

Sustainable SMEs workshop conclusions

Workshop in Finnish: Kipukohdista käytäntöihin - yhdessä kohti parempaa vastuullisuusraportointia

Translation: From Pain Points to Practice – Together Toward Better Sustainability Reporting

Date: 18.2.2026

Organizer: Jyväskylä University of Applied Sciences, Jamk

Interreg



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Northern Periphery and Arctic

**Sustainable
SMEs**

Workshop facts

Target

The workshop aims to summon-up sustainability reporting experiences, challenges and existing good practices of SMEs and SME stakeholders.

The information gathered is used to plan the upcoming pilots, guidebook content and other project activities.

Participant groups in the workshop

- ✓ SME (#1)
- ✓ SMEs customer (#0)
- ✓ Business developer (#0)
- ✓ Regional developer (#10)
- ✓ Reporting expert (#0)
- ✓ Researcher (#0)
- ✓ Other (#2)

Agenda 18.2.2026 at 9:00-10:30

Welcome to workshop

Why are we here today?

Key findings from SMEs & SME stakeholder interviews

Collaboration and co-creation:

- ✓ *Sustainability reporting benefits*
- ✓ *Sustainability reporting challenges*
- ✓ *Key content of sustainability reporting*
- ✓ *Good practices for sustainability reporting*

What's next?

Closing

Fact box: What is corporate responsibility?

Social sustainability

- ✓ safe working conditions
- ✓ equal treatment and opportunities for staff
- ✓ equal treatment and opportunities for customers
- ✓ responsible data handling

Ecological sustainability

- ✓ water efficiency
- ✓ energy efficiency
- ✓ renewable energy
- ✓ reduction of emissions
- ✓ reduction of waste
- ✓ reduction of harmful substance
- ✓ circular economy

Governance and economic sustainability

- ✓ payment practices
- ✓ responsible sourcing
- ✓ prevention of misconduct
- ✓ revealing of misconduct
- ✓ animal welfare
- ✓ traceability

Workshop conclusions

Benefits of sustainability reporting (Why and for whom?)

- Competitiveness and competitive advantage
- Customer relationship management / maintaining customer relationships
- Meeting customer needs and preferences
- business development
- regulation and standards
- Enabling open communication
- To be able to operate within value chains
- Public procurement requirements
- Obtaining funding
- Operational transparency, utilizing accumulated data

Content of sustainability reporting (What are key content and info?)

- identifying data points from own operations
- calculating the carbon footprint
- Companies should report what is truly relevant
- Industry-specific factors affect on what to report
- GSE order (cf. ESG)
- It's important to communicate negative issues too
- product/service life-cycle thinking
- identify and report key issues
- concrete examples from one's own operations
- VSME standard

Challenges of sustainability reporting

- difficult to identify what is essential
- materiality analysis is challenging
- How to identify data points?
- How to know what is relevant?
- Support is needed for reports
- Visibility and comparability is challenging
- Supporting tools and suppliers market is changing quickly – How to keep up?

Methods to do sustainability reporting (Methods, tools, datapoints)

- ESG Tool
- VSME tool and guidance
- Start first with internal data collection, then external reporting
- identify the framework (SDG, VSME)
- through accounting – financial importance
- through risk assessment – operational risks and where do we affect the most
- Utilize open “coefficients”
- Use the help of rapid development of AI

Workshop conclusions: continuation

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From the questionnaire

- 4 of 13 answered: 3 felt workshop useful and 1 somewhat useful
- 2 heard from the workshop from a people they know, 1 from project website and 1 from linkedin
- Feedback:
 - a slightly longer group-work session; interesting to hear diverse perspectives
 - thank you, a very good and efficient workshop
 - active communication about upcoming pilots and events is important :)
 - thank you for the arrangements!
 - I started to feel nervous when I had registered for a webinar but it turned out to be a workshop – but I was pleasantly surprised; it was nice to share and discuss an important topic

Which topic would you like to know more about

- what kinds of challenges companies experience in the area of sustainability reporting
- how the process progresses: good practices and tools as well as their development
- it would be interesting to hear SME examples of implemented reporting (VSME or CSRD)
- targeted information on sector-specific reporting requirements

SUSTAINABLE SMEs

enhances SMEs' understanding about the reporting and the sustainability transition as a whole

- NPA project NPA0800241
- Length 4/25-3/28
- Funding about 1,5 M€
- Coordinated by Jamk University of Applied Sciences
- Partnership covers Sweden, Ireland, Iceland, Norway, and Finland

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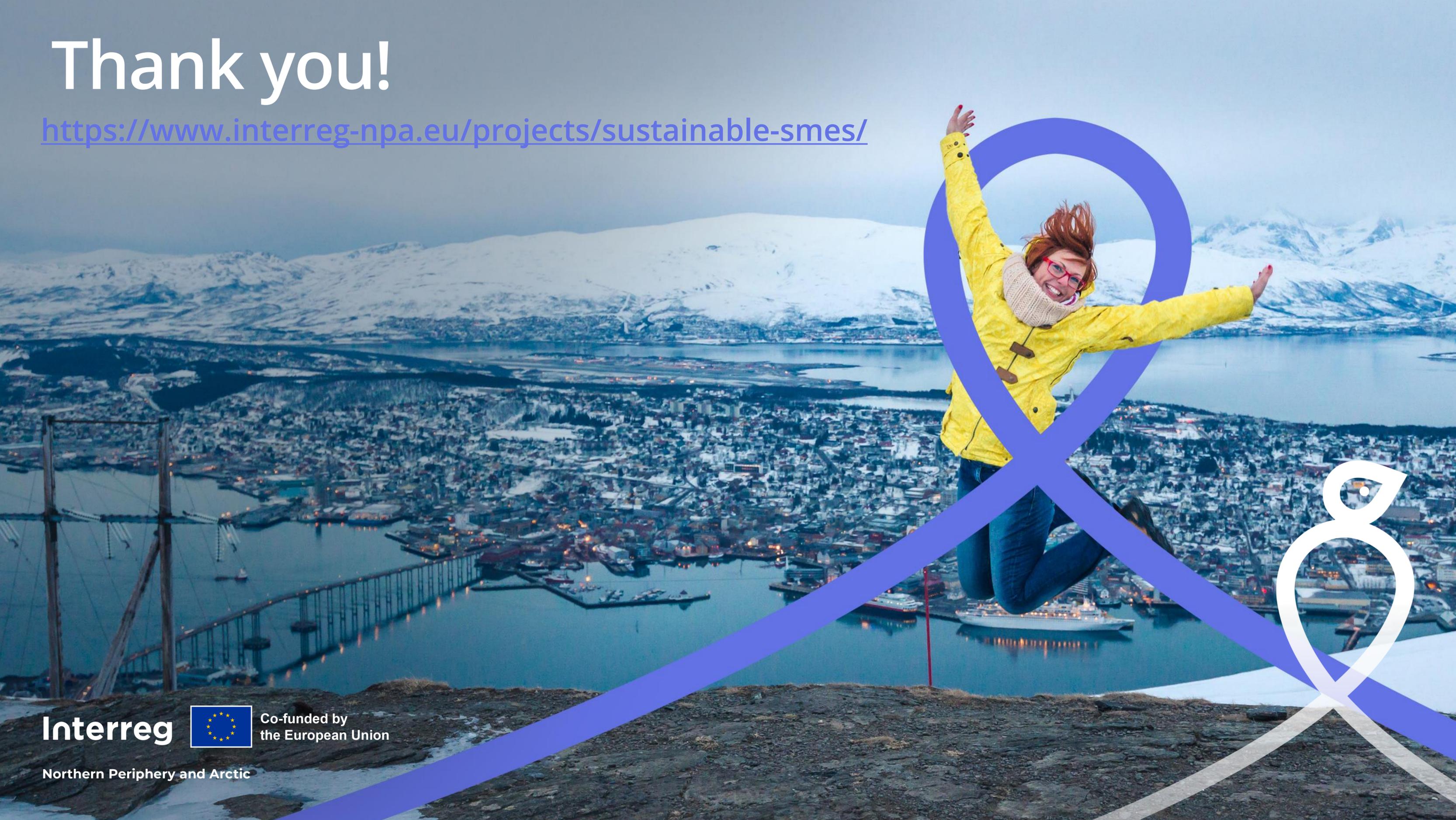
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Thank you!

<https://www.interreg-npa.eu/projects/sustainable-smes/>



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