

## **Module 1**

# **General Awareness Raising of Corporate Sustainability and Responsibility**



Source: [rsc - Liberal Dictionary \(tekportal.net\)](https://www.liberaldictionary.com/rsc)

## **Module 1: General Awareness Raising of Corporate Sustainability and Responsibility**

<b>Unit 1</b>	<b>Start-up culture (how start-up is different from corporation) in relation to CSR</b>
Topic 1	Understanding what is a startup
Topic 2	Why is a startup different from a corporation
Topic 3	What is CSR?
Topic 4	Why is CSR is a better option for startups?
Topic 5	What IS and What Is NOT CSR

## **Module 1: General Awareness Raising of Corporate Sustainability and Responsibility**

<b>Unit 2</b>	<b>CSR and why it is relevant within the startup context</b>
Topic 1	What are the main challenges that startups must face
Topic 2	Why CSR
Topic 3	What does CSR offer?
Topic 4	Examples of CSR practices

## **Module 1: General Awareness Raising of Corporate Sustainability and Responsibility**

<b>Unit 3</b>	<b>Corporate Sustainability &amp; Responsibility</b>
Topic 1	A New Corporate Philosophy
Topic 2	CSR Pillars
Topic 3	A New Approach to Define CSR

## **Module 1: General Awareness Raising of Corporate Sustainability and Responsibility**

<b>Unit 4</b>	<b>The Global Sustainability Framework</b>
Topic 1	UN Global Compact
Topic 2	The 10 Principles of the UN Global Compact
Topic 3	The 2030 Agenda and the 17 Sustainable Development Goals
Topic 4	17 SDGs and Start-Ups

## **Module 1: General Awareness Raising of Corporate Sustainability and Responsibility**

<b>Unit 5</b>	<b>Integrating CSR in daily practices and routines: practical examples</b>
Topic 1	Which areas does CSR cover?
Topic 2	How can CSR be implemented
Topic 3	Examples of practical cases

## **Module 1: General Awareness Raising of Corporate Sustainability and Responsibility**

<b>Unit 6</b>	<b>Learning from success stories / good practices and avoiding greenwashing (SDG washing)</b>
Topic 1	What is greenwashing
Topic 2	The 5 most common mistakes of greenwashing
Topic 3	Good practices
Topic 4	Practical cases



## **Module 1: General Awareness Raising of Corporate Sustainability and Responsibility**

### **Unit 7**

**Understanding how knowledge of legal and regulatory environment can help StartUps in practicing CSR**

#### Topic 1

European Startup Regulatory Framework

#### Topic 2

CSR Related Regulatory Framework

#### Topic 3

Identifying the Values

#### Topic 4

Code of Ethics – Step by Step Implementation

<b>Module 1: General Awareness Raising of Corporate Sustainability and Responsibility</b>	
	<b>Activities</b>
	<b>Further readings</b>
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## **Unit 1**

**Start-up culture (how start-up is different from corporation)  
in relation to CSR**

# Learning Objectives

Through this module, we will establish a welcoming environment where the initial aspects of CSR and startups will be created and presented in order to acquire basic notions. Thanks to this, we will be able to:

- Understand basic concepts as startup, corporation or CSR
- Be aware of possible CSR areas and activities
- Understand why CSR is a good perspective for startups



Source: [INNOVATIVE HSE CONSULTANCY & SERVICES | Corporate Social Responsibility \(innovhse.com\)](https://www.innovhse.com)

# Topic 1: Understanding what is a startup

## DEFINITION:

A startup is defined as a young or recent company which is created by one or more entrepreneurs to develop a solution to an issue or service and bring it to market in order to make it succeed.

Key aspects of the startups are:

- Little or even no income in the first stages of the process
- They are perceived as risky propositions
- They need to prove their potential
- Their size is small at first
- Willingness to grow

## Topic 2: How are startups different to corporations

### STARTUPS

- Created by one or two entrepreneurs
- They evolve and change fastly
- Flat structure
- Focused on innovation
- Often setted up for solving a current issue
- Lack of money at first

### CORPORATIONS

- Created by stakeholders or shareholders
- Search for stabilty
- Hierarchical structure
- Regular profits and work ethic
- Search for stability
- Bigger flows of money

## Topic 2: Why are startups different to corporations (continuation)



Source: [Cost Savings Initiatives for Corporations | BvW Global](#)



## **Topic 3: What is CSR?**

What do you think CSR is?

# Topic 3: What is CSR?

What do you think CSR is?



Source: [Are CSR Definitions outdated in 2019? - Impakter](#)

## Topic 3: What is CSR? (continuation)

‘Corporate Social Responsibility is a management concept whereby business integrate social, environmental and economic concerns in their operations and interactions with their stakeholders’.

(UNIDO, 2020)



Source: [Pinterest](#)

## Topic 3: What is CSR? (continuation)

- The term CSR was first used in 1953 by the American economist Howard Bowen in his publication *Social Responsibilities of the Businessman*.
- The concept bloomed in 1970s in the States as a kind 'social contract' between companies and society and it was presented by the Committee for Economic Development.
- In the 1990s CSR was a concept widespread, in 1991, professor Donna J. Wood, from the University of Pittsburgh, published *Corporate Social Performance Revisited*, improving CSR models and facilitating a framework of CSR programs.
- In the early 2000s, CSR was introduced as a solid part of the strategy for many multi-million-dollar organizations like Coca-Cola, Walt Disney, and Pfizer.



[What is Corporate social responsibility \(#CSR\) ? - YouTube](#)

## Topic 4: Why is CSR a better option for startups?

### EASY IMPLEMENTATION

**Startups** are new companies that can implement CSR from the very beginning without effort



On the contrary to big corporations that find it more difficult to change their already existent practices

## Topic 4: Why is CSR a better option for startups? (continuation)

### SECURE THEIR VIABILITY

**Start-ups** work with uncertainty and need to prove their value and avoid risks



CSR is a continuous path with and through sustainability, which also provides a chance fit in the demands of the market





Source: Financial Viability - Business Model Viability -  
Aktiasolutions

## Topic 4: Why is CSR a better option for startups? (continuation)

### INCREASES COMPETITIVENESS

CSR becomes a part of business strategy for **start-ups** and adds a strong value for trade and industry when competing in international markets.



While big corporations are stuck in their old practices being reluctant to innovation and grow and, hence, losing attractiveness

## Topic 4: Why is CSR a better option for startups? (continuation)

Through CSR startups should not aim for

- Compliance to legislations
- Philanthropy
- Sponsorships
- Public Relations
- Opposing the business purpose

Through CSR startups aim and practise

- Platform for social dialogue
- Investment in integrity, transparency and truth
- A mechanism for creating trust and respect between the company and its stakeholders
- A function that links corporate Strategy and Values
- Tool for creation of added value and long term prospective
- Source of innovation

## Topic 4: Why is CSR a better option for startups? (continuation)

Through CSR startups aim and practise

- Differentiation from competition
- Improve customer loyalty / Gain new customers
- Gain and to sustain competitive advantage
- Improve employee satisfaction and motivation
- Reduce employee absenteeism
- Improve productivity
- Attract better employees and retain talent
- New business opportunities
- Better relationships with local communities
- Improve stakeholder trust (including investors)
- Increase investors' interest

# Topic 5: What IS and What Is NOT CSR (continuation)

## What IS CSR

- It is an investment in integrity and trust
- It is about transparency and continuous dialogue with stakeholders
- It is about connecting the corporate values with the business strategies
- It is about putting the emphasis on what creates added value and long-term perspectives
- It is about continuous improvement
- It is a Risk management approach
- It is a self-commitment that goes beyond the law. A voluntary commitment!
- It is about addressing internal and external business issues/areas
- It is part of the strategic business model
- It is part of business' DNA and related to core business
- It aims for responsible development and effective cost management

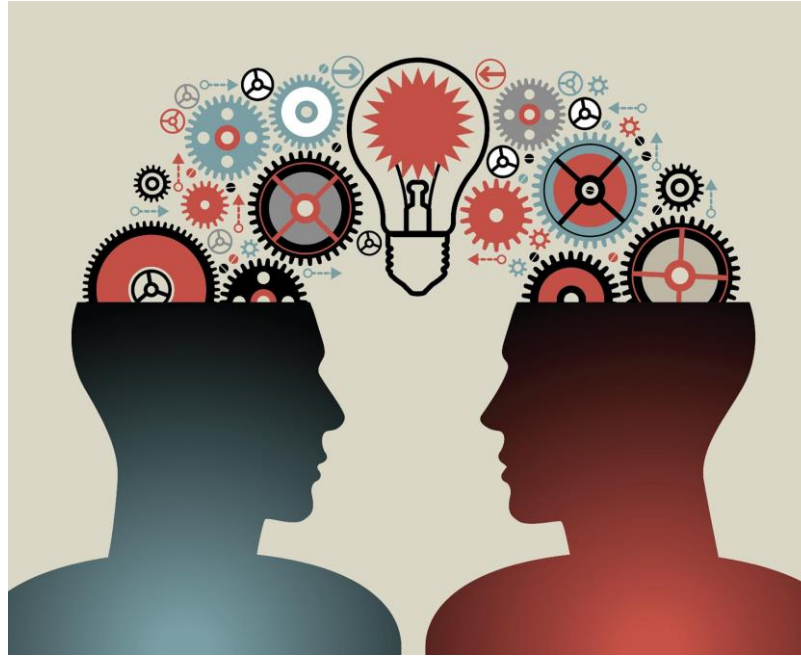
# Topic 5: What IS and What Is NOT CSR (continuation)

## What IS NOT CSR

- It is not just about nice words
- It is not always about choosing the most convenient option
- It is not about correcting Social Inequalities
- It is not about Public Relations
- It is not about compliance with legislation
- It is not about Philanthropy and/or Commercial sponsorships
- It is not about chasing awards just for the publicity
- It is not something that opposes the main business Purpose

## **Unit 2**

**CSR and why it is relevant within the startup context**



Source: [How To Capture Knowledge | Behavioural Safety Services](#)



# Learning Objectives

Through this module, we will deep into the different benefits that CSR can apport to startups. Thanks to this, we will be able:

- To understand the benefits and value-added for engaging in CSR practices
- To be aware of possible CSR areas and activities.
- To be aware of the particular weaknesses that startups have.

# Topic 1: What are the main challenges that startups must face

## RISK

- The vast majority of startups tend to be unprofitable in their first year of operation, therefore there is a high possibility of failure
- When startups are under that risk position, it may affect directly their strategic vision and, consequently, they either fail to seize market opportunities or overestimate their sales projections
- In addition, the more risk a startups takes, the less attractive is for the market

## COMPENSATION

- At first there is little or even a complete lack of money and compensations
- The rewards are extremely low-progressive and take time to generate actual revenue
- This is why there are startups that are abandoned or refuse to keep operating

# Topic 1: What are the main challenges that startups have to face (Continuation)

## MARKET ACCESS

- The lack of experience can be an obstacle to attract clients
- It is more expensive to attract new clients than to maintain old ones
- It is difficult to operate without a database of clients

## PROCEDURES

- Startups do not have defined business processes
- They are exposed to financial issues, legal liability and customer procedures
- They need to build and implement their strategies from the beginning

## Topic 2: Why CSR? Why in startups?

As it has been seen, startups are created under **uncertainty** and must face multiple challenges

As they do not have established strategies or routines, it is a **good opportunity** to implement CSR which will also help them to reduce risks and rise **long-term stability**

# Topic 3: What does CSR offer?

## ATTRACTIVENESS

- Young people currently feel more attracted by environmental and social causes; therefore, they will search for companies aware of these issues
- Working with environmental and social issues through honest dialogue will boost and increase positive relationships with customers

## SAVE COST PRACTICES

- Through simplification processes and promoting sustainability and energy-saving, it is possible to increase efficiency and, therefore, reduce costs significantly. That occupants of greener buildings may be more productive is the icing on top.

## Topic 3: What does CSR offer? (continuation)

### BRAND REPUTATION

- Build a commercial identity
- Thanks to CSR programmes, startups can establish the difference from other members of the community
- By reinforcing your brand as startup, you will prove to be unique and original, attracting more confidence and investors

### PASSION AND PURPOSE

- CSR will proportionate a meaning to startups, passion and purpose
- Startups thanks to CSR will be able answer customers' questions easily (eg. What sources were used to make this product?)

## **Topic 4: Examples of CSR practices**

As it will be seen with more detail in the following unit, we will briefly present some ways where startups can engage with CSR, in order to close this unit with some examples and to have a better and general understanding of the relationship between CSR - startups.

## Topic 4: Examples of CSR practices (continuation)

Engage with local  
communities

Implement social change  
practices (bring dogs to work,  
free snacks, etc)

Donate the excess of products  
to humanitarian organizations

Knowledge of the supply chain  
of your own products

Diversity among its workers



## **Unit 3**

# **Corporate Sustainability & Responsibility**

# Learning Objectives

- Understand the new role of businesses
- Understand the benefits deriving from applying CSR
- Recognise the linkage between CSR and Sustainability

# Topic 1: A New Corporate Philosophy

## Past

Organizations were only interested in:

- short-term profitability
- operating for a general nonspecific purpose

Their vision was based solely in quantitative perspectives:

- maximizing the shareholder wealth
- without taking into consideration the other stakeholders of the organisation, like employees, suppliers, and society at large.

## Present and Future

Organizations are striving to identify tools and techniques that will enable them not only to survive but to gain competitive advantage as well.

In recent years, the impact of corporations upon our world has become undeniable. Citizens nowadays demand a responsible business behavior from all kinds of organizations (for-profit and not-for-profit), corporations and their leaders, who have become aware of the crucial role of social responsibility in seeking performance excellence and sustainable growth.

CSR has never been more important.



Source: [Gatheringbooks](#)

# Topic 1: A New Corporate Philosophy (continuation)

The last decades witnessed a vigorous debate over the role of corporations in society.

Interest in CSR became intense as shareholders, consumers, activists, governments, and society in general called for higher standards of business.

It became clear that CSR is not a “**nice-to-do**” thing. It is a “**must-do**” thing.

## Topic 2: CSR Pillars

CSR can be broken down into the following basic pillars:

- Environment
- Society
- Workplace
- Marketplace

RESPONSIBILITY  
TOWARDS  
**ENVIRONMENT**

RESPONSIBILITY  
TOWARDS  
**SOCIETY**

RESPONSIBILITY  
IN THE  
**WORKPLACE**

RESPONSIBILITY  
IN THE  
**MARKETPLACE**

# Topic 3: A New Approach to Define CSR

The UN Industrial Development Organisation (UNIDO, 2017) claims that CSR is generally understood as being the way through which a company achieves **a balance of economic, environmental and social imperatives**, while at the same time **addressing the expectations of shareholders and stakeholders**.

CSR can also be broken down into the “**three Ps**” (“Triple-Bottom-Line- Approach”): **Profit, People, and the Planet**

- Balance between social, environmental and economic growth
- Responsible and proactive decision-making
- Innovation that minimizes negative impact

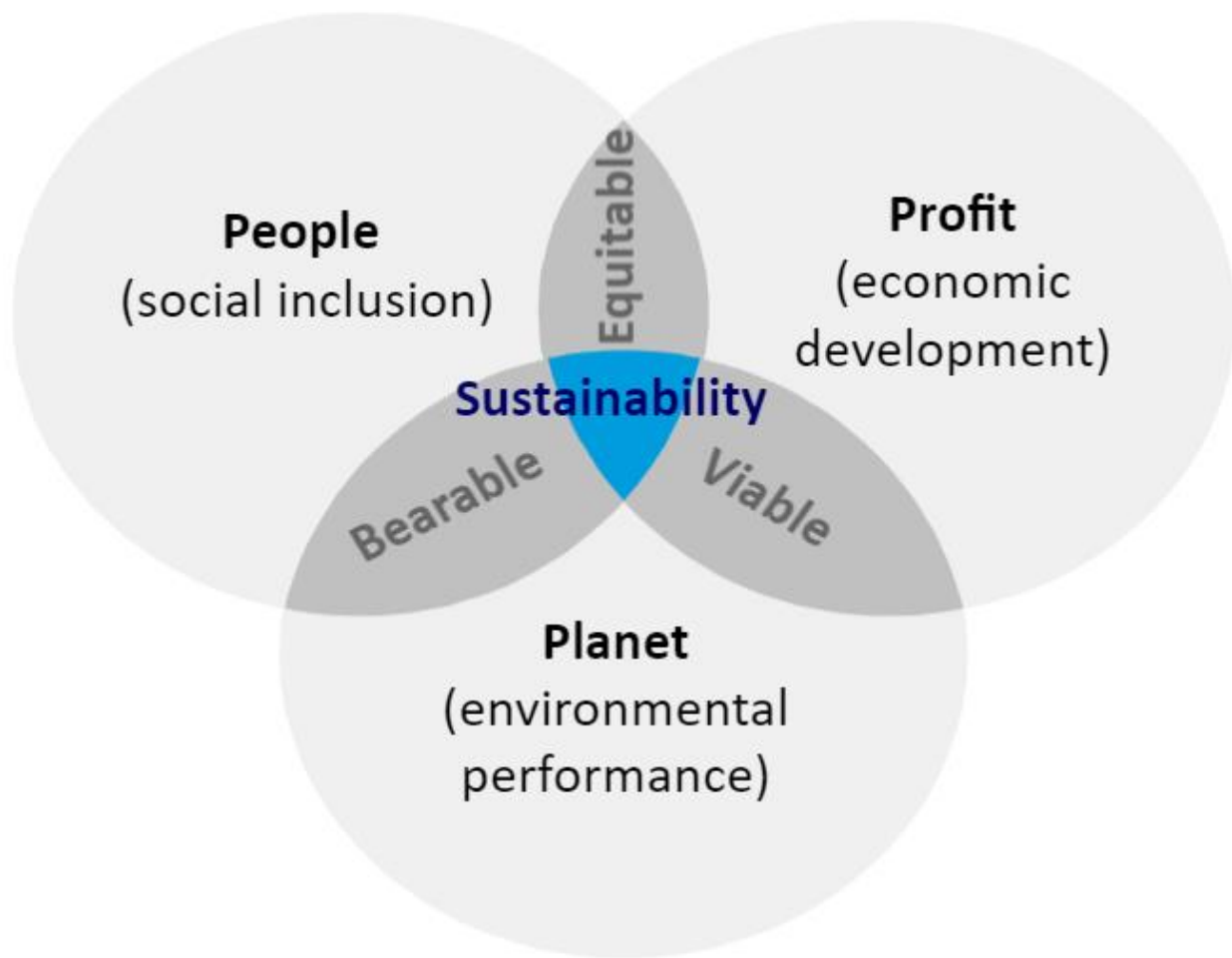


## Topic 3: A New Approach to Define CSR

The Triple-Bottom-Line-Approach aims at:

- Balance between social, environmental and economic growth
- Responsible and proactive decision-making
- Innovation that minimizes negative impact

in order to create a sustainable environment for all.



## **Topic 3: A New Approach to Define CSR (continuation)**

We have now moved from CSR to new CSR:

From

**Corporate  
Social  
Responsibility**



To

**Corporate  
Sustainability &  
Responsibility**

## **Unit 4**

### **The Global Sustainability Framework**

# Learning Objectives

- Understand the 10 Principles of UN's Global Compact
- Understand the Agenda 2030 and the 17 Sustainable Development Goals
- Recognize the importance of applying the principles of Sustainability in a business setting (especially in startups)



# Topic 1: UN Global Compact

The United Nations Global Compact is a voluntary initiative based on CEO commitments to implement universal sustainability principles and to undertake steps to support UN Goals.

As a **voluntary initiative**, the UN Global Compact seeks wide participation from a diverse group of businesses.

As a participant of the UN Global Compact, a company:

- Sets in motion changes to business operations so that the UN Global Compact and its Ten Principles become part of strategy, culture and day-to-day operations;
- Is expected to publicly advocate the UN Global Compact and its principles via communications vehicles such as press releases, speeches, etc; and
- Is required to communicate with their stakeholders on an annual basis about progress in:
  - Implementing the Ten Principles and
  - Efforts to support societal priorities.



# Topic 1: UN Global Compact (continuation)

- CSR starts with a company's value system and a principles-based approach to doing business.
- This means operating in ways that, at a minimum, meet fundamental responsibilities in the areas of **human rights, labour, environment and anti-corruption**.
- Responsible businesses enact the same values and principles wherever they have a presence, and know that good practices in one area do not offset harm in another.
- By incorporating the Ten Principles of the UN Global Compact into strategies, policies and procedures, and establishing a culture of integrity, companies are not only upholding their basic responsibilities to people and planet, but also setting the stage for long-term success.



HUMAN RIGHTS



LABOUR



ENVIRONMENT



ANTI-CORRUPTION

## Topic 2: The 10 Principles of the UN Global Compact

The UN Global Compact's 10 principles in the areas of human rights, labour, the environment and anti-corruption enjoy universal consensus and are derived from:

- The Universal Declaration of Human Rights
- The International Labour Organization's Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work
- The Rio Declaration on Environment and Development
- The United Nations Convention Against Corruption UNGC (2021)

### Human Rights

Principle 1: Businesses should support and respect the protection of internationally proclaimed human rights; UNGC (2021a)

and Principle 2: make sure that they are not complicit in human rights abuses. UNGC (2021b)

## Topic 2: The 10 Principles of the UN Global Compact (continuation)

### **Labour**

Principle 3: Businesses should uphold the freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining UNGC (2021c);

Principle 4: the elimination of all forms of forced and compulsory labour UNGC (2021d);

Principle 5: the effective abolition of child labour UNGC (2021e); and

Principle 6: the elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation UNGC (2021f).

### **Environment**

Principle 7: Businesses should support a precautionary approach to environmental challenges UNGC (2021g);

Principle 8: undertake initiatives to promote greater environmental responsibility UNGC (2021h); and

Principle 9: encourage the development and diffusion of environmentally friendly technologies UNGC (2021i).

### **Anti-Corruption**

Principle 10: Businesses should work against corruption in all its forms, including extortion and bribery UNGC (2021j).

#### PRINCIPLE 10

Businesses should work against corruption in all its forms, including extortion and bribery

#### PRINCIPLE 9

Businesses should encourage the development and diffusion of environmentally friendly technologies

#### PRINCIPLE 8

Businesses should undertake initiatives to promote greater environmental responsibility

#### PRINCIPLE 7

Businesses should support a precautionary approach to environmental challenges

#### PRINCIPLE 6

Businesses should uphold the elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation

#### PRINCIPLE 1

Businesses should support and respect the protection of internationally proclaimed human rights, within the scope of their influence

#### PRINCIPLE 2

Businesses should make sure that they are not complicit in human rights abuses

#### PRINCIPLE 3

Businesses should uphold the freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining

#### PRINCIPLE 4

Businesses should uphold the elimination of all forms of forced and compulsory labour

#### PRINCIPLE 5

Businesses should uphold the abolition of child labour



# **Topic 3: The 2030 Agenda and the 17 Sustainable Development Goals**

## **From 8 Millennium Development Goals to 17 Sustainable Development Goals**

In 2000, the Millennium Declaration of the United Nations was drafted and approved for the Millennium Summit, reflecting the concern of 147 heads of state that signed the treaty in the largest gathering of world leaders of all times.

The fight between the inequalities verified between the north and south, and the existents social imbalances are the foundation of the eight main targets identified and named as the development goals of the millennium, which were supposed to be achieved by the year 2015.



## **Topic 3: The 2030 Agenda and the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (continuation)**

- The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, adopted by all United Nations Member States in 2015, provides a shared blueprint for peace and prosperity for people and the planet, now and into the future.
- At its heart are the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which are an urgent call for action by all countries - developed and developing - in a global partnership.
- They recognize that ending poverty and other deprivations must go hand-in-hand with strategies that improve health and education, reduce inequality, and spur economic growth – all while tackling climate change and working to preserve our oceans and forests.
- The Goals interconnect and in order to leave no one behind, it is important that we achieve each Goal and target by 2030.



## Topic 3: The 2030 Agenda and the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (continuation)

- The 17 SDGs are integrated—that is, they recognize that action in one area will affect outcomes in others, and that development must balance social, economic and environmental sustainability.
- Through the pledge to Leave No One Behind, countries have committed to fast-track progress for those furthest behind first. That is why the SDGs are designed to bring the world to several life-changing ‘zeros’, including zero poverty, hunger, AIDS and discrimination against women and girls.



# SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

17 GOALS TO TRANSFORM OUR WORLD



Source: <https://unfoundation.org/>

## **Topic 3: The 2030 Agenda and the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (continuation)**

SDG 1 calls for the eradication of poverty in all its manifestations. It envisions shared prosperity, a basic standard of living and social protection benefits for people everywhere, including the poorest and most vulnerable. The goal seeks to ensure equal rights and access to economic and natural resources.

SDG 2 seeks to end hunger and malnutrition and ensure access to safe, nutritious and sufficient food. Realising this goal will largely depend on promoting sustainable production systems and increasing investment in rural infrastructure and agricultural research and development.

SDG 3 aims to ensure health and promote well-being for all at all ages by improving reproductive, maternal and child health; ending epidemics of major communicable diseases; and reducing non-communicable and mental diseases. It also calls for reducing behavioural and environmental health-risk factors.



## **Topic 3: The 2030 Agenda and the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (continuation)**

SDG 4 seeks to ensure access to equitable and quality education through all stages of life, as well as to increase the number of young people and adults having relevant skills for employment, decent jobs and entrepreneurship. The goal also envisages the elimination of gender and income disparities in access to education.

SDG 5 aims to achieve gender equality by ending all forms of discrimination, violence and any harmful practices against women and girls in the public and private spheres. It also calls for the full participation of women and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of political and economic decision-making.

SDG 6 calls for ensuring universal access to safe and affordable drinking water, sanitation and hygiene, and ending open defecation. It also aims to improve water quality and water-use efficiency and to encourage sustainable abstractions and supply of freshwater.



## **Topic 3: The 2030 Agenda and the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (continuation)**

SDG 7 calls for ensuring universal access to modern energy services, improving energy efficiency and increasing the share of renewable energy. To accelerate the transition to an affordable, reliable and sustainable energy system that fulfils these demands, countries need to facilitate access to clean energy research and technology and to promote investment in resource- and energy-efficient solutions and low-carbon energy infrastructure.

SDG 8 recognises the importance of sustained economic growth and high levels of economic productivity for the creation of well-paid quality jobs, as well as resource efficiency in consumption and production. It calls for opportunities for full employment and decent work for all alongside the eradication of forced labour, human trafficking and child labour, and the promotion of labour rights and safe and secure working environments.

SDG 9 calls for building resilient and sustainable infrastructure and promotes inclusive and sustainable industrialisation. It also recognises the importance of research and innovation for finding lasting solutions to social, economic and environmental challenges.





## **Topic 3: The 2030 Agenda and the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (continuation)**

SDG 10 addresses inequalities within and among countries. It calls for nations to reduce inequalities in income as well as those based on age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion or economic or other status within a country. The goal also addresses inequalities among countries, including those related to representation, and calls for the facilitation of orderly and safe migration and mobility of people.

SDG 11 aims to renew and plan cities and other human settlements in a way that offers opportunities for all, with access to basic services, energy, housing, transportation and green public spaces, while reducing resource use and environmental impact.

SDG 12 calls for a comprehensive set of actions from businesses, policy-makers, researchers and consumers to adapt to sustainable practices. It envisions sustainable production and consumption based on advanced technological capacity, resource efficiency and reduced global waste.



## **Topic 3: The 2030 Agenda and the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (continuation)**

SDG 13 seeks to implement the commitment to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and deliver on the Green Climate Fund. It aims to strengthen countries' resilience and adaptive capacity to climate-related natural hazards and the resulting disasters with a special focus on supporting least-developed countries.

SDG 14 aims to protect and ensure the sustainable use of oceans. This includes the reduction of marine pollution and the impacts of ocean acidification, the ending of overfishing and the conservation of marine and coastal areas and ecosystems. SDG 14 has strong interdependencies with a broad range of other SDGs, as oceans sustain coastal economies and livelihoods and contribute to food production, while at the same time function as a sink for land-and sea-based pollution.

SDG 15 seeks to protect, restore and promote the conservation and sustainable use of terrestrial, inland-water and mountain ecosystems. This includes efforts to sustainably manage forests and halt deforestation, combat desertification, restore degraded land and soil, halt biodiversity loss and protect threatened species.



## **Topic 3: The 2030 Agenda and the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (continuation)**

SDG 16 calls for peaceful and inclusive societies based on respect for human rights, protection of the most vulnerable, the rule of law and good governance at all levels. It also envisions transparent, effective and accountable institutions.

SDG 17 calls for a global partnership for sustainable development. The goal highlights the importance of global macroeconomic stability and the need to mobilise financial resources for developing countries from international sources, as well as through strengthened domestic capacities for revenue collection. It also highlights the importance of trade for developing countries and equitable rules for governing international trade.



## Topic 4: 17 SDGs and Start-Ups

- The SDGs set forth a bold agenda to tackle critical issues that will affect the world over the next several years. These goals act as a call-to-action for both the public and private sectors to help address crucial challenges such as ending poverty, ensuring access to high-quality education and protecting natural resources.
- Addressing the SDGs is new territory for most businesses. Because the agenda is recent, companies' practices and impacts have not been the subject of long-term study.



Source: Startups in the post-coronavirus world



# Topic 4: 17 SDGs and Start-Ups (continuation)

## STEP 1: DEFINE YOUR PRIORITIES WHAT ARE THE SDGs?

Your company may have a significant positive or negative impact on some of the SDGs and virtually no impact on others.

“The SDGs are a new narrative around sustainability globally, so it’s increasingly important **to explain what you’re doing in the context of the SDGs**. But this is not an agenda that’s supposed to replace the great work that companies are doing,” says James Gomme, Director of Sustainable Development Goals with the World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD).

## STEP 2: GET FEEDBACK

Your company will need to to a materiality assessment, which will determine which topics matter most to relevant stakeholders, both internally and externally, such as employees, investors or the communities where you operate.

Your value chain map and materiality assessment demonstrate the areas upon which your business can approach the SDGs most effectively, as well as which of these areas matter most to your stakeholders.

## Topic 4: 17 SDGs and Start-Ups (continuation)

### **STEP 3: TURN PRIORITIES**

Your value chain map and stakeholder outreach will highlight the areas in which your operations and CSR programming already align with the SDGs, as well as where you can improve.

Your team will be faced with choices that force you to balance your reach and abilities with the bold action required by the SDGs.

**START WHERE YOU ARE:** Depending on your priorities and your company's overall experience with social and environmental sustainability, you might not feel ready to set long-term goals right away. The most important thing is to get started. That may mean setting short-term goals and building from there.

## Topic 4: 17 SDGs and Start-Ups (continuation)

### STEP 4: REPORTING

The reporting landscape around the SDGs is still evolving. Goal-setting and measurement systems are well established for environmental and economic targets, but less so when it comes to social programs. This leaves businesses largely in the dark when it comes to effectively measuring social impact at scale.

Even if your company doesn't have all the answers yet, experts say that's no reason to hold off on incorporating the SDGs into your non-financial reporting.

“Reporting is important. It offers **transparency** to the stakeholders who are participating in our business,” says Ian Rosenberger, founder and CEO of Thread International, a social enterprise based in Pittsburgh. “But it's more important that we **actually make an impact than it is that we talk about it.**”

Startups and social enterprises have scant resources, and if it's between scaling your impact and creating a robust report, the decision is clear. Do what you can to communicate, but not at the expense of your greater goals.

# Topic 4: 17 SDGs and Start-Ups (continuation)

## STEP 4: REPORTING

The European Commission recently (April 2021) adopted a proposal for a Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive (CSRD), which would amend the existing reporting requirements of the NFRD. The proposal:

- extends the scope to all large companies and all companies listed on regulated markets (except listed micro-enterprises)
- requires the audit (assurance) of reported information
- introduces more detailed reporting requirements, and a requirement to report according to mandatory EU sustainability reporting standards
- requires companies to digitally 'tag' the reported information, so it is machine readable and feeds into the European single access point envisaged in the capital markets union action plan.

## Topic 4: 17 SDGs and Start-Ups (continuation)

For Startups

Even if you're not familiar with **formal non-financial reporting**, you can still communicate progress.

The SDGs are a great opportunity to begin discussing with your stakeholders about the purpose of your company.

According to Powell of Agora Partnerships, "If you have a social media presence, you can certainly blog about it or use the hashtag **#SDGs** to make yourself known a little bit. You could include the SDGs in an annual impact report that you send to your stakeholders. Or you could gather your employees together and have a talk. It's all about communicating in the way that makes most sense for you and your business for where it is at its growth stage."

## Topic 4: 17 SDGs and Start-Ups (continuation)

### STEP 5:

#### WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE

“Ultimately, if we all continue working the way we currently are, we’re not going to achieve the SDGs,” says Alexandra van der Ploeg, who heads up SAP Corporate Social Responsibility global education and social entrepreneurship work. “The next step is figuring out where we can allow the agenda to influence how we do business and where we can partner up with others.

It’s about asking, especially in the CSR space, where do we come out of our splendid isolation and begin pursuing multi-stakeholder partnerships to make a difference? Those are things that are still in development.”

# Activity 1

- Please study the 17 Sustainable Development Goals at <https://sdgs.un.org/goals>.
- Decide which SDGs are more related with your business.

## **Unit 5**

**Integrating CSR in daily practices and routines: practical examples**



# Learning Objectives

Through this module, we will show how CSR can be implemented in the startup's strategy in order to:

- Be aware of practical examples of CSR in daily routines
- Offer practical cases that serve as a reference

# Topic 1: What areas cover CSR?

In this topic we will cover the following areas:

- Economic responsibility
- Legal responsibility
- Ethical components
- Philanthropic responsibility
- Environmental responsibility



Source: ¿En qué consiste la Responsabilidad Social Corporativa o RSC?  
- Observatorio del Inversor (andbank.es)

# Topic 1: What areas cover CSR? (continuation)

**Economic responsibilities** are the core of a business as they need to be effective and produce profits



**Legal responsibilities** also play an important role as companies are expected to behave according to law addecuance



Use economic and legal aspects as the base of its work with social responsibilities.



Source: [Evolution for CSR in India - Vskills Blog](#)

## Topic 1: What areas cover CSR? (Continuation)

Economic Components (Responsibilities)	Legal Components (Responsibilities)
1. Perform in a manner consistent with maximizing earnings per share.	1. Perform in a manner consistent with expectations of government and law.
2. Be committed to being as profitable as possible.	2. Comply with various federal, state and local regulations.
3. Maintain a high level of operating efficiency.	3. Be a law-enduring corporate citizen.
4. Maintain a strong competitive position.	4. It is important that a successful firm is defined as one that fulfils its obligations.
5. It is important that a successful firm is defined as one that is consistently profitable.	5. Provide goods and services that at least meet minimal legal requirements.

Hermansson and Olofsson (2008)

# Topic 1: What areas cover CSR? (Continuation)

## Ethical responsibilities

'The ethical responsibility is the voluntarily responsibility by the company to act in a manner that is fair and justice and to avoid or at least minimize the risk that the shareholders of the company is affected in any negative manner'.

Hermansson and Olofsson (2008)

This means that startups need to engage with stakeholders beyond their legal responsibilities.

# Topic 1: What areas cover CSR? (Continuation)

## Philanthropic responsibility

- It addresses all the corporate activities that cover society awareness.
- It is voluntary and requires time from the employees and the startup in their efforts on improving the society
- Donations and charity programmes are examples of philanthropic responsibility



# Topic 1: What areas cover CSR? (Continuation)

Ethical Components (Responsibilities)	Philanthropic Components (Responsibilities)
1. Perform in a manner consistent with expectations of societal mores and ethical norms.	1. Perform in a manner consistent with the philanthropic and charitable expectations of society.
2. Recognize and respect new or evolving ethical moral norms adopted by society.	2. Assist the fine and performing arts.
3. Prevent ethical norms from being compromised in order to achieve corporate goals.	3. That managers and employees participate in voluntary and charitable activities within their local communities.
4. It is important that good corporate citizenship be defined as doing what is expected morally or ethically.	4. Provide assistance to private and public educational institutions.
5. Recognize that corporate integrity and ethical behaviour go beyond mere compliance with laws and regulations.	5. Assist voluntarily those projects that enhance a community's "quality of life".

Hermansson and Olofsson (2008)

## Topic 2: Ideas of how to implement CSR

### Environmental responsibility

- Implementation of initiatives that engage with natural resources and reduce excessive consumption, pollution and greenhouse gas emissions
- Use of business expertise and attend to community needs
- Aid with healthcare facilities; aid with urban renewal); ments, noise control, dispersion of industry, control of land use, required recycling)

.

## Topic 2: Ideas of how to implement CSR (continuation)

### Consumerism

- Honesty in lending the products and advertising them
- Knowledge of your own supply chain and product warranty and service

### Governmental relations

- Lobbying implementations; new business regulation or restrictions on international operations
- Business giving
- Educational support
- Charity giving
- Artistic financial support



Source: The Brock Press ([eyes-down.net](http://eyes-down.net))

## Topic 2: Ideas of how to implement CSR (continuation)

### Social care

- Specific trainings to disadvantaged people, workers displaced by technology
- Diversity, inclusion and equal employment opportunities
- Specific programs for alcoholics, drug addicts or people with prison records

### Stockholder relations

- Opening of Boards of Directors to public members representing various interest groups
- Prohibition of operations in nations with “racist” or “colonial” governments
- Improvement of financial disclosure
- Disclosure of activities affecting the environment and social issues

## Topic 3: How can CSR be implemented

- Analyse the core of your business values and address them to CSR strategy
- Keep a general vision, link relevant experiences you had in past
- Address it personally, create a of dedicated employees with equal rights and responsibilities
- Motivate and engage the team constantly about the new mission and keep them up-to-date
- Be ready to change, to be flexible and to adapt the business strategy

# Topic 4: Practical cases

## **Worker Well-Being (WWB) programme**

- Implemented in 2011 by Levi Strauss & Co
- Worker-driven
- Employees were surveyed before implementing any program or intervention with the aim of obtaining first-hand experience of what they needed to be more engaged with, and to be healthy and productive.
- Then, LS & CO created partnerships with national non-profits and NGOs to implement programs that met the needs of workers.
- Since 2011, LS&Co. has expanded Worker Well-being to 17 countries, impacting nearly 190,000 workers and creating, social benefits at all levels of the supply chain.

# Topic 4: Practical cases (Continuation)

## Method (Walking the walk), New Zealand

Method's founders witnessed organizations with a desire to recycle, that lacked the tools to recycle successfully. Instead of changing the actors, they changed the processes:

- Created product refills in place of new packaging where possible
- Use plastic that had been recovered from the planet's oceans as part of their new products
- Their processes reflected their values
- When you buy a Method bin, for example, it comes in a recycled cardboard box that says, "Recycle Me" on the outside





Source: [Method Recycling | Certified B Corporation](#)

## **Unit 6**

**Learning from success stories / good practices and avoiding  
greenwashing (SDG washing)**

# Learning Objectives

Through this module, we will show how some CSR good practices will serve as an example of how to implement CSR successfully within a business strategy. By doing this we will:

- Understand what greenwashing (SDG washing) is
- Recommend practices
- Get inspired by good practices

# Topic 1: What is greenwashing?

Greenwashing could be defined as a marketing strategy driven by certain companies to present themselves as sustainable when, actually, they are not. The objective is then to hide their real practices and to take advantage of the attraction and interest that generates being green to others.

Greenwashing was first used by Jay Westevel in 1986, after detecting that some strategies carried out by some hotels belonged to commercial issues more than to environmental reasons.

## Topic 2: The 5 most common mistakes of greenwashing

- 1) Hidden background
- 2) No proof
- 3) Vagueness
- 4) Fake tags and lies
- 5) Irrelevance

## Topic 2: The 5 most common mistakes of greenwashing (continuation)

### Hidden background

The product is presented as eco-friendly without taking into account other characteristics. For example, many paper cups in coffee machines are sold as recyclable while the reality is that they will rarely be recycled

### No proof

Other typical mistake is not offering any solid argument of the origin of the products or proof that supports the credibility of the CSR actions, make sure you justify and prove your work by providing real examples of your practices



Source: [can-you-prove-it-672x3721.jpg \(672x372\)](#) ([churchofchrist.bb](#))

## Topic 2: The 5 most common mistakes of greenwashing (continuation)

### Vagueness

This means not being precise, concise or specific. In order to avoid being vague you need to express clearly what you are doing and how you are doing it or you will take the risk of seeming too opaque and generic.

### Fake tags

Take care with those tags that seem certified by a third part and in reality, they are certified 'ad hoc' by the same company or by a company that belongs to the same group. This said specify and clarify that your products are certified by a real third part.



## Topic 2: The 5 most common mistakes of greenwashing (continuation)

### **Irrelevance**

Talk about the real practices that are making real impact in the society

For example, it is irrelevant to mention that you offer vegan menus to your employees when the actions of your startup are deeply polluting

Balance your activities and make sure that they are having a real impact

# Topic 3: Good practices

## Start Small

As a startup, you might have other priorities when setting your business

For that reason you can start with small practices, like selecting a recycling or energy saving programme in your office

As you grow, you can increase your efforts in implementing CSR practices



Source: [5 Ways to Save Now Even if You Don't Make Much Money - Money Nation](#)

## Topic 3: Good practices (continuation)

### Think locally

Try to align your company activity with local issues. For example, you can support a movement that encourages sustainable farming in urban areas or join school feeding schemes.



Think Globally:  
Act locally



Source: [think-globally-act-locally.png](#) - StartUp HERE Toronto

## Topic 3: Good practices (continuation)

### **Listen to Your Staff and Customers**

Your employees have the closest opinion and experience about your business, by engaging with them and following their opinion you will achieve a successful implementation of CSR within your business.

### **Identify the causes that matter**

In other words, ask yourself what is the core of your business and then find the causes related to CSR that are linked to it

Additionally, ask your employees, working in an environment where their interests are covered, will help them to stay motivated

## Topic 4: Practical perspectives

By watching the following video, you will learn about different perspectives applied to CSR:



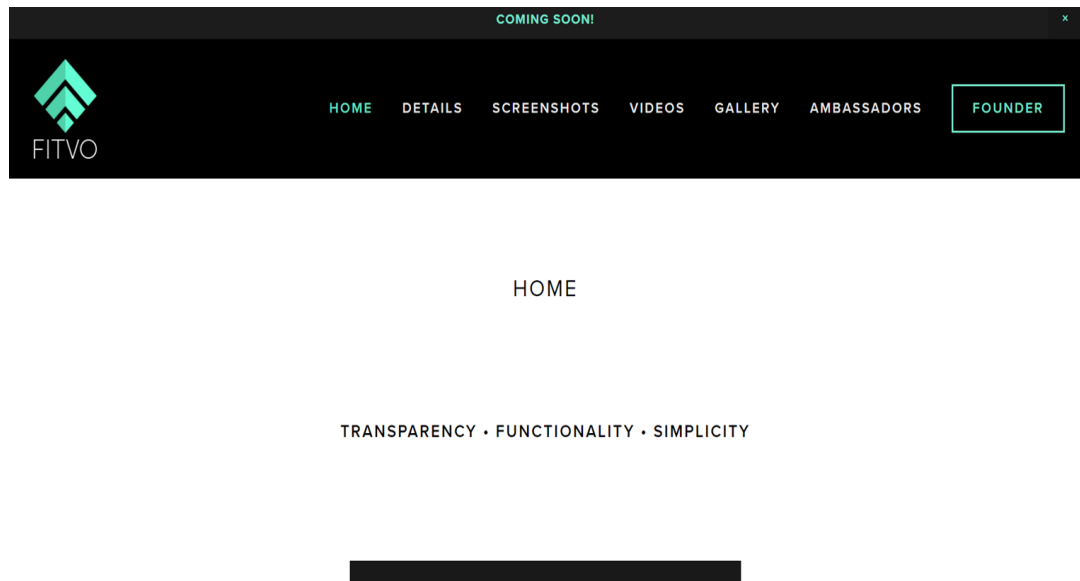
[Corporate Social Responsibility \(CSR\): Practical Perspectives by Thomas Beschorner - YouTube](#)

## Topic 4: Practical perspectives (continuation)

### FITVO

- A fresh e-commerce company that sells high-performance athleisure.
- In addition, FITVO also carries out a vast ambassador program which encourages people to be in their best physical shape
- It also designates a percentage of all the sales to nonprofit organisations through GlobalGiving.





Source: [FITVO \(fitvoapp.com\)](https://fitvoapp.com)

## Topic 4: Practical perspectives (continuation)

### Yoppie

- UK-based startup that commercialises with sanitary products
- Its subscription-based box delivery of organic tampons and pads —with a fully disclosed list of ingredients— is growing rapidly
- For every month you use Yoppie, the company will donate a month's supply of sanitary pads, underwear, and reproductive health education to a girl in need.

# PERIOD CARE DESIGNED FOR REAL LIFE

Life can be stressful, but your period shouldn't be. Say hello to personalised period care delivered straight to your letterbox, on your terms.

LET'S GET STARTED!



Source: [Yoppie | Period Care Designed For Real Life](#)

## **Unit 7**

**Understanding how knowledge of legal and regulatory environment  
can help Startups in practicing CSR**

# Learning Objectives

This module will enable participants to:

- Familiarize themselves with the European Startup regulatory framework
- Understand the CSR Related Regulatory Framework
- Understand the importance of identifying the values of the startup
- Learn how to develop a code of conduct based on a set of corporate values

# Topic 1: European Startup Regulatory Framework

## CSR and Startups

- As explained, CSR is a voluntary integration of social and environmental concerns on corporate activities.
- There is no legal framework for CSR.
- There is though a regulatory framework (including legislations and directives) that influences how companies (and startups) carry out their operations.

## Starting a Business in Europe

- To start a new company in an EU country one need to know the **rules** that apply and the relevant national contact point to set up a company in that specific country.

# Topic 1: European Startup Regulatory Framework (continuation)

## Funding and support

- There are different EU funds available for startup businesses. To find out which one meets your needs, as well as information on support and resources, visit the [Startup Europe Club](#).
- You can also use the [Startup Europe Partnership](#) platform to get help with expanding and developing your business.
- If you're looking to increase the visibility of your business project, you can register your project on the [European Investment Project Portal](#). The portal also enables you to get in contact with potential international investors.



Source: <https://proposalsforngos.com/diversifying-funding-sources/>



# Topic 1: European Startup Regulatory Framework (continuation)

## The EU & Labour law

- EU policies in recent decades have sought to
  - achieve high employment & strong social protection,
  - improve living & working conditions,
  - protect social cohesion,
  - protect the environment.
- The EU aims to promote social progress and improve the living and working conditions of the people of Europe - see the preamble of the Treaty on the Functioning of the EU.
- Individual EU countries are free to provide higher levels of protection if they so wish. While the European Working Time Directive entitles workers to 4 weeks' annual paid leave, for example, many countries have opted for a more generous right to the benefit of workers.

# Topic 2: CSR Related Regulatory Framework

## Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive

- In order to set a baseline for reporting all CSR practices, the EU rules large companies, as well as all those listed on EU regulated markets, to annually report the social and environmental impacts through the Non-Financial Reporting Directive (NFRD).
- On 21 April 2021, the European Commission issued their proposed changes to strengthen the nature and extent of sustainability reporting in the EU over the coming years, through the Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive (CSRD).
- The CSRD sets out in far greater detail the non-financial information that entities should report. It introduces **mandated EU sustainability standards**, to be prepared by the European Financial Reporting Advisory Group (EFRAG) and adopted via secondary legislation. The standards should be based on the recent recommendations recently made by the EFRAG Task Force on Non-Financial Reporting Standards, with a first set of standards due for adoption by 31 October 2022.

## Topic 2: CSR Related Regulatory Framework (continuation)

### Environmental & Human Rights Due Diligence on Supply Chain

- The European Commission is set to propose new rules subjecting companies to stricter controls in a bid to ensure that their suppliers respect human rights and do not harm the environment.
- These rules will increase companies' capacity to control their global supply chain, especially small and medium-sized businesses (SMEs), within and beyond Europe's borders.

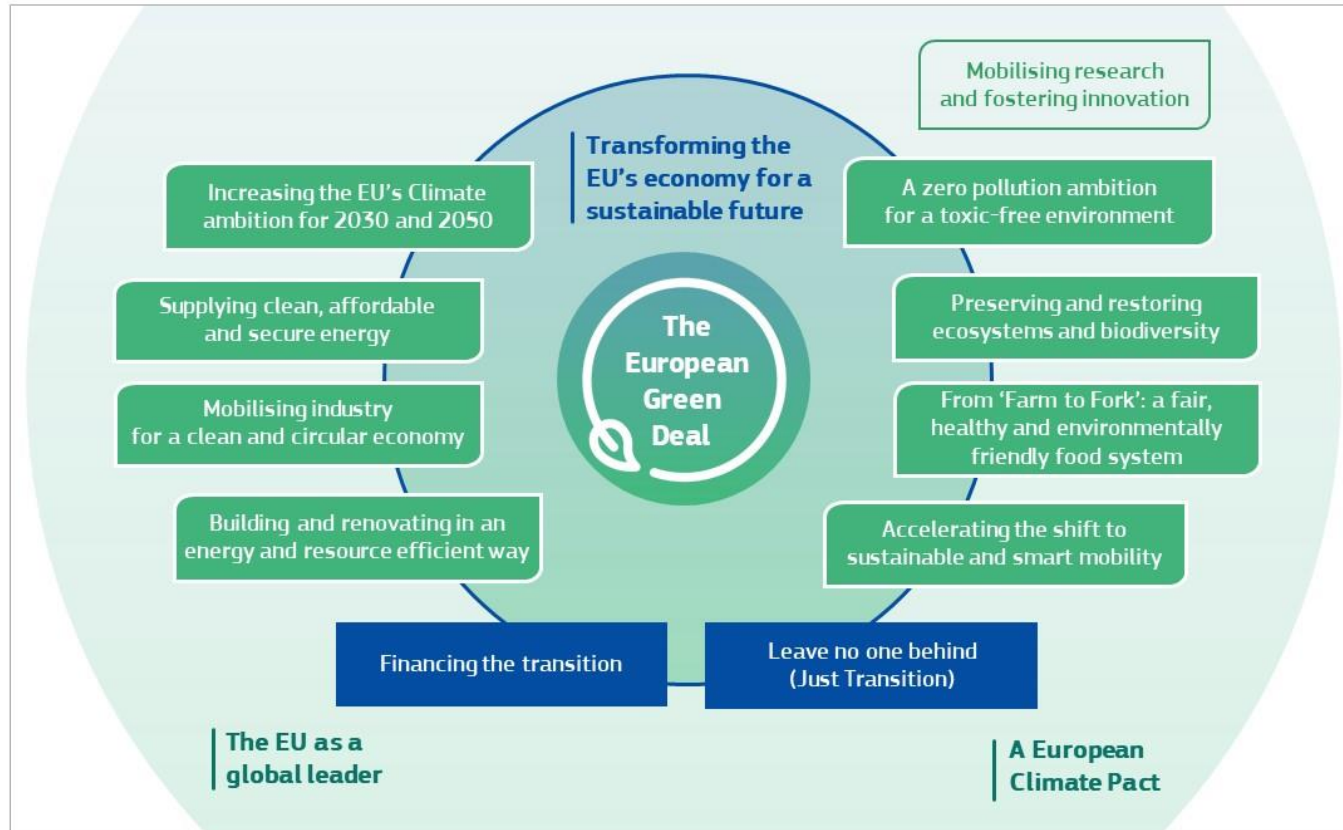
So, although it seems that CSRD will not affect startups directly, it will definitely do so **indirectly**.

Startups on the supply chain of bigger companies will have to provide **information** on how they manage sustainability issues, like respect for human rights, environmental issues, etc.

## Topic 2: CSR Related Regulatory Framework (continuation)

### European Green Deal

- The European Commission in order to emphasise even more the need to act and take measures for the environment, announced and communicated on 11/12/2019 the European Green Deal (GD).
- GD is a new growth strategy that aims to transform the EU into a fair and prosperous society, with a modern, resource-efficient and competitive economy.
- The overall aim is no net emissions of greenhouse gases by 2050.
- GD also aims to protect, conserve and enhance the EU's natural capital, and protect the health and well-being of citizens from environment-related risks and impacts.



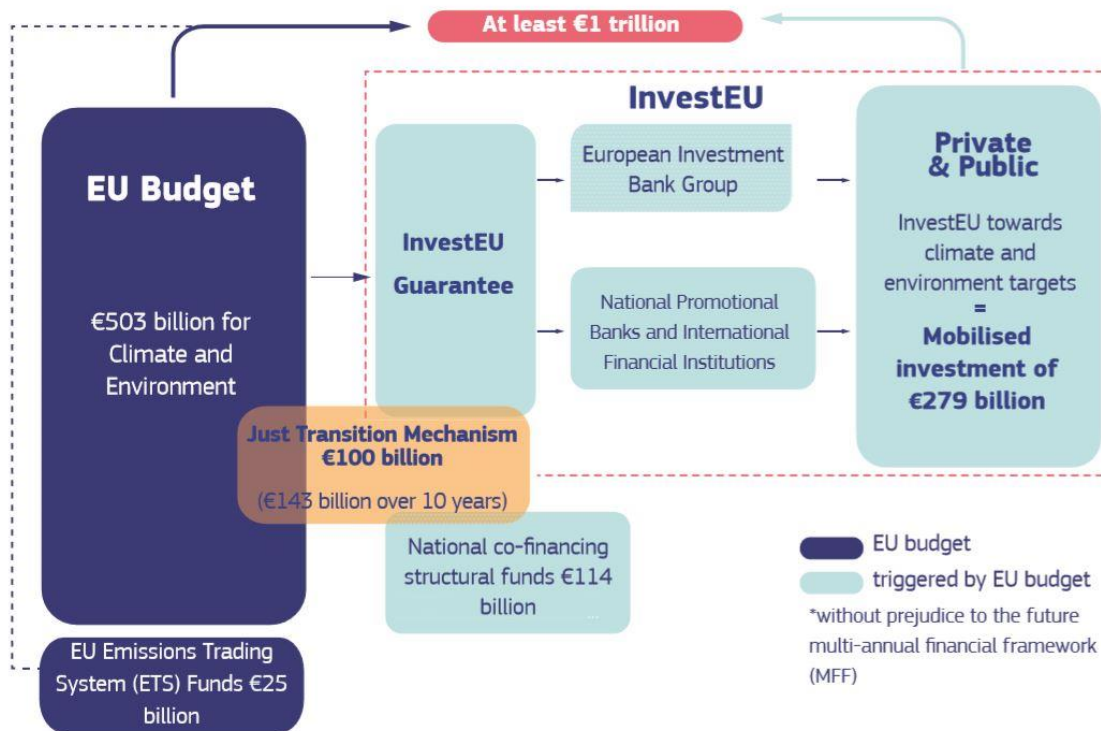
Source: European Commission

## Topic 2: CSR Related Regulatory Framework (continuation)

### EU Funding

- The proposed financing of the EU Green Deal is set out in the EU Green Deal Investment Plan.
- The Plan comprises of two principal financing streams totaling €1 trillion. Over half of the budget, €528 billion, will come directly from the EU budget and the EU Emissions Trading System. The remainder will be sourced through the InvestEU programme, which combines €279 billion from the public and private sectors to 2030 and €114 billion from national co-financing.
- Clearly, EU funding will be linked with EU Green Deal and the Sustainability Agenda.
- So, startups seeking to attract funds from investors or EU institutions must link their strategy and operations with CSR and Sustainability.

## WHERE WILL THE MONEY COME FROM?



\*The numbers shown here are net of any overlaps between climate, environmental and Just Transition Mechanism objectives.

Source: European Commission

# Topic 3: Identifying the Values

**Corporate values** (also known as core values) are a set of guiding beliefs upon which a business is based.

To help people function together as one and shape the way employees (should) behave.

- They impact both internal and external affairs and define
  - how employees treat each other
  - how employees treat clients, partners, and the broader community.
- Company values define the desired behavior to accomplish the company's 'why'.
  - they affect every aspect of the business, from reward models, compensation, and policies, to strategic decisions and public affairs.
- Company values only make sense if they're practiced. Unfortunately, most companies have a disconnect between 'proclaimed' values, and 'behavioral' values, as Nik Beeson [wrote here](#).





Source: [Unsplash](#)

# Topic 3: Identifying the Values (continuation)

## Why are Company Values Important?

### For the employees

- Values drive community: If you want your employees to act like one, you need a shared code of behavior or a code of conduct (see Module 3). Your values define your company beliefs and bring people together, building a community.
- Values attract the right people: People don't leave companies; they leave toxic workplace cultures. Your core values define what you stand for and will help attract the talent that is right for your organization.
- Employees are willing to earn less money to work in an organization that's aligned with their personal values.
- Company values simplify decision-making: It's easier to make choices when everyone knows what matters (or not) to the organization. Values help establish clear priorities; they make it easier to say "no" to the things that are not aligned with their core beliefs.

# Topic 3: Identifying the Values (continuation)

## Why are Company Values Important? (continuation)

### For the customers and associates

- Core values educate customers about who you are: When a company brings its beliefs to life, their partners and clients know what they expect (or not) when doing business with that organization.
- Corporate values create differentiation: They don't just represent what you believe, but your unique behavior.
- Fair Business Practices: Corporations often go rogue with regards to their business practices in the lust for more revenue. This puts everyone associated with the company in jeopardy and also causes loss of trust and integrity within the organisation. The corporate values when applied by an organisation in its day to day activities forbids it from nurturing any malpractices.
- Identifying and understanding a company's values is a challenging and important exercise. Company's values are a central part of the principles of the company– and will convey where the company wants to go and how will get there.

# Topic 4: Code of Ethics—Step by Step Implementation

## 1. Tone at the top

Ensure that you have gathered the required preconditions to successfully elaborate a Code of Ethics.

**Conception of the human being's dignity.** Managers and shareholders in order to construct this code should be aware of this conception, more or less explicit, as well as how it fits in a company.

**The example should be set at the top.** It is essential for leaders to have or to aspire having a consistent performance according to the business principles that will be approved. The example set at the top, or lack of it, will be the confirmation subordinates need to understand if chosen principles are to be implemented and followed or not.



Source: [Compliance and ethics](#)

# Topic 4: Code of Ethics–Step by Step Implementation (continuation)

## 2. Committee

A small committee should be created to begin the first sketches, make sure to determine the appropriate mechanisms of participation and consultation to reach the aforementioned target, oversee its introduction in real life and in the future accompany it's practical application and the definition of criteria.

## 3. Questionnaire

Create an internal questionnaire submitted to all the company's employees to find out which great principles they feel are in tune with what the company stands for and which ideas do they personally stand by.

## 4. Identification

Gather every result and aim to identify, in preliminary document, the principles and practices that match your code. Beware that the Ethics Code can't be tangled or even brought down to the level of the current business culture (which can be unhealthy and unwise), it should consist instead of normative principles, that do not express how the majority acts, this is as you can imagine Sociology.

## 5. Analyze

Provide this document to be analyzed by every one of your company's official, so the final document can be produced.

# Topic 4: Code of Ethics—Step by Step Implementation (continuation)

## 6. Present

When the final document is approved, arrange an internal meeting to present it and if possible deliver a copy to each employee after it being individually signed, in order to solidify your commitment.

## 7. Publish

Publish the code on the company's website, make sure it is in a visible and accessible place so every person that visits it can access it, not just the employees but the multiple organizations that interact regularly with your company.

## 8. Monitor

Schedule periodic meetings with the board of direction and/or the employees, in order to discuss the ethical issues and assist in raising awareness, commitment and criteria creation, you can whenever it is possible to use real and personal real life situations. Promote programs (internally or otherwise) that aim to educate about Ethics in general or Business Ethics.

## 9. Reward

Reward those that abide by the code, such reward should be handled publicly and fairly. Ethics is a practical science that, principles aside, demands its continuous application in order for it to ingrain itself and evolve: one does not study to know, one studies to act.