

## CSR Policies in the Viennese Hotel Industry

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### **The performance check between chain-wide CSR policies and their implementation in individual properties**

#### **Abstract**

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) has gained increasing importance in the past two decades, making it a central aspect of most business strategies. Within the tourism industry the topic is of particular interest, as tourism by its very nature results in numerous negative impacts on destinations and demands for strategies aiming at the preservation or improvement of the environment, economy, and social standards, where a tourism business is situated. Apart from developing strategies that address these needs, companies' should also focus on transparency when executing responsible business activities, to acknowledge requirements of stakeholders and increase the degree of credibility.

The present research aimed at investigating differences between chain-wide CSR strategies and which aspects of them are implemented at individual hotel properties situated in Vienna. In addition to exploring discrepancies between the strategies, the reasons for these were assessed critically. Moreover, a focus was put on the management processes governing the implementation and controlling of chain-wide strategies at the properties, to provide insight into the operational processes of international hotel chains. The sample was composed of five hotel chains and properties respectively.

The major findings were that hotel properties exceeded chain-wide strategies in the majority of cases, indicating a high degree of commitment to CSR within the up-scale Viennese hotel sector. No specific region of low performance could be identified for either the chain or the hotels. Moreover, it was found that deviations between the strategies were predominantly due to cultural and geographical differences and proved to be a positive aspect in this research sample. Individual hotel properties demonstrated to have some degree of autonomy in their decision making, enabling them to tailor their strategies to the needs of their regions of operation.

Nevertheless, chain-wide strategies had to be implemented, and provide the basis for individual strategies, which was an important aspect ensuring coherence between the different hotels belonging to a chain.