

The Restaurant Industry puts Social Responsibility on the Menu

Together with the trade association Denmark's Restaurants and Cafés, Sticks'n'Sushi, Madklubben and Cock's & Cows are among the 14 restaurants launching an ambitious CRS initiative, Restaurateur's Guarantee Arrangement (REGA), putting the industry at the forefront of social, environmental and economic responsibility.

Danish restaurants are thriving. Thousands of people are gainfully employed, profits are increasing, and the industry is of increasing importance to tourism in and export from Denmark. The general development of the industry has given 14 of the largest restaurants an appetite for focusing even more on corporate social responsibility.

Together with the trade association Denmark's Restaurants and Cafés, they are launching a new CSR initiative, **Restaurateur's Guarantee Arrangement, REGA**. The new initiative obliges companies to put a spotlight on their business practices and align them with the UN Guidelines for Human Rights and Business.

REGA was officially launched with a grand industry event at UN City in Copenhagen on 30 May 2018.

The first industry-wide CSR initiative in the world

As global frontrunners, the 14 representatives from the restaurant industry shall implement the UN Guidelines, thus documenting how they deal with their adverse impacts on the environment and human rights, and how they prevent corruption.

This translates to 180 eateries across the country participating in this CSR initiative. Torben E. Hoffmann Rosenstock, Director of Denmark's Restaurants and Cafés states:

"As an industry, we want to take greater responsibility for the society we are a part of. Therefore, we are launching this ambitious initiative that will give companies the tools they need to work with social responsibility in a systematic and uniform manner. We are the first in the world to do this at industry level, and we are really proud of that." He adds:

"Being a part of REGA requires a significant financial and time investment, so we are really pleased that so many big and small businesses have pledged to commit their own companies to, and support each other in, living up to the UN Guidelines on Human Rights and Business."

Greater transparency in the industry

Working systematically with corporate social responsibility means that all members of the REGA collaboration will identify their adverse impacts on social, environmental and economic sustainability, and document what they are doing to prevent and mitigate those adverse impacts. Companies commit to making their results, including the areas where there is room for improvement, publicly accessible.

At Sticks'n'Sushi, Director Kim Rahbek is pleased that the restaurant industry now has a more systematic way to work with CSR.

"Our industry already addresses many social issues. We are a part of ensuring good working conditions in the industry, we include all social classes in our businesses, we are important actors in the field of labour market integration, and we aim to act responsibly in relation to the environment and climate and contribute significantly to the Danish economy. But a joint effort has been missing and we lack some common tools to commit one another, and where we as industry work together and work systematically with social responsibility" says Kim Rahbek.

In Denmark, the implementation of the UN Guidelines on Human Rights and Business is in its initial stages, with only a few companies, for instance Georg Jensen, Rambøll and Arla, already in the process of implementing this UN management system. By contrast, France has already made it a legal requirement for the country's 100 largest companies to implement the UNGPs in order to show due diligence in the field of human rights, while in the Netherlands the legal requirement will be effective for all companies as of 2020.

Facts about the initiative:

- Restaurateur's Guarantee Arrangement, REGA, is a collaboration between restaurateurs who wish to improve the quality of their work with social responsibility. With REGA, the restaurateurs guarantee that they will work concertedly to running responsible businesses, focusing on social, environmental and economic sustainability.
- REGA members commit to carrying out regular impact assessments whereby the company identifies, prevents and mitigates potential adverse impacts on the internationally agreed principles for social, environmental and economic sustainability in accordance with the UN and OECD guidelines from 2011. Respect for human rights, respect for the environment, and the prevention of corruption are at the core of REGA.
- REGA is grounded in the framework for companies' work with sustainability, namely the UN Global Compact from 2000.

Facts about REGA members:

The following 14 Danish restaurants are part of REGA:

Sticks'n'Sushi
Madklubben
Cocks & Cows
Love of Food N Wine
Cofoco
MASH
Original Coffee
Victor Gruppen
Halifax
Pixie
Café Evald
REKOM
Vapiano
Gorm's