommendations on human rights disclosure based on its Italian experience.

First at all, according to HRIC, disclosure on human rights should include at minimum a description of:

- the company’s value chain;
- a risk-based assessment on human rights;
- overall company’s management approach on risks;
- grievance mechanisms or tools (if any) for stimulating open dialogue with key-stakeholders, especially workers and local communities.

Information should be made available on the main company’s communication channels, including company’s website. And they should be communicated to all company’s key-stakeholders.

Moreover, to support the development of good practices for safeguarding human rights in the value chain, we encourage the Norwegian Government to introduce a domestic law providing the mandatory disclosure on non-financial information, and the financial incentive to companies for inserting also human rights requirements in their procurement screening procedures.

HRIC also highly recommends to the Norwegian government to adapt the “reporting law” to the peculiarities of the Norwegian industrial context. In Italy, for example, the Legislative Decree No. 254/2016¹ implementing EC Directive 2014/95/UE is having a limited impact because it has been addressed to companies with at least 500 employees, whilst the national economic context is mainly constituted by small and medium enterprises.

Analyzing the Italian Companies disclosure’ practices, HRIC noticed that almost the 80% of them have drafted their reporting according to the GRI Standards². Despite our appreciation on GRI standards in terms of clarity and completeness, we observed that a relevant number of companies, instead of disclosing on human rights impact and risks, have limited their disclosure to a compliance level, inserting information on their compliance with collective bargaining law instead of disclosing data on worker rights or working conditions. Against this background, we invite Norway and, and eventually, the European Member States to sensitize GRI on the over-mentioned topic and to find common solutions that do not permit to companies to bypassing the disclosure on human rights.

¹ <http://www.gazzettaufficiale.it/eli/id/2017/01/10/17G00002/sg>

² <https://www.globalreporting.org/standards>