

## Citation for published version

Garay, L. & Font, X. (2013). Corporate Social Responsibility in Tourism Small and Medium Enterprises Evidence from Europe and Latin America. *Tourism Management Perspectives*, 7, 38-46.

## DOI

<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tmp.2013.03.002>

## Document Version

This is the Accepted Manuscript version.  
The version in the Universitat Oberta de Catalunya institutional repository, O2 may differ from the final published version.

## Copyright and Reuse

This manuscript version is made available under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution Non Commercial No Derivatives licence (CC-BY-NC-ND) <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/3.0/es>, which permits others to download it and share it with others as long as they credit you, but they can't change it in any way or use them commercially.

## Enquiries

If you believe this document infringes copyright, please contact the Research Team at: [repositori@uoc.edu](mailto:repositori@uoc.edu)



**Corporate Social Responsibility in Tourism Small and Medium Enterprises**  
**Evidence from Europe and Latin America**  
**Submitted to Tourism Management Perspectives**

---

Luis Garay Tamajón

*Lecturer*

*Economics and Management Department*  
*Universitat Oberta de Catalunya*  
*Avinguda Tibidabo, 39, 08035, Barcelona*  
*Tel : 93 254 21 68 / Fax : 93 417 64 95*  
[lgaray@uoc.edu](mailto:lgaray@uoc.edu)

Xavier Font

*Reader*

*International Centre for Research in Events,*  
*Tourism and Hospitality*  
*Leeds Metropolitan University*  
*Carnegie Faculty Headingley Campus*  
*Tel: 0113 812 5609*  
[X.Font@leedsmet.ac.uk](mailto:X.Font@leedsmet.ac.uk)

**Abstract:** While there is a growing literature related with corporate social responsibility (CSR) in hospitality and tourism large firms, much remains to be done in the case of CSR in tourism Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs). In this paper we show three studies regarding this particular aspect through the evidence present in different destinations: Catalonia, European natural parks and Chile. Among the conclusions can be highlighted the prevalence of altruism in the reasons for being responsible, the introduction of increasingly advanced measures or their impact on different business variables, highlighting the financial performance.

**Keywords:** Corporate Social Responsibility, Small and Medium Enterprises, Catalonia, Natural Parks, Chile

---

## **1. Introduction**

Government policies favour market based mechanisms to self-regulate the handling of negative impacts in order to continue economic growth (Mol, 1997; Sprenger, 2000). These market based instruments suggest that corporate transparency on how they acknowledge their societal responsibilities will become an increasingly important tool for improving societal wellbeing. Producing corporate social responsibility (CSR) reports is now standard practice for large tour operators and hotel chains, and much research has been undertaken on the business case for CSR for large manufacturing, and to a lesser extent, tourism firms. While there are examples of how small and medium enterprises (SMEs) take responsibility for being more sustainable, a systematic comparative analysis is less common. Our study aims to further understand the CSR motivations and practices and to seek relationships with other business characteristics.

## **2. CSR in small firms**

The notion of CSR has a long history that has gone on par with the very concept of business, but it was not until the seventies when it started to have more resonance and until the nineties when it really began to be important in certain business strategies (Blowfield & Murray, 2008). Although there are different approaches, CSR can be understood as the voluntary contribution by companies to improving the environment, society and economy, either for altruistic reasons and / or to improve their competitive

position. It is also often understood as going beyond shareholders reporting requirements (Friedman, 1970), by taking into account the expectations of other stakeholders that have a relationship with the company (Freeman, 1984). Among these, the literature cites the *internal* ones as the owners or shareholders and the employees but also the *external* ones, such as consumers, suppliers and other members of the supply chain as well as government, third sector organizations and others, and could even include society, environment as well as future generations from a broader perspective (related with the classic concept of sustainability).

Traditionally, the concept of CSR has had a marginal consideration in the world of management but it is claimed that the current crisis has made it a greater priority (Franklin, 2008). The opportunities arising from it have been explained through the Resource-Based View (RBV) theory, which considers that CSR can lead to the generation of resources and capabilities that can provide sustainable competitive advantage to the company (Branco & Rodrigues, 2006). On the other hand, pressures from stakeholders are manifested especially by the need for *accountability* starting with its customers, who increasingly denounce possible fraudulent *greenwashing* practices (Ramus & Montiel, 2005), and continues with other stakeholders (Sen & Bhattacharya, 2001). Increased pressure for transparency and the benefits from lean management have led to integrating aspects of CSR into the overall strategy of the company benefiting from the new possibilities from information and communication technology (Capriotti, 2011), and these data systems then inform the preparation of external reporting outputs, supplier certification in particular.

It is generally considered that companies tend to prioritize CSR measures that offer cost savings and resources in the short term or generate resources and capabilities (RBV), which in turn lead to competitive advantages leading to increased profits. CSR=CFP (corporate financial performance) has been the "holy grail" of the literature on CSR in recent years (Carroll & Shabana, 2010). However, the same literature has not been conclusive on this relationship, finding positive neutral and negative associations (Griffin & Mahon, 1997; Margolis & Walsh, 2001) and has even been criticized by an excessive bias considering CSR only as a business case (M. Lee, 2008). Perhaps a better approach is not only looking for CSR contribution to economic performance but its converge with the social objectives, naturally part of the business strategy (Porter & Kramer, 2006). For authors like De Bakker (2005) the question should not be whether CSR and results relate but what is the nature of CSR, for what purpose is it implemented and which stakeholders does it speak to. Companies driven by competitiveness will focus on responding to shareholders and investors, those driven by legitimization respond to different stakeholders (employees, consumers, government, etc..) and finally altruistic firms usually respond to concerns over larger and more loosely defined groups (the environment and society overall).

Most CSR studies focus on large industrial corporations and until recently there was a gap in research that considers the ownership structure, strategic direction,

manager/owner characteristics and importance in the local community of SMEs (Moneva & Hernández, 2009). Given the heterogeneous nature of SMEs (Hillary, 2004) it is important to note that the reasons for introducing CSR in SMEs may be different from those of large enterprises (Udayasankar, 2008) and may be consistent with the owner's values (Murillo & Lozano, 2006), the need to improve community relationships (Chrisman & Archer, 1984), to promote a climate of trust with internal stakeholders, especially employees (Ciliberti, Pontrandolfo, & Scozzi, 2008; Graafland, Van de Ven, & Stoffele, 2003; Perrini, 2006) or gain reputation in the community (Jenkins, 2006).

In contrast to traditional assumptions about the barriers (lack of budget, time, capacity) to implement CSR (Jenkins, 2006), many small businesses seem to be very aware of the potential benefits of taking responsibility for being sustainable and understand it as a business model, especially by creating proactive relationships with stakeholders and generating reputation. As the social capital accrued from their commitment is vital for their survival, CSR can be understood as a valid use of their limited resources (Sen, 2011). Other authors point at the importance of values, pragmatism and owners/managers routines as drivers (Murillo & Lozano, 2006; Sarbutts, 2003). Examples would include the habits of family firms or women who are per se more sustainable (Déniz, de la Cruz, Martín, Javier, & Cabrera Suárez, 2005).

The literature highlights the limitations in SMEs in implementing and communicating CSR (Lawrence, Collins, Pavlovich, & Arunachalam, 2006; Lepoutre & Heene, 2006) starting with the lack of knowledge about management systems and communication of CSR among the owners. Other authors (Spence, 2007) also note that many of them do not understand CSR as a source of competitive advantage and therefore it is not for them a business priority. In any case, CSR can be a problem for SMEs if they follow the same processes set for large companies, given the bureaucratic demands of standards and reporting procedures. SMEs use more informal channels to have closer relationships with stakeholders resulting in greater capacity for dialogue and engagement (Murillo & Lozano, 2006; Perrini, 2006; Sarbutts, 2003; Spence, 2007). Simple organizational structures mean adapting more quickly to changes (Jenkins, 2006). While for large firms CSR accountability is important given the pressure from various interest groups, SMEs can concentrate on employees' motivation and community involvement.

Analysing the possible CSR-CFP relationship, the literature has traditionally considered that the lack of resources, interest or information the reasons why SMEs do not engage in CSR. But this view is changing. More flexible ways of understanding CSR in SMEs show that these are proactive in taking actions that lead to financial gains. They make use of their unique flexibility and entrepreneurial skills and values together with their stakeholder partnerships (J.A. Aragón-Correa, N. Hurtado-Torres, S. Sharma, & V.J. García-Morales, 2008; Ciliberti, et al., 2008; Jenkins, 2006; Marín Rives & Rubio Bañón, 2008). This interpretation would be consistent with Hart's resource-based view (1995), in which organizational capabilities are fundamental to understand business

strategies, in both large companies and SMEs, although the paths may be uneven and capabilities are based on different characteristics.

### **3. Corporate Social Responsibility in tourism**

A larger number of tourism companies are incorporating the concept of CSR in their business models, among different issues trying to improve the environment, the quality of life of local communities and the welfare of their employees (Bohdanowicz & Zientara, 2009b; Font, Walmsley, Cogotti, McCombes, & Häusler, 2012). While there is progress, there are also concerns about greenwashing (Self, Self, & Bell-Haynes, 2010). Although the literature on CSR in the sector is scarce, it has grown in recent years (Kang, Lee, & Huh, 2010), Research has focused on cost reduction and resource consumption in hospitality (Ayuso, 2006; Bohdanowicz & Zientara, 2009a; Kasim, 2007). The main motivation is to reduce costs to provide a competitive advantage (Knowles, Macmillan, Palmer, Grabowski, & Hashimoto, 1999; Stabler, 1997) while also legitimizing how they meet the growing expectations of demand in responsibility (Bremner, 2009; Cheyne & Barnett, 2001; Ian, 1996). Some research has also looked at altruism motivations of CSR in tourism (Ayuso, 2006; Rivera, 2004; Tzschentke, Kirk, & Lynch, 2004). CSR actions are heterogeneous given the wide diversity of tourism, but the most common fall under environmental management, community dialogue and employee relationships (Holcomb, Upchurch, & Okumus, 2007; Karani & Day, 2011). For large firms, working conditions in the supply chain organizations are especially important. For Goodwin (2011) one of the main features of tourism is that the client is transferred to the same places in which the sector "creates" the experience, have direct contact with workers and can see directly their conditions. In the same way, responsibility for tourism should also take special care of the supply chain, both in tour operators (Wijk & Persoon, 2006) and hotels (Bohdanowicz & Zientara, 2009a; Holcomb, et al., 2007).

Tourism literature also proposes a positive CSR-CFP relationship. Although reported practices often are limited to environmental operations, efficiency gains arising in the short term could be reinvested into longer term needs, improving the quality products, increasing market share, reducing responsibilities with stakeholders, consumers and employees motivation and satisfaction, and providing access to subsidies or reduced fees. Álvarez, Burgos and Céspedes (2001) concluded that the age of establishment, size, chain membership, stakeholder pressures and the use of operational techniques of management exercised a lasting influence on the degree of implementation of environmental management practices and showed a positive relationship between environmental management and financial performance. Carmona et al. (2004) suggested that group affiliation was associated with a higher level of environmental performance, but not necessarily with financial performance. Claver et al. (2007) concluded that environmental proactivity has no direct impact, but indirectly through improved management systems. Lee and Park (2009) found a positive relationship for hotels and Kang and others (2010) examined the positive effects (proactive) and negative (reactive) of CSR activities in the performance for tourism-related industries

(airlines, casinos, hotels and restaurants) and found that in hotels and restaurants there was an improvement in the value of the company. Inoue and Lee (2010) examined how different CSR dimensions could affect the financial results of companies in four tourism-related industries (airlines, casinos, hotels and restaurants). Finally, there are great disparities in CSR accountability (Font, et al., 2012; Holcomb, et al., 2007), despite a positive relationship between CSR and share prices for tourism evidence (Nicolau, 2008; Rodriguez & del Mar Armas Cruz, 2007).

Few studies have considered tourism SMEs distinctive features other than to mention weaknesses, such as lack of capital, management structures, planning, decision making and particularly information control, financial instability and risk exposure (Ateljevic & Doorne, 2000; Dewhurst & Thomas, 2003). Early studies identified the introduction of basic environmental practices for ecosavings (Kirk, 1995; Knowles, et al., 1999), tax incentives or subsidies (Bonilla-Priego, Najera, & Font, 2011) and lifestyle habits founded on ethical and social reasons (Sampaio, Thomas, & Font, 2012; Tzschentke, et al., 2004). The latter authors found that despite SMEs producing significant savings from improved energy management and recycling, most respondents lacked control methods to be fully aware of this, or were not particularly interested in controlling the outcome of such measures. Those owners less profit oriented were the least likely innovate (including CSR measures), while those who are willing to adopt CSR also have financial expectations from its adoption (Sampaio, et al., 2012). In summary, how SMEs respond to taking responsibility for being sustainable differs from large firms based on how they acquire resources, develop their skills, implement strategies and deliver the resulting product (J.A. Aragón-Correa, N. Hurtado-Torres, S. Sharma, & V.J. García-Morales, 2008).

## **4. Methodology**

### **4.1. Questionnaire design**

This article brings together three different studies analysing the reasons, barriers and practices of CSR in relation to business characteristics. The first study, conducted in Catalonia, has served as a pilot for the two latter, in European protected areas members of Europarc and in Chile. Self-completion questionnaires were distributed to owners and managers of tourism firms. All tourism firms were sampled regardless of their current CSR involvement, as in previous studies (Carlsen, Getz, & Ali-Knight, 2001; Revell, Stokes, & Chen, 2010). Pre-testing with academics, industry and expert in tourism and CSR strengthened the validity of the instrument. The original questionnaire asked questions about themselves (gender, age, title, role in the company), their establishment (name, address, zip code, age of the establishment, brand or chain membership, being a family business, business type, category, number of employees, capacity, occupancy average, certification of sustainability and communication with customers), business performance data (current financial health and satisfaction with recent developments), and client data (origin, average stance, transport used). Then they were asked about environmental, social and economic CSR measures, if customers valued them and how that information was collected and communicated. Finally, they

were asked about their main reasons and barriers to be sustainable. The European wide study added questions about location (nature reserve, country, language, protected area characteristics), with the remaining questions not changing. The Chilean study remained consistent in asking for CSR practices and motivations, but the government agency commissioning the research shortened the list of business and personal variables.

#### **4.2. Populations, data collection and samples**

The Catalan survey was sent on-line to accommodation owners/managers (Idescat, 2010) from a database with accommodation enterprises, published by the Catalan Government (DIUE, 2010) with 3,838 businesses, of which 3,225 had valid emails (excluding those that did not work). After pilot test with 150 companies, three rounds of data collection and various reminders collected responses on a six-week period between September and October 2010. Finally 394 establishments responded (response rate 12%) providing the largest sample available in Europe for a single destination studying CSR practices.

The European protected areas study targeted all types of tourism businesses (accommodation, restaurants, travel agents, guides, activity providers). The endorsement of Europarc led to recruiting protected area staff to distribute the survey in their respective parks. Each park had the survey translated into their language and a specific url created with their logo. The survey run between late 2010 and early 2011 with reminders sent to the protected area staff with the names of the companies that had responded in their own park and comparative data at European level to encourage participation and create a greater sense of belonging. 59 parks participated, although 70% of all responses came from 17 of them, providing a sample of 900 companies in what is now the largest European level survey in these matters.

For the Chilean study, 2,000 businesses were randomly sampled from the database of Sernatur, the national tourist board in Chile, which has over 16,000 registered businesses including accommodation, tour and adventure operators. Within two weeks from the original mailing, including two reminders, 465 responses had been received. The unusually high response rate could be partly attributed to having sent the survey from the Sernatur business email contact, with additional endorsements from the Subsecretary of tourism, the Federation of tourism businesses, and CORFO (government body executing entrepreneurship and innovation policies).

All three studies provide robust samples with a small sampling error relative to the total population (Catalonia, 4.7%, Europarc 3.5%, Chile 4.5%), taking into account the broader populations and following the recommendations of the literature (Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson, 2010).

## **5. Results**

The analysis consisted of a preliminary study of frequencies, an analysis of CSR measures and the different relationships between categorical variables by cross-tabulations, checking the possible significance of these relationships.

### **5.1. *Sample characteristics***

In Catalonia, we found a majority of women (57%), mostly owners (74%), middle-aged (62% between 41 and 60) and well-trained. 86% of companies have ten or fewer workers, confirming that we are basically talking about small businesses. 90% of these companies are family run, young (under 10 years) and independent (80%). 55% are rural self-catering properties and 26% are hotels, mostly mid-range. Finally, 8% are campsites and 11% pensions. Only 24% of these companies have some form of quality certification. Only 10% of respondents said the economic situation of their business was poor and only 15% are not satisfied with the results of their business in the last two years (most said their perception was average). The customer profile is families (40%) and couples (22%), staying two or three days (78%) and reaching the establishment by car (90%). Respondents believe their customers choose their accommodation for their quality (30%) and location (24%), while price is perceived less important. 52% of customers use the Internet to find the business, followed by word of mouth (20%). The main markets are the same region (67% of customers), international (19.5%) and other Spanish regions (13.5%).

The European sample shows a similar gender distribution, mostly women (78%), middle-aged (64% between 41 and 60 years), well-trained, small (90%) family run (78%) businesses with less than 5 employees (80%), not affiliated to a brand (83%) and relatively young (45% under 10 years). The business types vary, the most typical apartments/self-catering (29%), followed by hotels (20%), pensions (14%), restaurants (14%), activity providers (13%), campsites (7%) and others (3%). 62% said that the financial health of the establishment is average (24% good, 14% poor). 40% have more than 50% occupancy throughout the year. Families (45%) and couples (28%) are the key markets. Quality (82%) and location (76%) are the key reasons why customers choose them and not the price (45%). Recommendation from past clients and information on the website are the main ways to attract customers, but these companies also depend on repeat customers (65%).

We have limited profile data on the Chilean survey. These are micro-enterprises and small businesses (87%), mostly located in natural areas, which mostly do not have quality certifications (77%), although owners are interested (92%) in it. They are mostly accommodation businesses (69.1%), with fewer travel agents (with 13.5%), catering companies (about 9%), adventure tourism suppliers (3.7%), tour guides (3.5%) and transport services (1.5%). Most clients are domestic (89.5%) while in international clients from Europe (71.4%), neighbouring Argentina (66.5%), United States and Canada (64.9%) and Brazil (52.5%) multiple responses were allowed.

### **5.2. *CSR measures***



Most companies claim to be introducing practices beyond the initial assumptions in the literature of focusing on environmental savings, although it is true that they are still very important in all three studies. The environmental measures reported in Table 1 show how energy and water saving measures stand out, with figures close to 70% in all three surveys. There is also an important effort behind raising customer environmental awareness despite slightly different wordings of the questions. The differences in claiming to implement other environmental measures vary but are still considerable. An example is the high claim of using renewable energy and organic products in the Europarc survey, or the high percentage of recycling in Catalonia. All three samples showed considerable work with selecting environmentally responsible suppliers, with the Europarc sample standing out.

Table 1 also shows the social measures, with support for local community development, heritage conservation and respect for local culture having the highest scores. Promoting socially acceptable behaviour only received a high score in Catalonia (65%). The promotion of gender equality is also one of the reported measures, close to 50% in all the three studies. Family-work balance measures also perform well at 35% to 40% in the three studies, similarly with having disabled-friendly facilities (27% to 40%). Then we would have the cooperation with social projects (30 to 35%) and lower scores for customer awareness, collaboration with socially responsible suppliers or recruitment of disabled people.

\*\* Insert Table 1 about here

The most popularly reported economic measure (see Table 1) is the promotion of local products among customers (60% to 80% in the three studies). Preferential hiring of people from the same town where the establishment is located scores between 55% and almost 70%, followed by choosing suppliers that support local development (40% to almost 60%). Measures relating to extra monetary and non-monetary benefits for workers score above 40%, reporting the payment of salaries above the average (unexpectedly in Catalonia this scores 54%). In Chile we asked about training programs for staff (30%) and in Catalonia and Europarc on contributing to charitable initiatives, low in the case of Catalonia but with a remarkable score (44%) for businesses in Europarc protected areas.

### **5.3. *Reasons and barriers to be responsible***

The reasons and barriers to introducing these measures show interesting results, despite differences in the three questionnaires (in Catalonia and Chile respondents were asked to choose four questions and in Europarc only three, in Chile the reasons were displayed randomly while in Catalonia and Europarc the list always had the same sequence). Despite these variations, the main results are not significantly different. Table 2 shows that the main reasons given are altruistic or related with lifestyle. The main reason reported for the three samples that is environmental protection (close to 85% in European studies and slightly lower in Chile at 73%). The second altruistic reason,

commitment or improvement of society, scored 64% in the case of Catalonia and close to 50% in the two other studies. Another non-economic reason, maintaining a lifestyle, has different results in all three studies, and while it is the second most reported in Catalonia (64%) and Europarc (49%) is the fourth in Chile (27%).

\*\* Insert Table 2 about here

Economic reasons score high generally but are clearly in second term. The highest of these reasons, consistent with the literature, is cost reduction (Catalonia 56%, Europarc 19%, Chile 27%). Additional economic reasons in the Chilean survey not present in the previous two were being more competitive at international level or reducing risks from environmental degradation. Image differentiation also appears to be significant for all three, if less important in Chile. The results suggest actions are not taken to increase legitimacy towards stakeholders, except for the case of following legal requirements in Catalonia or in demand in Chile. Finally, actions are reportedly not taken to access subsidies or because they are easy to implement.

The barriers to introduce new responsibility have some important similarities and also some differences. Lack of budget is the most reported barrier (92% Chile, 76% Catalonia, 70% Europarc). This is followed by lack of time (between 40% and 47%). The remaining barriers are less significant, although in the case of Chile the lack of motivation or not knowing what to do about it were above 20%. Moreover, the Chile survey introduced an additional barrier, the concern that management might costs go up, seen as a barrier by 61% of the respondents.

#### **5.4. Relationship between CSR and other business variables**

A basic analysis of relationships shows interesting results. The first two studies highlight the relationship of the various measures with the financial performance and the owner's satisfaction with its recent development, while in Chile, by not including these questions we have analysed other relationships. Starting with Catalonia, we found a significant positive relationship between corporate financial performance and the implementation of energy and/or water saving practices ( $p = 0.02$ ), and a positive relationship correlation between improved financial results and other advanced measures of an organizational nature, such as having wages below the industry average ( $p = 0.05$ ). Something similar is observed in the case of satisfaction with CFP in the last two years, where there is also a significant positive relationship between this and the implementation of ecosavings ( $p = 0.00$ ) but also with other more advanced measures such as social impact assessment of the activity ( $p = 0.03$ ). In Catalonia there are also some significant differences in the implementation of CSR against other variables. Company brand affiliation or holding a certification is significantly related with implementing CSR measures. Having altruistic reasons as a reason for acting is positively related to the implementation of many environmental measures, compared to those giving legitimization or economic reasons.

In the Europarc survey, we can see more companies taking more sustainability measures they believe their business has benefited from it, and are more satisfied with their financial performance than the average. There is also a positive relationship between environmental, social and total measures and their current financial situation and its evolution over the past two years. Companies performing financially above average also report above average to be saving water and energy ( $p = 0.03$ ), recycling ( $p = 0.01$ ), choosing workers from the same location ( $p = 0.00$ ) and promoting local consumption ( $p = 0.00$ ). Companies that are more satisfied with their financial performance than average report above average savings on energy and water ( $p = 0.00$ ), recycling ( $p = 0.00$ ), collaborating with social projects ( $p = 0.01$ ), promoting gender equality ( $p = 0.01$ ), including disabled in jobs ( $p = 0.00$ ), contributing to social projects ( $p = 0.00$ ) choosing workers choose from the same location ( $p = 0.00$ ), promoting consumption of local products ( $p = 0.00$ ) and choosing suppliers that contribute to local development ( $p = 0.00$ ). It is therefore the satisfaction with one's financial results, more than the results themselves, which have a direct correlation with CSR practices. This is interpreted as resulting from CSR values driven companies being less demanding towards financial profits and having multiple business goals. There are no significant relationships between CSR results against respondent characteristics, although there are interesting differences. Men report to implement more renewable energy, introduce accessible facilities, promote gender equality, choose local staff and encourage higher salaries, while women report higher on recycling or using organic products. Age also influences some relationships, with the 41-60 year old group introducing more measures. Training also impacts positively on the number of measures implemented. Brand affiliation also positive relates to introducing most measures, and being a family business does not help many of them. Finally, size does not have an impact. The relationship between motivations and measures is very similar to the Catalan study.

We do not have economic performance for the Chilean firms, but we have found interesting relationships with other business variables. There are significant differences in the implementation of some measures from the type of establishment, especially accommodation. We also know that there are differences based on size. Thus, large firms are good in recycling liquid waste (30% against an average of 12%). They also report introducing facilities for disabled and reduced mobility, providing employment opportunities for disabled, promoting initiatives contributing to social purposes, adding additional benefits for the employees and training programs for them. It is also interesting to note it is the smallest and also the largest companies (out of the four categories of size) that report performing best in promoting heritage conservation and local culture, choosing responsible suppliers and promoting consumption of local products. Finally, being certified correlates with implementing more CSR measures.

## **6. Discussion**

These three studies provide new information regarding reasons, actions and relationships of corporate social responsibility in small and medium tourism enterprises,

confirming some of the assumptions presented in literature but also contradicting others and also providing new information. All three studies sampled primarily rural tourism businesses, in locations where natural resources play an important role. In cases of Catalonia and Europarc, where we have information of the owner/manager we can see that there is an equal distribution in gender, most of them are middle-aged and well-trained. For the three cases we surveyed primarily family businesses, usually not affiliated to a brand or business group and mostly without quality or sustainability certificates. Generally customers are families and couples who come from the same region where is located the establishment and it is known by word of mouth and more and more about the information in Internet, either through specialized websites or portals themselves.

Our sample reports that these firms go well beyond ecosavings, although these are still present, especially in relation to energy and water savings (between 65% and 75%) (Font, Tapper, & Cochrane, 2006). We also detected significant progress in implementing other environmental, social and economic measures and also important differences between destinations. Waste recycling varied substantially for example according to the availability of infrastructure. The use of alternative energy is far from widespread use, and when 43% of companies in protected areas make such claims, it is because of using wood burners, not solar or wind energy. These same businesses claim to use some environmentally friendly products in 75% of cases as opposed to 40% in the other two studies (and yet spot checks would report most businesses do use bleach for example). Finally, all businesses claim to raise environmental awareness of their customers, but we have no evidence of how well this takes place.

Perhaps more interesting is to observe the progress regarding measures of social and economic development. All three samples claim to support of local and community development, or gender equality (most were family businesses) and to a lesser extent the promotion of work-life balance for staff. Accessible facilities are only common for larger firms. The favoured economic measures are promoting local products and sourcing local workers and suppliers. To a certain extent this has to do with the business profile (family businesses, mostly located in rural areas offering products related to nature and local heritage). The statements were also fairly open to interpretation, while the more specific questions (providing fair wages for example) have lower scores.

The reasons and barriers to take responsibility for being sustainable confirm much of the literature. Personal values and lifestyle, more than economic factors, play an important role (Ayuso, 2006; Rivera, 2004; Tzschentke, et al., 2004) although this is less important in Chile. The economic reasons relate to seeking a competitive advantage (Knowles, et al., 1999; Stabler, 1997) are also important but are always placed in the background. Stakeholder requirements (Sen, 2011) play a part if we understand society and the environment as stakeholders, and not only clients, government or civil society. The barriers reported are in line with the literature and consistent in all three sites: the lack of budget, followed by lack of time. In the case of Chile is also important the lack

of motivation or knowledge about it, and the assumption that being sustainable increases operating costs.

CSR measures relate to business and financial results. The studies confirmed a significant positive relationship (Inoue & Lee, 2010; Kang, et al., 2010; S. Lee & Park, 2009). The first two explicitly asked about the business financial performance and satisfaction. Basic operational measures such as ecosavings and recycling have a positive relationship with CFP. But this positive relationship is stronger with more measures requiring a greater level of commitment, and in most cases closely related to the company strategy and values (Porter & Kramer, 2006). Company type and size influence the type of measures taken, and belonging to a group or having certification is positively related to the introduction of most measures. In all three surveys, it is the businesses with altruistic and personal reasons (as opposed to those with economic reasons) that implement most CSR measures.

## 7. Conclusions

This paper presents the main developments reported in terms of corporate social responsibility in small and medium enterprises from three different contexts, two in Europe and a third in Latin America. Despite some differences, there are clear patterns across the three surveys in the characteristics of these businesses, responsibility measures introduced and, reasons, barriers and related relationships. This study aims to contribute to the understanding of how the transformation is taking place to responsibility within the tourism SMEs. It would be very useful to further test the survey instrument in further destinations and to also analyse of how taking responsibility evolves over time, but also be useful to have qualitative studies to test how reliable self-completion questionnaires are, and to study how companies verbalise their justifications for the answers given in paper.

## 8. References

- Alvarez, M., Burgos, J., & Céspedes, J. (2001). An analysis of environmental management, organizational context and performance of Spanish hotels. *Omega*, 29(6), 457-471.
- Aragón-Correa, J. A., Hurtado-Torres, N., Sharma, S., & García-Morales, V. J. (2008). Environmental strategy and performance in small firms: A resource-based perspective. *Journal of Environmental Management*, 86(1), 88-103.
- Aragón-Correa, J. A., Hurtado-Torres, N., Sharma, S., & García-Morales, V. J. (2008). Environmental strategy and performance in small firms: A resource-based perspective. *Journal of Environmental Management* 86, 88-103.
- Ateljevic, J., & Doorne, S. (2000). Staying within the fence: lifestyle entrepreneurship in tourism. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 8(5), 378-392.
- Ayuso, S. (2006). Adoption of Voluntary Environmental Tools for Sustainable Tourism: Analysing the Experience of Spanish Hotels. *Corporate Social Responsibility and Environmental Management*, 13(4), 207-220.
- Blowfield, M., & Murray, A. (2008). *Corporate responsibility: a critical introduction*: Oxford University Press, USA.

- Bohdanowicz, P., & Zientara, P. (2009a). Hotel companies' contribution to improving the quality of life of local communities and the well-being of their employees. *Tourism and Hospitality Research*, 9(2), 147-158.
- Bohdanowicz, P., & Zientara, P. (2009b). Hotel companies contribution to improving the quality of life of local communities and the well-being of their employees. *Tourism and Hospitality Research*, 9(2), 147-158.
- Bonilla-Priego, M. J., Najera, J. J., & Font, X. (2011). Environmental management decision-making in certified hotels *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 19(3), 361-382.
- Branco, M. C., & Rodrigues, L. L. (2006). Corporate social responsibility and resource-based perspectives. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 69(2), 111-132.
- Bremner, C. (2009). Sustainable tourism moves slowly in the right direction: Euromonitor International. London. [http://www.euromonitor.com/Sustainable\\_Tourism\\_Moves\\_Slowly\\_in\\_the\\_Right\\_Direction](http://www.euromonitor.com/Sustainable_Tourism_Moves_Slowly_in_the_Right_Direction). [Accessed 09/26/09].
- Capriotti, P. (2011). Communicating Corporate Social Responsibility through the Internet and Social Media. *The Handbook of Communication and Corporate Social Responsibility*, 358-378.
- Carlsen, J., Getz, D., & Ali-Knight, J. (2001). The environmental attitudes and practices of family businesses in the rural tourism and hospitality sectors. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 9(4), 281-297.
- Carmona, E., Céspedes, J., & De Burgos, J. (2004). Environmental strategies in Spanish Hotels: Contextual factors and performance. *The Service Industries Journal*, 24(3), 101-130.
- Carroll, A. B., & Shabana, K. M. (2010). The business case for corporate social responsibility: a review of concepts, research and practice. *International Journal of Management Reviews*, 12(1), 85-105.
- Ciliberti, F., Pontrandolfo, P., & Scozzi, B. (2008). Investigating corporate social responsibility in supply chains: a SME perspective. *Journal of Cleaner Production*, 16(15), 1579-1588.
- Claver, E., Molina, J., Pereira, J., & López, M. (2007). Environmental strategies and their impact on hotel performance. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 15(6), 663-679.
- Cheyne, J., & Barnett, S. (2001). The greening of accommodation: stakeholder perspectives of environmental programmes in New Zealand hotels and luxury lodges. *Journal of Corporate Citizenship Spring*.
- Chrisman, J. J., & Archer, R. W. (1984). Small business social responsibility: Some perceptions and insights. *American Journal of Small Business*, 9(2), 46-58.
- De Bakker, F. G. A., P. Groenewegen, et al. (2005). A Bibliometric Analysis of 30 Years of Research and Theory on Corporate Social Responsibility and Corporate Social Performance. *Business & Society*, 44(4), 283-317.
- Déniz, D., de la Cruz, M., Martín, S., Javier, D., & Cabrera Suárez, M. K. (2005). Responsabilidad social corporativa y empresa familiar. *Revista Europea de dirección y economía de la empresa*, 14(4), 43-58.
- Dewhurst, H., & Thomas, R. (2003). Encouraging sustainable business practices in a non-regulatory environment: a case study of small tourism firms in a UK National Park. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 11(4), 383-403.
- DIUE. (2010). Llistat d'establiments turístics Retrieved 15/12/2010, 2010, from [http://www.gencat.cat/diue/ambits/turisme/empreses\\_establiments/directori/index.html](http://www.gencat.cat/diue/ambits/turisme/empreses_establiments/directori/index.html)

- Font, X., Tapper, R., & Cochrane, J. (2006). Competitive strategy in a global industry: tourism. *Handbook of Business Strategy*, 7(1), 51-55.
- Font, X., Walmsley, A., Cogotti, S., McCombes, L., & Häusler, N. (2012). Corporate social responsibility: The disclosure–performance gap. *Tourism Management*, 33, 1544-1553.
- Franklin, D. (2008). *Just good business: A special report on corporate social responsibility*: Economist Newspaper.
- Freeman, R. E. (1984). *Strategic management: A stakeholder approach*. Boston: Pitman.
- Friedman, M. (1970, September, 13). The Social Responsibility of Business is to Increase its Profits. *The New York Times Magazine*.
- Goodwin, H. (2011). *Taking Responsibility for Tourism*. Oxford: Goodfellows.
- Graafland, J., Van de Ven, B., & Stoffele, N. (2003). Strategies and instruments for organising CSR by small and large businesses in the Netherlands. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 47(1), 45-60.
- Griffin, J., & Mahon, J. (1997). The corporate social performance and corporate financial performance debate. *Business & Society*, 36(1), 5.
- Hair, J. F., Black, W. C., Babin, B. J., & Anderson, R. E. (2010). *Multivariate Data Analysis: a global perspective*. New Jersey: Pearson Education.
- Hart, S. L. (1995). A natural-resource-based view of the firm. *Academy of management review*, 986-1014.
- Hillary, R. (2004). Environmental management systems and the smaller enterprise. *Journal of Cleaner Production*, 12(6), 561-569.
- Holcomb, J. L., Upchurch, R. S., & Okumus, F. (2007). Corporate social responsibility: what are top hotel companies reporting? *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 19(6), 461-475.
- Ian, R. (1996). From shareholders to stakeholders: critical issues for tourism marketers. *Tourism Management*, 17(7), 533-540.
- Idescat. (2010). *Anuari d'Estadística de Catalunya*. Barcelona: Institut d'Estadística de Catalunya.
- Inoue, Y., & Lee, S. (2010). Effects of different dimensions of corporate social responsibility on corporate financial performance in tourism-related industries. *Tourism Management, In Press, Corrected Proof*.
- Jenkins, H. (2006). Small business champions for corporate social responsibility. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 67(3), 241-256.
- Kang, K. H., Lee, S., & Huh, C. (2010). Impacts of positive and negative corporate social responsibility activities on company performance in the hospitality industry. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 29(1), 72-82.
- Karani, A. P., & Day, J. G. (2011). Corporate Social Responsibility and Employee Recruiting in the Tourism Industry.
- Kasim, A. (2007). Corporate Environmentalism in the Hotel Sector: Evidence of Drivers and Barriers in Penang, Malaysia. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 15(6), 680-699.
- Kirk, D. (1995). Environmental management in hotels. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 7(6), 3-8.
- Knowles, T., Macmillan, S., Palmer, J., Grabowski, P., & Hashimoto, A. (1999). The development of environmental initiatives in tourism: responses from the London hotel sector. *International Journal Of Tourism Research*, 1(4), 255-265.

- Lawrence, S. R., Collins, E., Pavlovich, K., & Arunachalam, M. (2006). Sustainability practices of SMEs: the case of NZ. *Business Strategy and the Environment*, 15(4), 242-257.
- Lee, M. (2008). A review of the theories of corporate social responsibility: Its evolutionary path and the road ahead. *International Journal of Management Reviews*, 10(1), 53-73.
- Lee, S., & Park, S. Y. (2009). Do socially responsible activities help hotels and casinos achieve their financial goals? *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 28(1), 105-112.
- Lepoutre, J., & Heene, A. (2006). Investigating the impact of firm size on small business social responsibility: a critical review. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 67(3), 257-273.
- Margolis, J. D., & Walsh, J. (2001). *People and Profits? The search for a link between a company's social and financial performance*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Marín Rives, L., & Rubio Bañón, A. (2008). ¿Moda o factor competitivo? Un estudio empírico de Responsabilidad Social Corporativa en PYME. *Información Comercial Española, ICE: Revista de economía*(842), 177-194.
- Mol, A. P. (1997). Ecological modernization: industrial transformations and environmental reform. In M. Redclift & G. Woodgate (Eds.), *The International Handbook of Environmental Sociology* (pp. 138-149). Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Publishing.
- Moneva, J. M., & Hernández, J. (2009). Responsabilidad Social Corporativa e Información de Sostenibilidad en la PYME.: José M. Moneva Abadía y Julio C. Hernández Pajares. *Revista Internacional de la pequeña y mediana empresa*, 1(2), 23-41.
- Murillo, D., & Lozano, J. M. (2006). SMEs and CSR: An approach to CSR in their own words. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 67(3), 227-240.
- Nicolau, J. L. (2008). Corporate social responsibility: worth-creating activities. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 35(4), 990-1006.
- Perrini, F. (2006). SMEs and CSR theory: evidence and implications from an Italian perspective. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 67(3), 305-316.
- Porter, M. E., & Kramer, M. R. (2006). The link between competitive advantage and corporate social responsibility. *Harvard business review*, 84(12), 78-92.
- Ramus, C. A., & Montiel, I. (2005). When are corporate environmental policies a form of greenwashing? *Business & Society*, 44(4), 377-414.
- Revell, A., Stokes, D., & Chen, H. (2010). Small businesses and the environment: turning over a new leaf? *Business strategy and the environment*, 19(5), 273-288.
- Rivera, J. (2004). Institutional pressures and voluntary environmental behavior in developing countries: evidence from the Costa Rican hotel industry. *Society and Natural Resources*, 17, 779-797.
- Rodriguez, F. J. G., & del Mar Armas Cruz, Y. (2007). Relation between social-environmental responsibility and performance in hotel firms. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 26(4), 824-839.
- Sampaio, A. R., Thomas, R., & Font, X. (2012). Why are Some Engaged and Not Others? Explaining Environmental Engagement among Small Firms in Tourism. *International Journal of Tourism Research*, 14(3), 235-249.
- Sarbutts, N. (2003). Can SMEs “do” CSR? A practitioner’s view of the ways small-and medium-sized enterprises are able to manage reputation through corporate social responsibility. *Journal of Communication Management*, 7(4), 340-347.



- Self, R. M., Self, D. R., & Bell-Haynes, J. (2010). Marketing Tourism In The Galapagos Islands: Ecotourism Or Greenwashing? *International Business & Economics Research Journal (IBER)*, 9(6).
- Sen, S. (2011). Corporate social responsibility in small and medium enterprises: application of stakeholder theory and social capital theory.
- Sen, S., & Bhattacharya, C. B. (2001). Does doing good always lead to doing better? Consumer reactions to corporate social responsibility. *Journal of marketing research*, 225-243.
- Spence, L. J. (2007). CSR and small business in a European policy context: the five “C” s of CSR and small business research agenda 2007. *Business and Society Review*, 112(4), 533-552.
- Sprenger, R. U. (2000). Market-based instruments in environmental policies: the lessons of experience. In M. S. Andersen & R. U. Sprenger (Eds.), *Market-based instruments for environmental management: policies and institutions* (pp. 3-26). Cheltenham, UK and Northampton, MA, USA: Edward Elgar.
- Stabler, M. a. J., Goodal, B. (1997). Environmental awareness action and performance in the guernsey hospitality sector. *Tourism Management*, 18(1), 19-33.
- Tzschentke, N., Kirk, D., & Lynch, P. A. (2004). Reasons for going green in serviced accommodation establishments. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 16(2), 116-124.
- Udayasankar, K. (2008). Corporate social responsibility and firm size. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 83(2), 167-175.
- Wijk, J. V., & Persoon, W. (2006). A Long-haul Destination: Sustainability Reporting Among Tour Operators. *European Management Journal*, 24(6), 381-395.

**Table 1. CSR practices implemented**

Number of companies that have implemented and percentage of the sample

	<b>Catalonia (n=394)</b>	<b>Europarc (n=910)</b>	<b>Chile (n=465)</b>
<b>Environmental practices</b>			
Evaluates the environmental impact of the business	125 (31.7%)		
Energy and water saving activities	303 (76.9%)	562 (65.0%)	318 (68.4%)
Renewable energy sources (solar, wind, biomass...)	122 (31.0%)	379 (43.9%)	65 (14.0%)
Waste recycling	347 (88.1%)	544 (63.0%)	159 (34.3%)
Use environmentally friendly products	166 (42.1%)	651 (75.3%)	172 (37.0%)
Choose environmentally friendly suppliers	127 (32.2%)	376 (43.5%)	111 (23.9%)
Encourage customers to save water and/or energy	288 (73.1%)		
Encourage organic products consumption	111 (28.2%)		
Encourage customers to participate in protection initiatives	173 (43.9%)		
Encourage customers to be environmentally friendly in the property		586 (67.8%)	278 (59.8%)
Encourage customers be environmentally friendly in nature		543 (62.8%)	
Carries out actions that contribute to environmental conservation			141 (30.3%)
<b>Social practices</b>			
Evaluates the social impact of the business	94 (24.4%)		
Collaborate with social and charity projects	120 (30.5%)	281 (35.6%)	
Promotes local community development and heritage conservation	267 (67.8%)	551 (69.8%)	

Promotes local community development			149 (32.3%)
Facilities are adapted for disabled people			280 (60.2%)
Promote gender equality in the employment practices	150 (38.1%)	321 (40.7%)	125 (27.2%)
Encourage people of all abilities to apply for jobs	221 (56.1%)	366 (46.4%)	236 (50.8%)
Seek to balance work and family life for your staff	31 (7.9%)	178 (22.6%)	45 (9.7%)
Choose suppliers that demonstrate their social responsibility	139 (35.3%)	271 (34.3%)	183 (39.4%)
Encourage customers to contribute to social and charity initiatives	93 (23.6%)	239 (30.3%)	93 (20.0%)
Actively encourage respect for the culture and language of the area	58 (14.7%)	273 (34.6%)	108 (23.2%)
Facilities are adapted for disabled people	261 (66.2%)	342 (43.3%)	
Promotes civic attitudes among clients	257 (65.2%)		
<b>Economic practices</b>			
Evaluates the economic impact of the business	138 (35.0%)		
Choose local staff wherever possible	233 (59.1%)	460 (55.0%)	312 (67.1%)
Staff salaries are above industry average	214 (54.3%)	355 (42.4%)	
Has additional benefits for their employees			196 (42.2%)
Encourage customers to consume/use local products	317 (80.5%)	660 (78.9%)	283 (62.0%)
Encourage customers to contribute to charitable activities	56 (14.2%)	371 (44.3%)	
Choose suppliers that contribute to local development	221 (56.1%)	346 (41.3%)	255 (54.8%)
There are training programs for the staff			140 (30.2%)

Source: Own elaboration

**Table 2. Reasons and barriers to implementing CSR**

Number of companies that have selected this reason and percentage of the sample

	<b>Catalonia (n=394)</b>	<b>Europarc (n=910)</b>	<b>Chile (n=465)</b>
<b>Reasons to implementing CSR</b>			
To protect the environment	342 (86.8%)	744 (87.0%)	339 (72.9%)
To improve our society	242 (61.4%)	401 (46.9%)	224 (48.2%)
It's a personal. lifestyle choice	253 (64.2%)	421 (49.2%)	127 (27.3%)
To be more competitive in the global market			145 (31.2%)
Improve the income of the company accessing more spending markets			35 (7.5%)
Reduce the risk of the company due to environmental degradation			190 (40.9%)
For cost savings	223 (56.6%)	249 (29.1%)	129 (27.7%)
For marketing and image benefits	160 (40.6%)	162 (18.9%)	88 (18.9%)
To gain new information. advice and networks	37 (9.4%)	59 (6.9%)	84 (18.1%)
To obtain subsidies or grants	50 (12.7%)	38 (4.4%)	49 (10.5%)
To improve business management data	65 (16.5%)	51 (6.0%)	183 (39.4%)
To meet legal requirements	116 (24.9%)	69 (8.1%)	72 (15.5%)
To meet the requirements of a chain/group	19 (4.8%)	26 (3.0%)	62 (13.3%)
To meet the requirements of a tour operator	2 (0.5%)	5 (0.6%)	15 (3.2%)
In response to customer demand		82 (9.6%)	101 (21.7%)
Because it was easy to implement	68 (17.3%)	47 (5.5%)	17 (3.7%)
<b>Barriers to implementing CSR</b>			
Lack of time	166 (41.1%)	330 (45.1%)	221 (47.5%)
Lack of money	300 (76.1%)	510 (69.7%)	429 (92.3%)
Lack of motivation		45 (6.1%)	96 (20.6%)
I don't know what to do	51 (12.9%)	87 (11.9%)	123 (26.5%)
The customers haven't asked for it	13 (3.3%)	55 (7.5%)	72 (15.5%)
Nobody will value it	26 (6.6%)	24 (3.3%)	46 (9.9%)
Management costs can increase			287 (61.7%)

Source: Own elaboration