

Chapter 21

The Consideration of Children's Rights in Corporate Action: Current Developments in Germany

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ABSTRACT

This chapter provides a concise overview of the integration of children's rights into corporate operations, highlighting the growing importance of this issue in the globalized business environment. As companies become more interconnected with global supply chains, they must address the direct and indirect impacts of their activities on children, particularly in areas like child labor prevention, fair wages, education, and healthcare. By embedding children's rights into their strategies, businesses not only fulfill legal and ethical obligations but also enhance their reputations and contribute positively to society, facing both challenges and opportunities in this endeavor.

INTRODUCTION

The consideration of children's rights in business activities is becoming increasingly important in today's globalized world. Companies no longer operate in isolation, but are part of a complex network of supply chains and business partners that transcend national borders. In this context, it is crucial to recognize and address the

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impact of business decisions on the youngest and often most vulnerable members of society - children.

Children's rights and corporate action are closely linked, as companies play a key role in influencing the living conditions of children worldwide. Children's rights include the right to education, protection from exploitation, health and a safe living environment. Companies have a responsibility to ensure that their business practices respect and promote these rights. This includes the prevention of child labor in supply chains, fair wages for parents to make child labor unnecessary, and investment in education and health programs. By acting responsibly, companies can not only comply with legal regulations, but also contribute to the long-term well-being of society and strengthen their own reputation.

Children's rights, as enshrined in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, include the right to protection from economic exploitation, the right to education, the right to health and the right to an adequate standard of living. These rights must not only be seen as moral obligations, but must also be anchored in corporate practice. Companies have a responsibility to ensure that their business activities do not violate these rights, but actively contribute to their promotion.

The pressure on companies to face up to their social responsibility comes not only from non-governmental organizations and governments, but increasingly also from consumers and investors who demand ethical behavior and sustainable business practices. It is therefore essential that companies develop strategies and measures to respect and promote children's rights. This includes reviewing and adapting supply chains, implementing child protection policies and creating education and health initiatives.

This chapter examines how companies can integrate children's rights into their business activities, what challenges they face and what best practices exist. The aim is to contribute to raising awareness and improving the consideration of children's rights in corporate activities. The research question is therefore: How can companies effectively take children's rights into account in their business activities?

BACKGROUND

The rights of children, which are meticulously articulated and enshrined in the comprehensive framework of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, encompass a wide array of fundamental entitlements that include, but are not limited to, the crucial right to protection and safeguarding against various forms of economic exploitation that could jeopardize their well-being and future prospects, the essential right to access a quality education that empowers them with knowledge and skills necessary for personal development and societal participation, the vital

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