



# Columbus

## Report on Corporate Social Responsibility 2013

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## Executive Statement

Columbus entered the UN Global Compact in 2012. This report is the first statement from Columbus concerning our implementation of the UN Global Compact charter into our CSR policy. In this annual Communication on Progress, we describe our actions to continually improve the integration of the Global Compact in the areas of Human Rights, Labour, Environment and Anti-Corruption.

In 2013 Columbus has focused on implementing the strategy for working on CSR. This was done in conjunction with committing Columbus to aligning our operations and strategies to the 4 core values of the UN Global Compact.

In Columbus our talented employees are our most valuable assets. They are the key to our success. This means, that it is crucial, that our employees are happy and develop themselves professionally, so that they stay with us – and attract new competent employees. Of course, this applies to our employees on all locations in the world, where we operate.

In 2013 Columbus has chosen to focus primarily on our employee's working conditions, well-being and development. We believe this to be the best starting point for a process, where we will contribute to a sustainable development, internally and externally. Together with the 10 principles of the UN Global Compact, this forms the basis for Columbus CSR strategy for 2013.

Being an international consultancy, there are natural differences in business cultures, rules and laws in countries, where Columbus operates. But we will not compromise with unethical business conduct. This is why we have completed Columbus' Code of Conduct, which prospectively is the ethical guideline for our business operations and at the same time the strategic guiding principle for our CSR.

Columbus considers the overall achievements in relation to the company's corporate social responsibility to be satisfactory. We commit to share this information with our stakeholders using our primary channels of communication.

Thomas Honoré  
CEO, Columbus

## Code of Conduct

Our Code of Conduct is our general ethical guideline for business conduct to ensure that we in Columbus on a global level are dedicated to promote ethical business practices and protect Columbus against corruption and other unethical business behavior, which we believe is incompatible with the operation of a healthy business.

Code of Conduct applies to Columbus' parent company and all subsidiaries. We expect and demand that all parties acting on behalf of Columbus respect our Code of Conduct.

### Transparency and Credibility

In Columbus we are committed to show complete openness towards customers, employees, shareholders, suppliers and other stakeholders. It is essential that their understanding of our services and products is accurate, updated and truthful. Therefore there is no incongruence between what we communicate within the company and what we do externally. Among other things we show this by putting our internal newsletters to employees on our website, where they are publicly available.

### Anti-corruption

We will not tolerate corruption, money laundering, bribery or other illegal or unethical business activity. Our performance and competitiveness are strengthened solely through lawful conduct. The group's anti-corruption position has been clearly communicated to all subsidiaries. Furthermore, we have implemented Columbus Authorization and Risk Management Rules (CARMR), which encompass rules on the authorization hierarchy and ensure the senior management's involvement in major contracts and investments.

### Multiplicity and Non-discrimination

All employees in Columbus have been carefully selected on the basis of professional competencies without regard to religion, race, skin color, gender, age, disability or sexual or political orientation. We regard multiplicity as strength and we will not tolerate discrimination or harassment.

### Taking Care of Employees

In Columbus we wish to attract the most competent employees and to retain them. Therefore, we strive to create a healthy and safe work environment. In addition we aim to create high quality and stimulating working conditions for all employees globally. This is ensured through policies in our employee well-being handbooks as well as our competence development program, Columbus Competence and Career framework, and our monthly employee satisfaction survey Heartbeat, which are currently being rolled out. As a fundamental aspect of our operation all employees are

encouraged to work in teams and share knowledge across borders. This is substantiated by our global delivery model.

## **Implementing Code of Conduct**

Our Code of Conduct was completed at the start of 2013, and we will work determinedly to implement the guideline in Columbus on a global level.

We will do this internally by communicating Code of Conduct to all employees, both from Headquarters and through country managers. Furthermore, on our monthly business reviews with the subsidiaries and on our update calls with the Country Managers, we will make sure that Code of Conduct is implemented in the daily operations. In regards to our customers, partners, suppliers and other external stakeholders, we will communicate our Code of Conduct via our website and in marketing material. Furthermore, we will make it clear to potential new customers and partners that we expect them to comply with our Code of Conduct, in particular the anti-corruption principles.

## Employees

Columbus is a People Business. Our success depends on our ability to attract and keep the best employees from our industry on a global level. It is crucial that we not only comply with human rights, but on top of that also ensure attractive working conditions for our employees, in particular in regards to salary, well-being and competence development. This applies to all our subsidiaries worldwide. In 2013 we have decided that our employees' working conditions would be the main focus of our CSR efforts.

Our employees in Columbus' parent company and all subsidiaries are highly qualified and attractive on the global career market. Thus, employees' working conditions in Columbus are already on a high level. Furthermore, the employee handbooks in our subsidiaries treat local policies on working conditions, employee well-being and employee development. In our CSR efforts, we will focus on current initiatives, which apply to all employees globally, because we strive to do an even greater effort in this field.

In Columbus we are proud, that several of our subsidiaries are engaged in community and charity initiatives. We regard this as an expression of commitment and team spirit and the initiatives are important in two ways: They contribute to the employee well-being internally in Columbus, and they promote Columbus as a company, which engages in sustainable development in the communities, in which we operate. We fully support this, and we have decided to emphasize these initiatives in our CSR.

### **Employee Development**

In 2013 we rolled out **Columbus Competence and Career framework**, which is a system designed to ensure a targeted and structured effort on our employees' competence and career development.

Every employee in Columbus on a global level will, on the basis of aspects as seniority and competences, be enrolled in in Columbus Competence and Career Framework. There will be specific well defined targets on how the employees can improve and develop their career to the next level.

Currently employee development is handled by the individual managers, and we assess that Competence & Career Framework will create more uniformity in regards to focus and ambition level. Our goal for 2013 is that all employees in Columbus are enrolled in the Competence and Career Framework and get a specific plan for a further career development.

Furthermore we make investments so that all our consultants on a global level are being certified in our unique business.

### **Gender policy**

Columbus strives to be an attractive work place for both men and women, and we are convinced that a reasonable distribution of both genders on all levels in the Company has a positive effect on both working environment and bottom line. It is essential that all employees experience that Columbus has an open and unprejudiced culture where each individual is able to make the best use of his/her competencies, and that all regardless of gender have the same possibilities for career development and management positions.

At present the gender distribution in Columbus in non-management roles constitutes 29% women and 71% men. This is not an unusual distribution in our field, which has traditionally had more job roles attracting more men than women. These are primarily technical roles such as IT technicians and programmers. At management level the current gender distribution constitutes 12% women and 88% men. Thus, there is a considerable unequal gender distribution in Columbus both in general and on management level. In the Board of Directors the representation of women is currently 20%, as one out of five is a woman.

In 2013 we rolled out a plan on how to ensure more equal gender distribution in management as well as Board of Directors. It is our target to increase the proportion of female employees in the total staff, the management team and the Board of Directors.

In Columbus Competence and Career Framework program, we have incorporated ongoing measurement of the gender distribution in Columbus locally and globally in relation to career levels and job roles. This way we will ensure that we always have a thorough and true picture of the gender distribution in the Group.

The work increasing the proportion of woman in Columbus is an ongoing process. In 2013 we have started this process, setting up realistic targets on the different levels of our gender policy. We will follow these targets over the next four years:

- Increase the proportion of female employees to a minimum of 30% of the total staff in 2015.
- Obtain a distribution of both genders at management level of minimum 20% in 2015 in Columbus globally.
- Obtain a distribution of both genders in the Board of Directors in Columbus of minimum 40% in 2017.

### **Employee Well-being**

At the beginning of 2013 we launched **Heartbeat**, our global employee satisfaction survey, which is conducted on a monthly basis. Heartbeat is a simple survey, where employees only are asked to answer one question, which will be repeated every month: On a scale from one to ten the employees are asked to rate their job satisfaction in Columbus.

The purpose of Heartbeat is continuously to improve the employee satisfaction in Columbus. The survey is not anonymous, and this makes us able to follow the development in employee satisfaction on department, country and global level in Columbus.

The high frequency of the survey provides an exact and up-to-date picture of the employee satisfaction. The result of the survey will create the basis for specific initiatives and improvements.

Currently employee well-being is handled by our local HR departments. It is our objective, that Heartbeat in the longer term will replace other employee well-being surveys.

In 2013 our goal was to reach a 75% response rate, and that we in the same period get a solid impression of the employee satisfaction in Columbus on a local and on a global level, so that we in 2014 can launch specific initiatives in order to improve it, no matter current level. We have succeeded in reaching the response rate, thus the rate has continuously risen during 2013 reaching 6,81 in December.

### **Employee Recognition**

Employee recognition is vital. This is why we have launched our annual awards **Columbus Awards** on a global level. The purpose is to recognize and celebrate the individuals and teams, who have made a special effort and delivered extraordinary performances, in particular towards our customers. The winners of Columbus Awards are individual employees, teams and subsidiaries.

### **Employee Dialog**

We strive to grow the dialogue with our employees and dialogue between employees in Columbus across borders in order to strengthen our community. The aim is that everyone feels as part of a global team, and that everyone's voice counts and is listened to.

In 2012 we launched **Yammer**, our social, digital forum where all employees have the opportunity to debate with each other, ask questions, post inspirational messages and follow each other's achievements.

Once every month, since January 2012, all employees in Columbus have received a **global newsletter** called Windrose. The newsletters ensure that all employees obtain a thorough knowledge of the strategy and the development in Columbus' business. Furthermore the newsletters are aimed to be inspiration and motivation to work towards our common goals.

**Goals for 2014**

In 2014 we will refine these initiatives on the basis of input from our employees. It is our goal, that employee recognition is a natural and integrated part of our internal and external communication as well as in the operation and development of our business.

In 2014 we will strive to create more employee involvement and dialog. Among other things we will work determinedly to make the newsletters become our employees' mouthpiece to an even larger degree.

The gender policy targets are specified and we will work dedicated on achieving the results.

## Social commitment

It is essential, that we are involved in community and charitable initiatives. In 2013 Columbus has supported several organizations and has also set up our own projects in order to raise money for charity.

### **Parent company**

Columbus' parent company supports the association Hjælperytterne on an annual basis.

Hjælperytterne is a bicycle association, which supports the Danish association for rheumatic patients, Gigtforeningen.

### **Columbus Denmark**

Every year Columbus Denmark makes donations to charity instead of giving Christmas presents to customers. In 2013 Columbus Denmark donated to Doctors without Borders. Furthermore, the employees can choose to donate their company Christmas present to charity. In 2013 these Christmas presents were donated to The Danish Cancer Society.

### **Columbus UK**

In 2013 Columbus UK launched more charity initiatives in order to donate money to different charity organizations. Among these initiatives were events such as a Lottery bonus ball, a Secret Santa event, book sales, a Charity ball and a customer charity dinner. All together the initiatives raised more than £20,000. All proceeds will go to the charities Tommy's and The Maddison Bignal Trust.

### **Columbus US**

In 2013 Columbus US raised money for Volunteers of America, Michigan. Volunteers of America is a non-profit organization dedicated to helping people in need find housing, healthcare and anything that can help them to rebuild their lives.

### **Columbus Norway**

Columbus Norway is Save the Children Partner. This means that Columbus Norway has committed to donate 100.000 Norwegian Kroner to Save the Children each year. Until now these donations have been even larger. Columbus Norway collects these donations through sale of Christmas calendars in favor of Save the Children and lottery on Columbus Norway's annual Juleverkstedet.

Furthermore the employees in Columbus Norway voluntarily donate a monthly amount from their salary to Save the Children; an amount which otherwise would have been spent on employee Christmas presents.

Columbus Norway has also participated actively in Save the Children's marketing efforts in order to make more companies donate to the organization. In 2013 Columbus is going to participate in organizing activities for children on asylum centers.

Furthermore Columbus Norway has contributed financially to the initiative Aid to Play, which focuses on helping children and youngsters in difficult conditions to get a better life through sports and play.

#### **Columbus Russia**

Columbus Russia is working with a charity organization called Life Line, which raises money to medicine for severely sick children who cannot afford expensive medical assistance. In 2013 Columbus Russia donated money to help two children.

Every year Columbus employees collect change and donate it to the charity fund Life Line, which donates the money to different Life Line Funds. In 2013 the employees also collected money for the flooding in Krymsk, a small town in Russia.

#### **Columbus Netherlands**

Columbus Netherlands has supported various local initiatives like a cycling tour on the Alpe Duez to support research on cancer. Furthermore Columbus Netherlands supported a local project to support people who was in need or got into trouble due to economic problems like e.g. losing their job.

#### **Goals for 2014**

By emphasizing local community and charity initiatives in Columbus we hope to generate more similar initiatives. Though, these must always be based solely on our employees' voluntary commitment.

## Environment

Columbus is a people business delivering knowledge and software solutions worldwide. Naturally our initial focus is on bringing down the energy used in the buildings we work in.

### **Energy-saving offices**

In 2012 Columbus' office in Aarhus, Denmark, was renovated into a low-energy office. And the office outside of Copenhagen has implemented energy-saving technologies where many of the same energy-saving technologies have been implemented.

Virtual meeting-rooms, which are themselves already environmental friendly, are replaced with the newest equipment, which is even more energy efficient.

In 2014 we will continue focus on energy-saving in our daily operation. Initiatives for 2014 will be implemented in our CSR report next year.

## Reporting

During 2013 we have focused on implementing the CSR report's initiatives and to reach our targets for these initiatives. At the start of 2014 we will evaluate our CSR efforts in 2013 and describe focus areas and targets for 2014 in a CSR report. This report will be uploaded on our website and on UN Global Compact's portal, so that both our employees and our external stakeholders can follow our CSR process closely.