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**The Commitment of
Social Responsibility
Corporate Reflections on the
CSR mission**

Matilda Ardenfors

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- Corporate reflections on the CSR mission

Matilda Ardenfors

e-post: matilda.ardenfors@score.su.se

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Stockholms centrum för forskning om offentlig sektor
106 91 Stockholm

Abstract

As the world is increasingly characterized by transnationalism, values and ideas are moving across traditional borders at a speed that a few years back was hard to imagine possible. Political institutions are influenced by market values and the corporate world is influenced by ideas traditionally associated with the political domain of responsibility. In the case of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) this is particularly visible in terms of both the increased interest within the corporate world towards the field, as well as the growth of different standards and tools to ensure social responsibility.

This study is part of the research program *Social Affairs - Governance for a Normative Economy* which is funded by the Bank of Sweden Tercentenary Foundation. It puts its emphasis on corporate management at five Swedish corporations and their stories about the commitment of having a CSR agenda. With the main objective to investigate how attached these ideas are within the corporate world this report studies how corporate leaders at the Swedish companies ABB, Astra Zeneca, Elanders, Electrolux and Ericsson talk about the commitment that comes with working at a company portraying itself as being socially responsible.

The analysis shows that the stories contain views on companies as interwoven parts of the surrounding society where ideas of risk and societal expectations play an important part in creating a CSR agenda. The analysis also shows that CSR is described as something truly essential to the profitability of the companies. Simultaneously it is talked about in a general way, when delimiting it to a specific meaning and determining its range, which implies that the idea of CSR might not be as attached to the corporate world as the development, spread and popularity of CSR might suggest.

Abbreviations

CSR - Corporate Social Responsibility

GC – Global Compact

GRI – Global Reporting Initiative

ILO – International Labour Organizations

ISO – International Organizations for Standardization

OECD – Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development

UN – United Nations

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Trading ideas – the flow between private and public

The global economy and culture of today can be portrayed as a tight web of interwoven transnational relations that connect people, goods and places all over the world (Frieden 2006:xv). It is a web that makes it difficult to distinguish the actions taking place within and across national borders from the ones taking place beyond them (Djelic & Sahlin-Andersson 2006:4). This development holds new challenges for political institutions to govern in fields that traditionally have been associated with the political domain of responsibility. Issues such as human rights, labor standards and the environment are no longer solely of national concern. However, despite decades of transnational political negotiations with the ambition to create a political field with a global range, this is yet to come (Ruggie 2002:9).

During recent years scholars have argued that a shift has taken place in society, from a governmental authority, characterized by hierarchy and monopoly, to governance, with horizontal networks and relations marked by flexibility and voluntary rules (Mörth 2004:1). Studies show that market-based ideas such as privatization, deregulation and tax cuts have come to influence and characterize the politics of governments (Pierre & Peters 2000:3) and in Sweden research illustrates how responsibility that used to be associated with the political field today is the responsibility of the individual citizen (Nyqvist 2008:167). The public sector has become more “business-like” and as ideas from the private sector have influenced the political one, the borders between public and private have changed (Mörth & Sahlin-Andersson 2006:11ff).

The influence however goes both ways. During recent years corporations all over the world have incorporated ideas of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) into their business strategies taking on issues traditionally associated with the political sphere (Boström & Garsten 2008:1). This development seems to more or less mirror the activities taking place on the other side of the border between private and public and raises interesting questions about how attached these ideas of responsibility really are. In times of increased transnationalism and governance, is it possible to talk about an even and balanced flow of ideas between private and public?

This study is part of the research program *Social Affairs – Governance for a Normative Economy* which is funded by the Bank of Sweden Tercentenary Foundation. The program is located at Stockholm Centre for Organizational Research (Score) and engages about ten researchers from social anthropology, economic history, political science, and business management. This report puts its emphasis on how ideas about CSR are expressed through the talk of Swedish corporate leaders. More precisely the objective is to investigate what the motives behind an increased interest in social responsibility are and how it is talked about. By analyzing the talk of corporate

leaders at five Swedish corporations dedicated to the CSR agenda, this study puts its focus on their stories, about how the commitment of being socially responsible is presented and how it is defined and delimited, in search for clues on how well attached these ideas really are. However, before presenting the study further, a background to the development of CSR is in place.

The popularization of CSR

As mentioned above, society is changing and fields of responsibility, traditionally seen as belonging to the public sector, are increasingly associated with the private one. This can for instance be seen through the actions of social movements, such as Amnesty, Attac and Greenpeace, as they today target transnational corporations challenging them for accountability in areas that traditionally were seen as part of the political sphere (Engwall 2006:165, Garsten 2003:359, Ruggie 2002:3f., Segerlund 2007:84, Wheeler & Sillanpää 1997:20). By choosing the largest and most visible companies, social movements have been able to attract the attention of the media. Stories about infractions made by companies on social, ethical and environmental issues have reached consumers, customers and other stakeholders at a global pace resulting in devastating consequences for the corporations involved (Löhman & Steinholtz 2004:48, Power 2007:129, Wheeler & Sillanpää 1997:4, Rehbein, Waddock & Graves 2004:239).

The knowledge of the infractions of companies, such as Enron and Exxon, resulting in big corporate scandals, has for many corporations developed into a necessity of strategically working with Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) as a way to handle and evaluate risk (Power 2007:5). Internal auditing systems have been developed (Power 2007:40ff.) in order to be perceived as a legitimate actor and the importance of being transparent within the company as well as towards external organizations has increased (Marcussen 2004:123, Mörth 2004:123). This is visible in the emergent increase of voluntary standards that different standardization organizations offer companies in areas such as the environment, labor and human rights as well as in administration and production. In this governance influenced development standards constitute a kind of 'soft law' and are not binding in a legal sense, but have none the less had a great impact on today's world of business (Mörth 2004:6). Formulated as guidelines, codes of conducts and evaluations (Jutterström 2006:4f.) they are not seldom based on scientific research and viewed as sprung out of expertise and highly valued knowledge. Today these standards influence what companies and states can produce and how this is carried about and organized (Ahrne & Brunsson 2004:179). Some describe this development as a reregulation of the market, as a new way in which the market tries to steer itself in a time when the political steering fails to meet societal expectations (Djelic & Sahlin-Andersson 2006:4f.) and there is clearly a market for these soft laws. Organizations such as International Organization for

Standardizations (ISO 9000 and ISO 14000), Social Accountabilities (SA 8000), which is based on the conventions of the International Labour Organizations (ILO), and Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) are a few examples of organizations that offer voluntary regulation (Garsten 2003:362, Löhman & Steinholtz 2004:26, Tamm Hallström 2008:46). The United Nations (UN) and the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) also offer guidelines and rules connected to social responsibility where in particular the guidelines presented by the UN as Global Compact (GC) has had a huge impact. The initial idea that brought about the GC was to unite different actors behind ten 'universal' principles (Mörth 2004:131) and few could have anticipated the impact these ten principles would have on today's corporate and political world (Mörth 2004:195). Today GC has almost 5000 members, among which 3700 are corporations based in over 120 countries worldwide (www.unglobalcompact.org). Looking at the ten principles, they summarize what can be seen as the most common areas associated with CSR:

Human rights

1. *Businesses should support and respect the protection of internationally proclaimed human rights; and*
2. *make sure that they are not complicit in human rights abuses.*

Labor standards

3. *Businesses should uphold the freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining;*
4. *the elimination of all forms of forced and compulsory labor;*
5. *the effective abolition of child labor; and*
6. *the elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation.*

Environment

7. *Businesses should support a precautionary approach to environmental challenges;*
8. *undertake initiatives to promote greater environmental responsibility; and*
9. *encourage the development and diffusion of environmentally friendly technologies.*

Anti-Corruption

10. *Businesses should work against corruption in all its forms, including extortion and bribery*

CSR is a trend hard to miss. It is the "talk of the town" described as a means to attract customers, new collaborators and investors as well as to strengthen the reputation of the company, even though there is no univocal support that proves that CSR has this effect (Grafström, Göthberg & Windell 2008:152ff.). However, it is important to note that corporations portraying themselves as CSR compliant not always act in accordance with the universal principles associated with it. For instance, in the case of Enron, the company was initially seen as a good rolemodel within the field of CSR and promoted as one until the reality proved to be quite the opposite (Garsten & Hernes 2009:5).

Looking at the specific case of Sweden, the Swedish society is highly characterized by powerful unions and strict legislation on the labor market as well as on issues concerning human rights.

Thus, as issues regarding labor rights might be highly connected to the CSR agenda of companies in some countries, it is not necessarily the case for a company operating in Sweden. However, throughout recent years, in times of increased transnationalism, the Swedish government has more actively encouraged Swedish companies to act as CSR role models. Authorities, such as Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida), have been appointed by the government to take an active part in the work with CSR (Guidelines for Sida's support to Corporate Social Responsibility 2005). Also, in 2003 the European commission encouraged all member states to develop national plans of action for an increased environmentally adjusted procurement (Skr.2006/07:54) and today this work is being implemented in Sweden. Over the last couple of years the corporate world has experienced a dramatic increase of auditing by the media. Today, the three largest tv news programs in Sweden provide specific reports focusing on the corporate world and this increased scrutinizing of the corporate world is also visible in the Swedish press (Engwall 2006:164).

Even though the idea of CSR has increased in popularity over the last couple of years, the idea itself is not all that new. During the 1950s a discussion on the responsibility of corporations arose in USA and created an intense debate on how far the corporate responsibility actually reaches (Grafström, Göthberg & Windell 2008:29f.). Initially it was talked about in terms of the responsibility of "businessmen" to act in accordance with the values of the surrounding society. The idea was that the range of the responsibility involved more than the traditional notion implied, but how far and what it covered was not clear (Carroll 1999:270). During the 1960s and 1970s this way of thinking developed and different ideas emerged regarding the responsibility of corporations. This can be exemplified with a model that distinguishes four different kinds of responsibilities corporations have to take into account; *economic* to make profit, *legal* to follow the laws of society, *ethical* to do the right thing beyond what is regulated by law and *philanthropic* to voluntarily act in accordance with what is desired by society (Carroll 1999:283). The commitment to be socially responsible could be seen as a result of societal expectations impacting on the shape of the corporate responsibility (Wood 1991:695). In the article "Corporate Social Performance Revisited" (1991) Wood identifies three categories; expectations in terms of economic units (institutional), expectations towards specific companies based on what they are and do (organizational) and expectations put on managers and other actors within the company to act in accordance with the morale of society (individual). Corporations not matching these expectations might risk losing legitimacy (Wood 1991:695). This argument leads us to the next section of this report about corporations in society.

Corporations in society

As corporations interact with the encircled society the ambition of a company is to act in tune with its surroundings and links can be drawn to the institutional notion that identities of organizations are shaped through interaction with others. The identity of a company is not the result of an inner essence; rather it is dependent on how the surrounding world perceives it (Johansson 2002:99). Having primary products, capital, labor, equipment and knowledge is not enough; if the existence of an organization is questioned by the surrounding society it makes surviving difficult (Hatch 1997:110). In a study on how corporate leaders perceive the commitment of being socially responsible, it is therefore necessary to take into account that organizations are part of institutional surroundings where they interact with, and are influenced by, socially formed norms and conventions that permeates society. These norms contain ideas and expectations on how organizations should be designed and these norms shape them (Røvik 2004:34f.). Corporations can be seen as part of organizational fields, where they receive ideas from each other as well as the surrounding society. Within these fields organizations aim to fit in together with others at the same time as they strive to be perceived as unique. Thus, organizations can be recipient towards the same type of ideas, but at the same time adapt to and use them in different ways; they do not just copy ideas from the outside, rather they translate them within a range of their own prerequisites. Ideas are translated into concrete suggestions within the organization (Johansson 2002:99f.) and while being translated they change since “... a thing moved from one place to another cannot emerge unchanged: to set something in a new place is to construct it anew.” (Czarniawska & Sevón 2005:8).

Studies show that ideas on how a “good” organization should act are perceived as objective and taken for granted by the organizations themselves. The legitimacy of an organization can therefore to a large extent be seen as based on the success of incorporating the ideas of the surrounding society into the organization. However, successful ideas are not always the most efficient ones; rather they can be symbols of ideas and values viewed as the most rational of our time. The popularity of an idea can thus be a consequence of being associated with successful organizations, actors and countries rather than an efficient way of doing business (Røvik 2004:34ff.). Despite this, research shows that organizations still incorporate these ideas because of their external acceptance (Meyer & Rowan 1977:154f.) and also that the organizations that incorporate these, also called rationalized myths, are more “... legitimate, successful and likely to survive” (Meyer & Rowan 1977:167).

Ideas that have an impact on society, such as the idea of CSR, not only have an impact on organizations as such, but also among employees within organizations (Johansson 2002:94). It is

therefore valuable to approach corporate leaders committed to the CSR agenda to study what the ideas are amongst them, mainly because they in many ways are involved in and can influence the process of defining a CSR agenda.

To capture the social: Introducing the study

This report is based on interviews with corporate leaders at ABB, AstraZeneca, Elanders, Electrolux and Ericsson¹. The participating companies were chosen in cooperation with researchers at the Innovation Management Cooperation Research Centre at the University of Miskolc in Hungary with the comparative ambition to investigate the same five companies in both Sweden as well as in Hungary. This report is the result of the Swedish study.

In order to capture the ideas of what the commitment of being socially responsible meant to the respondents, the main focus was to investigate and analyze the stories of management within organizations that portray themselves as socially responsible. My focus was to put emphasis on how they talked about CSR, how they described the reason behind working with CSR, the role of the company in society, the mission of committing and where to draw the line. My intentions have not been to follow up the stories being told, to make sure they are correct in regard to the actual work of the companies; rather my interest has been to capture the content of the actual talk through the narratives of the interviewees. With this in mind it is important to note that what is presented in this report may not give a full description of the CSR work of the participating companies, rather it presents the ideas and thoughts identified in the talk of the interviewees. The analysis of the talk was influenced by a narrative approach. Narratives can be described as the main mode of human knowledge (Czarniawska 1998:3) and the narrative approach has had a great impact on different areas of research. Within the field of policy studies this type of approach is used as a way to understand how certain ideas, shaped as arguments and preferences, push and create political agendas. Fischer (2003) discusses narratives in terms of storylines that are used in the everyday communication between people and give voice to ideas that can be found on the macro level of a discourse. Through narratives individuals position themselves within their respective community and understand goals and values within social groups and conventions (Fischer 2003:161f.). In the field of organizational studies the narrative approach can be used when collecting organizational stories for analysis (Czarniawska 1998:13f.). There is no clear connection between the narrative approach and any specific data collection method but one way to go about is to conduct interviews (Czarniawska 1998:20), transcribe the interviews and then analyze them through a code system in order to discover

¹ For more information about the participating companies, see appendix 1.

common denominators within the material. By putting together tables that illustrate narrative tendencies in the material, stories within the dominating narratives can be identified (Roe 1994:155ff.).

In the fall of 2007 I began to investigate the work of the selected companies in regard to CSR. Initially, when I approached the participating companies, there were five prioritized areas in which I wanted to meet people with leading roles; the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) or manager, Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) manager, head of Human Relations (HR), head of Public Relations (PR) and head of Sales and these categories were adhered to very strictly. The areas were chosen in cooperation with researchers in Hungary in order to simplify comparison. At each company five people were interviewed representing the five prioritized categories. In case of, for instance, head of Sales not being able to participate in an interview another person at that department was approached with a request to participate in the study. At one company two people participated in a joint interview due to a request made by the company. An interview guide was used and the interviews were conducted at the workplaces of the interviewees, except for one that took place at a café. The interviews were relatively structured in order to allow for comparison, they were recorded and lasted for 40-90 minutes. The interviews were then transcribed and analyzed through a code developed within the qualitative data program NVivo and before the material was analyzed the interviewees were given the possibility to read the transcripts and make comments.

The five companies participating in this study all have developed codes of conducts that contain rules on how to behave in accordance with values of the company. These codes of conduct resemble the content of the GC and employees have been asked to sign documents where they commit themselves to these rules. The participating companies have implemented these codes of conduct within their respective organizations in order to ensure a CSR compliant way of doing business. This is however carried about in different ways. Elanders mainly uses the code when doing business and has not implemented it within the organization the way the other four have. ABB, Astra Zeneca, Electrolux and Ericsson on the other hand use well developed internal systems for ensuring that the contents of the codes of conduct are understood and practiced by everyone working within the organizations. A reason for this might be the difference in size between Elanders and the remaining four companies. Also, all five companies have joined different kinds of organizations and networks working with CSR and have a clearly expressed ambition to be as transparent as can be towards the outside society. This is however not presented further in this report since this study focuses on the views and stories of corporate leaders working within corporations advocating a CSR agenda. People at all five companies have however expressed an interest in these issues, which was especially apparent in the initial phase

when I approached the companies with my request to get access. In general the interviewees were very willing to participate and interested in the study and the field of CSR.

The commitment to social responsibility

In this section a review of stories from the interviews is presented. The analysis starts off by introducing what the stories reveal about the position of the company in regard to the surrounding society. This is followed by a presentation of how they talk about the commitment of being socially responsible, the range of the social and the social in relation to the mission of making profit. The section is concluded with showing how they talk about the origin of the work labeled as CSR and their views on risk and societal expectations.

Positioning the company

Starting off by looking at how corporate leaders talk about the role of the company in society, the analysis shows a few common stories from people at all five companies. As table 1 show, there are mainly two ideas that dominate the empirical material; the idea of the company playing an important role in regard to being an employer and the description of the products of the company as important to society.

	ABB	Astra Zeneca	Elanders	Electrolux	Ericsson
The role of the company	Develop society, offer work and positive work conditions, develop products, improve living conditions, offer interesting work, contribute with income to the country, develop technology, be a good citizen	Contribute with specific knowledge, secure the patient's access to medicine, a big employer in Sweden, an important base of competence through research and development, delivers health	Spreads information, the company is an organization for provision, an important cooperation partner	A component in society, responsibility for many employees, many consumers buy the products of the company	Interact with many people, contributes with communication infrastructure, a big employer, works with many suppliers, creates work that generate in revenues

Table 1

The role as an employer is talked about in terms of creating work and therefore contributing to the governmental income through taxes. It is also talked about in terms of responsibility for the people employed and the importance of providing good working conditions.

We have a very important role in society, on one hand we create work and generate lots of tax revenues. On the other hand we provide technology which increases communication between people...² (interview at Ericsson)

... we have, through a historical work with our company developed products that we sell to customers, industries etcetera, so in that sense our part in society is really to increase the welfare of individuals. So we contribute (...) to increased welfare in some sense and better working environment, that's what we do... (interview at ABB)

When talking about products the stories contain links between the product, or specific knowledge within the company, connected to an important place in society:

... the role of the company is to, from its business idea, contribute with, how can I say this, the specific knowledge that we have. In our case it is medicine and to do it in a confidence building and creatively responsible way... (interview at Astra Zeneca)

At Elanders one of the interviewees gives a good example. As a global information media company the role of spreading information is what is considered the important role of the company:

I hope that we are spreaders of information in one way and information can give knowledge, so I believe that we can say that we are in a sense a know-how company. Then, it is not like we own the information but that is another thing, but we assist in making sure it reaches the right person at the right time. In that way we are an important player in an information society. (interview at Elanders)

The important role of the company in connection to the product is, by one person at Electrolux, talked about in regard to the consumer:

We are an integrated part of society, we have many employees that we are responsible for. We have lots of consumers everywhere in the world that buy our products, so it is obvious that we have a big responsibility towards society and that we try to take it.(interview at Electrolux)

As the quotes presented above show, the idea of being a part of the surrounding society, acting within an institutional setting, is highly present. The borders between what is inside as well as outside of the company are however not all that easy to determine. This becomes even clearer when investigating what they say about the commitment of being socially responsible.

The commitment

The stories about the commitment are very much characterized by ideas about doing what is right.

... that is part of the responsibility, the social responsibility that we have as a company that we behave in the right way... (interview at Astra Zeneca)

... we want to be part of the solution rather than being part of the problem (...) we can look people in the eyes and say that we do this and we don't do it because we have to, rather we do it because we actually want to do it, we think it is right... (interview at Electrolux)

² All interviews were carried through in Swedish and the quotes presented in this report have been translated into English.

In this mission focus is being aimed towards two categories; stakeholders and issues, and within both categories there are clear differences between the companies in regard to what type of stakeholders or issue they aim their focus at. Common to all of them, however, is that the focus is directly linked to the core business of the companies, or the local communities in which they are based. This can be seen in table 2.

	ABB	Astra Zeneca	Elanders	Electrolux	Ericsson
Focus stakeholders	Customers, NGOs, environmental experts at funds, analysts, investors, common people, future labor	External stakeholders, NGOs (animal testing, patients, the environment), authorities, medical doctors, researchers, patients	People in the third world	Consumers, customers, the media, unions, the local community, the government, legislative bodies, suppliers, future labor	Researchers, financial institutes, authorities, owners, funds, consumers, customers, suppliers
Focus (issues)	Human rights in the third world, education at universities in Sweden, bribes, Access to electricity in Tanzania and India	Security for the patient, animal testing, road safety, health and environment, communication, occupational healthcare service, project to bring together the medical industry with the national health service, mentor programs with collaborators and youths, project with the police against organized crime in Södertälje	Environmental damage and waste, discrimination within the company, project in China against child labor, participates in environmental award in Gothenburg	Sustainability, environmental damage, energy efficiency, diversity, projects in other parts of the world	Environmental issues, radio waves, energy consumption, gender equality, diversity, project to get young people interested in the IT sector

Table 2

One person at Electrolux tells us more:

... one could say that consumers, customers, the media, unions, the local community where we keep our production or business, here it becomes more important (...) you have everything from government, lawmaking bodies, all of these. So really, all of these that surround Electrolux, depending on what context you are in geographically, they have different degrees of influence. Suppliers, it's the same thing there, they are also a very important group to us...(interview at Electrolux)

Consequently, to have a social commitment means that the company has a responsibility to act in a socially responsible way in all its interactions with the outside world.

... when we do business and associate with customers it has to be in a socially and environmentally fair way and then there are of course groups towards which we turn specifically when it comes to these issues (...) NGOs, it can be environmental experts at different funds that look at the investment in stocks, because they ask specific questions regarding this. They are really much more well-prepared and inquisitive than our customers so with them we work with these issues and document in order to be able to, in a dedicated way, talk to them... (interview at ABB)

The same goes for Astra Zeneca:

... there are different NGOs, non governmental organizations, working with animal experimentation, it can be environmental organizations, it can be patient organizations, authorities of course of all kinds both the Medical Products Agency that approve medicine, price authorities, environmental authorities, agricultural authorities because they are in charge of animal testing and similar, it can be financial institutions, it can be medical doctors, medical unions, it can be different, I mean we cover the whole spectrum. Scholars. (interview at Astra Zeneca)

At Ericsson one person explains:

...in our line of business there are many things to consider. One thing is environmental issues since we sell mobile systems for an example that radiates radio waves that some believe can be dangerous and we know that and we work very actively with scholars to research the issue, to learn more and hopefully prove that it isn't too dangerous. (interview at Ericsson)

Also when it comes to projects being run outside of the company's core business, in e.g. the third world, as in the case with ABB, there is still a clear ambition to keep the activity closely linked to the core business of the company.

... we want to avoid connecting social responsibility with sponsoring and contributions, rather we want to connect it to our business and that is clear amongst other with a project that is called Access to Electricity where we, that we run in both Tanzania and have started in India as well, where we electrify villages that lie far away from the normal networks (...) access to electricity is a way to increase the welfare (...) we work together with WWF and the UN for example... (interview at ABB)

A very similar description is being provided by one person at Electrolux:

Our policy and our strategy for Electrolux is that when it comes to the environmental and ethical issues, code of conduct and that type of issues, we are going to try to make sure that our production is as good as possible, that our products are as environmentally friendly as possible, that our employees have, have reasonable and good conditions of work. But the day we start looking outside of the company and say that we are going to save the world within another domain or now we are going to, now we are going to engage in educational issues or, or that you try to take on a different role than the one you really have, then I think you are taking a risk... (interview at Electrolux)

As shown in this section, what is the commitment of social responsibility is very much dependent on the surrounding society and whatever comes in the companies' way. It can be focusing on governmental authorities or NGO's or specific issues in the local community; the commitment means focusing on a wide range of organizations and issues. But how far does this commitment reach?

The range of CSR

Being socially responsible, whether it means focusing on human rights or on the environment, has a limit. A line has to be drawn both internally as well as externally in order to delimit the field of CSR and among the stories, clear opinions can be detected about social responsibility stretching inwards as well as outwards. Where to draw the line is however not all that clear.

Focusing on the talk, there are two different kinds of social responsibility that are often mentioned in regard to CSR; the responsibility of the employees towards the company and the responsibility of the company towards the employees (table 3).

	ABB	Astra Zeneca	Elanders	Electrolux	Ericsson
Range of social - internal	<i>Employees</i> Follow norms and values in the code of conduct, have a social and environmental perspective in the work, have responsibility to report irregularities	The company has a responsibility towards the individual <i>Employees</i> should follow the policies and the code of conduct, they are representatives of the company, have a responsibility to report irregularities	<i>Employees</i> Common behavior, follow the directives of the workplace, have responsibility to report irregularities	The company has a responsibility towards the individual <i>Employees</i> Always have a responsibility within the field they are in, responsibility to follow code of conduct, have responsibility to report irregularities	The company has a responsibility towards the individual <i>Employees</i> have a responsibility not to discriminate, to keep themselves informed

Table 3

At Astra Zeneca and Ericsson, the interviewees talk about the responsibility of the company towards members of its staff.

... we are a company with over twelve thousand employees and we have a responsibility towards them (...) we do many things, we have, we keep occupational health care very professionally. We provide workout facilities, community facilities (...) we sponsor holiday clubs and so on, so it is an internal perspective where we do very many things...(interview at Astra Zeneca)

... an employee with for instance an alcohol problem (...) the company does a lot, very much for those kind of people with that type of illness (...) I think that Ericsson is a very, very good company in that sense that it takes a long time, it can take three years before you even get to the line where you need to think about maybe not providing for an individuals health care anymore, that maybe this is something for the primary health care or some other health care agency. So I would say that it takes quite a long time before we let go of the responsibility... (interview at Ericsson)

There are however difficulties connected to this. One person at Elanders tells us more:

... we have tolerable working conditions and you get market oriented pay and people are the right age, but how, if their family is suffering from famine or are in need in any other

way it has to be the responsibility of the authorities or the society. We can only make sure that we use the conditions, that the conditions of work that we have are socially acceptable. (interview at Elanders)

The individual also has a responsibility to maintain the social norms and it is quite extensive. At all companies, with the exception of Elanders which simply encourages reporting of inaccurate behavior, there is an anonymous reporting system for the staff to use whenever they come across behavior that is not in accordance with the code of conduct or the ethical rules of the company. At ABB, Astra Zeneca and Electrolux there are special telephone lines that you are expected to use to report irregularities:

...in the workplace's code of conduct it is very clear that it is encouraged and expected of every single employee to report when something wrong happens. So it is very important that people feel that it is something that is supported, this is not to say gossip, rather more as a mechanism for control and that it does not (...) lead to negative consequences... (interview at Electrolux)

At Ericsson they have an anonymous survey for the staff to fill out:

... we measure, that is, we ask employees what they think of us as an employer and some of those questions relate a lot to diversity, how do you perceive Ericsson as an employer in terms of allowing diversity. And locally we have policies about how, that you cannot discriminate race, or sexually or in any other way... (interview at Ericsson)

It is also of great importance that the staff act in accordance with, and support, the core values and the ethical rules of the company.

...the employees shall so to speak fulfill the norms that we have agreed upon. There are legal things in a contract of employment that regulate what you are allowed to do as an employee at ABB and as an employee in Sweden and then there is a code of conduct where we have agreed on that these are the values that we work by and then there is also, if you are employed as a buyer or as a sales person or project leader then it is connected to that function and that profession... (interview at ABB)

At Astra Zeneca a high level of responsibility is put on the individual. If something is discovered as not being handled in accordance with the code of conduct it will lead to big consequences for the person responsible. One of the interviewees takes it as far as to say that if you are employed at Astra Zeneca you have a twenty-four hour responsibility.

...there are examples at this company where a person behaves in a bad way privately which is a risk for the company, to somehow get involved (...) that is not ok (...) if you are a part of, you are a representative of this company even, twenty-four hours so if you are employed at Astra Zeneca you have a certain responsibility to behave correctly. (interview at Astra Zeneca)

Where to draw the line is therefore not easy to determine. It is considered important to follow the ethical guidelines of the company, but how far this actually reaches is not clear. One person working at Elanders says:

... one has a responsibility as a normal citizen. One also has a responsibility I think to make the company attentive if there are shortcomings (...) and then of course, you have a responsibility to live by the policies and guidelines that the company has decided upon. (interview at Elanders)

The quote exemplifies the vagueness when describing the responsibility to behave as a normal citizen. Another quote like this is given by a person at Ericsson:

...of course it is every citizen's responsibility to behave correctly, that you have, that you don't discriminate, that you behave in accordance with how Ericsson wants you to be as an employee... (interview at Ericsson)

When committing to being socially responsible it also means focusing on the outside world. Looking at the stories about the social, a clear understanding is unveiled that the social also stretches outside your own company, shown in table 4.

	ABB	Astra Zeneca	Elanders	Electrolux	Ericsson
Range of social – external	The local community, suppliers, follow laws and rules of society	Suppliers, following laws (FN convention), responsibility for distribution and the product	Choice of suppliers, being a good citizen	The local community (Hungary and India), production through environmental and ethical guidelines, suppliers, follow laws	Suppliers, the production, the environment, child labor

Table 4

This notion is however characterized by the difficulty in delimiting the range. At ABB one of the interviewees talks about it as depending on the community; a company in a small community has a high degree of social responsibility in comparison to one in a big community.

... when you are in a small place for example then you are more than a company that makes business, if you are for instance a dominating employer then you might have to take more responsibility in society and be part of the local networks, support local initiatives in society, come together with others and try to make everything from infrastructural issues to local sports activities work... (interview at ABB)

Another person talks about the difficulty in determining where to draw the line.

... there is a practical border as for how much you can influence and make demands and it is usually drawn at the suppliers (...) you should however at least think the thought of moving on to the supplier of the supplier and see how things are there... (interview at ABB)

This quote reveals the vagueness of determining the range of the commitment of being socially responsible. There is a common idea of the importance in following laws, but since laws differ depending on society, this creates a space for transnational corporations, like the five participating in this study, to make their own decisions on what laws to follow.

... in Sweden or in Europe we have quite strict, the legislative protection is quite extended (...) but then there are other countries that don't have the legislative protection and then the companies must have higher demands than what the law in the respective countries say so, I don't think there is a clear border (...) we don't accept everything just because it is legal, if you are allowed to have child labor in India, it is not ok... (interview at Electrolux)

One example of how difficult this can be is given by one person at Elanders:

On the environmental side we can only make sure that we do everything to minimize our waste, our transportations and that we work with our sustainability issues. But if it turns out that our waste, that is supposed to be recycled, ends up on the lot next to ours it has to be a question for the authorities. I mean we can't (...) what is part of our business and our employees it is our responsibility but we can't, we can't go in and, according to me, of course we can do our part to contribute to different societal commitments (...) but it cannot be part of our responsibility. It can be a good initiative but it can't be our responsibility. It has to be the authorities of the country that have the responsibility... (interview at Elanders)

The borderline between what is considered the responsibility of the company and what is not is hard to determine. One person at Ericsson talk about the difficulty in determining whether or not it is the responsibility of Ericsson when a mobile service fails to function:

... that border can be very unclear and how far does our responsibility reach? If you look at our suppliers but also ahead if you look at, if you have a person who uses a mobile service, if you chat on your cell-phone or something, how far does our responsibility reach in order for it to be the responsibility of Ericsson?(interview at Ericsson)

Another example is given by a person working at Electrolux talking about a situation that occurred a few years ago.

... we bought a Hungarian company and this was directly after the iron curtain fell and it was a really weird soviet economy there and so (...) when we were to buy Alhell in Hungary a Zoo was included, there was a Zoo included and a couple of schools and bathhouses and both this and that. And we were pretty quick on saying, ok what should Electrolux do with a zoo and what to do with these tigers? And that is a concrete question, all of a sudden we owned tigers. And somewhere here you need to put down your foot and say that this is not our responsibility, there has to be someone else's... (interview at Electrolux)

This last quote illustrates a situation that put the spotlight on the border between what is not the responsibility of the company. In this case Electrolux sold the schools, the zoo and the bathhouses.

The commitment - an obvious way to make profits

As shown above, what the commitment of being socially responsible is and how far it reaches is hard to define. However, working with CSR and having a CSR agenda is considered as very closely linked to the core business of the companies and a means with which to make profits. Looking at table 5 it is very clear that it is described as a necessary way to do business.

	ABB	Astra Zeneca	Elanders	Electrolux	Ericsson
Social and profit	Tied to the commercial operations of the company, has to be taken into account in big projects, get input from NGOs when deciding on business deals, view project from economic and social perspective, social responsibility important in making profit, can not maximize profit in expense of the social, renounce from some business because of the social	Closely linked to the commercial operation, cannot separate the social from the commercial, a part of being a legitimate actor, ethical responsibility benefits the company – attracts good labor and customers, make profit in a responsible way	Social responsibility generates profit, a way to compete, has to do with business, the company can benefit from its values, no social responsibility means no long term business, can mean increased productivity	A way to behave good, earning money on the social – the consumers choose environmental friendly products, live up to expectations about being social otherwise no license to operate	While negotiating with customers the commercial parts of CSR is what is emphasized, when purchasing consultants-always look at CSR, connected to values that support the business idea, will not last as a business in the long run, the profit interest cannot exceed the people, the social is a way to fulfill the business idea

Table 5

A CSR agenda is very closely linked to the commercial activities of the company. One person at Astra Zeneca talks about it in terms of making profit in a responsible way:

...in some simple way one must summarize it as we are making money in a responsible way, that's almost how it has to be. I mean everything we do, we have to do in a responsible way and to earn money for our shareholders also have to be done responsibly every step otherwise it will strike back in some way. (interview at Astra Zeneca)

Another person describes it quite similar to the one above:

... this company was probably not created to practice social activities so of course, making profit is more important, it is what justifies our existence, but then you have to (...) act in a decent way... (interview at Electrolux)

Another person talks about it as a means to compete with others:

... if you look at the side that has to do with sustainability and environment (...) in the market it is a way to be competitive(...) and I am convinced that social responsibility in its broader sense also will be (...) because this is something that analysts and investors at the big funds puts increasing emphasis on. So it, it has to do with the business, definitely...(interview at Elanders)

Also, when negotiating with customers:

... when you negotiate with a customer I believe there are more commercial aspects of these things that we put emphasis on, to help decrease environmental impact and that we can decrease the usage of electricity and things like that... (interview at Ericsson)

To act in an ethically correct way is thus a way to be profitable, for example in regard to bribes and corruption. One person at ABB says:

... everybody can earn something if business is done in an ethically correct way and bribes and things like that are eliminated, because there is so much money disappearing in holes and, on the other hand it is hard to say how much but in the long run I think that the company gets a better reputation and repute which probably results in that we can get increased pay based on a solid reputation. (interview at ABB)

This is explained further by a person at Astra Zeneca:

... you basically have to make a profit otherwise you won't survive in the long run and then the social responsibility won't survive either. So the best way in which we can be socially responsible is to actually make a profit within the frame of a few values and rules that exist, so basically we have to make a profit... (interview at Astra Zeneca)

Thus, an ethically correct behavior benefits the company and in the long run it means that the company is making a profit in a responsible way. If the company does not act in a responsible way it cannot make a profit and if it does not make a profit it cannot act in a responsible way. The social is therefore talked about as a part of the determination of profit. Also, at Elanders this is mentioned. One person talks about not being able to be successful in a long term perspective without a social commitment:

... if one only optimizes the profit and not take into account the social you won't be very long-lasting and there we have a responsibility to be long-lasting, to actually make sure that this exists for a considerable period of time (...) profit is absolutely essential but so is also the social responsibility. (interview at Elanders)

One of the interviewees at Electrolux says:

... if we don't have a CSR agenda, or if we don't have an ethical profile, an ethical commitment towards the surrounding society, in the long run people won't buy our products, because consumers of today are well prepared, demanding and they don't want to support a company they don't see as, as fair in this area (...) we would loose, we would loose sales profit if our trademark was hurt because we didn't behave in respect to these kinds of issues... (interview at Electrolux)

Thus, the stories portray an opinion of the social being very closely linked to the commercial purpose of the businesses.

The origin of CSR

The introduction of this report outlined how ideas about risk, together with societal expectations, have played important roles in the development of creating social agendas in the corporate world. This development is confirmed by informants in this study who also talk about both risk and adapting to societal expectations as significant aspects of the work with CSR.

Despite the fact that all five companies quite recently incorporated codes of conduct in their respective organizations, participants at all five companies argue that the ambition to be

committed to social responsibility has been part of the corporate agenda for a longer period of time:

... if we take medicine in the environment for example, it is an issue where we, I mean we have also done good things and been far ahead but we haven't communicated it as much, and then something has happened which (...) has made us focus on it, and all of a sudden, well then now it is about communicating what we, what we do within this field. (interview at Astra Zeneca)

... there are some fundamental matters that have always existed (...) the content of the Code of Conduct I think, a lot of it Ericsson has had for a very long time, it is not something new...(interview at Ericsson)

However, the origin of the work specifically labeled as CSR is traced back mainly through examples of different kinds of scandals, the scrutiny by the media and the work of specific individuals having leading positions within the companies (see table 6).

	ABB	Astra Zeneca	Elanders	Electrolux	Ericsson
The Origin	Scandal, the establishment on the American stock market, Enron, collaborators, new CEO Fred Kindle	Bad reputation within the drug industry (neurosedyn, talidomid), a process of self-purification within the drug industry, incorporated rules, group CEO Tom McKillop	A highly regulated line of business with strict laws and bylaws in Sweden and the EU, debate within society, it is a trend, establishment in Beijing, head owner Carl Bennet	Scandal with Greenpeace, inventory through interviews with employees, pressure from the outside, head of environmental issues Henrik Sundström, trend, customers	Linked to crises with Enron and Parmalat, the media, financial scandals, group CEO Carl-Henric Svanberg, outside pressure

Table 6

ABB began developing a CSR agenda in the late 1990s, a work that started when the company was audited by groups of activists as well as the media when working on a project in South East Asia. This project had a negative impact on the environment and the local population:

...when we were involved in a big project in South East Asia there was a huge debate about this (...) we didn't build the dam but we delivered the power transmission, or we were supposed to deliver it so to speak, and this project (...) had a huge environmental impact. It was an area with intact nature and rainforest and, well sensitive wildlife and so on, plus there was a local population that lived there and that had to move, like it usually is with these big projects. But this was the first that was picked up by the media and here in Sweden we received a lot of attention and criticism... (interview at ABB)

As the project was acknowledged by the media, awareness emerged concerning the importance of being socially responsible and this resulted in an inventory of the organization.

Looking at Astra Zeneca, the work labeled as CSR reaches a few years back and can be traced to various scandals that hit the medical line of business.

... the industry has gone through a process of self-purification where the drug industry (...) said that we have to behave and let's clean up, let's scrutinize ourselves, let's see how we enforce activities. And that is part of the responsibility, the societal responsibility that we have as a company, that we behave in the right way and that we associate with our customers in an ethically correct way ... (interview at Astra Zeneca)

At Elanders, working with CSR can be traced a couple of years back and has a clear connection to the establishment in China.

...when we established our business in China we started to focus on these issues a bit more also when we saw that there were risks associated with the wrong publicity... (interview at Elanders)

At Electrolux, working with CSR is something the company started doing only a few years back. It began in the 1990s after Greenpeace left a truck full of refrigerators outside the head office of the company.

...they left refrigerators with freon in front of the gates of the head office and that was a very, it was really a wake-up call for many employees that this is something we need to start taking seriously. I mean the surrounding world comes in to our company and I think it affects also, the ones who experienced it, it makes one more inclined than before to embrace a new, if we call it a trend, that you see in society and say this is something we need to follow. We cannot work against it we need to work with it. (interview at Electrolux)

The action was carried through by activists arguing the case that freon in refrigerators were harmful to the environment. The scandal had a huge effect on the company resulting in Electrolux removing Freon from the production of refrigerators.

At Ericsson the stories about the commitment of working with CSR trace back to scandals that hit other big companies during the 1990s.

...there were for example these big financial scandals where big corporations had to be declared bankrupt and where the corporate management paid big bonuses with lots of money to themselves, and they were imprisoned for life. So that of course scared the corporate management. (interview at Ericsson)

At all five participating companies at least one person mentions a CEO or a head owner as important in developing a CSR agenda. It seems like the determination of people in leading positions pushing the CSR agenda have made a difference.

Risks and expectations

The people being interviewed talked about risk and expectations as having influence on the development of CSR. When talking about risk, it is mentioned in regard to both having a CSR agenda as well as not having one. This is presented in Table 7.

	ABB	Astra Zeneca	Elanders	Electrolux	Ericsson
Risk with not acting	“Bad will”, fast information channels spread, negative information, exclusion from markets (American)	It is not possible not to act, exclusion from contracts, excluded from the industry association, loose competent staff, as the largest medical company in Sweden you need to be able to answer	Loosing credibility as an employer, loose the power to attract investors, you won't be able to sell to the public sector	People ask so you have to act, risk with not having a functioning control over you production, there are losses to be made if you are not seen as a legitimate actor	Burnouts among the staff, a homogeneous population among the workers, it might be a political strain to work with Ericsson
Risk in acting	Missing out on a deal, short term risk, excluding yourself from business	In the short run it might be difficult in markets not as developed as in Sweden, there is a risk in being to communicative	It might be a problem in China with local authorities, it costs money, if you start your work too soon you might loose market shares	It sometimes costs more and it can result in loss of businesses	You must have all the facts on the table if you say that you act, every process takes time, you have to allow scrutiny

Table 7

First, looking at the risk of not having a CSR agenda, at Elanders one of the interviewees talk about the importance of acting responsible when being a supplier to the public sector; lacking a CSR agenda would probably have severe consequences:

...when it comes to taking responsibility (...) we would not be able to sell to one single customer within foremost the public sector whatsoever, so I think it would be completely unthinkable to try to compete on that market without a conscious work... (interview at Elanders)

Risk is also associated with not being able to control or have complete knowledge of the organization as a whole as well as the suppliers. At Electrolux one of the participants tells us more:

... for example if you don't have a well-functioning control over your production apparatus and all of a sudden it is revealed that you have child labor in your factories, or that it all of a sudden is revealed that you have suppliers that have child labor in their factories, or that you discover that you have suppliers that deliver material that is poisonous or have a big impact on the environment. Here there are of course huge risks towards the consumers that they, I mean then we would be screwed... (interview at Electrolux)

The above mentioned risks are not in themselves risks but become risks as societal expectations are taken into account. Expectations from politicians, the media, consumers and others are what shape the idea of risk among the interviewees. A quote from an interview with a person working at Astra Zeneca exemplifies this:

... we have of course mapped out those stakeholders that are important to us and who they are and how they perceive us today, and it can be stakeholders that we depend on, maybe to cooperate with in order to, for example, authorities to get our medicine through and get prices on our medicine, it can be stakeholders that might be obvious and it can be doctors and patients (...) how do they perceive us today and how, what are their expectations on us, what are their expectations and are we there or is there a gap that we need to work with and if so, seal that gap... (interview at Astra Zeneca)

In order to eliminate risk it is thus important to prevent and work in a proactive way. One person at Astra Zeneca says:

... you want to avoid risks and kind of prevent them and seal if you believe that, oh something might happen here if we don't seal it, so here you want to be proactive and one step ahead (...) because we know that if we make a mistake it will result in big consequences and we can't allow it (...) we try to be one step ahead... (interview at Astra Zeneca)

As mentioned earlier, there are also risks associated with acting in a responsible way. These are mainly talked about in terms of costs and expenses as the commitment of being CSR compliant prevents companies from participating in certain kind of businesses.

...short-term you probably exclude yourself from some business that you would have got before (...) I mentioned earlier that we have even pulled out from doing business in some countries, Iraq is such an example for the moment... (interview at ABB)

... we have made a decision to act this way and then we do, so I think that short-term we will loose revenues but in the long run it will serve our business... (interview at Astra Zeneca)

It also has to do with costs in regard to internal issues connected to the work within CSR:

... it costs money to do this work and to have an organization and a staff and an ongoing work focused on thinking more on the environment and other social commitments, and it is reflected in the price to our customers and there is always a risk that we are more expensive... (interview at Elanders)

They also talk about risks in regard to communication and that there is a balance to strike between communicating too little and too much.

You have to be able to stand for what you communicate and if you over communicate it, you have to allow scrutiny, even if it is not good to be exposed for scrutiny. It takes time and resources from focusing on other things. (interview at Ericsson)

In their talk the participants connect the ambition of taking social responsibility to thoughts on risk. The idea of risks associated with not matching the expectations of society is apparent.

Conclusion

This report has been based on the talk of people working within management at five Swedish companies. Thus, the stories being analyzed here is the talk of people who more or less have the position to define, decide and influence the CSR agenda of the companies.

It is interesting to find that the talk of people working at five very different companies is highly consensual. Despite the fact that the companies differ from each other both in size and activities, the stories presented in the report portray shared ideas and views in regard to CSR. Thus, the idea of CSR seems to have rooted among people within the Swedish corporate world regardless of company or business. It was mentioned earlier in the text that different kinds of corporations can be recipient towards the same type of ideas, but that they differ from each other when incorporating them (Johansson 2002:99f.). This is quite clear in this study as all five companies participating have responded to the idea of CSR but embraced it in very different ways when focusing on different kinds of stakeholders and issues.

The way the interviewees talk about the origin of CSR, risks, expectations and the position of the company in relation to the surrounding society, the analysis show that companies are thought of as integrated entities of society. They are described as responding to societal expectations as a method or strategy to handle risks which provide an understanding of the participants' sense of responsibility. The awareness of being part of a larger community is highly present and the ideas of risk and social responsibility are closely interwoven. The talk especially emphasizes the risk associated with not having a strategy for working with CSR. This can be described as a responsive form of CSR as opposed to a proactive.

The report also shows a kind of uncertainty in regard to costs and profit connected to CSR. When describing the benefits of working with CSR, it is talked about in terms of a necessity in order to make profit; if a company does not have a CSR agenda it will be hard for it to survive. Simultaneously, the participants talk about financial costs associated with having a CSR agenda. The loss of profit and the costs of having a CSR agenda are however separated from each other as the interviewees describe costs associated with not taking responsibility as long-term and the other as short-term expenses. As discussed earlier, successful ideas are not always the most efficient (Røvik 2004:34ff.), but despite this they are still incorporated into the activities of corporations (Meyer & Rowan 1977:154ff.) which is precisely what this report shows.

The participants' stories unveil a view of the commitment as hard to both determine and delimit; but still, the idea of the commitment has an important part to play in making business. The analysis shows that the social is talked about in terms of having an obvious and evident connection to the profitability of the business. The idea of CSR can be seen as kept in a quite general way which creates a space to adjust and determine the meaning of the term depending on situation. To keep the definition of different terms vague and general creates a certain kind of maneuver (Alexius 2007:77f.). Whether it is a conscious choice or not, talking about CSR in a general way, defining it different depending on situation (e.g. customer, NGOs, core business)

creates a space that allows for a more sporadic use of the term. However, even though the term CSR is kept general and hard to determine and delimit, the idea of taking a social responsibility and having a CSR agenda strikes as important to the people interviewed. Working with CSR is something meaningful to them. They talk about it as important and the idea of being part of something bigger that does something “right” can be detected in the stories.

Consequently, what the analysis shows is that the commitment of being socially responsible is connected to the participants’ idea of the expectations of the surrounding society linked to ideas of risks. The talk shows a responsive form of CSR and is characterized by a general idea of what social responsibility actually is. It is simultaneously described as an obvious prerequisite in order to make profits and therefore of great importance to the core business of the company. It is also viewed as something important and “right” and brings a certain sense of pride to the people within the organizations.

As a closing note, the general idea of social responsibility shown in this study can be interpreted as a loose attachment of traditional political ideas in the private sphere; here, represented through the talk of corporate leaders at five Swedish companies. As this report allows us to argue that a flow of ideas from public to private has occurred, it also shows that the attachment of these ideas are not as strong as studies have proven the opposite flow from private to public to be.

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Appendix 1

The participating companies

ABB is the result of the 1988 year old fusion between the Swedish company Asea and the Swiss company Brown Boveri. Asea was originally formed in the year of 1888. Today the company has a total of about 116 000 employees, where approximately 9000 work in Sweden. It is organized in five global divisions; power products, power systems, automation products, process automation and robotics, with different business areas within the divisions. The head office is in Zürich in Switzerland and ABB can be found in over a hundred different countries. The business idea of ABB is to support customers to use electrical power effectively and to increase industrial productivity in a sustainable way.

Astra Zeneca is a fusion of the companies Astra and Zeneca that was formed in 1999. The Swedish company Astra was originally formed in the year of 1913. It has a staff of 65 000; 12 000 work in Sweden. The head office of the company is in London with market businesses in forty-seven countries and sales businesses in over a hundred. The core business of Astra Zeneca is to deliver medicine that makes a difference in the health and lives of the patients. The company therefore conducts research as well as develops, produce and sell medicine all over the world. The business idea of the company is that all patients that need medicine should have access to it without any delay.

Elanders was formed in the year of 1908 and today it has about 1600 employees; 700 work in Sweden. The head office is located in Mölnlycke outside of Gothenburg. The company started of as a printing house, but has today developed into a business that offer clients file management and layout as well as store-keeping and distribution. Elanders is divided into two business areas; Infologistics and Usermanuals where the Swedish company Elanders Sverige AB is part of Infologistics. Globally, the company has businesses in Norway, England, Hungary, Italy, Poland, China, Brazil and Germany. The business idea of Elanders is to combine advanced information technology with qualified graphic competence and create substantial surplus value to its commissioning body.

Electrolux was formed in 1919 and today the company has about 56 000 employees of which approximately 3000 work in Sweden. The head office is in Stockholm and the company has businesses in 150 countries. The core business of the company is production and sales of products for domestic as well as professional use which is organized in four categories of products; kitchen, laundry, floor care and professional use. The business idea of Electrolux is to

offer products that meet a specific need of the consumer and to make profit and be a leading actor on the market.

Ericsson was formed in the year of 1876 and today it has around 60 000 employees; 320 works at Ericsson Sverige AB, to which most of the five people interviewed in this study belong, and 750 in the Nordic and the Baltic States. The head office of the global organization is based in Stockholm as well as the head office of the Swedish corporation Ericsson Sverige AB. In Sweden, the core business of the company is to sell the products of Ericsson on a Swedish market. The business idea is to be in the front, pushing communication in the world, to make communication available for everyone and to make it possible for people to communicate wherever they are.