

Beyond Compliance

Assessing Modern Slavery Statements using the Wikirate platform.

FOSDEM 2025, Open Research devroom

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Modern Slavery: A Global Challenge



Source: Walk Free

It impacts millions of people worldwide, and it is estimated that at least **28 million** people are in **forced labour**.

The **products** we buy **connect us** to **modern slavery**, as forced labour persists in the **supply chains** of many industries.

Modern Slavery: Key Actions

Strong **modern slavery legislation in place** that protects all workers in supply chains and **hold companies accountable**.

Companies must ensure **supply chain transparency** to identify and address risks of modern slavery.

Companies must engage in combating modern slavery by taking **responsibility** for their **operations** and **partnerships**.



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Modern Slavery Acts

The **UK Modern Slavery Act 2015** and **Australian Modern Slavery Act 2018** were one of the first laws to specifically address modern slavery.

- require companies above revenue thresholds to **produce annual modern slavery statements**.
- aim to **increase transparency in global supply chains** and hold companies **accountable for modern slavery risks**.

*Other laws addressing modern slavery: The **Supply Due Diligence Act** (Germany), **Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Directive** (European Union), **Uyghur Forced Labor Prevention Act** (United States), **California Transparency in Supply Chains Act**, **Norwegian Transparency Act**.*

Beyond Compliance: analyzing Modern Slavery Statements

What is beyond compliance?



Photo credit: Grace Forrest

Since 2016, Wikirate and Walk Free have partnered to analyze **Modern Slavery Statements** using a set of 21 criteria.

2'090 statements have been assessed since the start of the project.

Research question

Are companies treating the statements as a **box-ticking exercise**

or are they reporting comprehensively and **going beyond compliance?**



How do we do it?

ingredients for open and
community-powered research

An Open, Collaborative Approach

- **Community building and Crowdsourcing**
- **Accessible metrics**
- **Open and Transparent Methodology**
- **Open-data approach**
- **Empowerment through Education**



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Community building

- Passionate and knowledgeable volunteers in our partner's network.
- Training on the metrics and induction to the platform.
- Regular catch-ups, Slack channel.
- Contributors acknowledgement in reports and external communications.

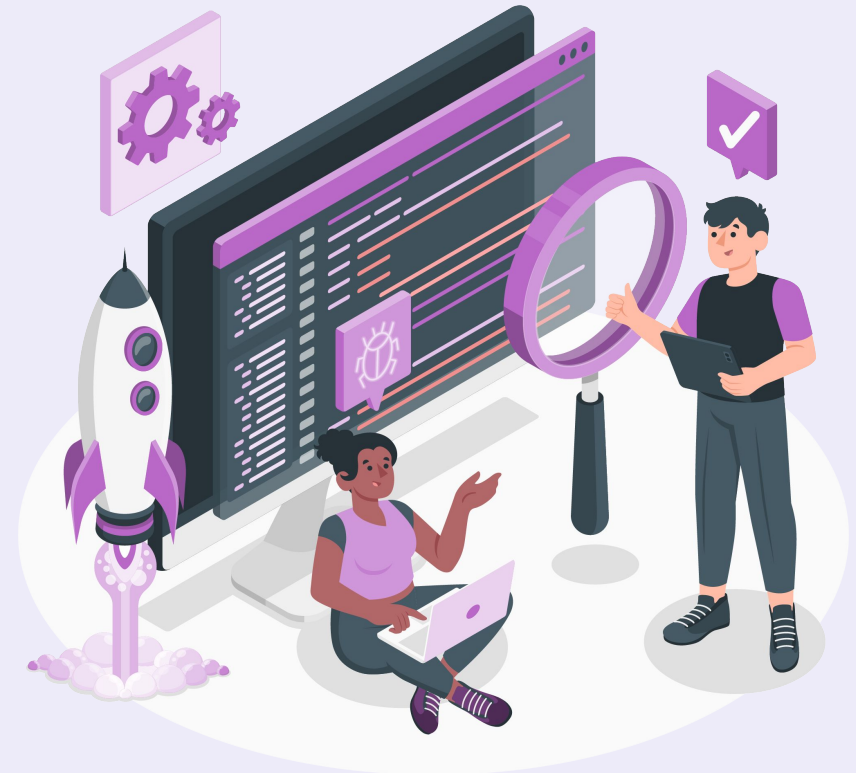


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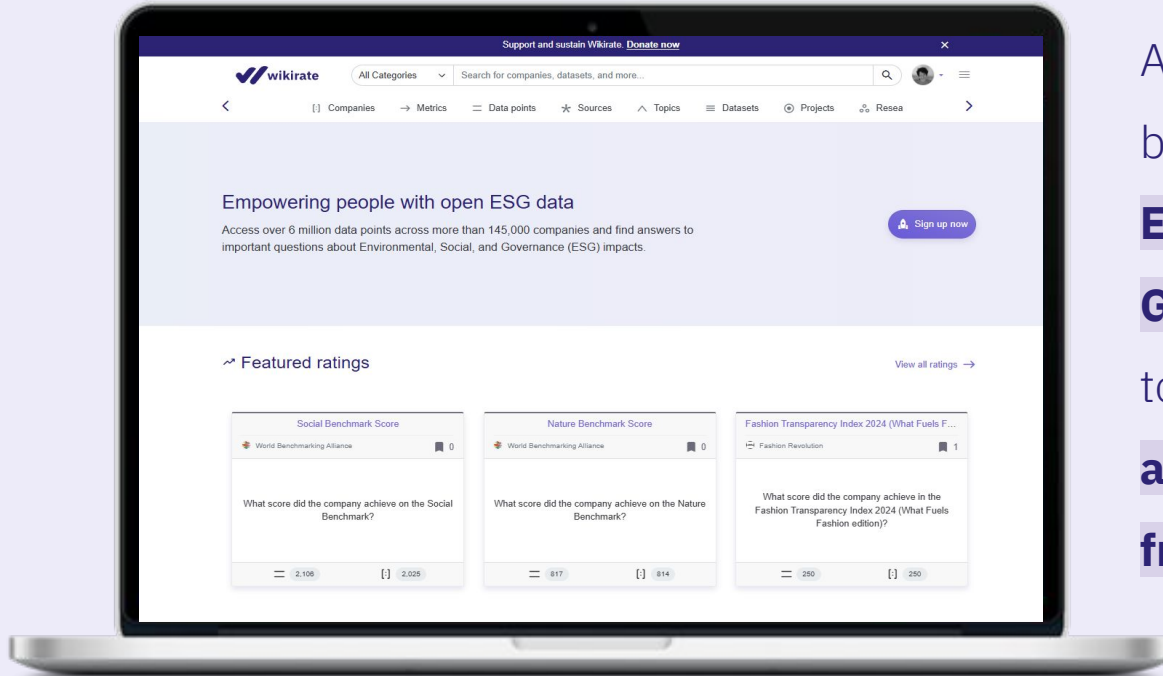
Research process

- **Comprehensive** and clear **methodologies** for assessments.
- Allocate companies **among contributors**.
- **Collect data** and researchers' comments in one place.
- Peer **reviews** & **Quality assurance**.

Refine methodologies as needed based on contributors' feedback






wikirate.org



An **open data platform** that brings **corporate Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) data** together in **one place**, making it **accessible, comparable** and **free** for all.

Research

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Featured ratings



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Social Benchmark Score

 World Benchmarking Alliance  0



What score did the company achieve on the Social Benchmark?

Nature Benchmark Score

 World Benchmarking Alliance  0

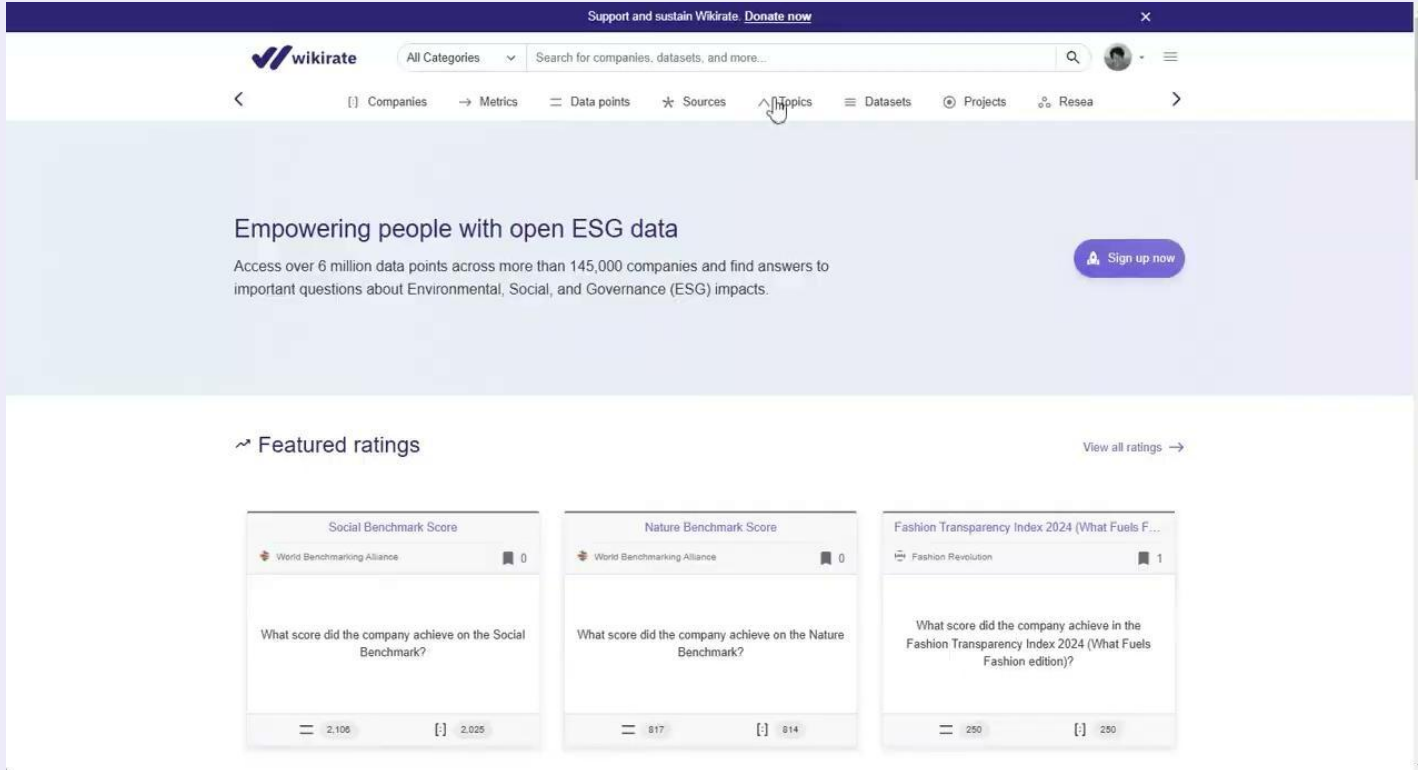
What score did the company achieve on the Nature Benchmark?

Fashion Transparency Index 2024 (What Fuels F...)

 Fashion Revolution  1

What score did the company achieve in the Fashion Transparency Index 2024 (What Fuels Fashion edition)?

Verification



The screenshot shows the Wikirate website interface. At the top, there is a dark blue navigation bar with the text "Support and sustain Wikirate. [Donate now](#)" and a close button. Below this is a white header area with the Wikirate logo, a search bar containing "All Categories" and "Search for companies, datasets, and more...", and a user profile icon. A secondary navigation bar contains links for "Companies", "Metrics", "Data points", "Sources", "Topics", "Datasets", "Projects", and "Research". The main content area features a light blue background with the heading "Empowering people with open ESG data" and a subtext: "Access over 6 million data points across more than 145,000 companies and find answers to important questions about Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) impacts." A "Sign up now" button is positioned to the right. Below this is a section titled "Featured ratings" with a "View all ratings" link. Three rating cards are displayed, each with a title, a source, a question, and a rating bar. The first card is for "Social Benchmark Score" by "World Benchmarking Alliance" with a rating of 0. The second is for "Nature Benchmark Score" by "World Benchmarking Alliance" with a rating of 0. The third is for "Fashion Transparency Index 2024 (What Fuels Fashion Revolution)" by "Fashion Revolution" with a rating of 1.

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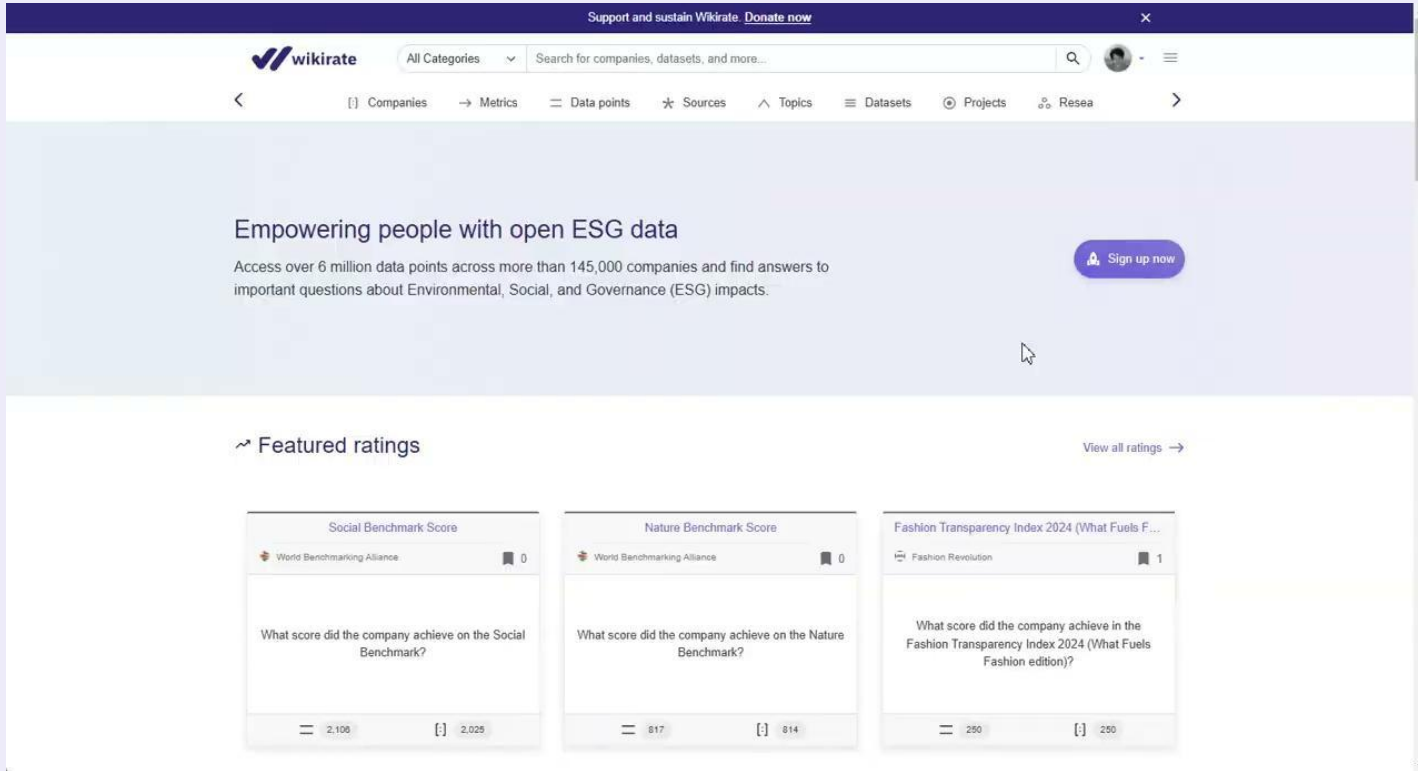
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Rating Title	Source	Rating	Question	Score Range
Social Benchmark Score	World Benchmarking Alliance	0	What score did the company achieve on the Social Benchmark?	2,106 - 2,025
Nature Benchmark Score	World Benchmarking Alliance	0	What score did the company achieve on the Nature Benchmark?	817 - 814
Fashion Transparency Index 2024 (What Fuels Fashion Revolution)	Fashion Revolution	1	What score did the company achieve in the Fashion Transparency Index 2024 (What Fuels Fashion edition)?	250 - 250

Calculated metrics



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Fashion Transparency Index 2024 (What Fuels F...)	Fashion Revolution	1	What score did the company achieve in the Fashion Transparency Index 2024 (What Fuels Fashion edition)?	250	250

What did we find?

Research question

Are companies treating the statements as a **ticking-box exercise**

or are they reporting comprehensively and **going beyond compliance?**



Findings

Compliance gap:

75% of companies fail to meet their reporting obligations under the relevant MSA legislation.

Overlooked modern slavery risks:

52% of companies **have not identified any modern slavery risks** within their operations and supply chains.

Lack of transparency:

50% of statements disclosed no information on the company's supply chains; **86%** do not report incidents.

Lack of remediation policies:

51% of companies **do not disclose having remediation policies in place** to respond to incidents of modern slavery.

Absence of worker centric policies:

88% of statements do not disclose direct worker remediation policies.

Limited reach beyond first tier:

74% of companies **do not have a modern slavery policy** that applies to stakeholders beyond the 1st tier of their supply chain.

How are the data used?

Building data dashboards
and advocating for change


BEYOND COMPLIANCE

in partnership with [WALK FREE](#)



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BEYOND COMPLIANCE

A living data dashboard assessing modern slavery reporting across business sectors.

[TAKE ACTION](#) [DOWNLOAD ALL DATA](#)

UNDERREPORTING OF CASES OF EXPLOITATION

ALL YEARS < LEGISLATION <

Only **14%** of companies we've assessed report finding incidents in their supply chains. Millions of modern slavery victims go undetected and an estimated **28 million people are in forced labour globally.**



*Sample size: 2,090

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KEY FINDINGS

ALL YEARS < LEGISLATION <

We analysed 2,090 company statements produced under the Australian and UK Modern Slavery Acts and these are some of the gaps we have discovered.

75%

COMPANIES ARE FAILING TO EFFECTIVELY MEET THEIR REPORTING OBLIGATIONS

75% of statements do not meet all minimum requirements of the corresponding MSA legislation.

50%

INEFFECTIVE DISCLOSURES RENDER MILLIONS OF WORKERS INVISIBLE

50% of statements disclosed no information on their supply chains.

88%

NO DIRECT WORKER REMEDIATION

88% of statements do not disclose direct worker remediation policies. Such policies prioritise the well-being, rights, and dignity of affected workers.

29%

NO DIRECT SUPPLY CHAIN DUE DILIGENCE

29% of statements report no supply chain due diligence in place. This means no risk management, seriously impeding companies' ability to detect or respond to exploitation.

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SPOTLIGHT METRICS

ALL YEARS < LEGISLATION <

LOW AND UNDERPAYMENT OF WAGES IN SUPPLY CHAINS

Only **15%** of statements provided a commitment on, or detail action to ensure fair / living wages in at least some parts of their supply chain. Low and underpayment of wages are an indicator of forced labour.

Living wage in supply chains 15%

MEMBERSHIPS AND PARTNERSHIPS WITH MULTI-STAKEHOLDER INITIATIVES.

52% of statements mention memberships or collaborations with multi-stakeholder initiatives that address modern slavery issues. Such initiatives can enable effective remedy for harms and sharing of good practices.

Collaborations and Memberships 52%

WORKERS ENGAGEMENT

Only **34%** of statements reported that the company engage with workers or trade unions in the supply chain.

Workers Engagement 34%

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Impact

What is the impact of the
beyond compliance project?

Shaping Policy

Data-driven recommendations by Walk Free shaped UK and Australian Modern Slavery Act reviews, with several adopted in Australia.

Results used in **advocacy efforts** on Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Directive (CSDDD) adoption.



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Shaping Business Practices



Image by [freepik](#)

Data on UK companies responses were leveraged to **inform updates** to the UK MSA guidance through the UK Forced Labour Forum.

Facilitating **engaged businesses** improving reporting and due diligence processes.

What the future holds?



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Integrating Mila - Quebec AI Institute **annotated dataset** of **5,000 fully assessed** Australian modern slavery **statements**.

Integrating **Mila's AI model** into our pipeline to **automate the assessment** of new statements, as part of a pilot project to scale up research.

How to contribute?

- [Sign up to volunteer for Wikirate](#)
- [Projects looking for contributors](#)
- [Contact us](#) - to share ideas, form partnerships or get support



How to contribute?

Wikirate is an open source project, written in ruby! Check-out our GitHub repository and get started with [wikirate](#) and [decko](#).

Create your own dashboards.



Thank you.
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