

GreenWorks Toolkit



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Supporting SMEs in the Green Transition



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PART 3 TOOLS & EXTRA LEARNING RESOURCES



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ABOUT THIS GUIDE

Your gateway to practical tools and resources for the green transition.

This guide complements the GreenLead learning modules by providing a carefully selected collection of digital tools, online platforms, practical guides, videos and additional learning resources.

The resources are organised according to the six GreenLead training modules and are intended to support SMEs, VET providers and other stakeholders in further developing their sustainability competences.

All resources have been chosen for their relevance, reliability and practical value, helping you to implement sustainable practices, comply with regulations and seize new opportunities in the green economy.

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE



LEARNING MODULES

Six GreenLead modules cover key areas of the green transition.



RECOMMENDED TOOLS

Discover digital tools and platforms that help you put learning into practice.



EXTRA RESOURCES

Access additional guides, reports, videos and learning materials.



PRACTICAL IMPLEMENTATION

Apply your knowledge to support the green transition in your organisation.

WHO IS THIS GUIDE FOR?

SMEs

Find practical tools and resources to support your green transition journey.

VET PROVIDERS

Access materials to enrich your training and support learners effectively.

OTHER STAKEHOLDERS

Explore resources to engage, collaborate and drive sustainable change.



MODULE 1

FOUNDATIONS OF SUSTAINABILITY AND GREEN POLICY FRAMEWORK

Learning outcomes supported

- Understand the principles of sustainable development
- Explain the European Green Deal and the SDGs
- Recognise key environmental legislation for SMEs
- Apply sustainability principles in business strategy

This chapter introduces the core concepts of sustainability, the European Green Deal, the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and key environmental requirements, helping SMEs integrate sustainability into their business strategies and everyday operations.

MODULE 1



01

Foundations of Sustainability

Understand the core principles of sustainable development and the environmental, social and economic dimensions of sustainability. Explore how these pillars support resilient businesses and long-term value creation.

MODULE 1



02

UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

Learn how the 17 Sustainable Development Goals provide a global framework for sustainable development and help organisations align their strategies with environmental, social and economic priorities.

MODULE 1



03

The European Green Deal

Discover the objectives of the European Green Deal and its roadmap towards climate neutrality. Learn how EU sustainability policies influence businesses and create new opportunities for SMEs.

MODULE 1



04

Environmental Legislation & SME Compliance

Explore the key EU environmental directives, legal obligations and sustainability requirements affecting SMEs. Understand how compliance supports risk management, competitiveness and sustainable growth.



Sustainability provides the foundation for resilient businesses, responsible leadership and long-term competitiveness.

MODULE 1



ADDITIONAL READING



REPORTS

Platform on Sustainable Finance: Streamlining sustainable finance for SMEs

It explains why SMEs are essential for Europe's sustainability transition and how simplified sustainable finance approaches can support them.



Waste Framework Directive - It explains that the Waste Framework Directive establishes the basic concepts of EU waste management, including definitions of waste, recycling and recovery, and introduces the waste hierarchy. It also stresses that waste prevention is the preferred option, while landfill should be the last resort.



TOOLKITS

UN Global Compact – SDG Toolbox

Useful for learners who want to explore practical tools for each SDG. It provides entry points, resources and best practices for companies at different stages of their sustainability journey.



VIDEOS

The European Green Deal: a commitment to future generations

It explains the EU's ambition to become the first climate-neutral continent by 2050.



WEBSITES

The European Green Deal - this is the official European Commission page explaining the Green Deal, climate neutrality by 2050, emissions reduction, circular economy, clean energy, financing and just transition measures. It can be used as the main official reference for learners.



UN 17 SDGs - provide a global framework for achieving sustainable economic, social and environmental development by 2030. They help organisations align their strategies with internationally recognised sustainability priorities and contribute to a more inclusive and resilient future.



Understanding sustainability policies helps SMEs transform environmental challenges into opportunities for innovation and growth.

MODULE 2

CIRCULAR ECONOMY AND RESOURCE EFFICIENCY

Learning outcomes supported

- Understand circular economy principles
- Identify opportunities for resource efficiency
- Reduce waste and improve material use
- Apply circular business practices in SMEs

This chapter explores the principles of the circular economy and sustainable business models. It introduces practical approaches that help SMEs to reduce waste, improve resource efficiency, adopt eco-innovation and low-carbon technologies, and create long-term environmental and business value. It will teach SMEs and their staff to move from linear to circular economy style of work.

MODULE 2



01

Circular Economy Principles

Discover how the circular economy replaces the traditional linear model by keeping products, materials and resources in use for as long as possible while minimising waste and environmental impacts.

MODULE 2



02

Green Business Models

Explore sustainable business models that combine economic success with environmental responsibility through circular value creation, resource efficiency and innovative business strategies.

MODULE 2



03

Eco-Innovation & Eco-Design

Learn how eco-innovation and eco-design help organisations develop sustainable products, optimise processes and integrate life-cycle thinking into product and service development.

MODULE 2



04

Low-Carbon Technologies

Understand how renewable energy, energy-efficient technologies and other low-carbon solutions support SMEs in reducing emissions, improving competitiveness and accelerating the green transition.



Circular economy transforms waste into value while strengthening business resilience and competitiveness.

MODULE 2



ADDITIONAL READING



REPORTS

The survey shows that only 34% of adults recycle. The lack of plastic recycling is one example of the linear economy, where the use of products generates waste, whereas the circular economy does not leave anything in the environment and reuses materials and remainders.



TOOLKITS

This Circular Economy Toolkit will help SMEs to create value and through practical experience to navigate themselves into more circular work. Follow the QR code to achieve the perfect circular business model.



VIDEOS

What does the transformation to a circular economy mean? What is a linear economy, and how SMEs can transform their work into circular economy? Follow the QR code and watch the video to get acquainted with the concepts and the process of the transformation.



WEBSITES

What does sustainability refer to? What steps an SME should undertake to create and implement their own sustainable business model? Visit the website to understand the concept, and the required steps to achieve it.



Eco-innovation and green business models enable SMEs to create sustainable growth through smarter use of resources and cleaner technologies.

MODULE 3

GREEN LEADERSHIP AND SUSTAINABLE ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE

Learning outcomes supported

- Understand the principles of sustainable leadership and change management
- Strengthen stakeholder engagement and internal sustainability communication
- Develop authentic sustainability messages using green marketing and storytelling

This chapter explores the leadership, stakeholder engagement and communication skills required to drive sustainability transformation in SMEs. It focuses on sustainable leadership, change management, employee engagement and authentic communication strategies that strengthen organisational culture, collaboration and long-term sustainability performance.

MODULE 3



01

Sustainable Leadership & Change Management

Discover how sustainable leadership helps organisations manage change, inspire employees and build resilient businesses through inclusive leadership, emotional intelligence and long-term thinking.

MODULE 3



02

Internal Stakeholder Engagement

Learn how to engage employees and internal stakeholders by building trust, encouraging participation and creating a shared commitment to sustainability goals.

MODULE 3



03

Internal Communication Strategy

Explore practical communication strategies that improve collaboration, transparency and employee alignment while supporting successful sustainability initiatives across the organisation.

MODULE 3



04

Green Marketing & Sustainability Storytelling

Understand how authentic green marketing and sustainability storytelling communicate environmental values, build stakeholder trust and avoid greenwashing through transparent and credible messages.



Sustainable leadership empowers people, builds trust and turns sustainability goals into everyday organisational practice.

MODULE 3



ADDITIONAL READING



REPORTS

GHG Protocol Calculation Tools - The (Greenhouse Gas Protocol) is the world's most widely used framework for measuring and managing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. It provides organizations with standardized methodologies and calculation tools to quantify their carbon footprint and identify opportunities for emissions reduction.



TOOLKITS

Future-Fit Business Benchmark - Practical sustainability framework that helps organizations assess how well their operations align with long-term environmental and social sustainability goals. Rather than focusing only on compliance, it provides a structured set of indicators and guidance to help businesses identify gaps, set improvement priorities, and integrate sustainability into their strategy, decision-making, and day-to-day operations



VIDEOS

ECESP Circular Economy Platform - The European Circular Economy Stakeholder Platform (ECESP) is a European Commission initiative that provides access to circular economy best practices, case studies, interactive maps, policy resources, and business tools. It enables SMEs to explore successful circular economy initiatives across Europe, identify opportunities for resource efficiency and waste reduction, and learn from real-world examples that can support their green transition



WEBSITES

Coursera – Corporate Sustainability: Understanding and Seizing the Strategic Opportunity - This course explores how sustainability can be integrated into business strategy to create long-term value, enhance competitiveness, manage risks, and strengthen stakeholder relationships. It covers key topics such as sustainability leadership, ESG considerations, stakeholder engagement, innovation, and organizational change, helping learners understand how businesses can turn sustainability challenges into strategic opportunities. The course can usually be audited for free, allowing access to most learning materials, while a Coursera subscription or one-time payment is required to obtain a certificate of completion



Effective communication and stakeholder engagement are essential for creating a shared sustainability organisational culture.

MODULE 4

DIGITALISATION, ESG REPORTING AND DATA-DRIVEN DECISION-MAKING

Learning outcomes supported

- Understand ESG reporting requirements
- Apply digital tools for sustainability management
- Improve data-driven decision-making
- Monitor environmental performance indicators

This chapter introduces digital tools and practical resources that support ESG reporting, sustainability performance measurement and data-driven decision-making. The selected materials help SMEs use digital technologies to improve transparency, monitor sustainability indicators and comply with evolving reporting requirements.

MODULE 4



01

Life Cycle Assessment (LCA)

Understand how LCA helps organisations measure the environmental impacts of products and services throughout their entire life cycle. Explore practical tools for assessing carbon footprints and sustainable decision-making.

MODULE 4



02

ESG Reporting & Sustainability Indicators

Learn the fundamentals of ESG reporting, including the CSRD, ESRS and GRI frameworks. Discover how sustainability indicators and KPIs support transparency, compliance and continuous business improvement.

MODULE 4



03

Data-Driven Decision-Making

Explore how digital technologies, sustainability data and business analytics can support evidence-based decision-making, improve operational performance and strengthen organisational resilience.

MODULE 4



04

Digital Tools for Sustainable Business

Discover practical digital solutions, including LCA software, carbon footprint calculators, ESG reporting platforms and sustainability dashboards that help SMEs implement and monitor their green transition.



Digital technologies and ESG reporting enable SMEs to make informed decisions, improve transparency and accelerate their sustainability transition.

MODULE 4



ADDITIONAL READING



REPORTS

EFRA - develops the European Sustainability Reporting Standards (ESRS) and provides guidance to help organisations implement the Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive (CSRD).

ISSB - develops globally recognised sustainability disclosure standards that help organisations provide consistent, transparent and comparable ESG-related information.

GRI - provides the world's most widely used sustainability reporting standards, enabling organisations to measure, manage and communicate their environmental, social and governance impacts.



TOOLKITS

Google Data Studio (Looker Studio) - is a free business intelligence and data visualisation platform that enables organisations to create interactive dashboards, monitor sustainability KPIs and transform complex data into clear, actionable insights.

Business Emissions Evaluator (BEE) - is a free carbon footprint estimation tool launched by the Change Climate Project. It allows SMEs to estimate cradle-to-consumer emissions using high-level financial and revenue data.



VIDEOS

EU Clusters Talk "Sustainability requirements and reporting: Cluster support for SMEs" - Learn how clusters support SMEs in meeting sustainability requirements, sharing best practices and accelerating the green transition.

The SME s Guide to Becoming Data Driven " - Discover how SMEs can use data-driven decision-making to improve efficiency, sustainability and business performance.



WEBSITES

SME Climate Hub - is a free online platform that helps small and medium-sized enterprises measure, reduce and report their greenhouse gas emissions while supporting their transition towards net-zero.

The Digital Transformation of SMEs - explore how digital technologies support SME competitiveness, innovation and sustainable growth while addressing the challenges of digital transformation.



Data-driven decision-making helps organisations optimise processes, monitor sustainability performance and create measurable business value.

MODULE 5

GREEN FINANCE AND SUSTAINABLE INVESTMENT

Learning outcomes supported

- Understand sustainable finance principles
- Identify green funding opportunities
- Evaluate sustainable investment options
- Support financially viable green projects

This chapter introduces the principles of green financing and strategic transformation for SMEs. It explains how organisations can access sustainable funding opportunities, evaluate the return on green investments and develop forward-looking strategies that support long-term sustainability, resilience and business competitiveness.

MODULE 5



01

Green Finance & Return on Investment

Learn the fundamentals of green finance, sustainable investment instruments and methods for evaluating the financial, environmental and social return on investment (ROI) of sustainability projects.

MODULE 5



02

Funding Opportunities

Explore European, national and regional funding opportunities, understand eligibility requirements and learn how to prepare competitive project proposals aligned with sustainability priorities.

MODULE 5



03

Forecasting & Strategic Planning

Discover forecasting techniques and strategic planning tools that help organisations anticipate future trends, manage risks and build effective sustainability implementation strategies.

MODULE 5



04

Building Sustainable Business Strategies

Understand how to integrate financing, forecasting, KPIs and risk management into practical sustainability roadmaps that support long-term organisational transformation and resilience.



Green financing enables organisations to transform sustainability ambitions into practical investments that create environmental, social and economic value.

MODULE 5



ADDITIONAL READING



REPORTS

European Commission

EU Taxonomy for Sustainable Activities

This report explains which economic activities are considered environmentally sustainable within the European Union. It helps SMEs align their green investments with EU sustainability criteria.



TOOLKITS

SME Climate Hub, Tools for SMEs

A practical toolkit providing guidance, templates and resources to help SMEs measure emissions, set climate targets and implement sustainability actions.



VIDEOS

What is Green Finance?

This introductory video explains the fundamentals of green finance, including sustainable investment, green financial instruments and the benefits of financing environmentally responsible projects. It provides clear examples of how organisations can improve both their environmental performance and long-term business competitiveness through sustainable finance.



WEBSITES

European Commission, Sustainable Finance

The European Commission's Sustainable Finance portal offers up-to-date information on EU policies, legislation and funding initiatives that support the green transition. It also provides guidance on sustainable investment frameworks, reporting requirements and financing opportunities available for businesses, particularly SMEs.



Successful sustainability strategies combine effective financing, forward-looking planning and continuous performance monitoring.

MODULE 6

IMPLEMENTING SUSTAINABILITY IN BUSINESS PRACTICE

Learning outcomes supported

- Apply sustainability in everyday business operations
- Develop practical implementation plans
- Monitor continuous improvement
- Strengthen organisational resilience and competitiveness

This chapter brings together the knowledge and competences developed throughout the GreenLead programme. Through a practical SME case study, participants analyse sustainability challenges, develop a Green Transformation Plan and propose realistic actions, KPIs, stakeholder engagement strategies and funding opportunities that support long-term business sustainability.

MODULE 6



01

Sustainability Assessment

Analyse the current environmental performance of an SME by identifying sustainability gaps, business risks and opportunities for improvement across operations, resources and governance.

MODULE 6



02

Green Transformation Plan

Develop a practical Green Transformation Plan with measurable sustainability objectives, realistic actions and implementation priorities aligned with EU sustainability policies and the SDGs.

MODULE 6



03

KPIs & Stakeholder Engagement

Define key performance indicators (KPIs) to monitor progress and explore how employees, suppliers and customers can actively contribute to a successful sustainability transition.

MODULE 6



04

Financing & Implementation Roadmap

Identify suitable funding opportunities, allocate resources and design a practical implementation roadmap with short-, medium- and long-term milestones for sustainable business transformation.



Successful green transition depends on practical implementation, continuous improvement and the active involvement of people throughout the organisation.

MODULE 6



ADDITIONAL READING



REPORTS

SMEunited, Implementation of the European Green Deal: How to Make it Workable for SMEs

This policy paper explains how the European Green Deal can become a practical opportunity for small and medium-sized enterprises. It focuses on reducing barriers, improving support mechanisms and helping SMEs adapt to sustainability requirements while remaining competitive.



TOOLKITS

Un Global Compact ,SDG Action Manager

This toolkit helps companies assess their contribution to the Sustainable Development Goals and identify areas for improvement. It is useful for SMEs developing a Green Transformation Plan, as it supports goal-setting, impact measurement and strategic decision-making.



VIDEOS

European Green Deal: Achieving Climate Neutrality

This video introduces the main objectives of the European Green Deal and explains how Europe aims to achieve climate neutrality. It provides useful background for understanding why SMEs need to integrate sustainability, legal compliance and long-term resilience into their business strategies.



WEBSITES

European Commission, European Green Deal

This official website provides information on the EU's strategy for climate neutrality, circular economy, clean energy and sustainable industry. It is a key reference for understanding the policy context behind the Green Transformation Plan required in Module 6.



A structured Green Transformation Plan helps SMEs turn sustainability challenges into opportunities for innovation, resilience and long-term competitiveness.

CONCLUSION

Sustainability is an ongoing journey that requires continuous learning, collaboration and practical action. We hope this toolkit will support SMEs, VET providers and other stakeholders in turning knowledge into meaningful change and accelerating the transition towards a greener and more resilient future.

Empowering people with knowledge is the first step towards building a more sustainable future.

FROM LEARNING TO ACTION



LEARN



ACT



IMPROVE



TRANSFORM

FINAL MESSAGE

Every sustainable action starts with knowledge. Every successful transformation starts with action.

LEARN MORE ABOUT THE GREENLEAD PROJECT



PROJECT WEBSITE



LEARNING PLATFORM



VIDEO GUIDE