

TRIVISI: Stimulating CSR in Flanders

1. The Organisation and Activities

In Trivisi the government tries to change the behaviour of companies in many different ways. It encourages the development of best practices, creates the framework for reflection on the topics concerned, helps to establish forums and other platforms for the exchange of experiences and facilitates the design of new working instruments for companies.

Phase I: June 2000 – July 2002

Trivisi is starting in June 2000 with three pioneering groups. These comprise representatives from industry, as well as mediation and professional organisations and research centres, education and training institutes. Academics and expert consultants contribute to the supervision of various projects. The pioneering groups explore various aspects of groundbreaking and sustainable enterprise in depth. They are known as pioneers because the participating companies are leaders in their field. Each pioneering group works intensively on one of the three themes, in particular, learning, diversity and stakeholder management.

In November 2001 Trivisi took advantage of the Belgian presidency of the European Union to provide a Flemish input in European organisations for the Green Paper on corporate social responsibility, on the basis of a meeting of experts. The promoters of and participants in the various Trivisi projects came together during a forum at more or less the same time. The aim was to achieve the best possible cross-fertilisation of activities in the various different processes. At the same time, there was an initial interim evaluation of the Trivisi process.

During another forum in June 2002 attended by a great number of people, the large harvest of instruments and good practices that had been perfected were presented and made available to all interested businesses. They filled a large box full of papers and electronic guides, checklists, exercises, training sessions, working instruments, exploratory studies and handbooks. These could be used by both individual businesses and organisations providing mediation or other services for industry.

Phase II July 2002 – now .

In July 2002 a call for new projects was launched. With support of the ESF 13 projects started by the end of 2002. Specific themes are CSR in SME's, CSR in training courses and alternative learning methods. In the period after 2002, more attention is be devoted to the permanent communication between all those involved.

Obviously, involving new stakeholders in this is very useful. It expands the foundation of Trivisi and is the only way of bringing about a general change in the conduct in Flanders.

In July 2003 the Flemish government started with stakeholder forums and 2 multi-stakeholderforums to broaden the base for CSR in Flanders. Stakeholders were invited to think together on a common strategy for CSR in Flanders. In may 2004 a big multistakeholderforum consolidated this strategy for the future.

2. The Challenges

There are four main challenges which present themselves at the Trivisi process:

- The valorisation of the results: to disseminate what has been learnt, the instruments that were developed, experiences and know-how, and introduce them in the business world.
- To continue to build on and improve the instruments and know-how that was developed, and respond to new challenges and themes.
- To incorporate concepts in the regular policy.
- To broaden the base for CSR in Flanders

3. The Future

The future of Trivisi is not clear for the moment and depends on the new Flemish Government. But the products and activities of Trivisi will be integrated in the Flemish Digital Knowledge Centre CSR. This knowledge centre will start by the end of 2004 as an information portal for companies (especially SME's) who are looking for information and products on CSR. The knowledge centre is an initiative of the Flemish government and will be supported by the European Social Fund and some strategic partners.

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