

Responsible Business,  
Better Future.



CSR Europe's  
2030 Strategy  
Mainstreaming the  
urgency for action



# A new Deal for Europe

In 2010, CSR Europe launched Enterprise2020, the Strategic Programme shaping our actions and focus for the period prior to 2020. At the end of this second decade of the 21st century, profound changes in local, European and global societies and communities require a more action oriented and collaborative approach. Europe is in turbulent waters – navigation becomes more difficult as multilateralism, collaboration and common visions are challenged. A deeper understanding of the urgency to address climate change and the challenge of inclusive societies are a concern to all.

What we need is a **New Deal for Europe** – for a Europe with a shared vision for its future: a leadership role in the sustainability transition that is required. Being a first mover in the green and inclusive economic transition, combined with a strong push on the international rule-of-law, will allow to set the standards and provide a strong competitive advantage in the global marketplace.



**CSR Europe**  
facilitates  
practical  
collaborative  
platforms

CSR Europe's basic vision remains the same: business is key in providing innovative solutions to meet these challenges – today and in the future - and we believe that, in Europe, **business is uniquely placed to contribute to the change** towards a society where everyone can thrive through social, environmental and economic progress. Society's concerns can be embedded in business priorities and the transformation of business models, a sustainable approach to investments and finance and enhanced collaboration are key to affirm the business contribution.

The **UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)** and the European Commission in its **Multistakeholder Platform on the SDGs** have outlined the overall direction for the role of business going forward. They provide the framework in which an organisation like CSR Europe, rooted in Europe but with a local, regional and global reach, can support a group of leading companies towards a model whereby business can play its key role as contributor to societal change and an inclusive economy. The Paris Agreement and the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights are the beacons on this journey.

## 1

# The evolution of CSR Europe throughout Enterprise 2020

The first decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century was characterized by a focus on awareness raising and early development of the CSR and sustainability agenda.

The second decade was all about mainstreaming and integration of sustainability into the strategic agenda of business.

Corporate leadership was defined by bringing the sustainability agenda into the core of the business strategy in each company and by enhancing transparency and engagement with key stakeholders. Membership of a network like CSR Europe was valued for its opportunity to share good practices, for benchmarking and enhancing the link between sustainability and different corporate divisions like R&D, purchasing and marketing.

At a policy level the debate on voluntary versus regulatory approaches reached a consensus in 2011 where corporate social responsibility got defined by the [European Commission](#) as the responsibility of enterprises for their impacts on society.

However, the UN Sustainable Development Goals and the Paris Agreement on climate change have increased the understanding that sustainability and inclusiveness are the real name of the game. It is not only about the company's responsibility for its impact, but it is also about an action-oriented stakeholder approach to develop and implement shared solutions for local and global sustainability challenges.

This changing understanding of the sustainability agenda has been reflected in the recent evolution of CSR Europe. We broadened our approach to the sustainability agenda, both in our work with companies and national partners and in the engagement with European and national policymakers. The National Partner Network of CSR Europe, with its 40+ direct members and covering more than 10.000 companies became a unique asset of the network that can be leveraged towards a more sustainable future in Europe.

With our  
**40+ corporate members and National Partners,**  
we represent over  
**10.000 companies**  
in Europe

# The evolution of CSR Europe throughout Enterprise 2020 (2010-2018)

CSR policy dialogue  
with the EC

Awareness raising

Best practice sharing  
and capacity building  
for members

*This evolution also changed the understanding of what corporate sustainability leadership is about: it is not the iconic leader setting a bold sustainability strategy for an individual company but it is the company capable of bringing along other companies, the sectors in which it operates, stakeholders and policy makers in a common drive towards systemic change.*

- At the core of **EU policy dialogue** on sustainability with a wider group of DGs: Grow, Trade, Employment, Environment, Development, External Action Service, Connect, Commissioners, Commission President.
- Positioned at the crossroads of the EU sustainability and social innovation agenda and the **UN 2030 Agenda**.
- Established as a practical, **leading network of +10.000 companies** through a **strong National Partner Network** with 600 experts and a strong focus on social inclusion.
- Development of relevant **tools and benchmarking** focused on mainstreaming within divisions and in company strategy.
- Stronger focus on **added value services** for individual members and platforms with a rigorous methodological approach.
- Incubation and facilitation of **practical collaborative platforms** (e.g. automotive, cobalt, rubber, refugees)

*Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals is a shared responsibility and requires a change in thinking, not only by public authorities, but also by other stakeholders including citizens. It is a challenge but also a great opportunity to craft a brighter future for all within our planet's limits. We need to learn from each other and work better together to accelerate progress in reaching those who are left behind and decoupling economic development from environmental degradation.*



**Frans Timmermans**  
First Vice President,  
European Commission



**Jyrki Katainen**  
Vice-President,  
European Commission

## 2 Dealing with the Megatrends

*CSR Europe's 2030 Strategy is determined by our understanding of the main challenges faced by society. The trends that the Board of CSR Europe identified in 2010 remain a challenge but those listed below are the ones deemed most significant and urgent towards 2030. We need – with our members and stakeholders – to be ready to seize the positives of the trends and upcoming disruptions. This will allow companies to turn threats into opportunities.*

**Climate change** is one of the major challenges of our time and already impacts on the opportunities for societies to grow and business to prosper. Without drastic action the future will be more difficult and costlier as it will require major adaptations. Business has a key role to play, globally and in Europe. Corporate climate change disclosure is only a means towards a carbon neutral economy and the real challenge is to make the collective investment, collaboration and business transformation.

**Resource scarcity and geopolitics** will enhance the need for resource efficiency and a more circular approach to the economy. Increasingly complex trade arrangements and the advent of new global players will lead to larger business and societal interdependencies. A deeper understanding of value chain dynamics and a focus on sustainable and circular sourcing will be required at a global level. A trade agenda with a focus on traceability and capacity building throughout the supply chain is only a first step, collaborative engagement is the real challenge.

The surge for **transparency and privacy** expectations will further add requirements to companies, not the least in terms of proactive engagement with different stakeholder groups.

Profound **business transformations are taking place, and significant labour market transitions** will follow. These can only be built on lifelong learning methods that will be part of the overall human resources approaches by companies. Major changes in systems of social inclusion will be required.

With the evolution of European societies, **rising protectionism** and political uncertainty, the project of the European Union is at a crossroads. Europe needs a new societal deal and a new narrative of progress. More than ever business can contribute to a European agenda of sustainable and inclusive growth.

Moreover, **resilience of cities and communities**, enhanced employability and protection of citizens are key sustainability drivers to countermeasure **growing income inequality** and to contribute to an inclusive society.

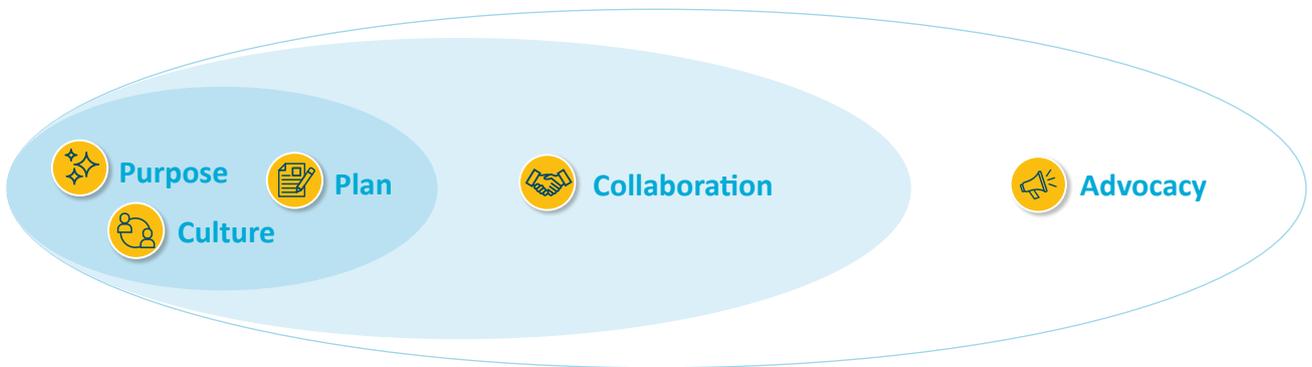
**Widespread adoption of digital technologies** like artificial intelligence, robotics and other forms of digitalization across the entire value chain will drastically change business models and jobs and will add new requirements in and to our understanding of transparency and privacy. Simultaneously, these technologies can boost the transition towards an inclusive and carbon neutral economy.

# 3 CSR Europe's Leadership Model

*The sustainability agenda towards 2030 is by necessity both a leadership and collaborative programme. Leading companies will have the opportunity to engage in collaborative platforms to bring along their sectors- and/or value chain peers and work together with other stakeholders. Leadership can only yield impact if systemic change and transformation of the entire eco-system is envisaged.*

## Leadership has three engagement mechanisms

Source: Grayson, Coulter & Lee, All-In. the future of business leadership, 2018



**Foundation**

Help companies to lay a **foundation** through providing support to enhance the level of maturity and integration of sustainability inside each company. In addition, we will help define the **purpose**, strategy and management systems as well as fostering a sustainability **culture**. Communities of practice that offer both entry-level and advanced learning opportunities through networking and practice sharing, webinars, benchmarks and workshops will be organized. The collaboration with the National Partners is key in delivering quality and innovation. Additional services to individual members will help to support change at a company level.

**Scale**

Develop and **scale up** solutions that will make systemic transformation possible. **Collaborative platforms** between companies from different industry sectors and sector platforms will be used with the aim of delivering high-level impact. CSR Europe will endeavour to create these platforms where participating companies set out a common target to be achieved through their collaborative efforts. The network of **National Partners will be key in delivering the scale and impact required** across all parts of Europe and their innovations and experience are essential to develop programmes with impact at a European and global level.

**System Change**

**Advocate** the development of a level-playing field and recognition of the role of business in the sustainability agenda through **systematic** and intensive engagement in a wide array of global/international, EU and National Policy Dialogues. A focus on means of implementation is necessary, including partnerships, sustainable financial systems, research and innovation, and enhanced monitoring and accountability.

# 4 CSR Europe's 2030 Strategy

## 5 Key Directions for the Sustainability Agenda

**1 The business contribution is core to Europe moving towards a sustainable future.**

Europe should be at the forefront of global transformation by promoting high environmental, social and governance (including tax) standards at an international level and by ensuring a level-playing field globally

**2 Sustainability is no longer about individual company's management but it is about the entire eco-system and is only possible if implemented through strengthening local communities**

**3 Impact and change are the focus of the network, not only management processes or reporting.**

**4 High impact collaborations and advocacy** are - together with mature and integrated sustainability management systems - key areas for intervention and action. The focus of a network like CSR Europe should therefore include the incubation and implementation of collaborative sector and value chain platforms.

**5 Enhanced transparency and proactive stakeholder engagement** at all levels are basic requirements

**With this direction, CSR Europe, as a network of leading international companies and National Partners throughout Europe, reconfirms itself as a unique private sector movement to accelerate the SDG/climate change agenda from within Europe. While the urgency of this challenge is well understood by leading companies, we see our role as the main enabler for responsible and sustainable business in Europe, leveraging our entire network to deliver action-oriented impact.**

## Strategic Framework



To strengthen the drive for Sustainable Growth and Inclusive Communities in support of the UN Sustainable Development Goals



We anticipate, innovate & lead the practical transition to a carbon neutral, inclusive, sustainable and circular economy with respect for human rights across all stages of the Value Chain



### AN ECONOMY WITH AND FOR PEOPLE

We aim for an inclusive economic system and labour market that promote life-long employability



### SUSTAINABLE RAW MATERIALS & VALUE CHAINS

We work together towards a carbon neutral, sustainable & circular economy, where sourcing & processing of materials takes place with respect for all human rights



### SUSTAINABLE MARKETS & FINANCE

We endeavour to make sustainability driven investments through enhanced **Total Impact Disclosure** the new normal

BY LEVERAGING THE POWER OF OUR 10.000 ENTERPRISES NETWORK TO MAKE SYSTEMIC CHANGE POSSIBLE:



Facilitate **practical collaborative platforms** with industry sectors, value chains and stakeholders



Co-build with **Policy Makers and Civil Society** a Sustainable Europe 2030



Increase the **maturity and integration of sustainability management** inside companies

# Our Service Offer

## COLLABORATIVE & LEADERSHIP PLATFORMS & NATIONAL PARTNER NETWORKS

- Develop & Scale solutions for systemic transformation
- Set common targets
- Achieve results through collaborative effort
- Scale up initiatives through Network of National Partners across Europe

## COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE

- Entry level and Advanced Learning Opportunities
- Networking
- Webinars, Benchmarks & Workshops
- Quality & Innovation through National Partner Organisation Network
- Additional Services (Stakeholder Dialogue, ...)

## POLICY DIALOGUE AT EUROPEAN & NATIONAL LEVEL

- Advocate Development & recognition of role of business in sustainability agenda
- Focus on implementation : partnerships, sustainable financial system, research & innovation, monitoring & accountability

# Topics 2019-2022 in People, Materials and Markets

In the first three years of the programme the three priority areas (“people, materials and markets”) will focus on the following topics, with specific attention to the enabling potential of smart technology and the results of successful social innovation by companies and social entrepreneurs in each area.



### An economy with and for people

- Future of Work
- Corporate Digital Responsibility



### Sustainable raw materials & value chains

- Sustainable sourcing
- Circular economy
- Sustainable supply chain platforms
- Business & Human Rights
- Sustainable Raw Materials



### Sustainable markets & finance

- Fair & Transparent Markets and Governance
- Sustainable Finance
- Non Financial reporting
- Transparency & Responsible Tax Behaviour

Smart technologies & social innovation

# 5

## Role and positioning of the CSR Europe network

*We understand the urgency to respond to the global megatrends and challenges that we and future generations are facing. CSR Europe also sees the opportunity for business to enhance its competitiveness in dealing proactively with these challenges. That is why CSR Europe's Strategy 2030 will boost the network to:*



*We need a new economic model that provides well-being for all within the planetary boundaries, is inclusive, fosters social cohesion and respects human rights while generating value for all, spurring innovations and ensuring our competitiveness. Europe should be at the forefront of this global transformation by promoting high environmental, social and tax standards at international level and by ensuring a level-playing field globally.*

European SDG Multistakeholder Platform, October 2018

# Responsible Business, Better Future.

CSR Europe is the leading European business network for **Corporate Sustainability and Responsibility**. With 40+ corporate members and National CSR organisations, we unite, inspire & support over 10,000 enterprises at local, European and global level. We serve businesses & industry sectors in their transformation and collaboration towards practical solutions and sustainable growth. We enable systemic change and follow the SDGs, we want to co-build with the European leaders and stakeholders an overarching strategy for a Sustainable Europe 2030.



**CSR Europe**  
Rue Victor Oudart 7  
1030 Brussels  
Belgium  
[communications@csreurope.org](mailto:communications@csreurope.org)