What Irish Businesses Need to Know about Human Rights

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The Network for Responsible Business
Business & Human Rights – Sobering Facts

• Ongoing research is showing, there isn’t a single business world-wide who can say their operations & supply chain are free of risk of Human Rights Infringements. Infringements are on the rise globally.

• Human Rights Infringements include excessive working hours; the under-payment or non-payment of wages; non-payment of overtime; poor health & safety.

• Modern Slavery is the term used to describe slavery, labour exploitation, forced labour and human trafficking. The Global Slavery Index estimates 40.3 million people worldwide are trapped in modern slavery – c. 8000 in Ireland.

• High-Risk Sectors include Agriculture, Construction, Apparel (e.g. Uniforms & T-Shirts); industries that use raw materials for component parts; Facilities Management (particularly the use of Recruitment Agencies by Sub-Contractors) e.g. Cleaning, Security, Maintenance, Catering & Food – such as the sourcing of fresh produce, fruit & vegetables, meat & fish.

• Migrant Workers and Refugees are particularly vulnerable to Debt Bondage.
BITCI Advice & Guidance on Human Rights includes:

- Development of a Human Rights Policy
- Supplier Code of Conduct
- Human Rights Governance Structure
- Supplier Questionnaire
- Human Rights Due Diligence Process
- Bespoke Awareness-Raising & Training for Procurement Teams, Cross-Functional Teams & Tier 1 Suppliers on How to Mitigate the Risk of Modern Slavery
1. What human rights due diligence (or risk identification & management) is currently being conducted by your organisation - for both operations and the chain of supply e.g. do you know from which firms the meat & fish used by your caterer is coming from?

2. Is there a named senior leader in your business who has accountability for human rights?

3. Does your organisation have a human rights or modern slavery policy?

4. What steps are being taken to raise awareness and engage staff and suppliers on human rights risks and modern slavery?
Thank You

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