A decorative graphic in the top right corner consists of several thin, light green lines radiating from a central point towards the right edge of the page. Small dark blue dots are placed at various points along these lines, creating a network-like pattern.

UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights 10+ Towards a decade of global implementation

Stakeholder input on relevant resources

Summary of the [econsense Discussion Paper](#)

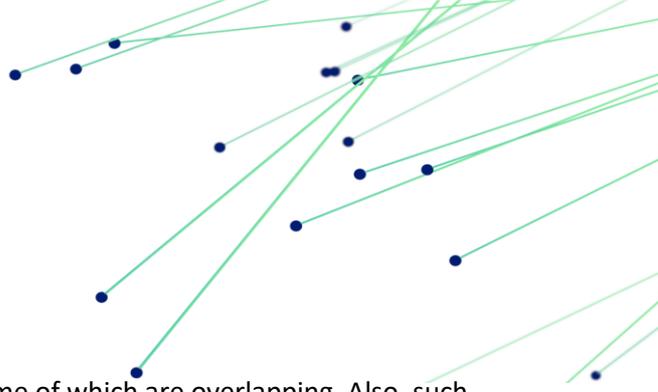
[“Values & Valuations – A Comprehensive Compilation of Quantitative Human Rights Indicators for Companies”](#)

Companies face increasingly high requirements regarding the corporate responsibility to respect human rights. However, human rights are often perceived as abstract and complex. They need to become more tangible and actionable for companies and investors alike. **If human rights are to be at the core of corporate management and financial systems, concrete quantitative indicators are indispensable** to effectively define, track, and compare company performance. While acknowledging that quantitative indicators have limits, are difficult to assess, and do not replace a human rights due diligence, the sustainability network [econsense – Forum for Sustainable Development of German Business](#) has compiled a set of quantitative human rights indicators relevant for companies in a recent discussion paper. This list builds on indicators drawn up by established and recognized institutions.

The key international frameworks in this context are the **UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (UNGPs)** and the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises. The corporate responsibility to respect human rights is also addressed in the fields of Sustainable Finance and Non-Financial Reporting. In this context, human rights fall into the second category of environmental, social, and governance factors (so-called ESG factors). However, while the debate on Sustainable Finance is accelerating, **the social dimension of sustainability still receives much less attention than environmental issues**. This challenge is not only addressed by many civil society actors, but increasingly by investors as well. Many issues of the “S” in ESG are in fact human rights issues, since social and employee matters can often be clearly linked to international human rights documents. With the EU Taxonomy Regulation and ongoing political debates on mandatory human rights due diligence, **requirements to disclose a company’s human rights performance are likely to increase even further**.

There is a need to clarify the issues encompassed by human rights. When looking at company reporting, it can be observed that reports tend to differentiate between social issues (such as diversity) and human rights issues (such as child labor). This is linked to the definition of sustainability topics as laid out in the EU Non-Financial Reporting Directive. The directive distinguishes between “social and employee matters” and “respect for human rights” without providing a clear definition of either term. But human rights are more than the prevention of forced labor or child labor. When human rights are only assessed from the angle of extreme negative impacts and social issues only refer to labor standards, this creates a gap because some human rights are simply not addressed, such as the right to privacy. **The distinction between social and human rights issues is somewhat arbitrary.** Social matters are part of the human rights spectrum.

However, guidelines often simply state relevant human rights conventions without providing a list which issues are part of these documents. On the one hand, this is understandable, as human rights



are complex and defined through a variety of conventions, some of which are overlapping. Also, such a list would come with the danger of oversimplifying. On the other hand, if no clear list of human rights is provided, the range of human rights that corporate activities touch upon remains somewhat blurred. Many frameworks in the field of business and human rights reference neither a list of rights nor their respective definitions. This is problematic, as language in these documents is often incorporated word-for-word into legislative texts. This in turn can lead to misunderstandings, as the content and scope of human rights will be left open to interpretation when these policy instruments are applied in practice.

Human rights are an important part of doing business. Several guidelines regarding human rights policies, risk analyses, measures, and reporting have already been developed, such as the UN Guiding Principles Reporting Framework. Most of these guidelines are qualitative in nature. **Methodologies that allow to report on human rights in quantitative terms are less common.** The econsense discussion paper therefore assumes that companies need a list of human rights issues and corresponding indicators to operate with in order to track and steer human rights performance.

The discussion paper can be downloaded here:

English version:

https://econsense.de/app/uploads/2020/09/2020_econsense_Paper_Human_Rights_Indicators.pdf

German version:

https://econsense.de/app/uploads/2020/09/2020_econsense_Menschenrechtsindikatoren_Diskussionspapier.pdf

The full list of indicators can be downloaded as an Excel spreadsheet here:

English version:

https://econsense.de/app/uploads/2020/09/2020_econsense_Human_Rights_Indicators_final-EN.xlsx

German version:

https://econsense.de/app/uploads/2020/09/2020_econsense_Menschenrechtsindikatoren_final-DE.xlsx

[About econsense – Forum for Sustainable Development of German Business](#)

econsense is a network of internationally operating companies with a common goal: They want to actively shape the change to a more sustainable economy and society. We support our members in anchoring sustainability in operational practice, in strategy, or along the supply chain. We track and analyze all relevant issues: from environmental protection to human rights - always with a focus on the business case for sustainability. In exchange with business, politics, and civil society, we proactively address sustainability challenges and advocate frameworks and policies that enable business' innovation and competitiveness. This makes econsense a valued thought leader, advisor, and partner in matters of sustainability. Further information can be found at the econsense website: <https://econsense.de/about-us/>