

2015–2016

WEBRANKING BY COMPREND

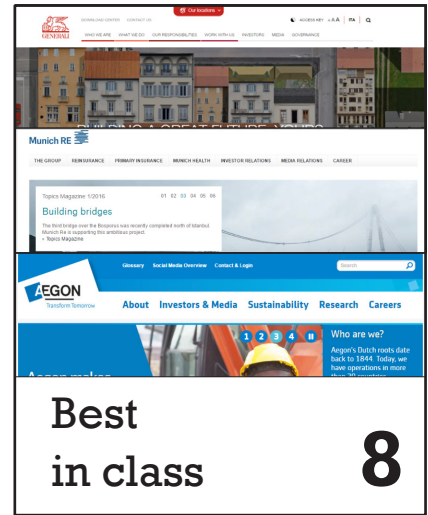
19th EDITION

EUROPEAN INSURANCE SECTOR

June 2016

TRANSPARENCY STRESS TEST

In an increasingly challenging and competitive environment, this analysis investigates how well leading European insurance firms meet the growing expectations of stakeholders in terms of transparency and dialogue through digital channels. Who is taking the lead?



Seen through the lens of Europe’s 35 largest insurance firms by market capitalisation, Webranking by Comprend evaluates a company’s ability to distinguish itself in an increasingly competitive and challenging business environment. Being able to articulate the insurance firm’s position on corporate issues via digital channels translates into an ability to respond to potential crises and also generates consistent opportunities to build engagement with key stakeholders. ”

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Key Figures

Webranking by Comprend is Europe’s leading survey of digital corporate communications

19th international edition

497 largest companies ranked in Europe

802 companies ranked globally

35 insurance firms ranked in Europe

19 sectors in

22 countries

100 maximum number of points from the protocol that cover all aspects of corporate communication

460+ responses to the two Webranking by Comprend questionnaires dedicated to the financial community (Capital Market Survey) and to job seekers

For further information about the research and to order the report contact:

helena.wennergren@comprend.com

The Webranking research helps companies understand how to improve their communication to better meet the needs of stakeholders, by comparing themselves to their international peers. It is the only research which, by annually investigating the needs of different stakeholders, gives a voice to website users.

Spotlight on Europe's insurance firms as they face the communications stress test

Based on the demands of stakeholders, Webranking works as a stress test by measuring the fundamentals of online corporate communications and digital dialogue. To measure how effectively European insurance firms are responding to market demands, the latest edition of the research has increased the weight of "core" information, i.e. information that stakeholders consider to be most important. Our research this year reveals that the insurance industry has made a significant leap forward in communicating clearly and transparently across the board.

The Webranking assessment judges companies based on stakeholder needs, which are rigorously tracked through annual surveys of the most authoritative and critical corporate audiences. This year, over 400 analysts, investors, job seekers and business journalists have been engaged to define 100 assessment criteria. Their perspective matters: **4 out of 5** use corporate websites to gather information on a daily basis.

Seen through the lens of Europe's 35 largest insurance firms by market capitalisation, the research evaluates the sector's ability to distinguish itself in an increasingly competitive and challenging environment. Aside from the overall positioning, the assessment looks at aspects that are critical for insurance firms such as strategy, **investment proposition, governance, remuneration, risk management and strength of employer branding.**

Being able to articulate the company's position on corporate issues through digital channels and demonstrating engagement in social media translate not only into an ability to respond to potential crises but to generate day in-day out an opportunity to build a competitive advantage with stakeholders and regain trust from a growing sceptical consumer base.

A leap in transparency

Considering 50 points out of 100 as the threshold at which companies respond adequately to market requirements, **this year 37% of companies pass the test, up from 22% in 2014.** The insurance sector increased its average significantly, improving by over 5 points since 2014 to total 45.8 points, making it the second most transparent sector in the European ranking.

Italian insurance company **Generali** tops the insurance ranking with 79.5 points out of 100, winning also the title of most improved with an impressive gain of 17.3 points. In second place is German reinsurer **Munich Re** with 67.7 points, while the Dutch firm **Aegon** is third with 61.6 points. Finland's **Sampo** and Austria's **Vienna Insurance** also made major improvements, scoring 13 points higher than in 2014.

The failure rate, or those companies at the bottom of the ranking which do not meet the minimum content required by the market, decreased significantly from 17% to 11% this year. Most insurance firms (52%) achieved between 30-50 points (finding themselves in the "held back" category).

The insurance industry has improved its communications capabilities at an impressive rate. While it still has areas of weakness, the future looks bright.

Staffan Lindgren, Managing Partner, Comprend

More weight given to stakeholder priorities

The protocol is revised annually, and this year the protocol evolved even further – giving more weight to what stakeholders expect. It increased the weight given to core information (which is the information most highly requested by stakeholders, such as strategy, growth drivers, market position, geographical data and sustainability). In this way, Webranking becomes an important stress test regarding the effectiveness of digital corporate communications.

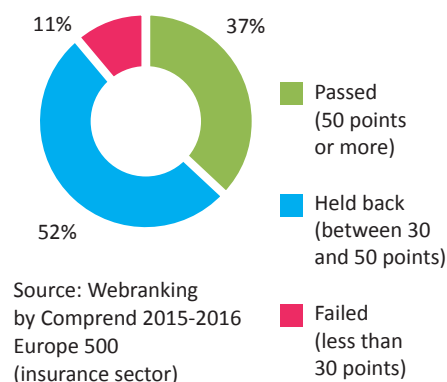
Webranking 2015-2016 Europe 500

35
insurance firms
evaluated

45.8
insurance sector
average

+5.3
improved average
score since 2014

Insurance sector performance



European insurance firms passing the test

1. Generali	79.5 points
2. Munich Re	67.7
3. Aegon	61.6
4. Hannover Re	59.8
5. Allianz	59.6
6. Aviva	58.8
7. Sampo	56.6
8. Axa	56.1
9. ING	55.6
10. Vienna Insurance	55.3

For the insurance industry, engaging in credible communication makes business sense

A stagnant European economy and changing customer base calls for a new mind-set in the conduct and culture of the insurance industry. At the same time, digital disruption has permeated the marketplace, forcing a consolidated industry to change the way it operates. Through a focus on thought leadership, risk and reputation, leading insurance companies are starting to engage in credible communications to find new and interesting ways to navigate these tricky waters. Webranking by Comprend provides a useful perspective for observing how the industry in Europe is translating this changing marketplace into credible communications with the public, customers and stakeholders.

A consolidated industry in the midst of change

Once seen as a cushy and relatively safe industry, the insurance industry has been seeing its once profitable business model change drastically. Persistent low interest rates in many advanced economies have decreased insurance investment returns, and reduced customer spending by a changing customer base still scarred from the 2008 financial crisis has forced the industry into a new dawn.

Instead of running for the hills, in recent years leading insurers such as **Zurich Insurance** and **Generali** have started opening themselves up to new innovations and business models. This is both in response to increasing customer expectations for new interaction channels, but also from leading insurers themselves, who in a challenge to differentiate themselves in an industry that deals with similar risks, regulatory environments and demographics, have used credible communications as a an opportunity to enhance their competitive advantage.

Leading insurers have understood the power of credible communication

These leaders understand that their customer base is changing and is becoming more empowered. They aim to understand this new customer base by engaging with them through credible communications via digital channels.

This conviction of these leaders to engage with the public through social media should not be underemphasized. Our Webranking research states that more stakeholders are looking for this type of interaction. Insurance companies who invest in understanding these needs are using these tools to monitor their corporate reputation and report on CSR policies, information highly requested by the public. This has led to new business models being created that better serve customer's needs.

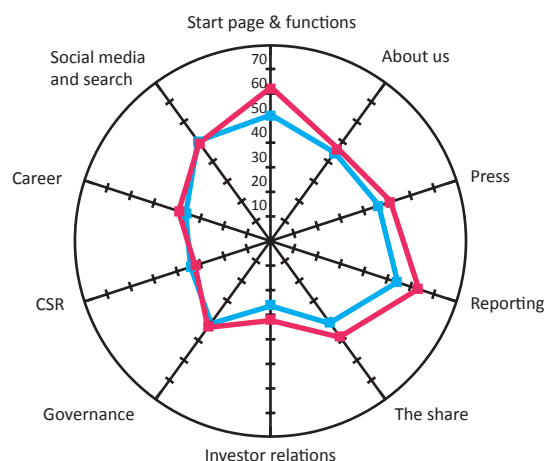
With this macro scenario in mind, Webranking by Comprend provides a useful perspective for observing which European insurance firms are communicating transparently via digital channels on critical issues deemed key to the public and stakeholders.

Webranking claims that responding to stakeholder needs is crucial for restoring trust, which is a major priority for the industry. It shows that an insurance firm has an awareness of critical issues and can engage in its own self-assessment, which can drive change. For this reason, the research ranks insurance firms according to whether they publish information deemed crucial to stakeholders across a number of different topics via their digital channels (see graph below).

Webranking 2015-2016 Europe 500

Insurance sector performance by section compared with top EU500 company performance

- Average insurance score (% of max score)
- Average EU500 companies (% of max score)



Source: Webranking by Comprend 2015-2016

Insurance industry outperforming European counterparts across the board

The findings this year show that insurance firms continue to improve their digital prowess, and in fact outperform their European counterparts across the board in financials, employer branding, media relations and governance.

Insurance now ranks as the second most transparent sector of 22 sectors included in our Webranking European research, jumping up from 8th place last year. It also ranks far above its financial peers, with banks trailing in 14th place and financial service providers holding last place.

Key comms areas identified within report

Identified within this report are five key areas that are critical for insurance firms in understanding how they are positioned from a credible communications perspective in the digital landscape.

From transparency on financial numbers to reporting on matters related to sustainability, the report uncovers which banks are leading the way in restoring trust through credible communications.

It is encouraging to see that leading insurance companies have used credible communications as a tool to differentiate themselves and grow their customer base.

*Joakim Lundquist,
CEO of Lundquist and Head of Comprend
in Austria, Italy and Switzerland*



A deep dive into the Webranking findings

Insurance companies are hesitant to disclose governance figures, yet are improving when it comes to reporting on matters related to CSR.



Best in class for corporate governance

- Sampo
- Generali
- Tryg

1 Online disclosure of governance issues low amongst insurance firms

The stakeholder landscape is changing. Markets and companies have become more global, meaning the focus on corporate governance is now focused less on alignment with domestic governance codes and more on explaining corporate practices clearly and in a common language – which is especially important for those companies where English isn't the primary language.

This year, insurance firms receive 43% of the maximum score for corporate governance, compared to 41% of European companies, a slight improvement from last year where the number stood at 35%. For a business that tackles risk, few insurers provide information

about their own financial risks (28%) or operational risks (31%) and only 51% present their risk management routines and processes.

An insurance company's leadership and strategic direction is also important. Insurers do a bit better than their financial counterparts in "putting a face to a name", with 59% providing information on their board of directors and 62% doing so for their group management (this number stands at 57% and 53% respectively for the banking industry). By providing this information transparently, companies demonstrate their values and culture for stakeholders and investors. This allows them to see that their concerns are being listened to and acted upon.

2 Transparency on remuneration for top management still lacking

It's been eight years since the financial crash of 2008 and the scandals linked to the excessive pay of managers that came with it, and yet even to this day less than a quarter of insurance firms show they are tackling this issue by publishing their remuneration policy.

Of the 35 insurers analysed, only two firms publish the full remuneration of their executives, with four doing so for their board of directors, despite this being information required by law. Danish insurance firm **Tryg** is the only company included in the analysis to publish full payment details across the board, as well as a remuneration policy.

3 Reporting on sustainability matters improving

Most leading insurers consider long-term sustainability factors to be essential to effective risk management. Our research shows that over 90% are broaching sustainability as a topic. It is an area which has improved year after year, from 26% in 2014, to 30% in 2014, to 32% in 2015. For insurance companies, focusing on sustainability helps retain customers, build expertise internally and transform business practices. No longer is the charity initiative seen as a "job well done", with results from our Webranking survey showing that stakeholders now expect companies to involve them in the process. Stakeholders are judging companies on what targets are set, achieved and how developments are reported.

Only 28% of insurance companies have a materiality analysis in place, which means just under a quarter are engaging with key stakeholders to understand what the critical issues are for them. Having a materiality analysis is important as it allows companies to outline the most important

issues affecting their business, and the overall sector, alongside their key stakeholders. This provides a framework for outlining key actions that need to be taken in order to tackle these issues, an exercise that helps build credibility and enhance transparency. Despite this low number, over half of insurance firms (69%) have a CSR report in place, with 31% of firms relating this directly to their corporate strategy, a number slightly higher than the EU average of 28%. Less transparency is given on target figures and achievements (Ex: what goals have they fulfilled when it comes to reducing their impact on the environment?) with only 20% of companies showcasing these figures.

So why does it matter whether an insurance company communicates transparently on sustainability? Because it increases credibility from the public and stakeholders and it makes business sense. Insurance companies manage risk and what better way to understand, and therefore better manage risks, than through a deep understanding of stakeholder needs and societal trends?



Best in class in sustainability

- Generali
- Allianz
- Munich Re

Over half of insurance firms have responsive websites and use social media to engage with jobseekers. Less than a third, however, publish information deemed crucial to the capital market.



Best in class in using social media as a tool to engage jobseekers

- Aegon
- Swiss Re
- ING

4

Engagement on social media and a work-life balance top priorities for millennial job seekers

The world of recruitment is changing. Finding work through social media has become the new norm, as companies compete for the best talent using channels such as Glassdoor, LinkedIn, Facebook and Twitter to post vacancies and interact with future employees. The Webranking Careers Survey reveals that 79% of job seekers use social media channels to

hunt for relevant career information. 54% of insurance firms have a LinkedIn presence, almost double that of banks (36%) and less than half (45%) post their vacancies on this outlet.

Studies have shown that millennials place greater importance than previous generations on having a work life balance. 40% of insurers publish detailed information with regards to this online, slightly higher than their banking peers (35%).



Best in class on investor relations

- Generali
- Munich Re
- Sampo

5

Less than a third of insurance firms meet market needs

Insurers continue to lack transparency when it comes to presenting information on investor relations, improving only slightly from 28% in 2014 to 32% this year.

Despite beating the EU average (26%), communicating transparently on issues related to funding (debt management and levels), financial targets and achievements, and growth outlook remain disappointingly low.

Information on how an insurance firm is investing or divesting assets, which is key information for stakeholders to have in order to understand their growth and strategic direction, is only presented by a mere 17% of insurance firms, trailing behind the EU average of 27%.



Most responsive websites

- Aviva
- Swiss Re
- Allianz

6

Responsive websites increasing, yet loading time remains an issue

Insurance firms have sped up their technological progress, with over half (51%) now having a responsive website (the ability to adapt to mobile platforms), up from 24% in 2014.

While this is a significant improvement from last year's figure, the problem remains that many of these sites have slow loading speeds. The Google site speed test reveals that a mere 34% of insurance firms reach the fastest loading speed on a desktop and none of the insurance firms at all reach this level on mobile platforms.

One to watch: Generali

The Italian insurer is one of the few in the industry to publish information on the Group's investment and divestments, linking this directly to the Group's strategy.

INVESTMENTS AND DIVESTMENTS

In a little more than two years, the group disposed of a number of assets that were no longer considered strategic, while taking full control of subsidiaries in core markets.

We concluded one of the most intense restructuring phases in the long history of the group with approval of the 2014 financial statements. Assets amounting to 8 billion were sold in a little over two years so they were no longer considered core for the group, while full control was obtained of certain joint ventures held abroad and considered to be strategic for future development.

The plan has now been successfully concluded with Generali having reformulated its growth strategy in certain countries and increased its cash and capital position and its efficiency through certain transactions concluded in the previous business plan. There are no significant mergers or acquisitions planned for the short term even though an eye is always kept out for opportunities in the markets that we operate in so to possibly select those transactions that could allow us to grow consistently with Group financial targets.

2015		
Date	Acquisition	Disposals
18 January	Closing of GPI minority interest.	
7 May	Generali acquires a 49% stake in the Malaysian insurer MFB.	
22 July	Generali acquires a 3.85% stake in Banco de Crédito Cooperativo (BCC) - part of Spain's cooperative Capem - in order to strengthen the successful strategic partnership with Capem.	
23 July	Generali acquires MyOris Solutions, a leading company in motor insurance technologies.	
16 September	Generali completes the disposal of BSI.	

Sectors:

Insurance sector improves by leaps and bounds to take second place in industry ranking

The insurance sector moves up eight places to take second place behind the chemicals sector.

The insurance sector moves up five places to take second place with 45.8 points, up from 40.5 points last year. Italian insurance company **Generali** tops this group, followed by **Munich Re** and **Aegon**.

The Chemicals sector in Europe comes out on top again (having held this place last year), with an average of 48.5 points, beating last year's average of 40.5 points. Leading German companies **BASF** and **Bayer** and Dutch company **DSM** make the top three for the second year in a row.

The **banking** sector achieved a low average of 39.2 points. Topping the banks ranking with the highest points are **Danske Bank** (69.5), **Swedbank** (63.4) and **Erste Group** (60.5).

Financial companies as a whole continue to disappoint, with the financial services sector performing the worst in the overall ranking. The few exceptions in this group include **Investor**, **Deutsche Boerse** and **Schroders**.

Seven sectors, including banking, out of 19 achieved less than 41.9 points, which is the general average score for Europe.

Country ranking – Insurance sector

The top 5 most transparent countries in the insurance sectors are:

	points
1. Germany	58.1
2. Austria	55.3
3. Denmark	51.8
4. Italy	51.1
5. Netherlands	50.2

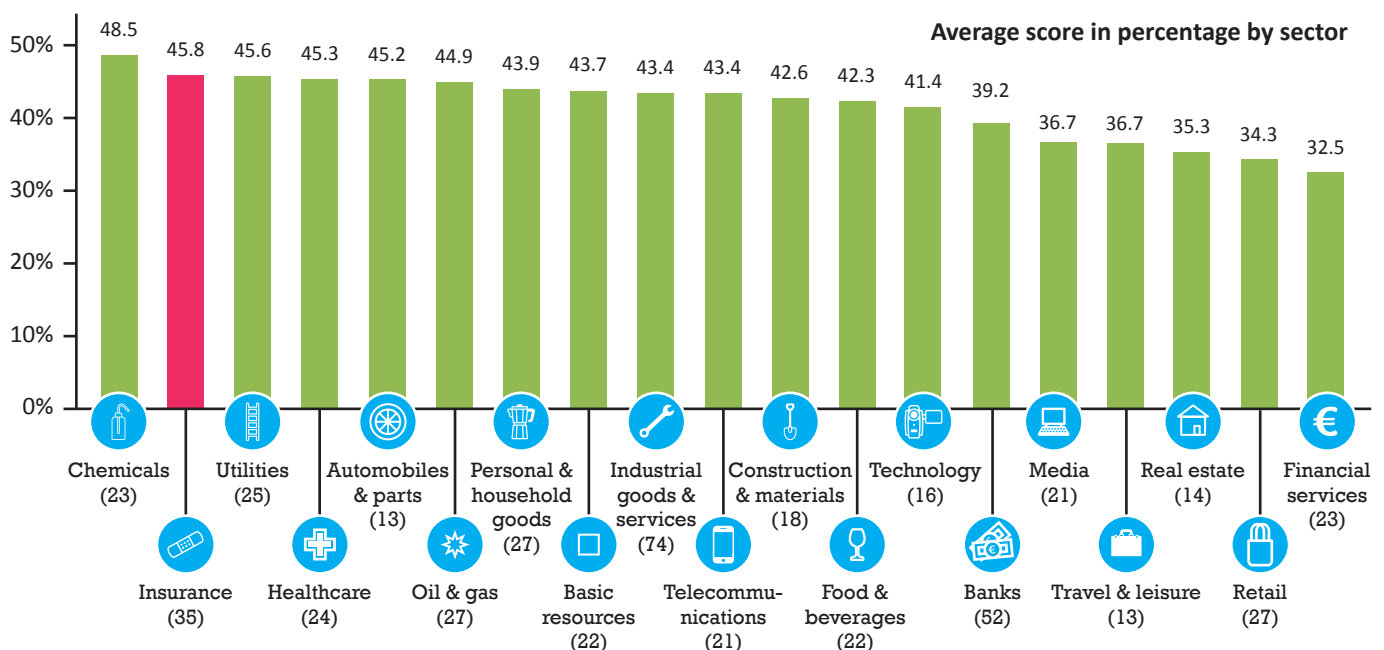
Publication of sector analyses

A new series of sector reports was introduced last year. These reports tell us how companies identify and address the most pertinent sector issues they are facing. It also offers a direct peer group comparison, giving companies an in-depth look into how their competitors are operating in the space.

Read our sector report on banking [here](#)

Look out for further sector reports on insurance, healthcare and construction.

Webranking data



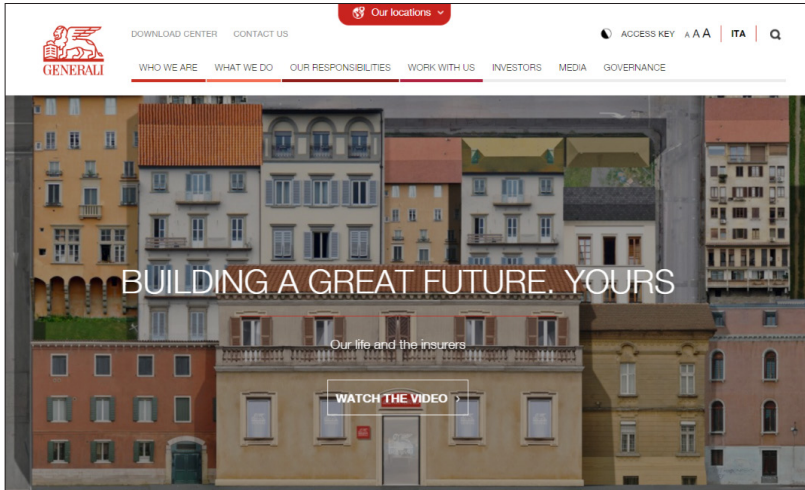
Note: Webranking by Comprend 2015-2016.

The companies included in Webranking by Comprend are categorised in 19 supersectors according to the ICB (Industry Classification Benchmark) methodology.

Best in class

Insurance firms in Europe 500

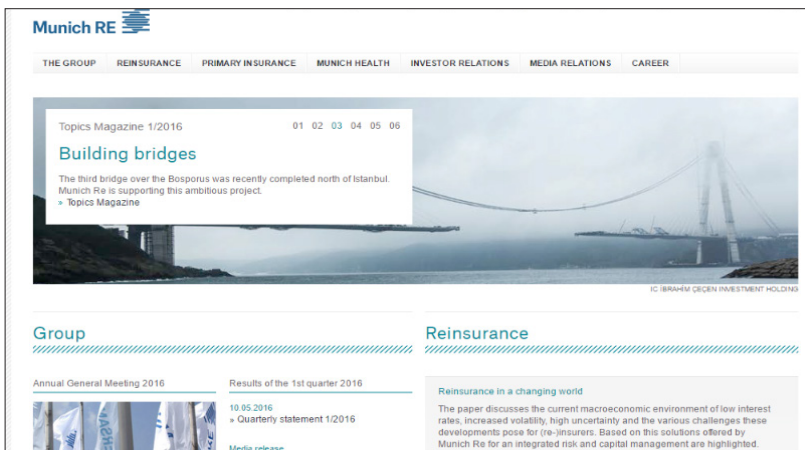
1 + BEST IMPROVER *generali.com/it*



Generali takes the top spot in the ranking this year, having been ranked second in 2014. The launch of a new corporate website led to an impressive 17.3 point increase.

With **79.5** points, the company gains the highest score for its CSR section, distinguishing itself as a leader in this field. It is also one of the few companies that publishes full remuneration details of its top executives and board of directors.

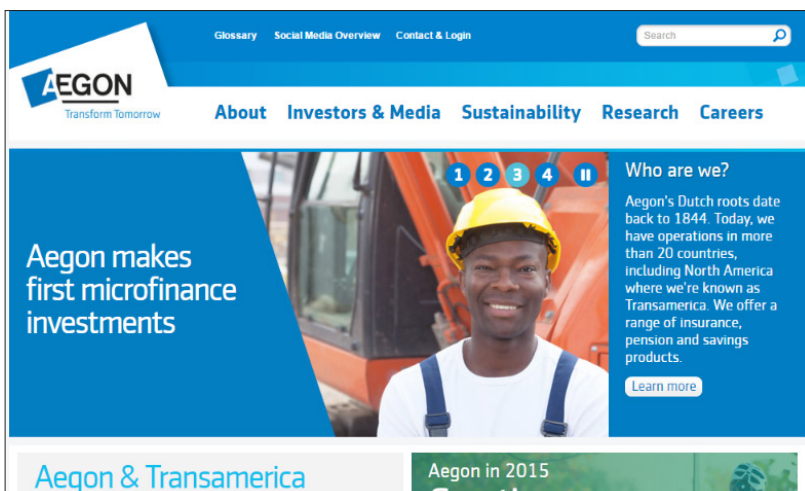
2 *munichre.com*



Munich Re stays in the top 3 as runner up with **67.7** points.

The German reinsurer scored highly due to a detailed press and careers section, showcasing a key awareness in communicating to two important sets of stakeholders – journalists and job seekers.

3 *aegon.com*



Entering the top three by moving up 1 position is Dutch insurer **Aegon** with **61.6** points.

The Dutch insurer scored highly for functionality, presenting a user friendly website that is responsive and easy to navigate.

How we conducted the research

Over the past 20 years, the Webranking research has become the most recognised analysis in Europe regarding digital corporate communication. The objective of the research is to help businesses better communicate with stakeholders and to understand their priorities. This year, the research has been improved to reflect the needs of stakeholders even more.

35 insurance firms assessed along with more than 800 companies globally

Comprend's Webranking research is the most well-known analysis of corporate and financial communications in Europe. The study is a well-honed instrument not only for measuring the efficiency of online communications, but also to help companies compare with national and international peers. The European ranking evaluates companies that are in the Financial Times Europe 500.

Sector rankings of companies in the FT Europe 500 index are compiled as well using the ICB sector classification. The European classification included 35 insurance firms in 2015.

The research also includes a global ranking that evaluates the largest 100 companies in the world included in the Global 100 index by the Financial Times. Taking into account the ranking of companies based in the Middle East and North Africa, a total of 802 companies worldwide were assessed.

The study evaluates the English language version of corporate websites.

The stages of the research

The research consists of three steps. First, every year Webranking criteria are updated based on the results of questionnaires dedicated to the capital market and job seekers in order to reflect new needs.

The second stage applies stakeholder expectations, in the form of an evaluation protocol, to all the companies included in the research to test how well they perform. Then, each company is given a score.

The last step is the data analysis and the presentation of the research results, in addition to the collection of international best practices and trends.

How are the companies evaluated?

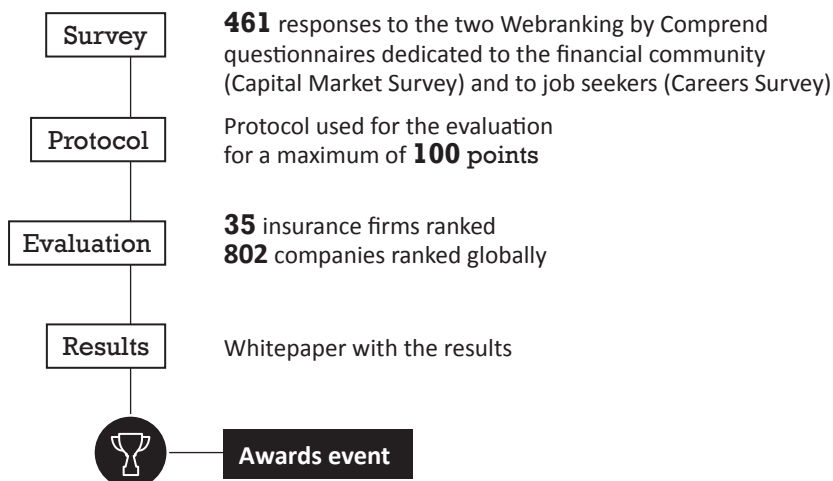
The evaluation protocol of Webranking by Comprend 2015-2016 is composed of 100 criteria, divided in 10 sections, making for a total score of 100 points.

Financial information (the presentation of financial statements, investor relations information and corporate governance) has grown in importance over the last year, making up a total of 48 points. The criteria dedicated to the site's positioning on search engines and the presence and use of social media make up a total of 6.2 points. They are integrated within the sections, as in previous years.

Major focus on information relevant to stakeholders

This year Webranking focuses more on the needs of the most important stakeholders. In this way, the research becomes even more of a stress test on the effectiveness of digital corporate communication.

The various phases of the research



Key numbers

19th
European edition

35
insurance firms
evaluated

802
companies
evaluated
globally

Comprend Webranking 2015-2016

Insurance ranking

Rank 2015-2016		Rank 2014	Company	Score 2015
1	▲	2	Generali	79.5
2	▼	1	Munich Re	67.7
3	▲	4	Aegon	61.6
4	▲	6	Hannover Re	59.8
5	▼	3	Allianz	59.6
6	▲	8	Aviva	58.8
7	▲	14	Sampo	56.6
8	▼	7	Axa	56.1
9	●	9	ING	55.6
10	▲	16	Vienna Insurance	55.3
11	▼	5	Zurich Insurance Group	55.2
12	●	12	Swiss Re	52.5
13	▼	10	Tryg	51.8
14	▼	13	Swiss Life	46.8
15	●	15	Old Mutual	46.2
16	▲	19	Legal & General	45.8
17	●	17	Gjensidige Forsikring	45.6
18	▲	26	Talanx	45.3
19	▼	11	Baloise	45.3
20	-	NEW	Helvetia	42.7
21	▼	20	Direct Line Insurance	42.4
22	▲	25	Euler Hermes	40.0
23	▼	21	Ageas	39.1
24	▼	23	Mediolanum	39.0
25	▼	24	Standard Life	38.2
26	▼	17	RSA Insurance Group	37.3
27	▲	29	St James's Place	35.9
28	▼	27	Unipol Gruppo Finanziario	34.9
29	▲	30	Scor	33.9
30	-	NEW	NN Group	33.4
31	▼	30	Prudential	32.2
32	▲	34	Admiral	28.7
33	▼	32	CNP Assurances	28.5
34	▲	35	PZU Group	28.1

Note

The maximum score is 100 points. The 35 insurance firms were selected from the FT Europe 500 Index 2015 and belong to the ICB supersector 8500 Insurance. Each site was evaluated twice by different researchers between the beginning of July and August 29, 2015.

The companies included in Webranking by Comprend are categorized in 20 supersectors according to the ICB (Industry Classification Benchmark) methodology.

Previous rankings can be found at comprend.com/webranking

Compared to last year, 2 insurance firms entered the FT Europe 500. This includes Helvetia and NN Group.

Close the gap: order the report

The Webranking Report is an online tool that identifies the gap between your key stakeholder demands and your digital corporate communication. It provides you with tools to reach your goals, meet stakeholder demands, benchmark against peers and competitors, or reach your anticipated ranking position.

The Webranking Report

- Your company's score and ranking
- Your strengths and weaknesses, overall and by section
- Benchmark analysis with 3 selected peers
- Detailed description of all 100 criteria
- 300 best practice examples to be inspired from while planning for your improvements
- Interactive tool that lets you test how improvements would affect your results
- Access to the data from the background research surveys

The Webranking Plus Report also includes

- A qualitative analysis with detailed recommendations on how to improve your digital corporate communication
- A face-to-face presentation of your results where we also share current trends and suggest possible ways forward for continuous improvement, including a review on design, message and findability

We are Comprend

comprend 

Digital Corporate Communications

At Comprend we believe in creating stronger, more engaging Digital Corporate Communications solutions for our clients. We combine communications knowledge with digital expertise. Our international clients rely on us for their IR, media, CSR, employer branding, internal communications and social media. Our work has global reach and successfully supports worldwide as well as local market-specific initiatives.

We are a team of 60+ professionals with offices in Stockholm, London and Lisbon. We have partners in Milan (Lundquist), as well as group partners in the H&H Group: Hallvarsson & Halvarsson, Involve, Jung and Springtime.

For further information check the website comprend.com

To order your Webranking by Comprend 2016-2017 report or to get more information and insights please contact:

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