



Unilever

Locations: United Kingdom (HQ)

Industries: Household and Personal Products

RISK LEVEL:



High Risk

DESCRIPTION:

Note: Unilever is the parent company of over 400 brands. This rating refers to Unilever's policies, practices, and funding. When one of its brands drastically differs from the company in any of these areas, particularly if the brand has a distinct corporate governance policy, we give that brand a separate rating.

Unilever is a defendant in two lawsuits for unlawful firings: one in Israel from the maker & distributor of Ben & Jerry's Ice Cream and another from a former U.S. employee fired for observing Rosh Hashanah. By complying with the HRC's controversial demands, Unilever increases the risk of dividing employees, alienating customers and harming shareholders. The company covers transgender-related medical costs for its employees and their children and provides specific sexual orientation and gender identity-based benefits. It also uses sex and gender ideology criteria in employee recruitment, vendor selection, marketing, and philanthropic support. Unilever forces employees to undergo multiple ideological trainings and uses its reputation, corporate funds, and political influence to support controversial sex and gender ideologies, organizations, and legislation. Unilever is part of the Global Alliance for Responsible Media. America First Legal filed a letter with the EEOC requesting a civil rights investigation into Unilever over discriminatory practices in hiring. The company frequently uses its reputation and corporate dollars to promote LGBT ideology and organizations. The company has consistently opposed election reform. Unilever donated to Planned Parenthood and pledged \$7 million to organizations working for social justice, though it is unclear who received support. Unilever provides a benefits package for employees which covers travel/lodging costs for an abortion and transgender medical procedures for covered employees and dependents, including children. The company opposed various state and local legislation intended to protect parental rights, girls' sports, bathroom facilities, and gendered spaces. Unilever is a member of the "Don't Ban Equality" business coalition. The company denounced various states' legislative efforts to protect election integrity and security. Unilever co-signed a letter to law firms demanding an improvement in diversity in order to retain business with the company. For these reasons, Unilever receives a High Risk rating.

Corporate Weaponization

Has denied service to customers, suppliers, or vendors due to their political views or religious beliefs OR corporately boycotts, divests, or sanctions regions, people groups, or industries. **High Risk**

A former Unilever employee is suing the company for a firing that took place after he took time off for Rosh Hashanah (1). Although Ben & Jerry's (separately rated Unilever brand) consistently acts distinctly from its parent company, it is notable that Unilever is named alongside the brand as a co-defendant in a lawsuit from the manufacturer of Ben & Jerry's Ice Cream in Israel due to its regional distribution ban, which is illegal under Israeli law (2). Because of Ben & Jerry's boycott of Israel, Unilever was found guilty of violating the anti-BDS laws of several U.S. states (34)(5)(6). The company received a score of 100 recruits employees based on sexual identity issues. The company discriminates against vendors that do not promote divisive sex and gender policies, indicating it

prioritizes sexual issues over merit (5)(6).

Charitable giving (including employee matching programs) policies or practices discriminate against charitable organizations based on views or religious beliefs.

High Risk

Unilever(1)(2).

Employment policies fail to protect against discrimination based on political affiliation/views and/or religion.

High Risk

Unilever indicates the company forces employees to attend multiple, controversial trainings on gender identity, sexual orientation, transgender issues, and divisive racial ideology. The company provides gender transition guidelines for its employees and specific benefits guide with a comprehensive explanation of transgender services funded by the company (1)(2). Unilever protects its employees against viewpoint discrimination (3). America First Legal filed a letter with the EEOC requesting a civil rights investigation into Unilever over discriminatory practices in hiring (4)(5).

Corporate Governance and Public Policy

Uses corporate reputation to support ideological causes and/or organizations hostile to freedom of expression.

High Risk

Unilever is a member of the Business Coalition for the Equality Act (1). Unilever signed an open letter denouncing legislation deemed "Anti-LGBTQ" by the HRC, such as laws that protect girls' sports and ban discussions on gender identity in public elementary schools (2). The company has also taken public stances on legislation impacting voting methods, denouncing specific bills state-by-state and advocating for expanding mail-in voting (3)(4)(5)(6). Unilever also publicly opposed Georgia's Religious Freedom Restoration Act (religious freedom) in 2016 (789). Unilever indicates the company agrees to allow a controversial stakeholder group focused on sexual identity issues to dictate marketing or advertising strategy (10)(11). By doing so, the company risks dividing employees, alienating customers and harming shareholders. The company opposed the Florida Parental Rights in Education Act, which would prohibit teaching gender identity and sexual orientation to kids in K-3rd grade (121314). Unilever co-signed a letter to law firms demanding an improvement in diversity in order to retain business with the company (1516).

Uses corporate funds to advance ideological causes, organizations, or policies hostile to freedom of expression.

High Risk

Unilever provides a benefits package for employees which covers travel/lodging costs for an abortion and transgender medical procedures for covered employees and dependents, including children (1)(2)(3). The company indicates the company covers transgender related costs for its employees and their children, including paid short-term leave, puberty blockers, cross-sex hormones, chest surgeries, genital surgeries, medical visits and lab monitoring, travel and lodging. Additionally, the company has pledged philanthropic support of at least one organization or event that promotes sex and gender ideology (4)(5). By allowing a political stakeholder group to dictate operations, the company increases health care costs and risks dividing employees, alienating customers and harming shareholders (6). The company is a member of the Global Alliance for Responsible Media (7)(8)(9). Unilever is corporate partner of the National LGBT Chamber of Commerce (10). In response to the death of George Floyd, Unilever and its brands pledged \$7 million to "organizations and activists working for social justice and racial equality". It is unclear which organizations received support from Unilever (11).

Uses corporate political contributions for ideological, non-business purposes.**High Risk**

Unilever indicates the company publicly advocated for controversial sex and gender ideology through local, state or federal legislation or initiatives (1)(2). By allowing a political stakeholder group to dictate operations, the company risks dividing employees, alienating customers and harming shareholders. Unilever does not operate a PAC at this time (3)(4).

The contents of this website and related resources (collectively, the "materials") are general in nature and intended for educational use only. Nothing in the materials or any other 1792 Exchange content constitutes legal or professional advice for any specific matter. Anyone seeking legal or professional advice should obtain such advice from competent counsel. Since individual circumstances vary, anyone reviewing the materials and/or any other 1792 Exchange content is strongly urged to obtain specific legal and/or other professional advice before acting or refraining from acting based on such materials or other 1792 Exchange content. 1792 Exchange accepts no responsibility for any loss or damage, howsoever incurred, which may result from accessing or relying on the materials or any other 1792 Exchange content. Further, 1792 Exchange disclaims, to the fullest extent permitted by law, all liability for any acts or omissions based on the materials or any other 1792 Exchange content.

USER AGREEMENT: Company reports and other resources are intended only for the private educational use of the registered user. Republishing and distributing reports and resources is strictly prohibited. By downloading reports and resources, the user accepts these conditions.

© 1792 Exchange 2023