

**EMBARGOED UNTIL 00:00 THURSDAY 28<sup>th</sup> NOVEMBER 2013**

## **Institute of Business Ethics' Tenth Survey of Public Attitudes to Business Ethics**

### **Tax avoidance replaces remuneration as main public concern about business behaviour**

Worries about tax avoidance have shot to the top of public concerns about business behaviour, replacing executive remuneration by a wide margin, according to the latest survey of public opinion conducted for the Institute of Business Ethics by IPSOS Mori.

The survey, published today, also shows an improvement in the proportion that think business is behaving ethically since 2012, bringing it back in line with 2011 figures; meanwhile there has been a rise in the proportion saying businesses are behaving less ethically than in 2003.

Asked whether business generally behaves ethically, 59 % of respondents said it did compared with only 48% in last year's survey (and 58 % in 2011), but there has been an increase of seven percentage points to 35% in the numbers of those who believe that business behaves less ethically now than it did ten years ago.

The findings show that older people aged 55 and above are more likely to think that business is not behaving ethically than younger people.

The results show that 37% of respondents thought tax avoidance was the main concern that businesses need to address, compared with 30 % of respondents citing remuneration. This pushed remuneration out of the top slot for the first time in six years. The ability of employees to speak out about company wrong doing was rated the third most significant concern at 22% with business attitudes to the environment and human rights coming in significantly lower at 16% and 15% respectively.

Commenting on the results, Philippa Foster Back OBE, IBE's Director, said: *"These results could indicate that business has clawed back some of the public trust lost in the wake of the financial crisis. But confidence remains fragile with a year on year increase in those saying that business is less ethical than it was ten years ago. Tax is also now clearly a reputational issue and has risen very rapidly up the scale. Trust cannot be taken for granted."*

**Attitudes of the British Public to Business Ethics – 10 year trends and 2013 findings is available as a free download from [www.ibe.org.uk](http://www.ibe.org.uk)**

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Institute of Business Ethics

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## NEWS RELEASE

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For interviews, articles or an advanced press copy, please contact

Katherine Bradshaw [k.bradshaw@ibe.org.uk](mailto:k.bradshaw@ibe.org.uk) 07771 517700 +(0) 207 798 6040

## NOTES FOR EDITORS

***Attitudes of the British Public to Business Ethics – 10 year trends and 2013 findings***

Free download from [www.ibe.org.uk](http://www.ibe.org.uk)

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### About the Survey

For ten years the Institute of Business Ethics has commissioned Ipsos MORI to carry out an annual face to face surveys asking British adults (16+) their opinion of the ethical behaviour of British business and the issues that most need addressing. This briefing considers the findings over these ten years.

The three questions asked are:

Q1: How ethically do you think British business generally behaves?

Q2: How do you think British business is behaving now compared with 10 years ago? (asked since 2006)

Q3: In your view of company behaviour, which two or three of these issues most need addressing?

The survey is based on face-to-face interviews with 996 GB adults 16+, 16-22 September 2013, trends: c. 1000

### About the Institute of Business Ethics

The Institute of Business Ethics promotes high standards of business practice based on ethical values.

We help organisations to strengthen their ethics culture through the dissemination of knowledge and good practice.

[www.ibe.org.uk](http://www.ibe.org.uk)