

VSME- THE VOLUNTARY SUSTAINABILITY REPORTING STANDARD FOR SME'S (5 hrs)

Course Overview

Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) criteria are increasingly being embedded in the supplier assessment process. As a result, companies belonging in the broader value chain, which are mostly SME's must adhere to numerous sustainability related requirements that are constantly evolving. Within this evolving regulatory framework, they need to embed ESG criteria into their business and report on their actions and initiatives following International & European Standards and frameworks.

Increased capacity building on sustainability-related matters is therefore essential for companies and their employees to be better equipped in identifying the impacts they have on the environment and people but also what risks and opportunities arise for companies throughout their value chain. Doing so, will enable them to create business strategies that encompass sustainability ensuring their long-term market resilience. Finally, reporting a company's sustainability performance in accordance with acknowledged reporting standards is essential for communicating this to its stakeholders, including clients, partners, investors and financial institutions.

Through this training, participants will learn how to use the newly adopted European Voluntary standard for non-listed micro-, small- and medium-sized undertakings (VSME) to disclose its Sustainability performance to stakeholders. The VSME is a voluntary sustainability reporting framework specifically designed for those that do not fall under the scope of the Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive (CSRD) and provides them with a structured and harmonized framework to engage in sustainability. Notably, following the latest Omnibus Proposal from the European Commission which aims at simplifying European reporting rules, an increasing number of companies are expected to use this standard in the coming years.

The training is primarily aimed at personnel from headquarters, finance, human resources, technical, health and safety, and procurement departments of companies. The selection of these participants ensures that all employees involved in data collection for their organization's sustainability report and the implementation of sustainability actions are adequately prepared to meet the requirements set out by the VSME standard.

The VSME Training program, will provide participants with the knowledge to ultimately be able to report their ESG performance and implement sustainability strategies that will facilitate the company's fair & green transition.

The aim of this training program is to acquire an in-depth understanding of ESG topics and equip employees with the necessary skills and tools to adopt the new VSME standard and be able to submit the required disclosures in compliance with this new standard.



Training Objectives

By the end of the program, participants will be able to:

- Develop an understanding of what ESG, Sustainability and Stakeholder capitalism is
- List the priorities of the EU relevant to ESG and Sustainability
- Describe the EU Green Deal
- Name the main pillars of sustainability (Environment - Society - Governance)
- Understand the new VSME Standards and methodology.
- Acquire theoretical knowledge for efficient data collection for sustainability reports.
- Apply the tools provided by the standards.
- Implement sustainability practices in decision-making processes.
- Promote sustainability within their organizations.
- Counter baseless comments on global challenges and sustainability trends.
- Accept the importance of integrating sustainability into the business strategy.
- Encourage environmentally and socially responsible practices throughout organizational activities.
- Collaborate and promote partnerships to achieve better outcomes.
- Include significant stakeholders in the decision-making process.

Training Outline

Opening Session: Introduction to Sustainability

- Ice-breaker Activity
- Training Objectives and Outcomes
- The benefits of sustainability
- The UN Sustainable Development Goals
- Stakeholder capitalism

VSME standards: In-depth analysis of Environmental (E), Social (S) and Governance (G) topics

- Presentation of VSME standards
- Basic and comprehensive Modules
- Presentation of standards architecture
- Environmental:
 - Energy and greenhouse gas emissions
 - Pollution of air, water and soil
 - Biodiversity
 - Water
 - Resource use, circular economy and waste management



- Social:
 - Workforce - General Characteristics
 - Workforce – Health and safety
 - Workforce – Remuneration, collective bargaining and training
- Governance:
 - Corruption and bribery

Who Should Attend

This course is suitable for persons interested in ESG and Sustainability, and will be of particular benefit to those holding positions in the following fields:

- Compliance officers and managers
- ESG & Sustainability Officers who wish to stay up to date with developments in the field
- Company executives from various departments who have been assigned the task of contributing towards their organisation's Sustainability Report, strategy and plan and wish to have a better understanding of the field
- Business consultants / strategists
- Professionals interested in ESG and Sustainability regulations and policies

Training Style

The programme is designed to deliver knowledge and insights regarding good and bad Sustainability communication practices. Focused on identifying and resolving bad practices/greenwashing, the course will strive to enhance participants' skills and knowledge via group discussions, case studies review, individual and group exercises, small lectures supported by power-point presentations and practical examples. The training style is both training-focused, involving a combination of presentation and real-live examples, but also learner-focused, where participants are encouraged to raise questions, seek clarifications and share their opinions from their different perspectives and engage in an exchange of views and personal professional experiences.

NOTES:

The above courses are delivered by HRDA certified professional trainers and meet all the criteria as set by the HRDA and can therefore be subsidized.

More details can be provided upon request.