



# University of Zurich

## Competence Center for Human Rights (UZHR)

### Focus Business & Economics

<b>Project</b>	<b>The role of private business in global governance: An analysis of corporate citizenship approaches of Swiss MNCs and SMEs participating in the UN Global Compact</b> (supported by the SNF and the SNIS)
<b>Project Leader</b>	Andreas Georg Scherer, Guido Palazzo
<b>Background</b>	Corporations are increasingly expected to get involved in political activities on a global level. It is claimed that corporations are no longer merely economic but also political actors.
<b>Research Objective</b>	The joint research project of the universities of Lausanne and Zurich, investigates the implementation of Corporate Citizenship (CC) both in multinational and small and medium-sized enterprises. The project also looks at the legitimacy problems that arise when private actors become involved in global governance. The project is funded by the Swiss National Foundation and the Swiss Network for International Studies.
<b>Approach</b>	The research team (Dorothee Baumann, Patrick Haack, and Christopher Wickert) pursues a multi-methodological research strategy with both quantitative and qualitative elements. The CC concept is operationalized by means of the UN Global Compact whose guidelines require corporations to protect human rights both in their business activities and along their supply chain. The assessment of CC implementation at MNCs and SMEs is based on in-depth case studies. The analysis of the underlying mechanisms of legitimation will employ experimental studies.
<b>Results</b>	Results of the implementation process in five large Swiss UNGC members illustrate that CC is a learning process and that corporations are at different stages of development. To date, only few companies are implementing CC as intended by the founders of the Global Compact. Results also show that companies increasingly assume a political role in their global business activities.
<b>Publications</b>	Scherer, A. G., Palazzo, G., & Baumann, D. Global Rules and Private Actors – Toward a New Role of the Transnational Corporation in Global Governance. <i>Business Ethics Quarterly</i> 2006. Scherer, A. G. & Palazzo, G. Towards a Political Conception of Corporate Responsibility. <i>Business and Society Seen from a Habermasian Perspective. Academy of Management Review</i> 2007. Scherer, A. G. & Palazzo, G. (Eds.) <i>Handbook of Research on Global Corporate Citizenship</i> . Edward Elgar 2008 Baumann, D. & Scherer, A. G. MNEs and the UN Global Compact: An Empirical Analysis of the Implementation of Corporate Citizenship. <i>Working Paper</i> 2009.