

# UN Global Compact Communication on Progress 2014



PLESNER





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# Introduction

Welcome to Plesner's second Communication on Progress (COP) and to an insight into our work with Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR).

We wish to act responsibly towards our employees, our stakeholders, the local community and the local environment and CSR is a natural part of our business activities.

When we joined the United Nations Global Compact in 2012 we committed to report on our CSR work and on the goals we work to achieve.

**CSR IS ABOUT** openness and transparency. The purpose of the COP is to give our clients, business partners, employees and other stakeholders an insight into our CSR work and how we wish to make a difference now and in future.

This COP includes five key issues: Environment and climate; the School Project; Student Volunteers; Employee satisfaction and Women and their careers. Our CSR initiatives are focused on these five issues. All initiatives are related to the ten principles of the United Nations Global Compact in terms of human rights, labour, the environment and anti-corruption.

**WE HAVE MADE PROGRESS** in respect of the CSR goals we set a year ago. Today our CSR work is deeply embedded in our organisation and integrated into our daily work. But it is always important that someone leads the way. And I am proud that Plesner is a firm with so many committed people – our CSR team, among others – who are committed to move our CSR initiatives forward. Constantly. It is becoming increasingly clear that our endeavours to operate a sustainable business create value for both our clients and ourselves.

I hope you will enjoy reading the report.

Tom Kári Kristjánsson, Managing Partner  
June 2014





# Environment and climate

In spite of our limited environmental impact we want to contribute to improve the environment.

It is our goal to continuously reduce our firm's negative environmental impact. We have identified four main points, ie:

- Energy and carbon emissions
- Purchases
- Waste management and cleaning
- Staff canteen

## Energy and carbon emissions

We are still focusing on energy optimisation and the reduction of carbon emissions, primarily from our heating and air-conditioning system. An examination of all technical installations in our premises in 2011 resulted in our goal to save 100 tons of CO<sub>2</sub> annually. During the latest reporting period we succeeded in reducing our overall energy consumption. In spite of a hot summer which resulted in increased use of the cooling system we have reduced our emissions by 125 tons of CO<sub>2</sub>. That is a total reduction of 258 tons of CO<sub>2</sub> over the past two years.

In 2013 we started a gradual transition to LED lighting, which potentially means large energy savings. By now we are using LED bulbs in desk lamps and spots and we are exploring the possibilities of also replacing the ceiling lighting in our main premises.

We are also focusing on the energy consumption for computer equipment. At the same time we are moving equipment to a hosting centre where cooling of the servers is more energy efficient.

## Purchases

We prioritise environmental considerations on an equal footing with economy, functioning, quality, service and security and we work actively to reduce the environmental impact, for instance by making environmentally correct purchases. Paper and office supplies constitute a large part of our purchases but by increasing our fo-

By increasing our focus on reducing paper consumption in favour of electronic processes we find that our consumption of office supplies has been reduced significantly during recent years.

Photo: Joachim Ladefoged

cus on reducing paper consumption in favour of electronic processes we have found that our consumption of both stationary and photocopying paper, envelopes, toners for printers and photocopying machines as well as other office supplies has been reduced significantly during recent years.

At the beginning of the latest reporting period we formulated a new purchasing policy which ensures that environmental measures are taken into account when choosing a new supplier. In connection with each purchase we evaluate specifically which environmental requirements we want to make in respect of the under-

taking, the product/service and/or quality, life span, environment and packaging. We attach much importance to environmental considerations and therefore the new purchase policy will influence all our future supplier relationships.

## Waste management and cleaning

We wish to increase the recycling of the total amount of waste that we dispose of every year.

During the reporting period approximately 26 tons of waste was recycled. That is an increase of more than eight pct. compared to the previous year. All cardboard,

paper, electronics, iron, glass, toners and light sources are sorted and food waste is submitted for biofuel.

The daily cleaning done in our offices is also environmentally friendly. We have a contract with one of the few cleaning companies in Denmark that is approved and certified under the Nordic Swan Ecolabel. During the year we have made an effort to increase our employees' focus on and knowledge of waste sorting by displaying visible signs in the printing rooms. This has also contributed to increase recycling.

A pilot project focusing on the transition to double-page printing has resulted in fur-

ther reduction of our paper consumption. The project is planned to be implemented in the whole firm during 2014.

## Staff canteen

Our canteen is still being operated by the Danish canteen provider »Meyer Kantiner« which serves fruit, breakfast, lunch and dinner to our employees every day. Meyer Kantiner has a documented eco/organic profile and uses at least 30 pct. organic products. During the reporting period our canteen used up to 48 pct. organic products, which means that we still have the Danish Veterinary and Food Administration's bronze medal.



# The School Project

We have succeeded in making a difference with our first School Project. We have been positively surprised by the pupils' commitment, curiosity and wish to be challenged.

In 2013 we concluded our first School Project that involved pupils at Nørrebro Park Skole which we have followed from the 7th grade to the 9th grade. Since 2011 we have – in close collaboration with four role models – followed the 24 pupils in the class, who all, more or less, have other ethnic backgrounds than Danish.

The object of the School Project is to encourage the pupils to understand the importance of taking school and education seriously and to motivate them to focus on the many job opportunities and degrees of freedom that may become available through further education.

In 2013 the Project was expanded to also comprise a 7th grade at Blågård Skole and we continue our collaboration with a new 7th grade at Nørrebro Park Skole which we will follow all the way through the lower secondary education stage.

## Convincing results

From the start of the Project in 2011 our criterion for success has been that if we can help just one pupil continue his or her education, the project has been a success. On that background our first School Project at Nørrebro Park Skole has turned out to be an immense success.

Today it is a fact that the final exam results of most of the pupils in the 9th grade were very satisfactory and that all pupils decided to continue their education. Five pupils are attending either upper secondary school (in Danish: gymnasium) or technical college, while the other pupils have continued in the 10th grade. This development highly exceeds both our own and the school's expectations.

## Positive feedback

Immediately after their 9th grade exams we invited the entire class to a special event

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We are delighted with the pupils' dedication, their curiosity and their wish to be challenged; it has been very gratifying and has confirmed our belief in the School Project. I am one of the role models at Nørrebro Park Skole which is my old primary and lower secondary school. It is fantastic to see that we have actually succeeded in making a difference with the School Project and it is a pleasure to follow the pupils and their positive development during the process.

**Shaina Jabbar**  
Attorney, Associated Partner  
and responsible for the School  
Project

where all pupils got an opportunity to put into words what they had gained from the Project. We only received positive and happy feedback. The pupils told us how the Project had opened their eyes to both education and job possibilities.

Some pupils contacted us afterwards to tell us how much the Project had meant to them personally and how the project has given them cause to believe that they will be able to cope with the exams and continue in the educational system.

It has been extremely satisfactory to see that we have really succeeded in making a difference with this Project.

## Role models as examples

Today the projects at Nørrebro Park Skole and Blågård Skole operate in a very structured form and a Plesner lawyer is project coordinator in respect of each school. We collaborate closely with the schools and follow – together with eight role models (four for each school) – two lower secondary school classes where many pupils have other ethnic backgrounds than Danish.

The same applies to the role models who all have medium or high-level education. It is important for the pupils that they are able to identify with the role models, who know the challenges faced by the pupils every day.

Each class is divided up into small groups centred around a role model. In that way the role models are able to build up personal knowledge of and close relations with the individual pupils. At Nørrebro Park Skole it particularly caught the pupils' interest that the Plesner lawyer responsible for the project had attended the school herself.

The role models meet the pupils once a month, every second month in class and every second month for visits to compa-



In April the 8th grade from Blaagaard Skole visited the Danish newspaper Dagbladet Information and learned about the paper's story and about the daily production for print and web. Photo: Lea Kirstine Gindin

presentations by employees who talk about their educations and their jobs.

The pupils gain a fascinating insight into the everyday life in Danish companies and the pupils are often challenged by being exposed to cases and assignments which they are happy to take part in. Also, the class teachers participate in the company visits that are also used for school assignments.

In 2013 the pupils visited Dong Energy, Danske Bank, Berendsen Textil Service, the Danish Police and the Royal Danish Life Guards. The pupils have been welcomed warmly everywhere and one of the companies even helped secure work-experiment placements.

## Evaluation and innovation

After the summer holidays in 2013 we started collaborating with two classes at Blågård Skole that have since been merged into one class of 30 pupils. Most of these pupils also have other ethnic backgrounds than Danish. The purpose and the contents of our collaboration with this class is the same as in the project at Nørrebro Park Skole.

Progress meetings are held with the two schools at regular intervals to evaluate the projects and define the future work. Even if the overall framework of the project is relatively fixed and by and large works well, we are open to continuous improvements as well as new ideas. We have received much positive input in respect of the School Project from both teachers, pupils and from our own employees.

nies. The meetings in class last approximately one to two hours and take the form of an open dialogue between the pupils and the role models.

The groups have, for instance, worked on setting realistic goals in respect of improving grades in individual subjects and

discussed what it means to make an effort in terms of school work to reach your goal.

## Introductions to Danish companies

Visits to companies normally last three to four hours and involve tours of the premises, introductions to the companies and



# It is all about being able to choose your future yourself

Role models and education can break the cycle of disadvantage.

»It has been an enormous advantage for our pupils to be given this opportunity. Through the School Project they have at an early stage gained insight into a world that they would otherwise not have been able to become acquainted with. The Project has been a very positive experience and has definitely contributed to the majority of the pupils having decided to continue their education after the 9th grade,« says Annette Hansen, co-developer of the project and class teacher of the pupils who participated in Plesner's first School Project from the 7th grade to the 9th grade at Nørrebro Park Skole.

»The School Project works splendidly with role models who, like the pupils, have other ethnic backgrounds than Danish. Having very different educational backgrounds, for instance as a police officer, an engineer and an attorney, they have told their own stories about breaking the cycle of disadvantage. Some of the boys in the class were both linguistically and socially challenged and close to environments encouraging negative behaviour. The role models have shown them another way that is about choosing yourself instead of letting

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The tough front cracked and we experienced spontaneous joy among the pupils when they felt specially selected. In that way the School Project has made a great difference.

someone else choose for you,« says Annette Hansen.

## Authentic experiences

She emphasises the class visits to companies and institutions as events that really caught the pupils' attention. During these visits the class was also welcomed by employees having other ethnic backgrounds than Danish as living proof that good education can lead to exiting jobs. This also gave them an opportunity to try their hands at very different jobs – from being a police officer at Station Bellahøj over battle tank training with the Royal Life Guards to simulated legal proceedings in Plesner's offices.

»All round we have been received well by

people who have shown how committed they are to the Project. It has been a real success giving the pupils an authentic experience of actual work life among people who speak their language.«

Annette Hansen has followed the pupils' development from initial scepticism to growing commitment during the three-year period.

»The joy I have noticed among pupils who normally have difficulties showing their feelings has made a big impression on me. The tough front cracked and we experienced spontaneous joy among the pupils when they felt specially selected. In that way the School Project has made a great difference.«

Annette Hansen, co-developer of the School Project and class teacher of the pupils who participated in Plesner's first project at Nørrebro Park Skole. »Some of the boys in the class were both linguistically and socially challenged and close to environments encouraging negative behaviour. The role models have shown them another way that is about choosing yourself instead of letting someone else choose for you,« she tells. Photo: Vibeke Toft

## Opening our eyes to education

We get a taste of the real world and discover that going to work can be fun.

»I always imagined it would be hard going to work and I did not expect it to be fun. When we experience real life like this, we see the multitude of education and job possibilities and understand that it is important to make an effort in school,« says 14-year old Salwa El-Subaihi who attends 8th grade at Blågård Skole.

Following a bit of initial scepticism, Salwa and her class mates were positively surprised at the first company visit. Since then they have visited several different places of work, most recently the Danish newspaper Dagbladet Information where both journalists and photographers took part in a lively talk about working at a newspaper. Salwa herself enjoyed the visit to Plesner the most.

»We were given an assignment and were to discuss pro and contra in a real court case. I fought as the attorney for one party and won the case. It might be exiting to be an attorney. That is, if it is not too difficult.«

## Important role models

She also finds that meeting in class with the role models works really well.

»The role models have very different backgrounds, for instance as a policeman, a lawyer and a teacher. By now, we have got to know them well and you can ask them anything. I think a lot about what I like to do best and get new ideas all the time. Right now I would like to be a dental technician. It is a skilled trade that requires dexterity, but also that you are good at talking to people. However, I am sometimes scared of making the wrong choice. That is one of the things we discuss with the role models.«

Salwa is happy about the School Project and Blågård Skole where she started in the 6th grade after some years at a private school.

»I love going to school. All pupils in my class like each other and the teachers are very open and easy to talk to if you need help. The School Project is super cool. It opens our eyes to which direction we should take. I would like to attend an upper-secondary school if I am found to be eligible. If not, I will continue in the 10th grade,« ends Salwa El-Subaihi.

# Student Volunteers

Legal advice hand in hand with charity and competence development.

All aspects of the collaboration with Student Volunteers have developed positively since the project's beginning in 2012 for the benefit of both charitable organisations, law students and Plesner employees. The organisations find that the collaboration is both constructive and professional. The four charitable organisations that have been involved from the beginning all want to continue the collaboration.

In order to ensure full use of the resources that we have set aside for the CSR work, two new organisations have joined during the past year, ie Ønskefonden Danmark (Make-A-Wish) and Scleroseforeningen (the Danish Multiple Sclerosis Society).

## Pro bono with many winners

With Student Volunteers the participants have developed a form of collaboration that creates value for all parties involved. The primary goal is clear: to support a good cause in the local community by providing free legal advice to selected charitable organisations focusing in particular on helping children and young people as well as people who are seriously ill.

At the same time law students get an opportunity to become involved on a voluntary basis and improve their legal skills through practical experience. Irrespective of the nature of the assignment the students collaborate with an experienced Plesner lawyer who guarantees legal advice of the highest standard.

## A developing collaboration

We find that Student Volunteers adds much value to the organisations and both the students and our own employees express pride in the advice they are involved in providing.

Based on our experiences during the start-up phase we are working on developing and adjusting the programme to ser-

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One of the aspects I find most gratifying about Student Volunteers, and which makes me invest much time in it, is the pride that all parties take in the collaboration, and this applies both to our employees, the charitable organisations and the law students. All round there is great enthusiasm and delight at the project. I am extremely pleased to be part of that.

**Mikkel Vittrup**  
Attorney, Partner and responsible for the Student Volunteers pro bono project



vice the organisations involved in the best possible way. At the same time it is essential to the collaboration that the students get a positive experience and gain insight into the work of a corporate lawyer. We constantly monitor whether the number of students and Plesner employees involved matches the requirement for assistance in the charitable organisations and how such resources can best be used.

The Legal Debate Society (Juridisk Diskussionsklub) holds the steering role in respect of Student Volunteers and every six months selects, in collaboration with Plesner, ten law students who are to be involved based on motivated applications. The law students commit in advance to set aside 60 hours for the work over a specific period.

At the end of the first six months of 2014 ten law students had provided advice as Student Volunteers. During the reporting period eighteen Plesner lawyers, six part-

ners and administrative staff spent approximately 1,000 hours on voluntary project work.

## Professionalism and streamlining

The work we receive from the charitable organisations is very varied and places demands on the professional skills of the law students. The broad array of incoming work also benefits Plesner which, being a full-service law firm, covers all major corporate law fields. Through an ongoing dialogue we want to help and advise the organisations defining more types of work that can be solved within the framework of the collaboration.

In order to professionalise Student Volunteers further we have launched several new initiatives. One initiative is a strengthening of the coordination of work, which an assistant attorney will be in charge of in future, assisted by our human resources department.



## ORGANISATIONS IN THE PROJECT

Student Volunteers provides advice to the following Danish charitable organisations

- Børn og unge i Voldramte Familier (The Danish Non-Governmental Organization for Children Exposed to Domestic Violence)
- Børns Vilkår (Danish Children's Welfare)
- Julemærkefonden (The Danish Christmas Seal Foundation)
- Red Barnet Ungdom (Danish Child Rights Ambassadors)
- Scleroseforeningen (the Danish Multiple Sclerosis Society) (NEW)
- Ønskefonden Danmark (Make-A-Wish) (NEW)

Accordingly, the charitable organisations will get one common point of entry to Plesner and at the same time we will streamline the screening of the incoming work and increase the flexibility of the collaboration. This is to ensure the best possible mix of students and relevant work with the lawyer responsible for the relevant field.

## A durable collaboration

After the most recent adjustments the collaboration is now in place. We receive a large number of applications from law students who wish to become involved in the project and the increase to six charitable organisations constitutes a solid foundation for the continuation of the voluntary legal work in the service of a good cause. The next phase will be to embed the collaboration securely in our organisation and ensure that Student Volunteers becomes a durable model for collaboration that continues adding value for all parties.





## Professional value and personal challenges

Providing advice to charitable organisations in need of help is rewarding. And really worthwhile.

»The fact that these are real legal issues that an organisation needs to solve makes it an exceptional experience. Thoroughness and quality assurance become essential in a completely other way than when you write a paper at university. You just want to solve the assignment in the best possible manner,« tells Alexander Grønlund.

He is a third year law student and has been involved in Plesner's Student Volunteer programme.

The assignment was to draw up an internal memorandum regarding a special

legal problem applying to charitable organisations – an assignment that required extensive research and examination of the interaction between various areas of the law over three days.

Work was carried out in close collaboration with an assistant attorney with Plesner who guaranteed the quality of the legal work.

### It gives you a boost to help

»It was new to me to write a memorandum and a great professional challenge. I received a satisfactory introduction to the as-

signment and was guided in a manner that was very motivating. The framework of the assignment was clear but it was up to me to find my way into the problem. I can use the structure and the method I have learned by solving the assignment directly in relation to my current bachelor project. In that way the assignment has been of great value to me professionally.«

The fact that the focal point of the voluntary work is to provide assistance to charitable organisations was a significant reason why Alexander Grønlund decided to

become involved in the Student Volunteers programme.

»On a personal level it is very important to me that we are focusing on vulnerable children and young people. And I can warmly recommend other students to become involved. My best advice to my fellow students must be: volunteer – and write a really good application. It is such a valuable lesson. It gives you a boost to help charitable organisations that really need it. Along the way you also help yourself. It makes you happy,« says Alexander Grønlund.

## STUDENT VOLUNTEERS

■ Student Volunteers is a collaboration between Plesner and the Legal Debate Society (Juridisk Diskussionsklub) at the University of Copenhagen that makes a difference to the charitable organisations in Denmark.

■ The purpose of the project is that law student volunteers supported by professional attorneys from Plesner use their skills to solve issues for selected Danish humanitarian organisations.

Alexander Grønlund is a third year law student and is involved in the pro bono project Student Volunteers that helps charitable organisations solving legal problems. Photo: Vibeke Toft

## The collaboration qualifies our work

All the money we save on legal advice goes directly to the children and the cause.

»We work for children and with children. A humanitarian organisation with 52 employees requires a good deal of administration, including legally binding agreements, which is not our key competence. All the agreements and contracts we enter into are subjected to Plesner's legal review to ensure that they are right for us, and accordingly for the children. It is our experience that the pro bono collaboration with Plesner and Student Volunteers greatly contributes to professionalise our work and ensure our legitimacy to the surrounding world. That is very valuable to us,« says Marie-Louise Bjørn, Head of Personnel and Development, Børns Vilkår (Danish Children's Welfare).

Both large and small assignments are performed for Børns Vilkår (Danish Children's Welfare), including preparation and quality checks of contracts, agreements and other documents. Examples are leases, leasing agreements and collaboration agreements that require a legal review. The organisation is in contact with Plesner several times a week in respect of pending and new matters.

»The internal coordination with Plesner works perfectly and ensures that contact is quickly made between the relevant lawyer, one or several students and the relevant professional expert with Børns Vilkår (Danish Children's Welfare). This is an invaluable service that we appreciate very much and which is a great help in our work.«

### Committed work on a voluntary basis

In Marie-Louise Bjørn's point of view the collaboration is of particular quality when everyone involved is committed and work on a voluntary basis. This applies both to the law students, Plesner's employees and volunteers with Børns Vilkår (Danish Children's Welfare).

»Our basic values build on professionalism and reliability, among other things, when meeting with both children and other stakeholders. The collaboration with Plesner qualifies our work and helps us come across as a well-ordered, professional and valuable organisation in terms of all our activities and contact with members, undertakings and foundations that donate funds to Børns Vilkår (Danish Children's Welfare). In that way the collaboration helps us measure up to our values,« points out Marie-Louise Bjørn.

*Børns Vilkår (Danish Children's Welfare) is a private, humanitarian organisation, which has been working for all children in Denmark since 1977.*





Plesner's employees are driven by a high professional level of ambition and professionalism and that provides the best starting point for good team work. Focus is constantly on improving the collaboration across practice areas and specialist fields - and on ensuring an open dialogue and a strong feedback culture.  
Photo: Lars Svankjær

## Employee satisfaction

Our endeavour to involve all the strongest individuals every time we select a team for an assignment is good for employee satisfaction and guarantees that our clients get more value for their money.

At the beginning of the reporting period we adopted a new HR strategy focusing on culture, leadership, professional standards and development as well as salary and employment conditions etc. It is our goal to set up simple systems that contribute to employee satisfaction, support the desired leadership culture and create an optimum framework for attraction, retention and development of our employees.

During the year we have focused our HR work on a leadership programme and leadership culture as well as on developing a new model for performance evaluation with a related bonus scheme. Finally, we have drawn up a new questionnaire for the quarterly review of the law students working at Plesner.

### Leadership programme

In the last year we have completed two

modules of our leadership programme and the participants are very satisfied with the quality and relevance of the programme. The foundation of the leadership programme is based on three issues that are essential to the working environment and everyday life at Plesner according to employee satisfaction surveys and leadership evaluations: Creating a framework. Development. Appreciation. The sixth group is

about to embark on Plesner's leadership programme.

### New evaluation form

We must continuously help each other to become even better and in order to be successful individually it is essential that we know when we have performed well and when we have to improve our performance.

The overall aim of the implementation of a

new performance evaluation model is to give our assistant attorneys and attorneys a clear picture of the expectations, both professionally and personally. Added value and high legal professionalism are obviously important – and it is just as important to review how we practise our professional competence, how we cultivate relationships with our clients and how we work together internally.

We expect to conduct an employee satisfaction survey in the spring of 2015 when the new initiatives have been fully implemented. At that time our concept for employee performance reviews will have been updated by the new criteria for performance evaluation with a related bonus scheme. As mentioned above, we also take into consideration subjective criteria such as how the person in question acts towards clients as well as colleagues.

The intention of the combination of these crucial tools is to further increase the professional development as well as the professional development of our employees and we therefore aim at improving employee satisfaction.

### Quarterly reviews of law students

Performance reviews also form an important element in the education of the large number of law students that are continuously employed by Plesner.

The apprenticeship model is still important and we are working on strengthening the ties that will provide our law students with more learning-oriented feedback. To that end we have drawn up questionnaires targeted at the quarterly review of law students and legal interns for the purpose of embedding and promoting feedback culture in this group.

### Culture

Plesner is a modern and informal law firm and our business culture is characterised by strong personalities who are all driven by a high professional level of ambition and professionalism.

This is also the culture that provides the best launch pad for good team working. It is crucial that we continuously improve the collaboration across practice areas and specialist fields – and ensure an open dialogue and a strong feedback culture. We have also introduced an annual »Plesner Day« where all employees join forces to contribute ideas to improve the way in which we work. This has also contributed strongly to support the feedback culture.



# Women and their careers

A more distinct career path for women has got off to a good start.

We wish to make a real and notable difference for our female talents and we want more women partners. Based on project group meetings we have implemented a number of initiatives aiming at improving the framework for our female talents through a mentoring scheme and panel discussions etc.

The diversity of partners and employees prepares the ground for a stimulating collaboration among colleagues, and accordingly for providing more multi-faceted solutions for our clients. Our clients demand diversity and we wish to match a client with the perfect legal advisor. Therefore we need more women partners.

### Panel discussions

One of the experiences gained from internal project group meetings is that our women lawyers are uncertain as to the possibilities in terms of career, family and children. Many women automatically worry how things are going to work out and decide not to take the next step up the career ladder.

Part of the uncertainty relates to children and practical issues and whether it will be an obstacle if you are unable to ask for help for a wide range of work.

That was the clear message at our first panel discussion »Women and their careers«. Seventeen of our women lawyers turned up to learn how Plesner works actively to become better at developing and retaining our female talents. The guest speaker was Lene Espersen, Member of the Danish Parliament and former Minister of Justice, and her husband, Danny Feltmann,

Former Minister Lene Espersen and her husband, Danny Feltmann, took part in the first panel discussion under the heading Women and their Careers.

They discussed the challenges of having two demanding careers and a family. Photo: Laura Bonde Wittrup

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Many women worry ‘What is going to happen’. But we still want to fend for ourselves, and that undeniable does make it extra hard.

**Lene Espersen**  
Member of the Danish Parliament and former Minister

who discussed how to make everyday life work when both parties have demanding careers.

### Mentoring

The programme also included our mentoring scheme and the importance of having a strong network. We have established a mentoring scheme aimed at women who are third year assistant attorneys or who have more seniority. The mentor is an external or internal partner from another practice area than the mentee. The aim is to provide

the mentee with the necessary inspiration and support in respect of development and career through mentoring and advice on development, further training and career. Today 17 women lawyers have a mentor.

### Network

Motivating more women to become partners requires a systematic and continuous effort over many years. Stronger internal networks have been built across our organisation that also provides a better view of possible career paths.

### WOMEN AND THEIR CAREERS

- We have 61 partners, 11 of whom are women
- We have 67 attorneys, 27 of which are women
- We have 47 assistant attorneys, 21 of whom are women

June 2014

We continue the mentoring scheme and the panel meetings with internal and external keynote speakers. In 2014/15 we also intend to systematise our efforts in terms of dialogue, briefings, following up on absence due to maternity leave and internal networks.

The world outside has noticed our commitment to motivate women to become partners: Euromoney has named Plesner the best Danish law firm and Plesner has been awarded its »Europe Women in Business Law Award 2014«.





# Plesner's CSR-team

Our CSR team is responsible for implementing and developing our CSR policy. In addition to the team, a large number of employees are involved in the practical implementation of our CSR work.

Plesner's CSR team includes:



**Casper Münter**  
Attorney-at-Law, Partner

**Area of responsibility:**  
Casper is responsible for Plesner's CSR policy.



**Shaina Jabbar**  
Attorney-at-Law, Associate Partner

**Area of responsibility:**  
Shaina is responsible for the School Project.



**Torben Nørskov**  
Attorney-at-Law, Partner

**Area of responsibility:**  
Torben is Plesner's Compliance Officer and is also responsible for the compliance with professional ethical rules.



**Anders Friis**  
Attorney-at-Law, Partner

**Area of responsibility:**  
Anders is responsible for employee satisfaction.



**Mikkel Vittrup**  
Attorney-at-Law, Partner

**Area of responsibility:**  
Mikkel is responsible for our Student Volunteers pro bono project.



**Pia Valentin Erichsen**  
CFO

**Area of responsibility:**  
Pia is responsible for climate and environment.



**Henriette Stakemann**  
Attorney-at-Law, Partner

**Area of responsibility:**  
Henriette is responsible for the project Women and Their Careers.



**Anne Mette Lykkeberg**  
Service Manager

**Area of responsibility:**  
Anne Mette is responsible for climate and environment.



Photo: Lars Svankjær

## How we implement Global Compact

### The UN Global Compact's 10 principles

#### Human Rights:

- Our firm should support and respect the protection of internationally proclaimed human rights within its sphere of influence.
- Our firm is to make sure that it is not complicit in human rights abuses.

#### Employee rights:

- Our firm should uphold the freedom of association and the effective recognition of the employee's right to collective bargaining.
- Our firm should support the elimination of all forms of forced and compulsory labour.
- Our firm should support the effective abolition of child labour.
- Our firm should support the elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation.

#### The Environment:

- Our firm should support a precautionary approach to environmental challenges.
- Our firm should undertake initiatives to promote greater environmental responsibility.
- Our firm should encourage the development and diffusion of environmentally friendly technologies.

#### Anti-Corruption:

- Our firm should work against corruption in all its forms, including extortion and bribery.

### Plesner's CSR initiatives

#### Human Rights:

- Student Volunteers
- The School Project
- Further and supplementary training of employees
- Leadership programme

#### Employee rights:

- Employee satisfaction surveys
- Women and their careers
- Employee performance reviews
- Quarterly reviews of assistant attorneys and legal interns

#### The Environment:

- Reduction of energy consumption
- Reduction of paper consumption
- Electronic processes
- Environmentally labelled products
- Environmentally correct removal of waste
- Organic products in the staff canteen

#### Anti-Corruption:

- Policy implemented – constant compliance with legislation





## CSR policy

As a leading Danish law firm we recognise our obligations to our stakeholders, including clients, employees, suppliers and the society that we are a part of.

Our CSR policy focuses on governance, ensuring an ambitious, attentive and safe working environment and using our competences for the benefit of charity work for persons or groups in Denmark.

We have joined the UN Global Compact, and in doing so we undertake to support the ten principles that are universally accepted in the areas of human rights, labour, environment and anti-corruption.

We will:

- Provide legal advice according to the highest ethical and professional standards
- Operate our firm in a socially and environmentally responsible manner
- Provide free legal advice (pro bono)

- Otherwise support the local community, eg through school projects

### Legal advice

We recognise that as a law firm we have a special status in a society based on the rule of law.

Our partners (the owners of the firm) have all pledged to act in a manner that will be a credit to the legal profession, to observe the rules applicable to members of the Danish Bar and Law Society and to maintain a standard which both professionally and in terms of service and appearance is in line with the firm's standing as one of Denmark's largest and most respected law firms.

In accordance with the Danish Bar and Law Society's rules and our impartiality

One of Plesner's goals is to have the most satisfied employees in the business. Photo: Nicolai Perjesi

Employees at Plesner meet their closest colleagues and their colleagues from other departments for Christmas and summer parties, for informal Friday evenings etc. They take part in the DHL relay race and play badminton and Plesner's football team takes part in the annual football tournament for law firms.

Photo: Lea Kirstine Gindin



procedures we ensure that there is no conflict of interest or loyalty before accepting an assignment.

Before accepting an assignment we also assess whether clients and specific tasks are in harmony with the firm's ethical standards.

We comply with the Danish Act on Measures to Prevent Money Laundering and Financing of Terrorism.

We comply with the legislation in relation to disclosure of inside information about listed companies and restrictions on trade with securities listed on the stock exchange. We have established internal procedures in order to prevent insider trading.

One of our partners has been appointed Compliance Officer and his primary task

is to ensure that external rules governing our profession are transformed into internal rules and that these rules are complied with. The Compliance Officer reports to the board of directors.

We have established strict rules for our partners' and employees' business activities outside Plesner and there are also strict rules for our partners' private financial transactions. Each year the firm's external auditor examines the partners' compliance with the rules.

We have created a manual on case management and quality assurance and we have established general terms and conditions for our services.

Our goal is to retain and attract clients that demand the most specialised legal ad-

vice on the market and as a result we have to be prepared at any time to provide legal advice according to the highest professional standard. Consequently we only employ the best qualified employees in their field of expertise.

We find that continuing practical and theoretical training is very important. A considerable part of our employees must have completed supplementary training abroad and all partners, senior attorneys and managers of our administrative staff receive executive training through our leadership programme.

We ensure professional development by establishing practice groups, by creating and maintaining relevant and committed departments with a high professional stan-

PLESNER



## CSR policy...

dard, by employing knowledge employees and by applying an open door policy.

Our administrative functions must at any time be able to provide the most professional service.

We evaluate our partners, salaried attorneys and administrative functions continuously.

In addition we maintain close relations to the leading law firms in all significant countries that Denmark trade with.

### Social and environmental responsibility

Employee satisfaction is very important to us.

Our goal is to have the most satisfied employees in the business at any time. To attain this generally applied employee satisfaction surveys will be carried out at suitable intervals.

We want to focus on the parameters that influence satisfaction, including our culture, clients, types of work, the professional environment, recognition, leadership, employment conditions, career prospects, diversity, mental work environment, social activities, our domicile, layout of the work place, canteen services, health policy etc.

We make a determined effort to develop all our talented employees and their career planning.

We want equal opportunities for everyone who possesses the professional and business qualities required for becoming a partner in our firm – regardless of gender, ethnicity etc.

It is a fact that large Danish and international law firms only have few female partners. This is also the case with Plesner. We do not wish to introduce quotas etc on the number of women. We do wish, however, to improve the framework for our talented female attorneys who we find fulfil the requirements for making partner so they continue their career with Plesner with a view to becoming partners in the firm.

We wish to establish special development programmes and mentoring schemes for our talented female attorneys, we will look into the possibility of introducing greater flexibility and ensure staff retention through



greater transparency and information.

As a socially responsible firm we are committed to improving the environment even if our environmental impact is limited.

It is our goal to continue to reduce the firm's impact on the environment.

We focus for example on constantly reducing our carbon emission, primarily by using less energy, using less paper through optimisation of the transition to electronic processes, by increasing the use of eco-la-

A working day at Plesner is characterized by a relaxed atmosphere, humour, teamwork, drive and ambition. These characteristics have a positive influence on the working environment at Plesner. Photo: Lea Kirstine Gindin

belled products, by increasing the use of more environmentally sound paper and office supplies, by disposing correctly of waste, focussing particularly on recycling and using as many organic products as possible in the staff canteen and when serving meals and refreshments in connection with meetings and conferences.

### Pro bono work

A central element of the CSR work is to use

core competences for charitable work in the local community (pro bono).

Our core competence is legal knowledge. We want to provide free legal advice of our usual high standard primarily to selected organisations that support poor, less privileged or marginalised persons or groups in Denmark.

For the purpose of supporting law studies in Denmark and making the students aware of the importance of pro bono work

we provide, among other things, legal advice in collaboration with law students selected by the association of law students at the University of Copenhagen. We are responsible for the provision of such advice. This collaboration is called »Student Volunteers«.

Each year Plesner donates a considerable number of hours to our attorneys' participation in pro bono work.

### Supporting the local community

In addition to legal pro bono work we support, among other things, the initiation of school projects.

It is a fundamental human right for everyone regardless of their background to have fair and equal rights to education. The Danish State provides the educational framework for everyone regardless of their background, but the personal framework which is often necessary for getting an education is not always available to all young people.

The majority of our employees are highly trained and network professionally and privately with other highly trained people. We therefore see on a daily basis the extremely positive effect of such training.

Some people do, however, grow up in environments that do not fully appreciate or give priority to education. We are confident that we can make a difference in such environments.

We wish to establish long-term collaborations with selected schools and persons who have broken the established pattern and can act as role models for the pupils.

The purpose is to motivate the pupils to focus on school work and on getting an education following their school education and to open the pupils' eyes to the many job opportunities and the degree of freedom that further education may imply.

The central elements of such motivation are regular contact between role models and pupils and several annual visits to various companies and sites where the pupils get first-hand impressions of the many job options.



Plesner is recognised as a leading Danish full-service law firm. Having about 350 employees, 220 of whom are fee earners, we are able to carry out the largest and most complex legal projects.

We aim to create the greatest possible value for our clients' businesses through focused and pro-active advice, constant

development of our competences and a high level of service. Plesner covers all important areas of commercial law and is continuously rated among the best law firms in Denmark.

Our specialists are among the absolutely best in their fields and handle the interests of Danish and international clients in Denmark and abroad.

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