



Sustainable SMEs workshop conclusions

Kom igång med hållbarhetsrapportering, VSME
(Get started with sustainability reporting, VSME)

2026-01-20

BioFuel Region

Interreg



Co-funded by
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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 (#8)
- ✓ SMEs customer (#6)
- ✓ Business developer (#0)
- ✓ Regional developer (#2)
- ✓ Reporting expert (#1)
- ✓ Researcher (#0)
- ✓ Other (#0)

Agenda 20.1.2026 at 9:00-11:00

Welcome to workshop

Key findings from SMEs & SME stakeholder interviews

Collaboration and co-creation:

- ✓ *Status of CSRD after EU-decision*
- ✓ *Introduction and discussions on how to get started and what is included in the VSME 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: findings

Benefits of sustainability reporting (Why and for whom?)

- Competitive advantage; risk of being deselected by larger companies if VSME data cannot be provided
- Reporting gives companies a clearer picture of where savings can be made and where improvements are easiest
- VSME is a useful solution for companies with large customers requiring data

Content of VSME sustainability reporting

- Large companies may request all data from both basic and extended modules.
- SMEs do not have to report all data points unless requested by a larger company
- Auditor review is required for large companies; optional but useful for SMEs
- DMA (Double materiality assessment) is not required in VSME but signals maturity if used strategically

Challenges of sustainability reporting

- Difficult to guarantee social sustainability across the value chain
- Unclear where responsibility begins/ends; data reliability can be challenging
- Sustainability work must align with company strategy
- The longer a company waits to start reporting, the harder it is to build reporting structures
- AI is not yet optimal for gathering GHG data or revenues

Method for starting to do sustainability reporting

1. Define the level of ambition
2. Understand and determine which reporting requirements apply to your customers
3. Identify the most critical topics for reporting

Workshop conclusions: continuation

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From the questionnaire

- 5 of 16 answered: 60 % good and 40 % - very good
- Most found the workshop through/via email and personal contacts
- Comment: The workshop provided a clear understanding of what VSME is and how we can establish an appropriate and necessary level in our sustainability work

Which topic would you like to know more about

- How to combine AI with sustainability reporting and the collection of climate data
- Transports - What does the situation look like today - where are we, what are the trends, and what is being done?
- Social sustainability
- Good tools for reporting

Other key topics from the workshop

- How to convert work started with CSRD to VSME?
- 
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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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Thank you!

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

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