

# The CSR Salary Survey 2007

A report by Acona, Acre  
and Ethical Performance

# Introduction

Although there is plenty of anecdotal evidence, little is formally known about the salary levels of senior corporate social responsibility (CSR) practitioners in the UK, nor even of basics such as their job titles, educational qualifications, day-to-day activities and the kind of budgets they work within.

Now, for the first time, Acona, Acre Resources, and Ethical Performance have teamed up to produce a survey that looks at all these areas and more. This, the first CSR Salary Survey, aims to paint a comprehensive profile of CSR practitioners using data collected from 281 of the most senior such people in the country.

Our online questionnaire ran through November and December 2007, and was distributed to key professionals whose sole focus was CSR – largely to managers working in corporations, or to specialist consultants working in the private sector. Nearly 300 responses and a great deal of interest from the industry underlines how important this information is to the CSR community.

Though this is the first time a survey on this scale has been undertaken in the UK, we hope to make it a regular programme which improves in scope and relevance – so that it can become a tool for all of us to track the development of the sector over time.

Special thanks must go to The Corporate Responsibility Group ([www.crguk.org](http://www.crguk.org)), who have provided invaluable advice and support to us throughout the project.

For details on Acona, Acre Resources, and Ethical Performance, see last page.

*March 2008*

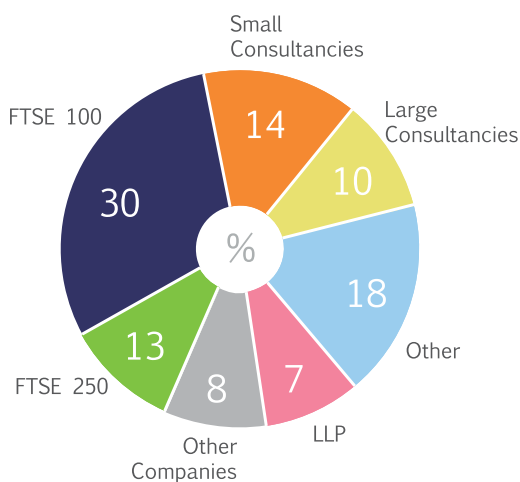
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# 1. The Sample

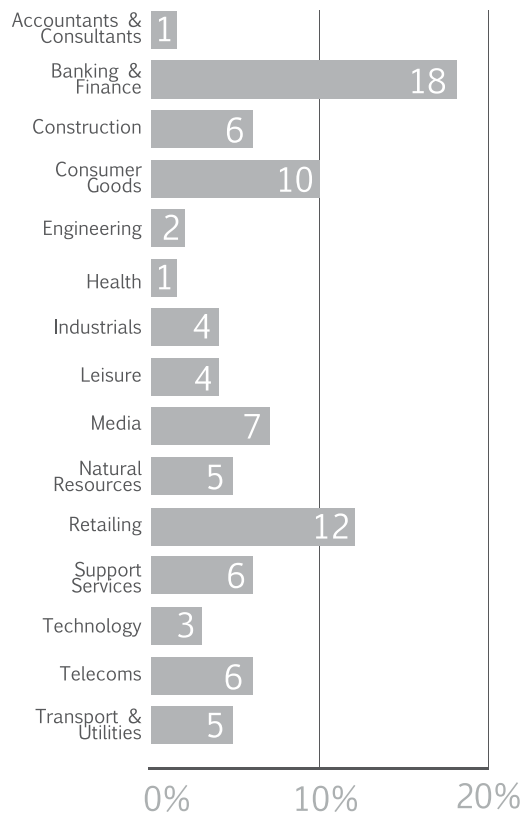
Although 'CSR' can encompass many things, in targeting respondents we decided to focus on two key groups: professionals working within large companies (whose sole responsibility is CSR or sustainability) and consultants who provide technical, strategic or communications advice to companies on CSR issues. To ensure the results were as useful as possible we distributed the questionnaire to experienced people within the sector using the contacts of all three of our organizations plus the Corporate Responsibility Group.

## Participants by Organization



A total of 281 of these CSR professionals filled in our online questionnaire, which was sent to them via email. Around half of those who responded worked for what we have termed 'companies' (captured in the questionnaire by those who selected the FTSE100 & 250, and 'other companies' options). In other words, these people were working in-house in CSR for corporate entities. Of these, the largest group were those working for FTSE100 companies (30 per cent) and of their number, a quarter were from the banking & finance sector, followed by 14 per cent from consumer goods, and 11 per cent each from telecommunications and the retail sector.

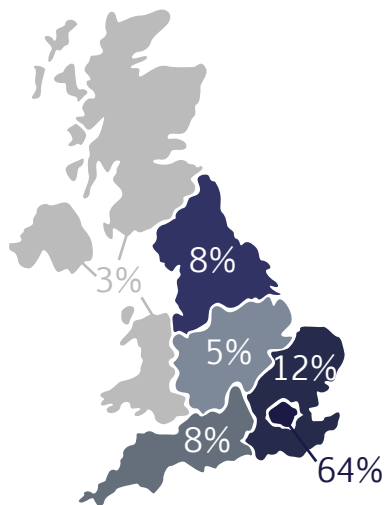
## Company Respondents by Sector



The rest of the sample either worked within a consultancy (large – 50+ employees – or small – less than 50), for a limited liability partnership (essentially the 'big four' advisory firms, Ernst & Young, PriceWaterhouseCoopers, Deloitte and KPMG, and larger London-based law firms) or for other organizations such as NGOs and government bodies. In the pages that follow, we have allocated to the 'company' grouping those individuals who selected the 'other' category but specified that they work in a corporate environment, albeit one listed on a stock exchange overseas or a private company. We also included under the 'company' label the very small number of individuals who worked for co-operatives and mutuals as, ownership structure apart, we felt this was the most appropriate place to capture their experiences.

The overall gender split was even (51 per cent female to 49 per cent male) and there was little, if any, variation in this between the different types of organizations or sectors (see gender chapter).

## Participants' Location



The survey results indicate that the overwhelming majority of people engaged in CSR are concentrated in London and the surrounding region – which is not surprising given the large numbers of responses from FTSE100 and 250 companies whose corporate headquarters are predominantly sited there. Two thirds of the respondents were based in London, with a further 12 per cent in the South East of England. The next most popular areas were the South West and North (eight per cent each). Those in Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland amounted to only three per cent of all respondents.

Those working for consultancies were even more likely than those in companies to work in the capital, with three quarters of consultants based in London compared to 52 per cent of company people.

Three-quarters of all respondents said they worked from a single fixed office location and, with the exception of ten per cent of consultants (versus three per cent of corporate CSR people), there was little evidence that those working in CSR are feeling the benefits of home working.

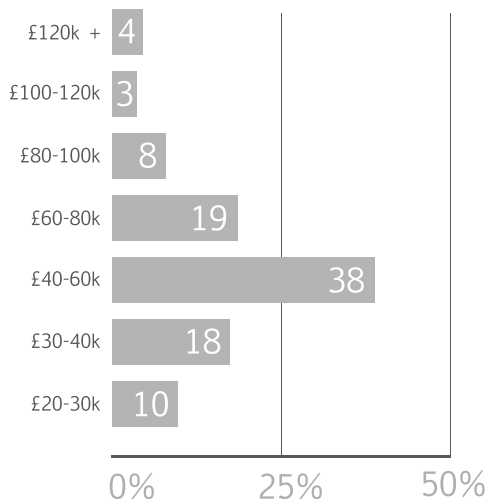
In terms of geographic focus, 45 per cent of the corporate respondents had a global remit compared to a third of consultants, and a third of respondents (regardless of organization) concentrated their efforts on the UK only.

Conversely, a third of consultants identified UK & Europe as the centre of their activities as opposed to only eight per cent of corporate employees. In other words, while company people had more of a global focus, the consultants looked more to Europe.

## 2. Remuneration

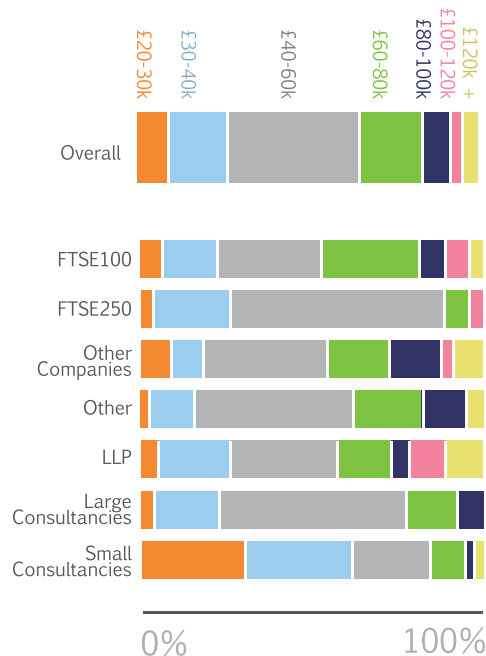
The overall median salary band for all respondents was £40-60,000 and four out of ten respondents earned this amount. Of those earning the larger salaries (that is, £80,000 and above), 83 per cent were based in London and the South East – marginally more than the overall percentage of people based in those regions. The existence of individuals in the higher salary bands elsewhere suggests that the path to financial riches in CSR does not necessarily entail relocation to the capital or its environs. We suspect there may be a salary gap between London/South East and the rest of the country. However, without undertaking a full-scale job evaluation exercise it is impossible to say how big – and how real – the gap is.

### Overall Salary Distribution



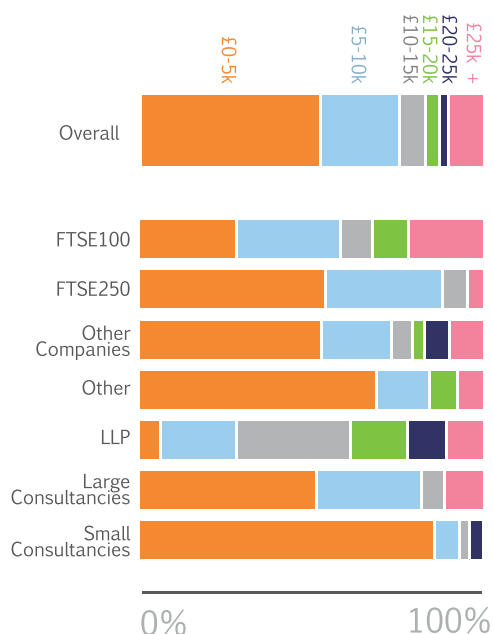
There were noticeable differences in the salary distribution across the different types of organization, although the results should be treated with a degree of caution given the relatively small sample sizes in some cases. However, it is possible to observe some differences between those working in-house on CSR (companies) and those employed as consultants. The most significant finding was that consultants were less well-paid, on average, than those who worked for other types of organizations. Consultants – especially those in the smaller (ie under 50 employees) consultancies – were disproportionately represented in the lowest pay banding (£20-30,000) and only one crossed the six-figure threshold. Overall, at this upper end of the salary range, eight per cent of all respondents earned £100,000 or more, with half of them earning more than £120,000.

### Salary Distribution by Organization



There are various discrepancies in salary distribution between employers. For instance, it appears that it is easier to earn more than £60,000 a year at a FTSE100 company than at one that is in the FTSE250 - and that if you want to earn a top range salary it may be better to work for a company inside the FTSE100 or within a professional services firm (LLP).

#### Bonus Distribution by Organization



Surprisingly, the shortfall between consultants and company people on base salary was not offset by consultants receiving proportionately higher bonuses. In fact, our survey results indicate that the best places for bonuses appear to be LLPs and FTSE100 companies, with the latter accounting for two thirds of those receiving bonuses of £25,000 plus. Five per cent of respondents earned salaries of £100,000 or more and bonuses in excess of £25,000

At this point, it is probably appropriate to say a word or two about the remuneration of those working for LLPs. As can be seen from the charts detailing salary and bonus distribution, LLPs appear to be fairly generous. We suspect that this may in part be due to two factors: first, average salaries in these organizations - given the large number of equity partners and fee-earners - are likely to be higher than in FTSE100/250 companies, so those working in-house on CSR might be benefiting from this overall largesse; secondly, some of those now working in CSR may have transferred from other areas of the organization and, consequently, their remuneration may reflect, in part at least, their previous role or seniority.

One of the main motivations behind this survey was to try to establish some benchmark salaries for different roles within the sector. In the absence of detailed - and objective - job evaluation information for each participant's role it would be a brave person who attempted to draw any hard and fast conclusions from the survey data. Furthermore, the plethora of job titles makes it difficult to have any clarity as to whether, for example, someone describing himself as 'CSR Manager' is performing the same - or similar - role to another respondent calling herself 'Manager, CSR'. However, we feel it important - and despite the above caveats - that we should attempt to give some indication of the salaries attaching to different roles both within companies and consultancies.

## Corporate Salaries

Job Level	Average Salary
Director/Head	£85k+
Manager	£50k
Advisor/Analyst	£30-40k
Assistant/Support	£20-25k

• **Director/Head** - we take these roles to be the most senior CSR person in the organization. Our data suggests salary would typically be in excess of £85,000, with those at larger organizations (by employee numbers) commanding in excess of £100,000.

• **Manager** - we envisage this role reporting in to a more senior individual who has a specific and overarching responsibility for CSR. Our data suggests starting salaries of around £50,000 - a figure that remains fairly consistent regardless of organization size.

• **Advisor/Analyst** - we see this job as sitting within a larger CSR team and reporting either to a CSR Manager or, possibly, to the more senior Director/Head role described above. The individual concerned may focus on a particular area of CSR - environment, community, reporting etc - or be more of a generalist. Salary would be in the range of £30-40,000.

• **Assistant/Team Member** – this is a junior and, quite possibly, an entry level role that provides support to others within the team either across the range of CSR activity or in specific areas. Due to our targeting of senior people, we received only a small number of responses from people in this category, but the data suggests that within companies this role would attract a salary of £20-25,000.

## Consultancy Salaries

Job Level	Average Salary
Director/Senior Partner	£70-85k
Senior Consultant	£40-50k
Consultant	£30k

If trying to come up with 'typical' roles and salaries in the corporate sector is problematic, then performing the same exercise for consultancies was a labour worthy of Hercules. This was partly because we were dealing with a smaller sample – hence one or two outliers can have a disproportionate effect on the analysis – and, perhaps more importantly, there is even less consistency in job titles. We also wonder to what extent salaries are artificially depressed by the fact that some of the sample at least will have equity in the business and are therefore perhaps prepared to sacrifice a higher salary in the short-term to build the business for the longer term. However, based on the comprehensive data we gathered, here is our take on the current average salaries within this group:

• **Director/Senior Partner** – this could be either the owner of a smaller consultancy or the most senior individual within a CSR-focused team of a larger consultancy. Salary ranged widely from just under £70,000 to £85,000 and beyond.

• **Senior Consultant** – we see this role as being performed by someone with either an in-depth knowledge of a particular area (environment or reporting, for example) or a more wide-ranging knowledge of CSR. Typically, this person would have a minimum of three to five years experience of CSR gleaned from a consultancy, in-house or elsewhere. The salary would be in the range of £40-50,000.

• **Consultant** – we do not regard this as an entry-level role but rather one that would typically be filled by someone with a year or more of having worked in CSR or a related field, and is likely to work under the guidance and supervision of more senior colleagues. Salary would be around £30,000.

As discussed earlier, for more senior employees of companies, it appears that in general the larger the organization (in terms of employees) the greater the chance that they will earn more – perhaps up to £20-30,000 a year in some cases. However, smaller companies – those with less than 500 employees, often appear to reward their CSR people better than larger companies, perhaps because they are taking on other tasks or have a higher profile within the company.

### Commentary on remuneration

*"My initial thought on reading through the results was that they confirmed a lot of my own views – mostly based on anecdotes and conversations with colleagues across the sector. Essentially, they suggest that CSR salaries are beginning to reflect the scope and scale of the responsibilities that attach to the various roles, especially those at the middle and senior management level.*

*This is particularly the case in companies, where most of the larger organizations now have job evaluation systems that are sufficiently sophisticated to take account of skills such as influencing, often at executive and main board level, and being able to develop programmes and approaches that reconcile the commitment to CSR with the realities of modern business.*

*Too often, in the past, such attributes were overlooked in favour of other, more obvious measures of job size, such as financial or supervisory responsibilities. That being said, I still suspect there is a tendency to underplay the value that CSR – and its practitioners – can bring to the business in terms of sustained shareholder value creation rather than a sole focus on reputational issues.*

*The apparent disparity between company and consultancy salaries was surprising. Putting aside the possibility that the survey failed to capture a representative sample of the latter, it may be evidence of too many consultants chasing too little work and/or an inability to secure the right level of fee for the type of work undertaken.*

*The latter could be due to a failure to price work accurately – in other words, over-servicing the clients' requirements – or to an inability to demonstrate real value and thereby attract higher fees. On the basis that consultants 'eat what they kill', it would appear that the pickings are not necessarily as rich as some people might imagine! If the sample size allowed, it would be interesting to see next time round if there were significant differences between larger and smaller consultancies and owner managed as opposed to subsidiaries of larger groups."*

– Mike Kelly  
Director of CSR,  
KPMG



### 3. Education, qualifications and career history

Over the past few years, there has been considerable growth in the number of CSR-related postgraduate courses and related modules as part of MBAs and undergraduate degrees. We wanted to uncover how qualifications and degrees appear to affect salary levels within the sector, and, in future surveys, we plan to see how this changes year-on-year as education in the CSR field becomes more formalized.

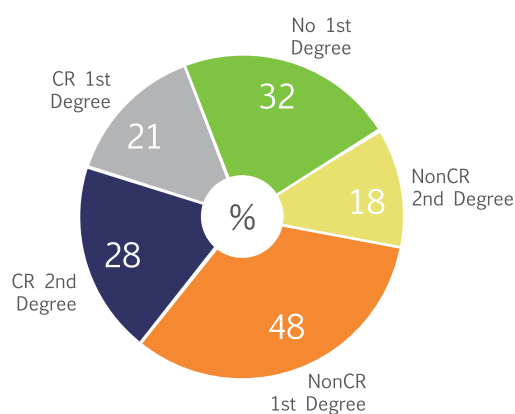
Key findings are as follows:

Over two-thirds of participants had a first degree. Of this group 30 per cent studied a CSR-related discipline, such as environmental science, while 70 per cent studied an unrelated subject. Just under half had a postgraduate degree (Masters/PhD) in CSR or other subject. Of the 32 per cent of respondents who did not have a first degree, a third of them held a second-tier degree in a CSR-related discipline or other subject while half of this group had a professional qualification in CSR or other discipline.

Our results therefore suggest that a first degree is the norm in the CSR sector. Furthermore, the fact that nearly 30 per cent of respondents held a postgraduate degree in a CSR-related area is testimony to the growth of such courses over the past five years and to the commitment of people working in the sector to develop their skills and understanding of CSR.

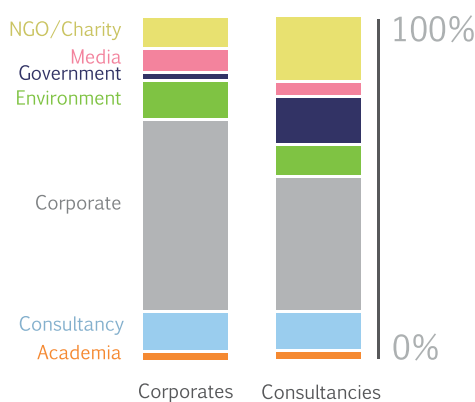
We think it noteworthy that educational qualifications – or lack of a first and/or higher degree – appear (at least at the moment) to have little impact on salary level.

#### Qualifications of participants



\*Total value exceeds 100% as some subjects fell into more than one category

#### Participants' previous experience



Only five per cent of the responses indicated that the current role was the participants' first job.

Overall, two thirds of respondents had been in their current roles for three years or less – the percentage was higher for those working in consultancies (83 per cent), and consultancies also had the largest number of people (50 per cent) who had been employed in their current role for less than a year.

In terms of previous experience, under half of the total sample (47 per cent) had three or more years of experience elsewhere, with 30 per cent having five years or more.

Given that CSR has a relatively short history as a discrete area of activity – either within the corporate setting or as an offering by consultants – the fact that over half (56 per cent) of respondents had switched from another discipline is not surprising. Of this group, half had previously worked in another corporate function; 14 per cent of them for an NGO/charity; and 12 per cent in a non-CR related consultancy. Only a very small number of people – three per cent and five per cent respectively – had switched from academia and government employment. This indicates that hands-on business experience is most valuable when wanting to work in CSR.

#### Commentary on education

*"Evidence of a growing CSR profession is welcome – as long as the profession has an eye on its own renewal. As doctors, lawyers and accountants will tell you, distinctive educational qualifications are part and parcel of professionalization. It would be interesting to know about any overlap between those with CSR-related first degrees and those with CSR postgraduate degrees, as one such qualification may sometimes be enough. A future survey could explore the extent to which members of the profession have access to mid-career executive education, as professional refreshment is becoming more important, particularly for those whose degree was taken some time ago."*

*It is difficult to tell at this stage whether educational qualification has any impact on salary, but the findings on career history are interesting, indicating that over half of the profession has had a career switch – something that may raise questions about the extent of professionalization in the CSR world. The data also shows that corporate responsibility professionals are generally new to their jobs, and that reminds us of the adventure they are engaged upon."*

- Jeremy Moon  
Professor and Director,  
the International Centre for  
Corporate Social Responsibility,  
Nottingham University Business  
School



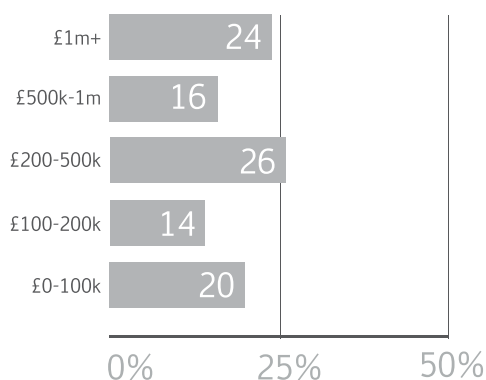
## 4. CSR in Companies

Not surprisingly perhaps, given that CSR is a recent addition to the wide range of corporate functions, our survey bears out the suggestion that budgets and team sizes are relatively under-developed compared, say, to those of more established areas such as marketing and human resources. A fifth of corporate respondents stated that they controlled budgets of £1million or more, while slightly fewer (17 per cent) laid claim to budgets of £100,000 or less. We wondered whether those with the largest budgets (£1m plus) worked predominantly in certain areas of CSR – for example, perhaps they oversaw the community involvement budget for their organizations. However, when we looked at the areas these

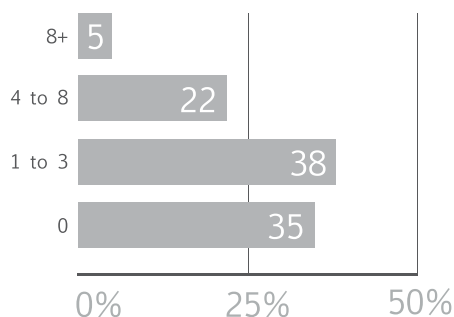
individuals had selected first for the main focus of their work they were twice as likely to have opted for environmental management/climate change as community involvement. Likewise, when we looked at the individuals' job titles it became clear that about half of them were, in fact, senior (if not the most senior) CSR managers in the organization, rather than community involvement managers.

What did surprise us was that less than half of Directors and Heads of CSR (based on their declared reporting relationship) appeared to report directly to the chief executive or other main board director, and that in most cases there was one further layer of management – such as an HR or Corporate Affairs Director – between them and the board.

### Budgets directly controlled by respondents



### Number of people reporting to respondent



A third of corporate respondents had no people directly reporting to them, and there appeared to be relatively little correlation between size of organization (in terms of employee numbers) and team size – so that, for instance, respondents from the largest organizations (25,000+ employees) did not necessarily have the largest teams. Likewise, there was no real evidence that respondents from the larger companies (10,000 employees or more) had access to bigger budgets compared to those in smaller organizations. Nor was there any suggestion that those receiving the highest salaries (£100,000+) had control of the largest budgets (£500,000+). However, those working for FTSE100 companies did appear to have access to larger budgets than their colleagues in FTSE250 or non-FTSE listed.

#### Commentary on CSR in Companies

*"There is little doubt that CSR is becoming more mainstream within companies as we begin to understand the sheer scale of building a truly sustainable business.*

*So what does this mean for those of us involved in CSR? Firstly, there will be a trend to de-centralise teams, putting people close to the issue that needs managing, rather than trying to both shape and deliver change from a remote corporate centre. Across value chains made up of potentially thousands of locations, products/services and raw materials and millions of consumers no central team, however well resourced, can effectively manage all issues. This means that many more CSR people will be recruited from, and managed within, core commercial disciplines such as logistics, marketing, buying and finance. Equally CSR budgets will increasingly be distributed across a business.*

*So where does that leave the central CSR team? Stakeholder engagement has always been at the heart of CSR but its importance will grow. The central team will also have to draw together the many disparate parts of CSR from across a company's whole value chain, and turn it into a compelling strategy for driving long term change. Implementation of this strategy will demand a huge innovation push, not just on new technologies but also on business processes and the culture of organizations. Last, but not least, CSR people will need to act as 'translators', helping communication teams turn complex science into simple, exciting messages for customers, employees and business partners."*

- Mike Barry  
Head of CSR,  
Marks & Spencer



## 5. Job function: what do people do?

We also looked at how respondents were dividing their time across the range of CSR activities. To arrive at the most popular activities, we looked at the first two areas selected by respondents from a drop-down list in the questionnaire. We then took the view that the areas which people regarded as the most important in terms of their roles would feature in their first two selections. Only two thirds of corporate respondents chose a fourth area of activity and only half chose a fifth.

### Top 5 Activities for Corporates

1	Environmental Management/ Climate Change
2	Reporting
3	Community Involvement
4	Marketing (to internal audiences)
5	Stakeholder Dialogue

For corporate respondents (and more so overall), the gap between environmental management and reporting was relatively small in terms of how frequently the respective activities were selected: however, the former was selected as a 'first choice' by twice as many people as the latter (38 per cent compared to 18 per cent). Most tellingly, of those who chose environment first, more than half said it took up the bulk of

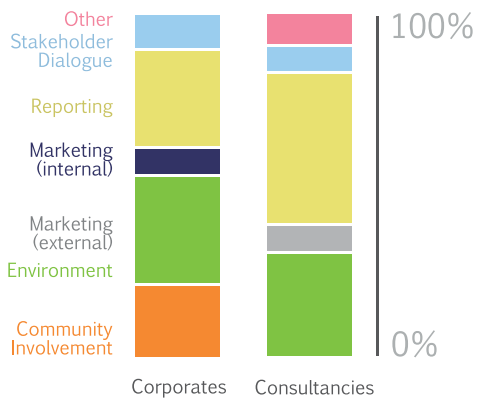
their time. In light of all the interest in climate change – and how businesses is responding to the challenges arising from it – this is not particularly remarkable. But it does demonstrate that, within the CSR teams of companies at least, climate change is the focus of attention. Not surprisingly, those who included the word 'environment' in their job title unanimously selected environment/climate change as first choice, with reporting second.

### Top 5 Activities for Consultancies

1	Reporting
2	Environmental Management/ Climate Change
3	Other
4	Stakeholder Dialogue
5	Marketing (to external audiences)

We found it interesting that consultants placed reporting ahead of environmental management/climate change, especially given the priorities expressed by those working in companies. The fact that marketing to external audiences features within the consultants' top five activities but not in the corporates is less surprising given that many companies are happy to 'buy-in' this expertise – and that the consultancies themselves often promote their credentials in stakeholder communications. The 'other' category selected by consultants included areas such as assurance and developing CR/sustainability strategies. We were rather surprised that stakeholder dialogue did not feature more prominently for consultants – especially given that many companies like to bolster the credibility of their stakeholder dialogue by using independent third parties.

## Top five activities - comparison



One of the most pressing debates within the CSR community is around terminology. Does a CSR manager take on different responsibilities to a sustainability manager?

An interesting finding from this survey – which confirms anecdotal evidence – is that job titles (with the obvious exception of those that explicitly refer to environment or community involvement) give little indication as to which area of CSR an individual focuses on. If one compares the main activities of those with CSR, Social Responsibility, Sustainability, or CR in their title with the overall results for others in companies, then there are no major differences in what they do, saving only that environmental management and reporting are selected slightly less often.

Of the respondents who worked for a FTSE100/250 or other company, 46 per cent had job titles that explicitly mentioned CR/CSR/Social Responsibility. Despite the increasing popularity of the use of the word 'sustainability' in the corporate world, only five per cent had job titles referring to sustainability or sustainable development.

And, somewhat surprisingly given the large proportion of time apparently devoted to the environment and climate change, only 16 per cent of company employees in the survey had 'environment' or a related word/term in their job title.

## Commentary on job function

*"There seems to be little doubt that there has been a significant change in the CSR job function within companies, with the urgency of addressing climate change pushing the environment to the top of the agenda."*

*It is also interesting to note that reporting is increasingly occupying the majority of consultants' time and a large proportion of corporate time. Community involvement is still significant at around 20 per cent of time, which I suspect is less than it used to be. All in all CSR seems to be becoming increasingly mainstream to a growing number of businesses."*

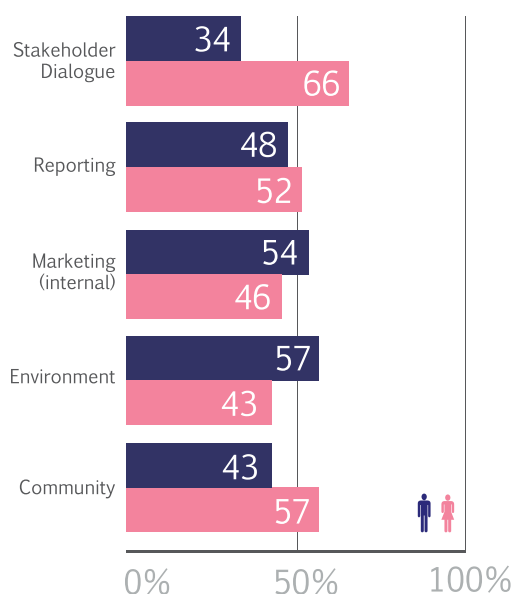
- Adrian Hosford  
Director of CSR,  
BT Group



## 6. Gender

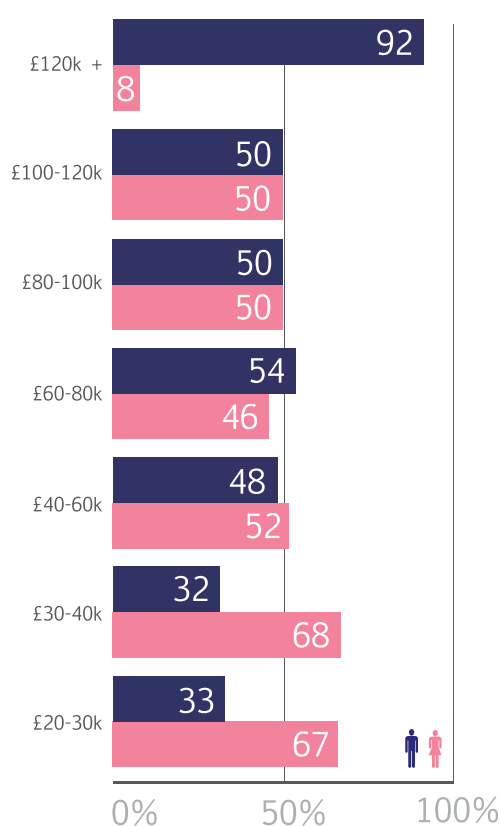
As mentioned earlier, the overall responses were evenly split between male (49 per cent) and female (51 per cent) and there was no discernible difference in the gender balance between companies and consultancies. This suggests that the CSR 'profession' has not yet come to be dominated, at least in terms of straight numbers, by either of the sexes.

### Corporate activities by gender



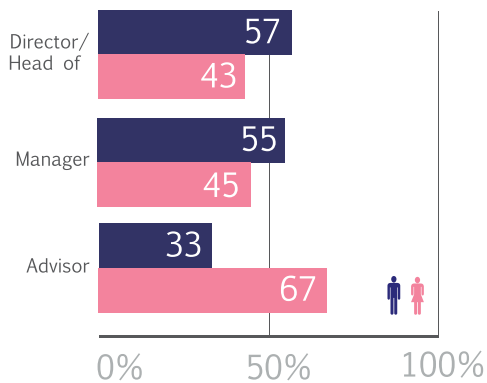
However, in terms of the primary focus of their roles, there was some evidence that women were devoting more of their time to community involvement activities and stakeholder dialogue than men, while the men were concentrating more on environmental management and climate change work. This was true both overall and, to a lesser extent, among those working for companies. However, there was no apparent bias in favour of either sex in the other main areas of CSR activity.

### Salary distribution by gender



Overall, women's salaries were lower than those of men, with a significantly larger number of men in the top pay band and twice as many females as males in the two lowest pay bands. However within the broad range of salaries from £40-120,000, there was equality between the sexes. One possible reason for these apparent disparities could be that some of the female salaries reflected the greater preference for part-time/job share arrangements among women. To see if this is the case, we plan to include a specific question on this in the next survey.

Company activities: Male vs Female split



While the data on gender/pay is robust, we have to state that it is more dangerous to draw conclusions from the information on gender as it relates to job levels. This appears to show that men are more likely than women to occupy higher level manager and director level posts, whereas women are more likely to fill the lower level advisor/analyst positions.

However, even if someone has, nominally, the same or similar job title as somebody else it doesn't necessarily follow that the work they are doing is of the same 'value'. To get an accurate assessment of that would involve a detailed study of the respective roles and taking into account the various skills, knowledge and experience involved. So although it would be fair to say that there is a gender pay gap in CSR – as elsewhere – it would be rash to jump to too many other conclusions at this stage.

#### Commentary on gender

*"The irony of the gender pay gap extending into the corporate responsibility world is something that is not only depressing but reflects badly on the whole CSR movement. One of the most fundamental principles of responsible behaviour should be equal treatment and opportunity. However, very few of the myriad CSR codes or principles include gender issues and challenges.*

*Clearly corporate responsibility is not such a force for change as this survey shows. I don't doubt the survey's findings, as many of us have observed over the years how the more junior and so called (not by me) 'softer' community and social roles become populated by women – while the men tend to be attracted to the environment and certainly dominate the senior positions.*

*What is interesting is the fact that the discrepancy between male and females in both pay and seniority is greater in consultancies than in companies. Those equal opportunity policies do mean something then; but the consultancy world clearly has a long way to go to catch up. Practice what you preach!*

*I don't think that any of us thought we would change the world through CSR but it would be encouraging to think that we would make some difference. If the survey is repeated we will be able to track any progress we might make in this regard. I applaud the inclusion of gender in this survey – a practice which should be standard in CSR reports."*

- Amanda Jordan  
Founder and Chair,  
The Smart Company



# Conclusions

## Views of the authors

**Paul Burke,**  
Senior partner, Acona  
[paul.burke@acona.com](mailto:paul.burke@acona.com)

For us, two things leapt out from the survey.

First, that those working in-house are devoting the bulk of their time to environmental management/ climate change work and CSR reporting. This supports our own experience with clients and raises the question of whether the focus on collecting data and reporting is reducing the time available for project-based work and CSR strategy formulation.

Second, despite the claims made by many organizations that developing a 'sustainable' approach to business is a major strategic issue, the level of resource devoted to CSR – in terms of budgets, team size and where it sits within the corporate hierarchy – suggests a disconnect between the reality and the rhetoric.

That's not to say that some organizations aren't making significant progress in these areas – we come across many businesses whose commitment and performance is way beyond what would have been considered possible even a couple of years ago. Judging an organization's commitment to corporate responsibility purely on the basis of resource allocated is an extremely crude indicator. However, the variable pace at which CSR is becoming fully integrated within the corporate culture and organizational structures – despite the overwhelming business case – is worthy of further investigation.

**Tom Leathes,**  
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Acre Resources  
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As a specialist CSR recruitment firm Acre has been tracking data on salary developments within the industry for some time – and we're pleased that the results of the survey confirm what we expected, while also providing some interesting pointers as to what's in store.

Salaries in CSR are rising – and are perhaps higher in general than some will have expected – however they're not in line with more established industry sectors. That CSR professionals choose – often despite the higher material rewards available elsewhere – to work within the sector is powerful testimony to the attractiveness of helping organizations improve their social, environmental and ethical performance. That said, for the sustainability of the sector itself it is important that salary levels should properly reflect the challenges, responsibilities and pressures placed on the individuals concerned.

There are a range of factors affecting the salary landscape. Competition among companies for the most talented professionals at the senior level is fierce; and this inevitably pushes senior salaries up further. Conversely, the huge number of passionate graduates wanting to move into CSR keeps salaries low at entry level. How these interweaving themes develop is something we'll definitely want to explore in future surveys.

**Peter Mason,**  
Editor, Ethical Performance

There are some newsworthy findings in this survey. The gender pay gap, the revelation that consultants generally earn less than people working in companies, and the fact that we now actually know the median salary range for CSR professionals would all make headlines in an issue of Ethical Performance even if we hadn't been involved in producing the study.

But the results on activities are particularly interesting for us, as they give an insight into what our readers do and what they might want to read about. Although our newsletter has reported over the past year on a dramatically increased interest in climate change, and by extension the environment, it was still a surprise to see the extent to which these topics now command the daily attention of the average CSR practitioner.

At Ethical Performance we also have to be careful how we use words, so another key finding for us was on the semantics of corporate social responsibility. While some commentators appear to place great significance on terminology in this sphere, the reality, according to the survey, is that people cover the same areas of activity regardless of the words used in their job title. So if you are a CR, sustainability, or CSR executive, then you do the same thing. Perhaps this finding will help to hasten the end of the often sterile wordplay debate in this field.

## About the authors

Acona is an independent employee-owned CSR consultancy and part of Acona CMG risk consultancy. It has broad expertise and advises large, mainly corporate clients on the full range of social, environmental and ethical matters, from tentative first steps through to day-to-day management, strategic planning, measuring performance and corporate reporting.

[www.acona.com/cr](http://www.acona.com/cr)

Acre Resources is the leading recruitment firm specializing in CSR and Sustainability. Since 2003, the company has grown to seventeen specialist consultants, and works with clients ranging from FTSE100 corporations to niche consultancies and NGOs.

[www.acre-resources.co.uk](http://www.acre-resources.co.uk)

Ethical Performance is a subscription-based monthly newsletter for senior executives, now in its ninth year of publication. It is read by more than 3500 CSR and SRI personnel in large companies, investing institutions and related organizations in the UK, Europe and the rest of the world.

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The  
CSR  
Salary  
Survey  
2007

## What we will do differently next time

Through carrying out this first survey, and following some very useful feedback from participants, we've identified a number of key things we plan to do differently next time:

- Try to establish where those working for companies sit within the corporate hierarchy by reference to number of levels between them and the CEO/board
- Again, primarily for those working in companies, ask how many people work within the CSR team and, separately, how many people they manage
- Include higher salary and bonus bands – we suspect the £120k+ / £25k+ limits in the current survey mask the fact that a small number of individuals are earning well in excess of these figures
- Revise the way in which we capture the principal activities undertaken and the time spent on each – perhaps by asking participants to be more specific about the time they spend on each
- Include a specific question about whether participants are working part-time or job-sharing
- Rephrase the questions around current and past experience – we think a better way to get to grips with this important issue is to ask participants to state the total time spent working in CSR and then to say how long they have been in their current role. In both cases, we will also include a greater and more specific range of options
- Perhaps look at benefits such as pensions
- Consider asking questions about age and ethnicity

To give any feedback on your experience of the CSR Salary Survey or to make any suggestions for areas you feel we've missed, please email [paul.burke@acona.com](mailto:paul.burke@acona.com)