

# Connexions #29

The major project of extra-financial standards



## A NEW JOB ?

The chartered accountant at the heart of CSR

## NON-FINANCIAL INDICATORS

Measuring for progress

## FOCUS ON CSRD

Immediate impacts

Smart decisions. Lasting value.

# Gray suit and floral shirt



France is the first country to have transposed the European CSRD directive into national law. The impact of these sustainability reporting requirements will gradually impact all companies, in one way or another. It is already leading us to integrate or re-evaluate the performance of our customers' CSR strategies.

The wave of extra-financial accounting is indeed a groundswell that is profoundly changing the management of a modern company. While there are as many CSR strategies as there are companies, there is only one way to be effective: measure to progress.

Here we are at the heart of our expertise.

Today, the chartered accountant is a key player in social, societal and environmental issues, not only in providing extra-financial support to companies, but also in defining the best CSR strategy to implement.

This extension of our mission is an opportunity. At the

profession's 34th annual conference last December, Yannick Olivier, Chairman of the CNCC, even spoke of a «historic moment».

The spirit of CSR is uniting our teams, broadening the meaning of our traditional missions and attracting new, committed, young and talented people to our firms.

Some stereotypes live on: a chartered accountant always wears a grey suit... but today the cut is more flattering!

The CROWE network is particularly involved in sustainability issues. This issue follows on from the field study published in January 2024 in the Crowe CSR Survey. It focuses on sharing experiences. Our network is rich in skills: a key asset for rigorously grasping the imprecise contours of CSR.

Enjoy your reading!

**Stéphanie Garnier**  
*Crowe Becouze*

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# CSR SURVEY 2023

## How can we be part of a progressive and sustainable approach?

The CROWE France CSR Survey 2023 has highlighted the diversity of CSR practices and commitments among companies. Based on the priorities expressed in this field study, it is possible to make pragmatic recommendations for furthering the continuous improvement process.

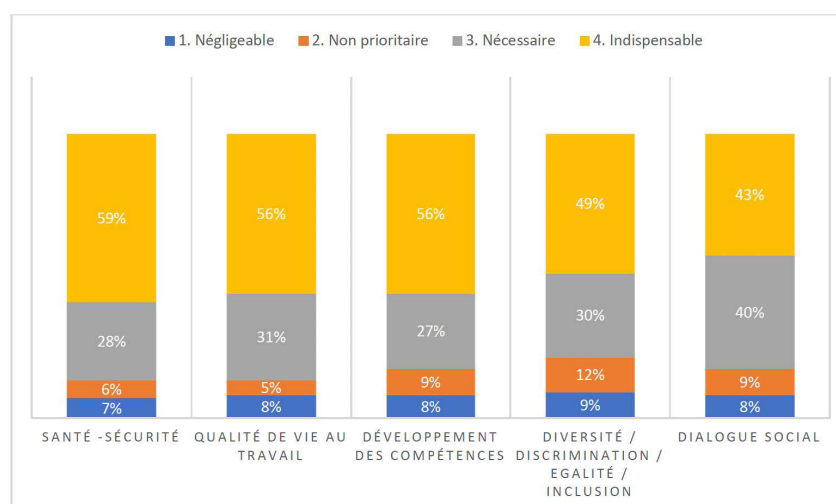


## Study results

### SOCIAL ASPECTS

80% of companies consider this issue to be essential, compared with 9% who do not consider it important. Of the 5 proposed social issues, health and safety, quality of life at work and skills development are identified by 59%, 56%

and 56% as essential. In terms of prioritizing social actions, the issues of diversity/discrimination and social dialogue appear to be important but secondary.



Source: XERFI study - 2023 Crowe CSR barometer

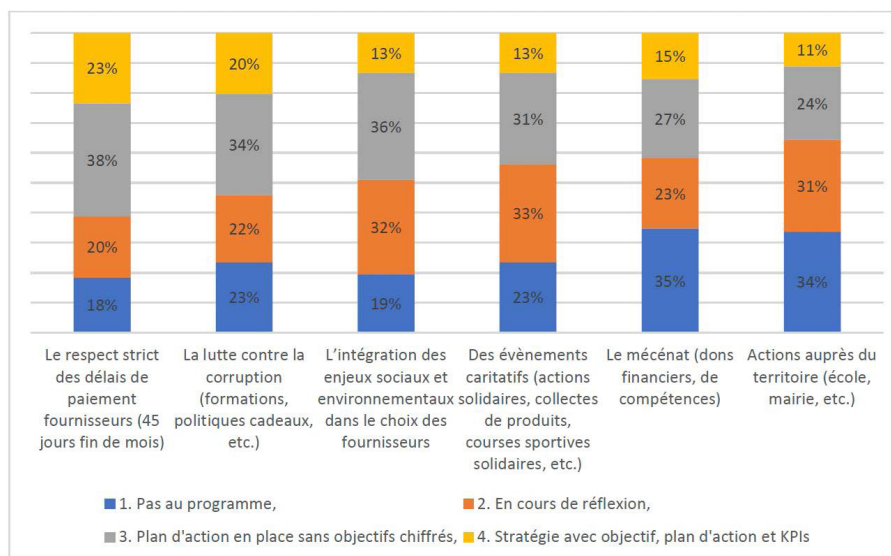
CSR : Corporate social responsibility  
CSRD : Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive

ESRS : European Sustainability Reporting Standards  
NFRD : Non Financial Reporting Directive

## SOCIETAL ISSUE

Business ethics and the quality of products and services delivered to customers are the major societal issues in the survey. Compliance with regulatory obligations appears to be the societal action best integrated into action plans with

or without targets (61%). Mid-size companies and SMEs focus on meeting their obligations before committing to voluntary social initiatives (corporate philanthropy, solidarity, etc.).



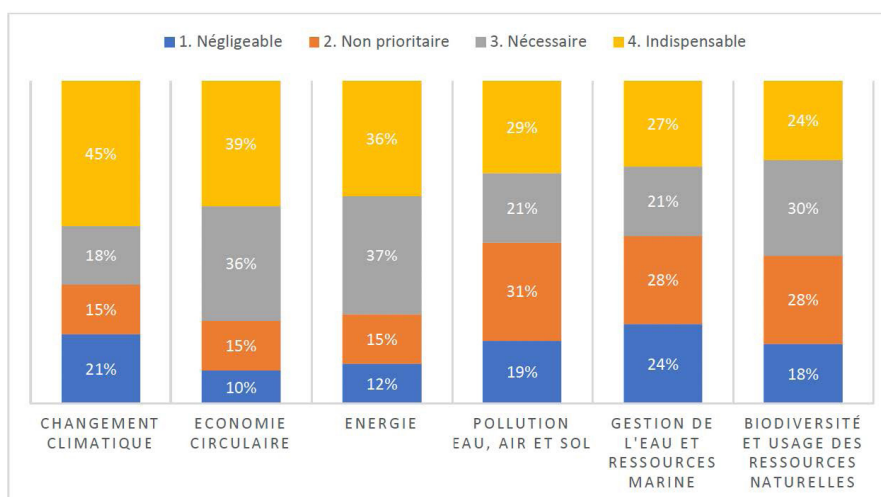
Source: XERFI study - 2023 Crowe CSR barometer

## ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

Nowadays, all environmental issues are addressed by companies of all sizes and in all sectors. Climate change, the circular economy and energy are among the issues considered to be the highest priorities for companies. When it comes to implementing actions to limit environmental impacts, the companies surveyed are not moving at the same speed, depending mainly on their size and sector of activity.

It should also be noted that the environmental issues identified by companies have different scales of impact:

- Climate, with a global impact
- Waste and pollution, with a local impact
- Eco-design, the integration of environmental criteria into our offers.



Source: XERFI study - 2023 Crowe CSR barometer

# How can you improve? Here are our recommendations

## CORPORATE ENGAGEMENT

### Building a more inclusive employer brand

Early dissemination of this diversity, from education to the first professional steps, could bring about a significant change in practices within largely masculinized sectors. The calculation of the M/F equality index will testify to the company's practices.

### Developing health and safety culture across the company

The company can also turn to obtaining ISO 45001, which establishes the criteria for an occupational health and safety (OHS) management system. ISO 45001 certification attests to compliance with international standards.

## WELLNESS

### Implement a well-being program

Providing training and webinars delivered by experts (stress management, improving sleep, healthy eating...) improves employees quality of life and satisfaction.

### Implement flexible training

Blend learning is a training approach that combines face-to-face sessions with online modules. This innovative method capitalizes on the benefits of online modules by offering employees the flexibility to follow the training.

## SOCIAL ISSUE

### Implement a responsible purchasing policy

Integrating social and environmental criteria into the purchasing process.

### Creating local links

Patronage, charitable actions and support for local associations.

### Involving employees

By encouraging employees to share their initiatives and projects, the company can tap into a rich reservoir of creativity and commitment.

### Sharing best practices

Through the various stakeholders, professional networks and associations in the region...

## ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

### Training and awareness-raising

Technical watch, expert webinars, Climate Fresk, biodiversity and digitalization...

### Carbon management

Carrying out a carbon footprint and setting up an action plan is undoubtedly the first step in identify action priorities. As a SME, you can call on the Banque Publique d'Investissement's Diag Decarbon'action program.

### Local issues and eco-actions

Energy consumption, waste sorting, gourds...

### Green products and offers

Product life cycle analysis, partnerships, support...

## BUILDING AN EMPLOYER BRAND

Three successive stages :

### 1 Making a diagnosis

Identify and promote best practices.  
Identify and categorize corporate challenges

### 2 Action plan

Bring out avenues for reflection.  
Build an action plan in line with priority issues.

### 3 Monitoring indicators

Ensure that actions are monitored and carried out.  
Rectify and improve trajectories based on indicators.

# How to prepare for the new sustainability report (CSRD)?

Companies subject to NFRD	Extended to groups and companies meeting at least 2 conditions		Companies subject to NFRD	Some companies or groups from non-EU countries
Deadline: 2025 (based on 2024 data)	Deadline: 2026 (based on 2025 data)		Deadline: 2027 (based on 2026 data)	Deadline: 2029 (based on 2028 data)
	> 250 employees			European sales > 150M€
	Groups	Companies		Subsidiary company within the scope of the CSRD or branch (>40M€ sales) based in the EU
	Sales > €60M Balance sheet > €30M	Sales > €50M Balance sheet > €25M		

## UNDERSTANDING CSRD / ESRS

CSRD training  
 Understanding standards and data points  
 Identifying expectations

## UNDERSTANDING THE BUSINESS MODEL AND VALUE CHAIN

Identify the stakeholders impacted on the value chain  
 Understanding the service lines and activities impacted by standards  
 Identify the scope of companies impacted

## INVENTORY & IDENTIFICATION OF MATERIAL ISSUES

Situation report of your current ESG practices  
 Gap analysis between your practices and ESRS expectations  
 Sector analysis of major sustainability issues relevant to the sector

## TRANSLATING SUSTAINABILITY ISSUES INTO IRO (IMPACT, RISK & OPPORTUNITY)

Identification of sustainability issues to be included in analyses  
 Qualification of issues into positive/negative impacts (impact materiality) and risks/opportunities (financial materiality)  
 Listing of data points to be reported

## DUAL MATERIALITY ASSESSMENT

Definition of rating scale  
 Identification of stakeholders to be involved  
 Consultation of internal stakeholders  
 Double materiality matrix to identify indicators and qualitative information required

## IMPLEMENTATION OF A DEPLOYMENT ROADMAP

Implementation of the 12 standards over 3 years (year 1 : ESRS E1, S1 et G1)  
 Implementation of a reporting protocol  
 Setting up of a dedicated team

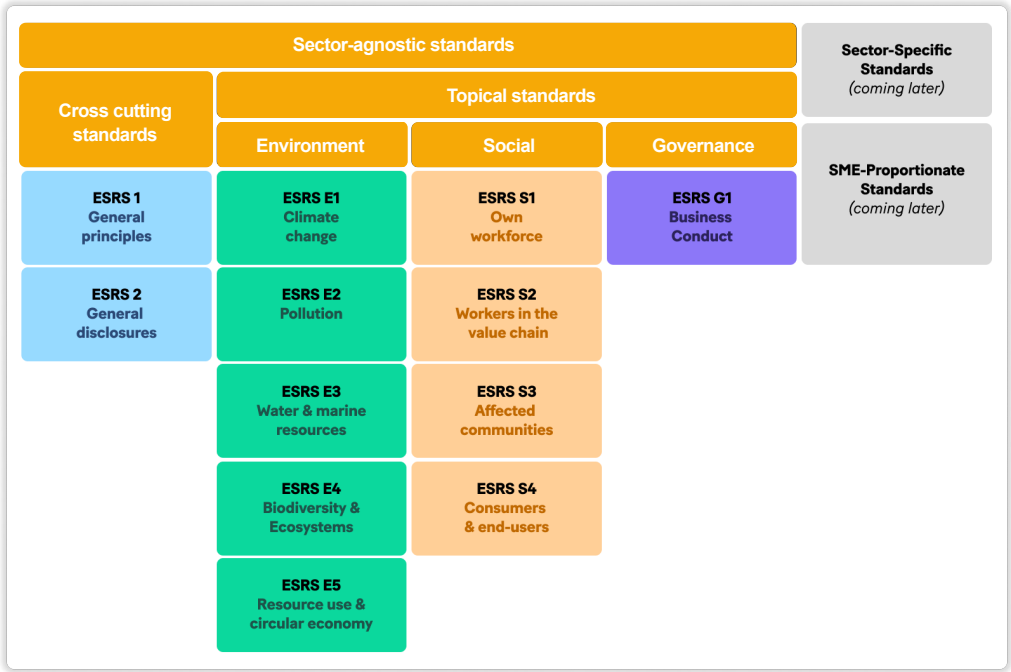
# Focus on mandatory European sustainability standards

Information published by the *Autorité des marchés financiers* ([amf-france.org](https://www.amf-france.org))

The CSRD directive provides for the creation of detailed European sustainability reporting standards, known as ESRS (European Sustainability Reporting Standards), which will provide a framework for harmonizing company publications. The European Commission has mandated EFRAG - the European Financial Reporting Advisory Group - to prepare the ESRS.

Several types of standards will be progressively adopted by the European Commission by means of delegated acts (see diagram below):

- Universal ESRS standards
- The standards for SMEs are scheduled for 2024 and listed on regulated markets;
- sector-specific ESRS standards;
- and finally, ESRS standards specific to certain non-European companies (concerned by Article 40 bis of the CSRD).



The 12 sector-agnostic ESRS standards were published in the Official Journal of the EU on December 22, 2023 via Delegated Act (EU) 2023/2772 of July 31, 2023. (...).

The 10 thematic standards generally cover several sub-themes. (...) For example, on the social front, the «Company's own workforce» standard (ESRS S1) covers sub-themes such as working conditions, equal treatment

- itself broken down into numerous sub-topics (gender equality, training, harassment at work, etc.).

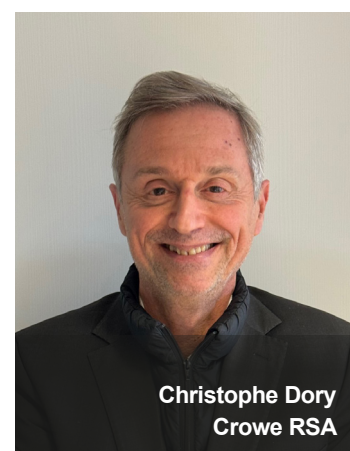
EFRAG continues to work on the second set of ESRS dealing with sector-specific standards and SMEs proportionate standards. The standards for SMEs are scheduled for 2024 and the sector-specific standards should be adopted by June 2026.

The French Accounting Standards Authority (ANC) has published a guide to an ESRS standards application guide. «Deploying the ESRS: A management tool for the transition».

(December 2023 version, [www.compta-online.com/](https://www.compta-online.com/))

# CSRD: what impact for SMEs?

While some SMEs fall within the regulatory thresholds of the European CSRD directive, will all be indirectly impacted as stakeholders in the ecosystem of the companies concerned, or by comparison on a competitive market.



## DOUBLE MATERIALITY AND TRICKLE-DOWN EFFECT OF ESRS

The 6,000 French companies (around 50,000 at European level) that will gradually be required to present a sustainability report under the CSRD directive from 2026 (accounting year 2025) will have to report on both the impact of CSR on their financial performance, and the impact of their activities on the external environment: economic, social and environmental.

This concept of double materiality therefore implies analyzing the impact of their ecosystem on every stage of the value chain.

On the environmental front, for example, companies will have to communicate the carbon emissions of their entire value chain, and to do so, collect data from their suppliers of goods and services... often SMEs.

If the SMEs in the supply chain are not yet engaged in a CSR approach or don't have structured data,

they run the risk of losing markets and, by the same token, significant customers. They therefore need to train and equip themselves now, both to implement a CSR policy for their stakeholders (customers, employees, suppliers, etc.) and to be in a position to report on it in 2026.

## AN ADMINISTRATIVE TSUNAMI?

If most SMEs have not yet grasped the extent of the changes that the CSRD implies in terms of transparency and communication, this is to be expected, given the scale of the project, which in its time could be likened to IFRS.

Training and collecting quality data that can be analyzed and communicated to clients has a cost, and requires the availability of trained staff.

The mobilization these resources, which are already sorely lacking in many SMEs for their economic missions, is somewhat worrying.





François Asselin, chairman of the CPME (Confédération des petites et moyennes entreprises), even speaks of an «administrative and penal tsunami» capable of discouraging companies which, for the most part, wish to voluntarily strengthen their CSR approach (Journal des entreprises, February 8, 2024).

The situation changes with the introduction of an indirect obligation of transparency and action.

Of course, SMEs have understood the challenges of CSR. They embrace it out of conviction, or through the influence of soft law, which encourages them to adopt more responsible behaviors.

Some have opted for incentive regulations such as the SDGs and ISO 26000, which structure responsible actions by providing a framework and objectives, while others have chosen labels, which are powerful differentiation tools in a competitive market. Purchasing policies structured around CSR are also already having a major transformative impact.

But the approach remains largely voluntary and progressive. The trickle-down effect is that the power of purchasing policies is extended to more principals, but also strengthened by indirectly forcing SMEs to submit to standards calibrated for larger companies.

Although visibility is still limited, it's clear that the effort will be considerable for many of them.

## CSRD/ESRS: TOWARDS A COMMON CSR LANGUAGE

More broadly, the 12 ESRS standards defined by the CSRD are tending to become a common CSR language for all companies and all sectors... and this will not be without difficulty, as these standards, written in English, will sometimes be subject to interpretation.

For VSEs and SMEs not subject to the CSRD obligation, the European Commission has mandated EFRAG to develop a simplified and proportionate reporting tool with 3 data collection modules. This standard, approved by EFRAG at the end of November 2023, has been subject to a public consultation since January 22, 2024, due to end on May 31, 2024.

For volunteer SMEs, the aim will be both to monitor their CSR performance and to meet the growing demands for CSR data from their financial and business partners.

When these European standards are issued, it will be necessary to share them with SMEs so that they are aware of the volume and nature of the sustainability informations they may be required to publish.

CSRD therefore requires an effort of acculturation to new concepts such as scope or double materiality, as well as an understanding of the expected levels of requirement. In competitive markets, even SMEs not indirectly concerned by CSRD will be compared. It's better not to be left behind.

# CSR for VSEs: a headache... really?

Counting euros...and kWh: CSR is changing the role of the chartered accountant, particularly when it comes to implementing simple, proportionate CSR actions for VSEs.



## THE CHARTERED ACCOUNTANT IN POLE POSITION?

The profession has clearly understood the importance of its privileged relationship with business leaders, helping them to build a more sustainable business. Training, the creation of dedicated departments or the recruitment of expert collaborators - the methods vary.

As far as customers are concerned, VSEs are the least equipped in terms of CSR strategy: yet they represent 85% of the French companies, and 9 out of 10 VSEs use the services of a chartered accountant!

Because they are at the heart of their economic activity, chartered accountants have a number of key assets to support the CSR transition of VSEs, including the trust of their managers and the legitimacy of their profession.

## HOW TO MOVE FROM INTUITIVE CSR TO A OBJECTIVES CSR?

VSEs are already doing CSR intuitively, relying on common sense that extends into the professional world the gestures adopted in personal life.

The challenge now is to objectify these practices by

structuring them, measuring them, federating teams around common objectives...without committing to overly complex labeling or disproportionate action plans. To do this, you need indicators.

Through the accounting entries file and the nominative social declaration, the chartered accountant has access to simple, understandable and easy-to-collect numerical indicators.

## WHICH INDICATORS TO USE?

In a proposal dated March 2022, the CNOEC (Conseil national de l'ordre des experts comptables) classified 17 indicators according to ESG terminology and by matching them with the corresponding SDGs.

These indicators (number of apprentices, number of kWh consumed, average length of service of employees, etc.), which are within the reach of chartered accountants, form a complete basis for a CSR action plan that is sincere, readable and proportionate to the capacities of VSEs...even if it means selecting only a few to begin with.

This classification is an interesting lever for encouraging VSEs (and other companies!) to embark on the CSR adventure without being overwhelmed by overly complex action plans.

# CSR data for VSEs

In March 2022, the CNOEC worked on a set of financial and extra-financial indicators covering CSR for all companies. Here is a simplified version:

1 - CONTRIBUTING TO A BALANCED SOCIETY	
<i>Reducing social inequalities through employment</i>	
Workforce as defined by the French Labor Code, broken down by type of contract (permanent/temporary)	SDG 8 : Decent work and sustainable growth
<i>Contribute to a high level of training within the company</i>	
Number of apprentices in FTE over the year + trainees in FTE over the year	
Workforce in FTE	
Number of training hours	
• of which digital training hours	SDG 4 : Quality education
• of which number of hours of training in ecological transition and sustainable development	
Number of hours worked over the year	
<i>Contribute to general economic equilibrium by financing redistribution</i>	
Total taxes collected (Total IS + CVAE + TS)	SDG 1: Eradicate poverty
Sum of taxes collected «on behalf of» (VAT if BtoC + CSG/RDS + PAS)	
Highest salary/lowest wage (net before PAS)	SDG 10: Reduce inequalities
2 - CORPORATE SOCIAL POLICY	
<i>Health and well-being within the company</i>	
Average employee seniority	
Number of workplace accidents	SDG 3: Health and well-being
<i>Gender equality</i>	
Number of female managers and equivalent in FTEs	
Number of managers and equivalent in FTEs	
Average hourly wage for women	SDG 5: Equality between men and women
Men's average hourly wage	
3 - ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION	
<i>Water</i>	
M3 of water consumed	SDG 6: Sustainable water management for all
<i>Sustainable cities and urban communities</i>	
Implementing 3 or 5-stream waste sorting within the company	SDG 11 : Sustainable cities and communities
<i>Sobriety of energy consumption</i>	
Kwh of electricity consumed	
Kwh gas consumption	SDG 7: Clean and affordable energy
Liters of fuel	
<i>Combating climate change</i>	
Carbone footprint© with date of last footprint	
Reimbursed/paid air travel expenses	SDG 13: Combat climate change
<i>Land artificialisation</i>	
M² occupied rates	
Footprint: including parking	SDG 15: Life on Earth
Number of m² used by the company	



# CSR and accounting firm

What actions and offers should be put in place to CSR?  
Focus on the Dupouy Group's CSR approach.

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Repeated climatic hazards among my clients in the wine sector and the COVID-19 crisis encouraged me to take the issue of CSR up within our group.

First step : training! I'm joining **end of 2021** a course at ENOES (Ecole de l'expertise comptable et de l'audit) to better understand the issues and know how to integrate them into our business and our customers' operations. I come away convinced that CSR is a major issue for our firms, and that it's possible to take action.

We are starting **in 2022** with a maturity diagnosis of our practices, via the ZEI platform, with the following findings:

- A good positioning on Social, which reflects our DNA and our actions with our employees.
- A more mixed result on the Environment, with the good energy performance of our buildings but the impact of our business trips.
- Foreseeable points of improvement on Governance because, at the start of our approach, no CSR strategy had yet been formalized.

This diagnosis gave rise to exchanges between us. As account professionals, we're more used to seeing figures as results than as the starting point for an improvement process ! Aware, however, of our impact, we have decided to focus our approach on the environmental aspect, which will, in turn, enable progress to be made in governance as a whole.

In **January 2023**, we onboard our employees at a seminar dedicated to the Environment, with an upgrade through the Climate Fresk and collective intelligence workshops to imagine the future. If the collective will to act emerges, we leave with a list

of ideas, without sufficient guidelines to draw up an effective roadmap...

To guarantee our approach, our group will join, in **October 2023**, the CEC (Convention des Entreprises pour le Climat): a 10-month course combining awareness and pragmatic thinking in a collective dynamic with 80 companies from a variety of sectors. Our roadmap will be finalized in **June 2024** around a dual challenge: limiting our negative impacts and supporting as many of the region's companies as possible in this gigantic challenge. We're not just talking, we're committed!

Of course, we didn't wait until the end of this training program to talk to our customers. As of 2022, we have built up a CSR offer by encouraging CSR diagnostics and proposing a Carbon footprint®.

To date, we haven't integrated any programs (BPI, etc.) or labels. However, this is not a hindrance: companies understand the benefits of working with us, as we know them, control their flows and monitor them over time. Dialogue and trust make us the right choice to guide them through these new challenges!

The regular exchanges we have within the Crowe France Sustainability Commission also enable us to move forward faster and more serenely. This is a strong point for us and our customers.

A next step at the **end of 2024** will be to obtain the Sustainability Visa so that we can certify our customers' extra-financial reports.

Our job as consultants gives us the opportunity to make things happen, to involve our customers and employees in a meaningful and unifying mission. The path to achieve this will be varied and specific to each company, but it's a real opportunity to be taken!



# What are the main obstacles to CSR?



Many of our customers want to get started but are looking for guidance in defining the right direction for their business.

**CSR is a process of continuous improvement.**  
There's no need to try to be perfect in the first year! Simplicity is the key to removing the main obstacles... and speeding up the process.

**Lack of commitment**  
Governance is the driving force behind structural change. If management is not the driving force behind CSR, it is essential to clearly explain the stakes and benefits of CSR to them, so that they give their sincere support. Management inaction reduces CSR to one-off actions.

**Which ESG indicators to choose?**  
The question of measuring the social and environmental impact of their activities quickly arises. This is the sinews of war. Without reliable, monitored data: no effective CSR! If the company is not subject to any regulatory obligation, it is free to choose its own indicators according to its priorities. It can also choose to refer to recognized standards (ISO 26000, UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), Global Reporting Initiative...), general labels (e.g. Lucie or Engagé RSE) or specific labels for a

particular sector of activity.

**Cost and complexity of implementation**  
CSR is a long-term investment to ensure a viable world for tomorrow, and that we can continue our professional activities while respecting the planet and humankind. Heavy investment, both human and financial, is needed to rethink the business model and take the first steps. The regions, CCIs (Chambre de commerce et d'Industrie) and BPI (Banque Publique d'Investissement) provide financial aid, human support and specific expertise.

**Aligning CSR objectives with business goals**  
Business objectives and ecological and social objectives are still perceived as competing. A successful CSR strategy will have resolved this false opposition: either because the indicators chosen will contribute to the company's growth (circular economy...), or because the company will have understand its advantage (risk anticipation, attractiveness, commitment, durability...) and will consider CSR as an investment in its future performance through sustainable practices.

## Implementing a CSR approach :

1. Identify your company's challenges  
Environmental  
Social and societal  
Governance

4. Inventory the practices
2. Map your stakeholders  
Internal: employees, management, managers  
External: suppliers, customers, local authorities, professional federations, planet

5. Set up monitoring indicators  
General (cf CNOEC) and/or company-specific
3. Understand how to engage with your stakeholders

6. Set up the first actions  
Raising awareness  
Investment (financial or human)  
Transformation of core business towards more sustainable practices
7. Continuous improvement

## Exemple

	Issues	Stakeholders	Dialogue with stakeholders	Sector indicators
VSEs in the construction industry	Circular economy / Waste	Corporate customers Employees Purchasing cooperatives, etc.	Survey After-sales service system	% of waste reused as raw material in building construction

# Carbon Footprint®, an accountant's mission?

CSR and carbon strategy consulting firm, Sustainable Metrics joined the Crowe network in 2014. It advises companies on their carbon strategy and assists accounting firms which wish to extend their offer to include Carbon footprint®.



## HAS CARBON FOOTPRINT® BECOME A MUST?

A Carbon Footprint® is a methodology for quantifying greenhouse gas emissions published by ADEME (Agence de l'environnement et de la maîtrise de l'énergie) in 2004. It enables companies and local authorities to meet their regulatory obligations, whether in terms of :

- the Environment Code's requirement to publish a Greenhouse Gas Emissions Balance (BEGES) for companies with over 500 employees in mainland France (250 in overseas territories), local authorities with over 50,000 inhabitants and public legal entity with over 250 employees,
- the CSRD directive's requirement for companies

with more than 250 employees (with: or a balance sheet > €25 million or sales > €50 million euros) by January 1, 2025. The recommended GHG protocol standard converges with the Carbon Footprint® method,

- ISO 14064-1 certification.

Other levers include ESG performance studies by investment funds, and the inclusion of extra-financial indicators in public tenders (60% of which are won by VSEs/SMEs).

Above all, companies have understood the urgency of climate change, and have identified the Carbon Footprint® as a powerful tool for implementing action plans to limit their environmental impact, and at the same time federate their teams around a collective

Of all GHG diagnostics carried out (or BEGES), 77% were carried out as part of a voluntary approach, compared to 51% in 2020. Carbon footprint® are widely used for carrying out GHG Protocol: in 2022, they represented 68% (45% in 2020) of GHG diagnoses. 32% of the Carbon footprint® carried out made it possible to comply with regulations, 68% were a voluntary approach.

*Extract from the 2022 flash survey of the Association for the Low Carbon Transition*

## A NEW MISSION FOR THE CHARTERED ACCOUNTANT?

There is a similarity between the Carbon Footprint® method and the traditional missions of the chartered accountant. While the tonne of CO<sub>2</sub> replaces the euro, the methodology is broken down into two «classic» phases for the profession:

- a counting phase that includes data collection and culminates in the Carbon Footprint® report
- a strategic consulting phase: this involves putting the figures into perspective and defining an action plan with objectives.

The chartered accountant is therefore fully qualified to carry out one or two of the phases of a Carbon Footprint®. Integrating this new offer, however, asks to anticipate the financial and human resources required. In fact, over and above employee training, the firm's human investment will vary greatly depending on the complexity of the company's business sectors, the structure of its

activity (multi-site, multi-company, etc.) and the size of its workforce.

It's important to be aware of all the factors that influence the success of a project (e.g. product quality, availability of «partner» employees for data collection, etc.), and their ambition in terms of detailed costing. A «beginner» company, for example, will require a greater educational effort. Many VSEs and SMEs will find it difficult to map all their flows. It may be necessary to recalculate it in N+1 with additional informations to build a realistic action plan.

## WHAT IS YOUR ROLE WITHIN THE NETWORK?

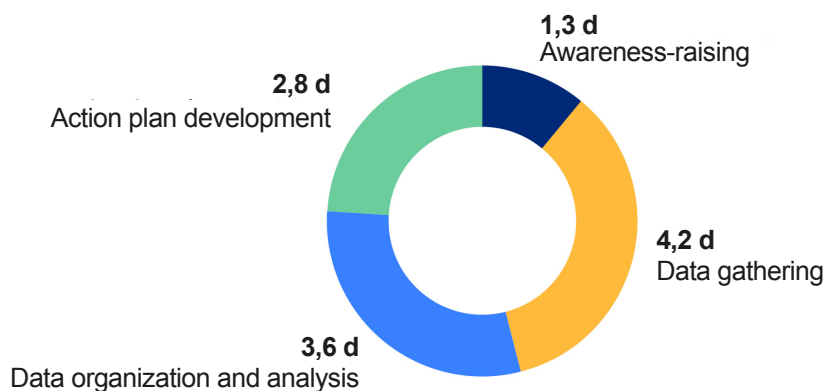
Sustainable Metrics assists companies and consultancies wishing to structure a CSR offering and/or carry out one or two of the Carbon Footprint® phases, either for themselves or for their clients as part of a skills-building partnership.

A few steps before getting started

- 1: Raise employee awareness of climate issues by, for example, creating a Climate Fresk.
- 2: Encourage the personal involvement of employees by carrying out their personal Carbon Assessment on the website [nosgestesclimat.fr](https://nosgestesclimat.fr)
- 3: Train yourself before carrying out the Carbon footprint® of your office
- 4: Carry out the firm's Carbon footprint®
- 5: Experiment with a consulting project with a loyal and motivated client

There are different proposals. The CNOEC therefore offers the Bilan Carbone mission kit or training sessions via the Sustainable Development Club, in partnership with the Carbon Footprint Institute.

On average, the time to complete a carbon assessment is **12 days** (9 in 2020), including:



Extract from the 2022 flash survey of the Association for the Low Carbon Transition



# Governance and CSR: a fusional pair!

## What has changed with CSR?

First and foremost, expectations! A company's success is no longer understood solely in terms of maximizing its economic value. It also includes its contribution to the public interest, by considering the consequences of its activity both inside and outside the company.

Management must therefore guarantee not only financial profitability, but also respect for higher values considered positive for society and the environment (equality between men and women, reduction of carbon impact, etc.). The creation of economic value can lose its legitimacy if it has negative repercussions on society or the environment. Conversely, defending superior values strengthens a company's attractiveness and becomes a factor of competitive differentiation.

A sign of the importance of this change is that CSR strategy in companies now falls directly under the responsibility of general management, in the same way as production or quality. There is also a personification of CSR management, with more dedicated positions and less overlap with HR, CFO and other functions.

## More governance?

The success of a company is more closely associated with its collective success than with the personal success of the manager. It includes employees and all stakeholders (Board of Directors, shareholders, middle management, customers, partners, etc.).

This notion of stakeholders is at the heart of CSR governance, since by considering its impacts, the company cedes to stakeholders the ability to influence its strategic decisions. This is where we

see the need for transparent, structured governance, to ensure respect for stakeholders as much as to maintain the company's ability to be managed.

Modalities vary from company to company, depending on maturity and resources. The first stage involves respecting stakeholders through good practices that must be identified and displayed, such as paying suppliers' invoices within the regulatory deadlines. The second stage involves stakeholders in the company's strategy and decision-making. The legal forms adapted to this approach vary. For example, it may involve setting up an employee shareholding scheme. Involving employees in a CSR committee is not insignificant either since they become decision-makers in direct contact with general management.

Under the impetus of CSR, governance is broadening and opening up to new people and skills.

## Is this a dilution of the manager's role?

On the contrary! CSR enriches the role of the manager. They have a new role to play, a role that federates, enhances and reinforces their legitimacy.

He or she remains the key person in getting the company and its stakeholders on board with an effective CSR approach. Without him, nothing concrete will emerge. Experience shows that his commitment provides the necessary impetus. His personal sensitivity often guides the ESG objectives defined as priorities. Next comes the ability to unite employees and to commit to a collective, structured and evaluated approach, without which the founding impetus will run out of steam.



Governance and CSR are inseparable: CSR shapes governance, which is itself the driving force behind a successful CSR strategy.



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