



# Guide to industry-wide CSR initiatives Analysis



## Introduction

MEDEF and the French Study Center for Corporate Social Responsibility (Orse) joined forces in 2014 to publish [the first guide to CSR initiatives](#) (in French) in 12 French sectors: Air, Aerospace, Chemicals, Cleaning industries, Electrical and electronics, Engineering, Health and pharmaceuticals, Insurance, Public works, Quarries and construction materials, Telecommunications, and Tiles and bricks.

This first and highly successful guide was the first time CSR initiatives had been compiled, by sector, in France.

The follow-up to this guide published by MEDEF and Orse in 2016 expands on the previous one, with new data on federations' CSR initiatives in other sectors not previously covered, and updated information on the sectors included in the first guide.

The second edition covers:

- Automotive sector;
- Chemicals industry (updated);
- Cleaning industry (updated);
- Commerce and distribution sector;
- Communications agencies consultancy sector;
- Event and meeting industry;
- Engineering industry (updated);
- Food industry;
- Mining, minerals and metals industry;
- Textile industry;
- Tiles and bricks industry (updated).

The sector-based information (in French) is structured into three parts in the interests of clarity and to aid comparison:

1. General information on the sector, its most pressing challenges, its strategy, commitments, and approach to stakeholder dialogue.
2. Presentation of CSR initiatives developed to help companies of all sizes to successfully implement their CSR policies and practices. These programmes fall into eight main categories:
  - Tools;
  - Training;
  - Recognition and rewards;
  - Meetings, Committees or Sustainable Development Clubs;
  - Events organisation;
  - Dissemination of information on sustainable development;
  - Publication of studies and practical guides;
  - CSR report and/or CSR section in confederation annual reports.

Some confederations also presented CSR initiatives at the international level.

3. «What next» section.

## 1. Why focus on industry-wide CSR initiatives?

Industry-wide CSR initiatives have been ramped up in recent years. Taking a more holistic viewpoint of a sector as a whole and fostering dialogue between stakeholders and joint actions on sustainable development, they promote convergence of practices and innovation.

Professional federations play a key role in providing support for companies, especially by developing resources and tools. Federations also offer risk and opportunity assessments to assist their members to identify the CSR levers that will give them a competitive advantage.

Orse and MEDEF support and encourage initiatives by professional federations as they are a source of continuous improvement.

## 2. Who is the guide for?

The guide is intended first and foremost for business leaders and staff in the sectors represented. It provides concise information to guide them in preparing their CSR policies and practices.

Secondly, it is intended for stakeholders (trade unions, NGOs, suppliers, government, etc.) to provide them with a comprehensive set of information on undertakings and actions.

The guide also aims to be a source of inspiration for professional federations keen to develop CSR tools for their members. Lastly, for the most highly committed, the document will be a source of ideas for new initiatives.

To download the second edition of the guide (in French) [click here](#).

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## In brief

Professional federations have made a generous and diverse contribution to this second CSR guide.

To be noted:

- The role of federations in highlighting progress by their members;
- Their legitimacy in providing a response to companies' commitment to tackle CSR issues collaboratively, by working on challenges specific to their industry;
- The development of initiatives, methods and tools tailored to the challenges and issues considered important for the industry;
- The increasing and very visible involvement of stakeholders in developing these initiatives and tools, in the knowledge that working together with stakeholders ensures the legitimacy and resilience of the policies and practices;
- The common threads running through the priority issues addressed by most federations: reporting, value chain and the involvement of microbusinesses and small and mid-sized companies;
- The focus on the link between CSR and performance, combining innovation and value creation;
- A growing European and international dimension to CSR.

MEDEF and Orse analyse the trends that emerge from the CSR initiatives developed by the federations contributing to the second edition of the guide. This analysis section is illustrated with federation best practices (see the information by sector).

## I. Priority CSR challenges, strategy, undertakings and dialogue with the federation's stakeholders

There is no one-size-fits-all. Each federation tailors its own model with specific definitions

of CSR, its scope and the terminology used (CSR dimension, CSR ambition, CSR priorities, CSR challenges, CSR action plan, CSR mission statement, main thrust of CSR policy, etc.). Some federations use a reference framework (ISO 26000 and the United Nations Global Compact mainly) to define the priorities for their sector.

Several have an official “umbrella” CSR programme, which is coordinated and rolled out from the top down, while others favour a multi-faceted approach with independent modules and measures agreed separately.

### Tiles and bricks industry

**French federation: FFTB - [www.fftb.org](http://www.fftb.org)**  
**Sustainable development strategy for the Terracotta segment**

The federation's board introduced a [sustainable development strategy](#) (in French) in 2012, to:

- unite manufacturers around common goals;
- develop and track performance indicators to provide a benchmark to emulate;
- share best practices in sustainable development;
- use these virtuous practices to promote the industry.

The modular sustainable development strategy breaks down into three stages over three years. Both a tool for internal engagement and external valorisation, the commitments of the terracotta segment (“*les engagements de la Filière Terre cuite*”) reflect the industry's commitment to sustainable development and set out shared priorities.

Some federations launched a CSR policy in their own organisation.

Regarding stakeholder dialogue, different approaches were also taken, such as:

- A CSR stakeholder committee;
- Steering committees for CSR projects;
- Organised dialogue with stakeholders (round table discussions, special interest days, etc.).

In other cases, the dialogue format depends on the type of stakeholders.

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## II. CSR initiatives implemented by federations

CSR is now a constant in **the information sent out** by professional federations. Above and beyond regulatory and technical intelligence, they also showcase best CSR practices. Most federations have special sustainable development pages on their website (or a separate website) and include CSR news in member newsletters or other publications and magazines.

**Training** forms an important part of the support measures for member companies and initiatives vary depending on CSR maturity in the company. Training programmes range from:

- Introduction to CSR;
- Creating a CSR policy;
- Promoting the policy;
- Support for specific measures or in addressing specific aspects of CSR.

### Cleaning industry

French federation: FEP - [www.monde-proprete.com](http://www.monde-proprete.com)

### Sustainable development training programme

- “Introduction to sustainable development” one-day workshop

Workshop for business leaders and managers to identify CSR challenges and the resources needed to embed sustainable development in a cleaning company, and introduce the CSR resources and training provided by the cleaning industries federation.

- [Sustainable development training](#) for managers (in French)

FEP also provides a programme to help senior executives to draw up their sustainable development action plans. The programme consists of four days’ group training and one day of individual training with a specialist consultant. It takes place over eight months. Participants are also given a hotline number manned by consultants.

Since the programme was launched in 2008, 383 companies, accounting for 70% of the sector’s workforce, followed the training programme with the aim of creating their own sustainable development strategies and action programmes.

- “Promote your sustainable development strategy” one-day workshop

Developing CSR **tools** is another key initiative to give companies practical and workable solutions.

- **Implementing regulations** is also a focus of teaching tools. Actions in this area aim to facilitate application of the regulations in companies and are geared towards the specific needs in the sector (for instance: management of regulated substances, carbon assessment, etc.).
- Some tools target a **specific CSR topic**, for example inter-company mediation or quality standards.

### Automotive industry

French federations: CCFA; FIEV; PFA -

[www.ccfa.fr](http://www.ccfa.fr); [www.fiev.fr](http://www.fiev.fr); [www.pfa-auto.fr](http://www.pfa-auto.fr)

### Inter-company mediation: the challenges

The French automotive industry mediation centre (CMFA - “Centre de Médiation de la Filière Automobile”) is an independent body established in 2008 by the professional bodies within the industry (French Vehicle Equipment Industries - FIEV; Federation of Mechanical engineering Industries - FIM; French Foundry Industries - Fondeurs de France; Automotive Plastics Processing Federation - GPA; National Trade Association for Rubber and Polymers - SNCP; French Committee of Automotive Industry - CCFA; and French Vehicle Body Manufacturing Federation - FFC) to help companies to resolve disputes amicably.

- For the most part, the **approach** to CSR taken by federations is a **holistic** one. They create a framework of core tools that cover all stages of CSR policy and practice (self-assessment, identification of priority issues for the sector, building an action plan, reporting and communication on actions) and extend to all pillars of sustainable development. Several of these reference frameworks are ISO 26000-certified. Some are also illustrated with examples of best practices in the sector.

### Communications agencies consultancy sector

French association: AACC - [www.aacc.fr](http://www.aacc.fr)  
Overarching CSR policy

The AACC offered members two assessments of responsible communication practices, a service

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introduced in 2013. The assessment measures the integration of CSR issues at two levels, based on the responsible communication index:

- CSR strategies in agencies, formulated and tested against a number of criteria;
- responsible communication practices (in other words, according to message compliance criteria), collaboration with external stakeholders and ecodesign of resources.

- Tools to measure the overall performance are increasingly common (the link between CSR and business).

## French Event & Meeting Industry

French federation: UNIMEV - [www.unimev.fr/](http://www.unimev.fr/)  
Event Performance Index

Developed by UNIMEV (French Meeting Industry Council), the [Event Performance Index](#) is a computer-based analysis and reporting platform enabling companies operating in the industry, destinations, and local & regional political and economic decision-makers to forecast, steer, measure and leverage the spin-offs, footprints and legacies of meetings and events, the venues hosting them and the meeting & event industry as a whole in terms of economic, labour, tax, environmental and societal value.

- As tracking the development of national and international initiatives is also a challenge for companies, some federations have developed compilation tools. For example, some inventory relevant certifications by sector to demonstrate the social and/or environmental qualities of the product.

Some common trends stand out throughout the guide:

- Professional federations are engaged in **joint development of tools** with member companies, ensuring that the tools developed fit their needs. This collaborative approach is also taken **with stakeholders** (government, operators up and down the value chain, NGOs), who challenge the CSR strategy and therefore increase its legitimacy;
- **Digital** is central to tool development and there are many digital interactive or web-based tools accessible online, which provide the added benefit of data collection from

across the sector;

- Professional federations are particularly mindful of **microbusinesses and small and mid-sized companies** - the majority of their members. They are keen to fine-tune tools for use by these companies or to develop special tools for them.

Formats vary widely and range from websites and kits to guides and best practice brochures. Similarly, some are reserved for Federation members while others are accessible to the public and can be used in other sectors.

## Mining, minerals and metals industry

French federation: A3M - [www.a3m-asso.fr](http://www.a3m-asso.fr)  
Circular economy leaflet

A3M (Mining, Minerals and Metals Alliance) published a [circular economy leaflet](#) (in French) in December 2014. Reflecting the current interest in this field, the leaflet sets out to showcase the industry as a committed key player in the circular economy, its place in the material life cycle, the environmental performance of metal products and their role in an ecological transition. According to the leaflet, metals are perfectly suited to the circular economy as they can be infinitely recycled, with no loss of quality or materials.

All federations have at least one **committee** to identify or propose new CSR actions. These bodies are a forum for information and exchanging knowledge between federations and companies. They often operate with ad hoc working groups formed to address aspects of corporate social responsibility for the sector (the environment, value chain, energy, climate change or customer-supplier relations, for instance). Other non-CSR committees (innovation, legal affairs, social affairs, etc.) can also contribute.

In addition to internal initiatives to engage employees, the federation may also decide on **external communication actions**:

- Developing **recognition** (awards, challenges or certification) to highlight daring and innovative solutions by companies to meet CSR challenges. The majority are collaborative efforts with stakeholders: government, NGOs, other business groups, higher education colleges, the media, etc.



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## Engineering industry

French federation: Syntec-Ingénierie - [www.syntec-ingenierie.fr](http://www.syntec-ingenierie.fr)

### Awards in the engineering sector

- “*Grand Prix National de l’Ingénierie*” (French national grand prize for engineering)

Organised by Syntec-Ingénierie in partnership with three government departments, the Environment, Housing and the Economy, the annual French engineering grand prize honours the best projects in infrastructure (in transport, energy and other), construction and industrial products in France and abroad.

- “*Prix de l’Ingénierie du Futur*” (Engineering of the Future award)

The French engineering of the future prize, also awarded by Syntec-Ingénierie, rewards imaginative scientific and technology solutions by engineering college and university students to meet emerging challenges.

2015 theme: Acting on climate change

2016 theme: Rethinking territories

- **Events** to raise awareness, discuss or present CSR best practices. Events can focus on building momentum within the company, or on showcasing the sector’s commitment towards external stakeholders. They cover a broad range of subjects: sustainable development in general and current topics. For example, many conferences, talks and debates were organised to coincide with COP21 in Paris in 2016. Professional federations often approach CSR initiatives from the point of view of building innovation capacity and competitiveness. Engagement with stakeholders is key to their success and adds additional depth to the contributions.

- **Reporting** on the federation’s CSR practices. Two federations publish this type of report, and six others include CSR sections in their annual report.

## III. Thematic focus

### FOCUS ON REPORTING

Some industries have developed tools to help members with CSR reporting, particularly by

defining common indicators. Eight sectors have or will soon launch this type of tool: automotive, cleaning industry, commerce and distribution, communications consultancy, engineering, events management, textiles, and tiles and bricks.

## Commerce and distribution sector

French federation: FCD - [www.fcd.fr](http://www.fcd.fr)  
CSR Indicators

ESSEC Business School and FCD partnered in 2012 to establish the ESSEC Sustainable Retail Observatory (OEDR - “*Observatoire de la distribution responsable*”). The primary goal was to define common indicators for the sector to measure the effectiveness of CSR policies and pinpoint national and international best practices. A total of 26 indicators cover key CSR issues.

The Observatory helps retailers to put their results in perspective by measuring them against the maximum and minimum scores for each indicator.

The large number of initiatives on CSR reporting reflects the importance of sustainability reporting for companies. Whether or not they are governed by French law on reporting requirements, businesses use the indicators to measure their performance and progress, and as an internal and external communication tool. Harmonised CSR indicators for the sector provide a common base to develop an industry-relevant model focused on specific priorities and also enable comparisons.

### FOCUS ON THE VALUE CHAIN

As value chain management is a key CSR priority for companies, federations have not been short of programmes in this area:

- Dialogue around contractor/supplier relations. For example, federations representative of a sector start a dialogue on CSR with their members’ main contractors (or with supplier evaluation bodies);
- Mediation system to resolve disputes between contractors and suppliers;
- Cross-industry collaborative platforms collating questionnaire and audit results of suppliers shared between contractors in the same sector;

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## Commerce and distribution sector French federation: FCD - [www.fcd.fr](http://www.fcd.fr) Social Audits

The members of the social clause initiative, ICS ([Initiative Clause Sociale](#)), use a common set of tools for social audits. These tools are adjusted frequently to take account of changing local conditions and new risks.

The toolkit includes a code of conduct in line with the recommendations of the GSCP (Global Social Compliance Programme), an ICS presentation document sent to suppliers prior to the audit, factory profiles, an implementation guide, an audit questionnaire, an alert notification, a remedial action plan and a shared database.

- Supplier risk is an important aspect of CSR and, in order to assist members mitigate this crucial risk, professional federations offer supplier risk assessment tools to their members.

## Textile industry French federation: UIT - [www.textile.fr](http://www.textile.fr) Guidelines on contractor - subcontractor relations

The textile industry subcontracting charter ("*Charte de la Sous-Traitance Maille-Textile-Habillement*") sets out a number of key principles and enumerates the main clauses to be included in subcontracting contracts to improve relations between contractors and their subcontractors.

## FOCUS ON MICROBUSINESSES AND SMALL AND MID-SIZED COMPANIES

One of the challenges facing federations is to involve their microbusiness and SME members in corporate social responsibility. While the majority of federations' CSR initiatives to date are tailored towards all companies in the sector, microbusinesses and small and mid-sized companies often need custom support and tools. There is a broad range of dedicated initiatives:

- Awareness-raising training and support measures;
- Adapted charters to shape CSR commitments;
- Tools to help companies create their CSR policy and practices (self-assessment, identification

of priority issues, action plans and reporting), illustrated with best practices in the sector.

## Food industry French federation: ANIA - [www.ania.net](http://www.ania.net) CSR support kit

In support of companies, and especially microbusinesses and small and mid-sized companies that make up 98% of the food industry, ANIA created a practical kit, with the aid of ACTIA (the French network of technical agri-foods institutes). Companies use the kit to assess their current policy and practices and implement the CSR policy taking the sector specificities into consideration, irrespective of their maturity on the subject. The [kit RSE ANIA-ACTIA](#), is based on ISO 26000, a CSR guidance standard.

It includes an awareness module, instructions, assessment tables illustrated with practical examples from sector's best practices, and a tool to communicate on the company's positioning.

## IV. The international dimension

French companies often operating on the global stage, professional federations initiatives tend to cover at least the European scope. To encompass the global dimension and give companies as diverse a set of tools as possible, this new edition of the guide highlights international actions by federations.

For those sectors included in the guide, the involvement of international federations varies. Some have developed structuring sustainable development policies, which are rolled out by the French federations. Others have translated French programmes into other languages to expand their scope to other countries.

## Chemicals industry French federation: UIC - [www.uic.fr](http://www.uic.fr) "Responsible Care®" initiative of the global chemicals industry

[Responsible Care®](#) is the global chemical industry's unique initiative to improve health, environmental performance, enhance security, and to communicate with stakeholders about

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products and processes. The initiative is led by the International Council of Chemical Associations (ICCA) and was adopted in France by the Union des Industries Chimiques (UIC) in 1990.

Partnerships in France and in Europe grant licences to use the Responsible Care® logo and brand to partner professional organisations (distribution and transport) in the chemical industry value chain to practice Responsible Care®.

In a globalised world, a unified approach increases buy-in by all actors and encourages companies to address the challenges of sustainable development by adopting a process of continuous improvement, while also highlighting best practices by French companies.

MEDEF and Orse encourage French federations to step up dialogue with their European and international partners to promote their tools and encourage further debate around developing industry-wide CSR initiatives.



**MEDEF**

**MEDEF** is the leading network of entrepreneurs in France. Over 95% of the businesses belonging to MEDEF are SMEs.

MEDEF places job creation and sustainable growth at the heart of its action. It promotes entrepreneurship and defends free enterprise.

MEDEF maintains a dialogue with all the actors of civil society and, with the various decision-makers, works towards achieving a better understanding of the constraints and the strengths of businesses.

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The **Observatoire de la responsabilité sociétale des entreprises** (Orse- Study Center for Corporate Social Responsibility) is a network bringing together over 100 members to study and promote Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). Orse is a non-profit organization created in June 2000. The association's success is based on the sharing of experience and heavy involvement of representatives of its members in Orse activities. Its members include major corporations, management companies and investors, professional bodies and organizations representing employees and employers, and non-governmental organizations.

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