

News Release
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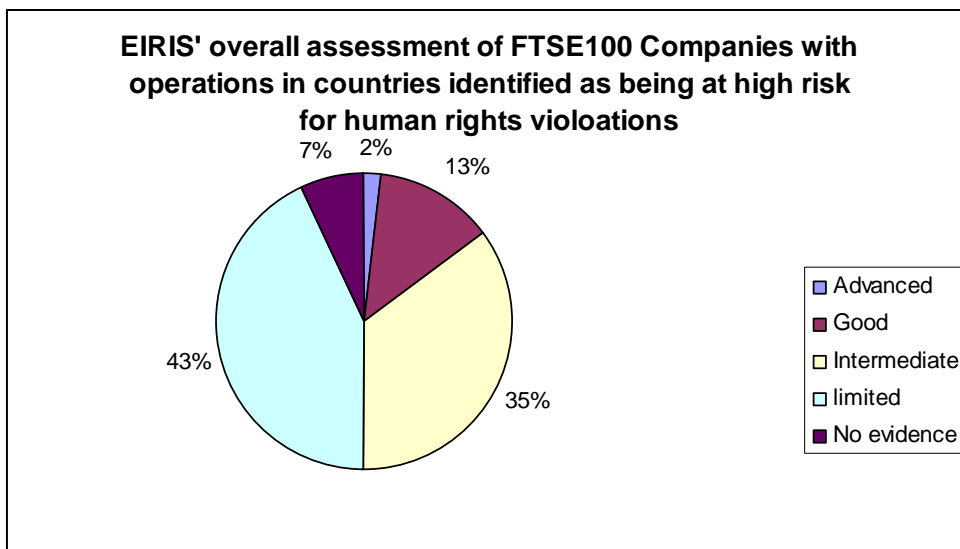
FTSE100 Companies get serious with Human Rights

On the eve of Human Rights Day, latest research from global sustainable investment specialists EIRIS examines the extent to which FTSE100 Companies have adequate policies and management systems in place to uphold human rights. The review finds that the UK's largest companies are taking their responsibilities to uphold human rights seriously, though performance varies considerably among the companies examined.

- 54 of FTSE100 Companies have operations in countries identified as being at high risk for human rights violations
- Of these, 61% have made an explicit commitment to the UN Declaration on Human rights

In conducting the review EIRIS also employed a more stringent methodology – based on its new Human Rights research criteria, designed to assess the human rights performance of large corporations around the world. This new grading system places international instruments such as the ILO Core Labour standards at its core, with companies assessed on their policies and approach to Human Rights, management systems (including training and auditing) and, reporting and disclosure on human rights.

In assessing FTSE100 companies against these criteria, EIRIS identified the following:



The above assessments are based on strength of management systems and the level of public reporting on what they are doing to implement international Human Rights standards.

"International human rights is a complex, evolving field, which is increasingly involving non-state actors, such as companies and NGOs. It is encouraging to see that a shift in the approach companies are taking to uphold human rights is underway. More and more investors now understand that issues like human rights can impact the performance of companies. We look forward to helping investors implement this within their investment strategy." said Peter Webster, Executive Director of EIRIS.

Head of Social Research at EIRIS Louise Tippet added, "While a corporate policy statement on the UNDHR is significant as an indicator of Corporate commitment to uphold human rights, what's also needed is an assessment of how companies are implementing their commitments. Whilst our analysis reveals some evidence that FTSE100 Companies are taking Human rights seriously, it's clear that a lot still needs to be done"

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Note to editors:

- 1 Ethical Investment Research Services (EIRIS), established in 1983, provides the independent research into corporate social, environmental and ethical performance that is needed by investors to make informed and responsible investment decisions. EIRIS does not promote any one particular view on ethical or socially responsible issues.
- 2 On 10 December 1948, the United Nations General Assembly adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which has become a universal standard for defending and promoting human rights. Every year on 10 December, Human Rights Day marks the adoption of the Universal Declaration. On Human Rights Day it is celebrated around the globe that "All human beings are born with equal and inalienable rights and fundamental freedoms"
- 3 EIRIS is the leading global analyst of corporate social, environmental and ethical performance with the following overseas research partners: Centre for Australian Ethical Research (CAER), Fundacion Ecologia y Desarrollo (Ecodes) of Spain, Imug – Institut fur Markt-Umwelt-Gesellschaft of Germany and EthiFinance of France.
- 4 EIRIS clients include, amongst others, Aberdeen Asset Managers, ABN Amro Bank, Aegon Asset Management, AGF Asset Management, AIB Investment Managers, AllianceBernstein, ATP, AXA Investment Managers, BankInvest, Bank of Ireland Asset Management, BlackRock, Cazenove Fund Management, Co-operative Bank, Credit Suisse, F & C Asset Management, Fédéris Gestion d'Actifs, FIDH, Fonds de Réserve pour les Retraites, FTSE, Insight Investment, Johannesburg Stock Exchange, KBC Asset Management, Martin Currie Investment Management, M&G Investment Management, Methodist Church Central Finance Board, Mondrian Investment Partners, Montgomery Oppenheim, Morgan Stanley, New Star Asset Management, Newsweek Japan, Newton Investment Management, Norwegian Government Pension Fund, Nomura Asset Management, Old Mutual Asset Management, Oxfam, Pen-Sam, Robeco Institutional Asset Management, Royal London Asset Management, Santander Gestion de Activos, Sarasin Chiswell, Setanta Asset Management, Schroders Investment Management, Scottish Widows Investment Partnership, Standard Life Investments, WaterAid.