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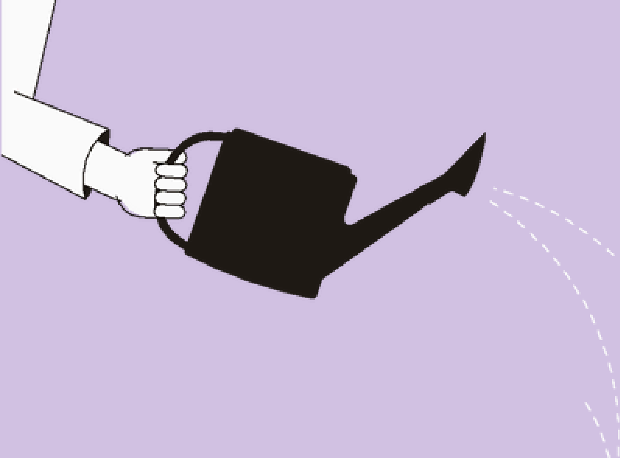
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

FOR COMPANIES COMMITTED TO
MEANINGFUL LOCAL IMPACT ACROSS EUROPE

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT MANAGER



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About the CDM project

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and sustainability are key priorities for companies in Europe, driven by social requirements and regulatory frameworks such as the 2023 Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive (CSRD). Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) lack CSR experts or appropriate training programmes. The current CSR practices often fall short in promoting direct engagement with local communities, which are essential for a company's acceptance and success.
The CDM project addresses this gap by introducing a comprehensive training program focused on linking CSR to community development. Aimed at graduates and company staff, the project emphasises the creation of a Community Development Manager (CDM) role to ensure CSR initiatives are aligned with business strategies, while promoting stronger links with local communities. By fostering shared values and addressing social well-being, the project seeks to bring CSR practices and promote cooperation in Europe.

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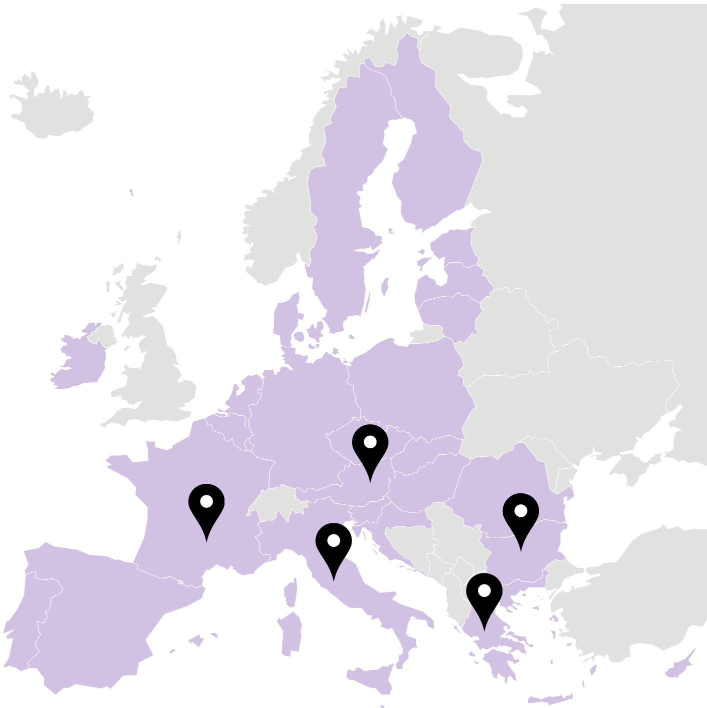
Introduction: Purpose of this document



These recommendations are designed as a **practical learning and action tool** for companies of all sizes wishing to initiate or strengthen their role in **community development** (CD). Grounded in survey, interviews and focus groups with both **private sector actors (nearly 170 companies) and local communities (20 organisations)**, implemented across 5 European countries (Austria, Bulgaria, France, Greece and Italy), the document reflects **transnationally valid insights** and **culturally relevant strategies** that businesses across Europe can adopt.

The CD recommendations are structured into **5 chapters**, each corresponding to key thematic areas identified in the research. Each chapter includes a short synthesis of cross-country findings, recommendations, good practices (case in point) identified and some engagement prompts such as checklists for action or reflection questions.

While the focus is on corporate social responsibility (CSR) and community partnerships, the underlying principle is broader: **businesses thrive when their communities do too**.

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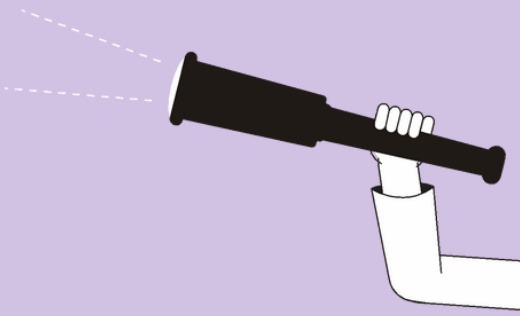
1. Integrating Community Development into business strategy

From ad hoc actions to an embedded CSR culture

Across Europe, small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) are already engaged in a wide range of community initiatives — from food support and educational sponsorships to environmental campaigns and inclusive hiring. Yet, these efforts are often reactive, disconnected from core strategy, or dependent on individual motivation rather than company-wide commitment. As a result, impact is limited, partnerships remain short-term, and long-term value (both social and business-related) is not fully realised.

Research across five countries confirms a shared ambition: SMEs want to evolve from informal, sporadic actions to structured, strategic, and sustainable community engagement. Many businesses already demonstrate strong values and intrinsic motivation. What's missing is not willingness — but a clear path from good intentions to strategic integration.

Community Development, when aligned with business strategy, enhances brand trust, employee engagement, innovation, and stakeholder relationships. It also helps companies stay relevant to changing societal needs and stakeholder expectations, especially as ESG considerations and purpose-driven business gain traction across Europe.



Key recommendations

01. Appoint or designate a CSR or Community Development champion — even part-time

A dedicated individual can act as an **internal driver of CSR action**, ensuring consistency, coordination, and follow-through. In SMEs, this role can be assigned to an existing staff member with cross-functional capacity — ideally someone with communication skills, stakeholder awareness, and a strategic mindset.

Research Insight: Many SMEs already have informal CSR leads (e.g. from HR or marketing), but without a job title or mandate. Formalising this role — even without creating a new position — helps structure and legitimise community efforts.

02. Move beyond viewing CSR as charity — align it with strategic business objectives

CSR is not about sporadic giving. It is a strategic investment in stakeholder trust, local ecosystem health, and long-term business sustainability. Integrating CSR into business planning helps ensure that activities are **relevant, scalable, and connected to core competencies** (e.g. food companies supporting nutrition education, tech firms mentoring young people).

> "We strongly believe that the development of the territory and its unique characteristics and typical products can bring a direct and indirect advantage not only to the company but to the entire Salento area."
> (Natale Pasticceria, Italy)

Key recommendations

03. Ensure visibility and commitment at executive level

CSR culture is built from the top. Leadership endorsement — through messaging, resourcing, or direct participation — reinforces the importance of community engagement across the organisation. It also empowers the CSR focal point to act decisively and collaborate across departments.

Leadership buy-in is especially important in SMEs, where personal values often shape company culture. Making CSR part of leadership KPIs, annual goals, or board discussions ensures continuity and focus.

Case in point

Strategic integration in Bulgaria: community engagement meets brand identity

A large international company working in the services sector (providing employee benefits - vouchers - for other companies), whose team in Bulgaria consists of 60 people, has a specific function regarding the CSR policies in each country - a "CSR champion" – a role executed by the Marketing Lead. While the role was not full-time, it had a clearly defined job description focused on community outreach, internal volunteering initiatives, and partnerships with NGOs. The role also included responsibility for communicating CSR actions externally — blending brand identity with community impact.

Key outcomes included:

- Improved visibility of CSR actions among staff
- Stronger relationships with local foundations
- Strengthening of employees' engagement through targeted involvement in long-term projects

This case illustrates how companies can move beyond reactive charity by embedding CSR in existing roles and aligning it with business functions such as Marketing or HR, and integrating it in the DNA of the company culture and strategy.

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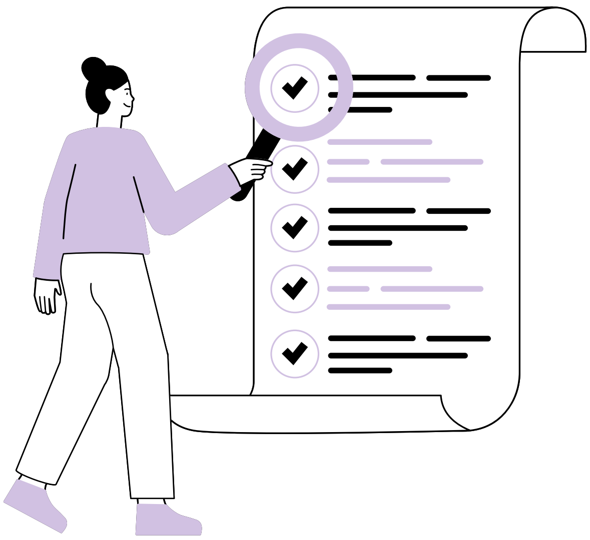
Checklist example:
Is your company ready to embed CSR strategically?

Use this checklist to assess whether your current community initiatives are aligned with long-term business strategy:

- Is community impact part of our strategic planning process?
- Do we allocate time, budget, and staff to CSR or community initiatives?
- Is there a named person responsible for coordinating community engagement?
- Does leadership actively support or promote our CSR actions?
- Are our community initiatives linked to our core business strengths?
- Do we measure or document the outcomes of our CSR actions?



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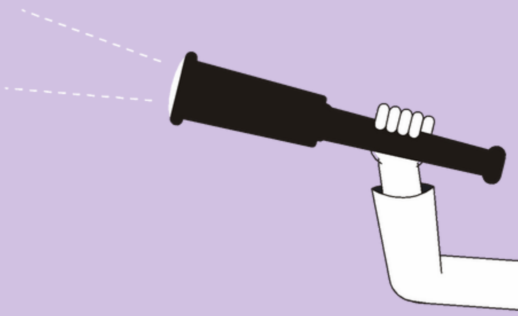
2. Overcoming common challenges in CSR implementation

Addressing internal and external barriers to action

Despite strong motivation and a clear understanding of their social role, many SMEs struggle to move from aspiration to action in their community engagement efforts. Our research shows that while companies frequently initiate valuable CSR activities, they often remain fragmented, short-lived, or dependent on one or two passionate individuals. This reality reflects the operational pressures SMEs face and the absence of structured support for CSR within most businesses.

Across all five countries in our study, SMEs consistently cited a lack of time, funding, and in-house expertise as the primary internal barriers to implementing meaningful, long-term CSR programmes. Externally, companies often lack reliable local partners, struggle to navigate the complexity of social needs, or are unsure how to access available support mechanisms such as public funding, training, or intermediary organisations. Encouragingly, most companies already want to do more — they simply need practical, manageable pathways to act strategically without overextending their limited resources. Community Development must therefore be approached not as a one-time event, but as an incremental process of learning, testing, building partnerships, and growing impact over time.



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Key recommendations

01. Start small — but plan strategically to scale

Even limited CSR actions can be highly effective when connected to a broader vision. Companies should begin with initiatives that are **realistic, relevant to their operations, and supported internally** — then gradually expand or replicate them as confidence, partnerships, and learning grow.

Research shows that companies engaged in one-off activities often struggle to create momentum. A strategic roadmap with small wins can sustain motivation and credibility, especially internally.

02. Seek international funding or co-finance projects via EU/local programmes

One of the most frequently cited obstacles to community engagement is the **perceived cost**. However, various local, national, and EU funding mechanisms exist to support CSR-related initiatives — especially those targeting inclusion, sustainability, or youth engagement.
Companies do not need to bear the full financial burden of social initiatives. Applying for small grants or co-developing projects with NGOs can unlock resources and increase impact while distributing risk.

> "We applied for an annual grant to support vulnerable women in Bulgaria within the global Stop Hunger Initiative of Pluxee — that allowed us to develop valuable partnerships with multiple NGOs, which we carefully selected and adapted the priorities and activities to their concrete needs and challenges."
> (Pluxee, Bulgaria)

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Key recommendations

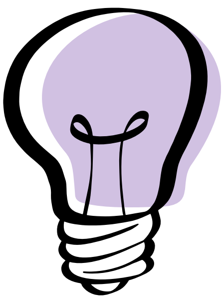
03. Join or form local business–NGO networks to pool resources and share practices

A common theme across countries was the **isolation of SMEs trying to 'do good' on their own**. Networks — whether informal or formal — help overcome resource constraints by enabling shared learning, joint initiatives, and access to trusted partners.
In Austria, for example, SMEs benefit from business-led clusters and thematic alliances with civil society actors (e.g. in environmental education or digital upskilling). In Greece and Bulgaria, NGO-led platforms facilitate matchmaking and capacity-building between companies and community stakeholders.

Case in point

Knowledge sharing in Bulgaria: the Building Bridges initiative

In Bulgaria there is a long-term initiative of 3 large international companies - Shell Bulgaria, Lidl Bulgaria and HPE. The Building Bridges initiative is designed for business owners, managers, team leaders, and HR professionals working in small and medium-sized enterprises who are committed to building a workplace culture rooted in respect, inclusion, and the celebration of individual differences. Experienced experts from large companies share their knowledge, know-how and good practices and give SMEs leaders guidance on how to adapt these practices to their needs, business environment and resources.



Peer learning and joint initiatives reduce the pressure on individual companies/SMEs and build a stronger culture of collective community development.

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Key recommendations

04. Invest in training to overcome internal skill gaps in CSR planning and ESG reporting

CSR efforts often falter not due to lack of interest, but because of **insufficient know-how in planning, executing, and evaluating community initiatives**. Companies report gaps in strategic planning, stakeholder engagement, communication, and especially impact measurement.

Structured training — particularly when tailored for SMEs and delivered by experienced practitioners — helps equip teams with the tools and confidence to act. The most successful companies in our sample acknowledged their internal limits and actively sought external support to strengthen capacity.

In most countries, companies noted a growing awareness of ESG but admitted lacking the tools or understanding to report or improve their performance. Access to training is essential to bridge this knowledge-action gap.

Cross-Country Finding:
Lack of financial and human resources is the most cited internal challenge across all countries.

Whether in Austria, Bulgaria, France, Greece, or elsewhere, SMEs expressed difficulty sustaining CSR efforts due to **operational pressures and staff limitations**. Community engagement is often informal, short-term, and reliant on individual commitment. Formalising roles, processes, and partnerships can help ensure that efforts are not lost when people move on.

External barriers such as unclear local needs, lack of access to community organisations, or administrative hurdles (especially in rural or under-resourced areas) further complicate implementation. Intermediaries and local authorities can play a key role in addressing these gaps — yet companies often lack awareness of where or how to access this support.

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Reflection Prompt for Companies

What barriers (time, resources, knowledge) are holding us back — and what low-cost partnerships or collaborations could help us overcome them?

Ask yourself:

- Are we trying to do everything in-house?
- Could we learn from or join forces with a nearby business or NGO?
- Have we explored funding or co-financing options for our CSR ideas?
- What type of external support would make it easier for us to act?

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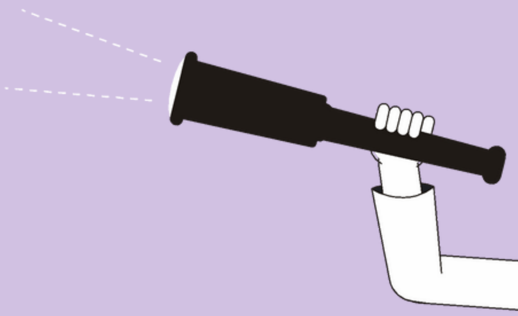
3. Building meaningful community partnerships

Many companies initiate community engagement through sponsorships, donations, or short-term events. While these efforts are appreciated, they rarely lead to sustained impact. What communities truly need — and what businesses ultimately benefit more from — are long-term partnerships grounded in mutual understanding, trust, and shared purpose. Our research reveals a consistent desire among community organisations and local authorities for deeper, more structured collaboration with the private sector. Yet these partnerships often fail to materialise due to misunderstandings, lack of clear communication, or uncertainty about roles and expectations. One key insight from the interviews is that companies and communities often operate in parallel, rather than in partnership — despite overlapping goals and complementary strengths.

To move beyond goodwill and towards meaningful, measurable change, SMEs must embrace co-creation: designing initiatives with communities, not just for them. This approach leads to more relevant, better-received activities and helps companies connect their social engagement to local realities and long-term goals.

From one-off events to co-created local impact



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Key recommendations

01. Approach community partners as equal collaborators — not just beneficiaries

Many community organisations are deeply embedded in local life, with expertise, networks, and understanding that businesses often lack. Yet they are frequently treated as **passive recipients of support rather than strategic partners**. Shifting the mindset from charity to collaboration means engaging these actors early, listening to their insights, and involving them in planning and decision-making.

> The conversations with representatives from non-profit organisations, public authorities, and civil society associations revealed that cooperation between companies and local communities exists, but remains sporadic, inconsistent, and largely short-term in nature. While some organisations reported having experience with corporate partnerships, these collaborations are often limited to seasonal activities, such as donation campaigns around Christmas, or one-off events like tree-planting days and product demonstrations.

Equal partnerships unlock more creativity, build trust, and ensure that CSR actions are rooted in real needs.

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Key recommendations

02. Support long-term initiatives, not just one-off sponsorships

Short-term visibility campaigns (e.g. holiday donations, awareness days) are common but **often disconnected from broader community challenges**. Long-term engagement — even if small-scale — builds credibility and multiplies impact. Examples include multi-year mentoring schemes, repeated educational events, or continuous support for specific vulnerable groups.
Sustained partnerships show the community that the company is **reliable, consistent, and genuinely invested**. They also help businesses develop internal expertise, foster employee ownership, and track progress over time.

Research shows that communities often perceive one-off actions as PR-driven unless followed up with continued involvement or support.

03. Encourage employee volunteering as a bridge between business and community

Employee volunteering is a powerful way to foster mutual understanding and create authentic connections between companies and the communities they serve. From mentoring youth to supporting local events or offering pro bono expertise, volunteers build trust, break down stereotypes, and bring CSR to life inside and outside the organisation.
Involving employees directly also boosts **engagement, morale, and retention** — especially when volunteering is aligned with personal interests and company values.

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Key recommendations

Case in point

Employee volunteering in Bulgaria: “Safety in the car” initiative

One of the companies we interviewed in Bulgaria, a large international company (leader in global sodium carbonate production) implemented a very successful volunteer project for their employees called "Safety in the car". It was an educational initiative, raising awareness on the topic among school children from lower grades (1st to 4th grade), where employees gave lectures to parents and children on the topic in about 50 schools from 2 different regions in the country. The initiative has encountered a high level of commitment from the employees, despite initial skepticism.

04. Make sure community needs are understood — not just assumed

Even well-intentioned initiatives can miss the mark if they are based on assumptions rather than dialogue. Several NGOs reported receiving support for activities they didn’t prioritise, while their core needs at the time remained unaddressed.

The most impactful CSR partnerships start with **listening**: hosting joint meetings, co-designing projects, or conducting small needs assessments. This helps ensure that corporate resources are directed where they’re most valuable — and that communities feel heard and respected.

> “Both sides need to make an effort. What matters is that everyone is convinced of the importance of this cooperation. It’s not about one side or the other — it’s a shared responsibility.”
> (French NGO)

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Research Highlight

In both Greece and Austria, local stakeholders highlighted the positive impact of co-designed initiatives, such as:

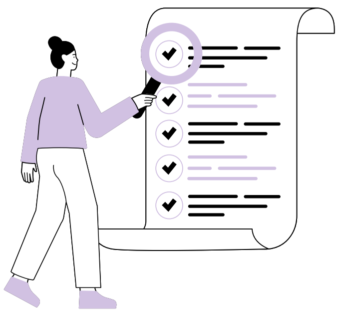
- Career mentoring schemes for unemployed youth
- First aid training delivered by company employees in collaboration with civil protection authorities
- Digital inclusion programmes for older adults or people with disabilities
- Joint sustainability events between green tech companies and local schools or NGOs

These initiatives were effective because they were planned and delivered together — respecting each partner's strengths, goals, and constraints.

Checklist example:

Use this quick reflection tool to evaluate your company's current community engagement approach:

- ☑ Have we identified the key social actors in our community (e.g., NGOs, schools, associations, local authorities)?
- ☑ Do we involve them early in the planning of our CSR initiatives?
- ☑ Are our activities aligned with real, expressed community needs?
- ☑ Are we building partnerships that extend beyond single events?
- ☑ Do our employees have opportunities to contribute through volunteering or expertise?



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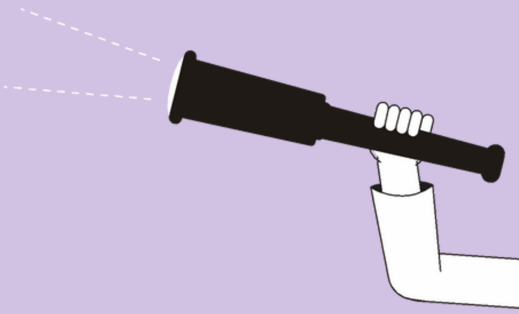
4. From awareness to action: ESG and impact measurement

Embedding ESG principles and measuring outcomes

In recent years, Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) frameworks have emerged as powerful tools not only for compliance, but also for strategic communication, performance management, and stakeholder trust-building. Yet for many small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), ESG still feels out of reach — perceived as overly technical, resource-intensive, or relevant only to larger corporations.
However, our research shows that many SMEs are already making decisions aligned with ESG values: hiring inclusively, supporting local communities, choosing ethical suppliers, and reducing environmental impact — often without labelling these actions as "ESG". This means the shift from awareness to action does not need to start from scratch. It is a matter of building on existing efforts and gradually formalising them through the lens of ESG.
By starting small — with simple tracking tools, human stories, and clear objectives — companies can build momentum and confidence. As capabilities grow, so too can the level of sophistication in reporting. The aim is not to overwhelm, but to empower: measuring what matters, communicating clearly, and learning how to improve over time.



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Key recommendations

01. Begin with storytelling + basic data collection

For SMEs new to impact measurement, storytelling offers a practical and engaging entry point. Personal narratives from employees or beneficiaries humanise your work and make it relatable — while **basic metrics** (e.g. number of volunteers, hours contributed, meals delivered, people trained) provide credibility and accountability. Storytelling is especially powerful when paired with visual formats (infographics, videos, social media posts), and when linked to real outcomes for communities.

02. Use ESG as a management framework — not just for compliance

Rather than viewing ESG as a burden or a tick-box exercise, SMEs should treat it as a **strategic tool** to align their values with their operations and stakeholder expectations. Even without formal standards, the ESG pillars can provide useful guidance:

- **Environmental:** How are we reducing waste, energy use, or emissions?
- **Social:** How do we support employees, communities, or inclusion?
- **Governance:** Are our decision-making processes transparent and ethical?

This mindset shift helps companies think more holistically and make decisions that serve both **business goals** and **social purposes**.

Our research shows that several Austrian companies have begun referencing ESG in client tenders or supply chain audits — not because they are legally required to, but because partners expect it.

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Key recommendations

03. Build capacity progressively: informal → structured → formal

Most companies do not move from zero to full ESG compliance overnight — nor do they need to. The transition typically follows a **progressive path**:

1. **Informal tracking**

E.g. keeping internal notes or pictures of community events, collecting feedback from NGOs, sharing stories in team meetings.

2. **Structured documentation**

E.g. creating a simple spreadsheet to log CSR activities, setting annual goals, assigning internal responsibility for social initiatives.

3. **Formal reporting**

E.g. adopting frameworks like the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) or the European Sustainability Reporting Standards (ESRS); preparing a sustainability report or dedicated CSR section on the company website.

The key is to **start with what you can manage**, and grow from there. SMEs that feel overwhelmed by terminology or expectations should focus first on **clarity and consistency** in how they track and communicate their efforts.

Cross-Country Insight:

Across **all five countries**, companies expressed a strong interest in ESG — particularly in how it connects to community action — but **most lack internal expertise or tools** to measure and report formally.

In **Bulgaria** and **Austria**, for example, some companies already collect ESG indicators alongside personal stories to capture both qualitative and quantitative dimensions. In **France**, one of the interviewed companies aligns its procurement practices with environmental and social values, even in the absence of a structured reporting framework. In **Greece**, familiarity with ESG is still limited, but there is openness to learning — especially through case-based and practical training.

This reinforces a common conclusion: **companies don't need convincing of ESG's value — they need help with the "how"**.

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Reflection Prompt for Companies

Take a moment to reflect:

How are we currently tracking the impact of our community actions — and how could we tell a better story?

Consider the following:

- Are we collecting any data? Is it stored and used meaningfully?
- Could we highlight one story of impact each quarter?
- Who in our company might help lead this effort?

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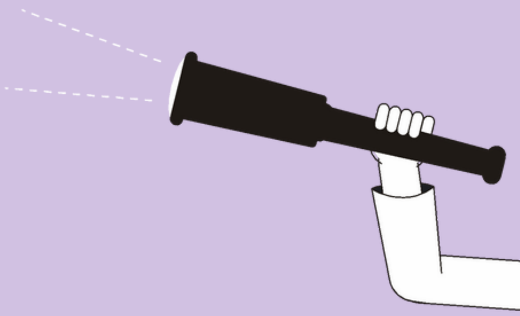
5. Developing skills for Community Development

Behind every impactful community development initiative stands a motivated person — or team — who believes in the cause, understands the context, and can mobilise both internal and external resources. These internal champions are often the bridge between the business and the community. However, in many SMEs, CSR and community development are still driven informally by passionate staff members who lack the time, tools, or mandate to act strategically.

Our findings confirm that training and upskilling are essential to transform good intentions into sustained, structured impact. Whether it's a marketing manager doubling as a CSR lead, or an HR officer coordinating volunteering days, these professionals need tailored support to grow into the role of Community Development Manager (CDM) — even if the title doesn't exist yet in their company.

Developing these competencies doesn't require building new departments or complex systems. What's needed is targeted, flexible training that fits into busy SME environments, speaks the language of both business and community, and builds confidence to lead.

Empowering internal champions to lead engagement



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Key recommendations

01. Provide training in several core competency areas

In addition to the ESG-related knowledge and reporting skills, based on the research findings, we recommend equipping relevant staff with the following essential skills:

- Stakeholder engagement: Learn how to identify key local actors (e.g., NGOs, public authorities, schools), map their interests, and establish meaningful, reciprocal relationships.
- Community dialogue and co-creation: Develop the ability to initiate trust-based conversations, understand the context and needs of local communities, and co-design impactful initiatives that reflect shared priorities.
- Project design and CSR planning: Gain practical knowledge in structuring community engagement initiatives — from setting objectives and timelines to budgeting and risk assessment — with alignment to broader business and sustainability goals.
- Impact measurement and evaluation: Build skills to define clear indicators, collect both qualitative and quantitative data, and assess the effectiveness and value of CSR initiatives in a meaningful and manageable way.
- Communication and storytelling: Understand how to communicate CSR actions both internally and externally — sharing stories that engage stakeholders, reinforce brand values, and increase transparency and accountability.
- Employee involvement and internal mobilisation: Learn how to activate and sustain employee engagement in CSR efforts through inclusive planning, accessible volunteering opportunities, and mechanisms for staff feedback and recognition.

Our research shows a perceived need for more strategic and structured CSR: developing action plans, checklists, or structured annual CSR calendars; setting dedicated CSR budgets to move from ad-hoc to long-term planning; better monitoring and reporting of CSR outcomes.

Key recommendations

02. Opt for blended learning: mix expert-led content with peer learning

Research participants across countries highlighted the value of **external trainers**, especially those with real-world experience in both the business and non-profit sectors. However, they also stressed the power of **peer exchange** and **mentoring.** You could:

- Host **cross-sector workshops** where business and community actors learn together;
- Facilitate **learning groups or roundtables** among companies with different levels of CSR maturity;
- Promote **mentoring schemes** between experienced and novice CSR practitioners.

Blended formats — combining expert input, interactive activities, and community of practice — help participants build both knowledge and confidence, while fostering cross-sector collaboration.

03. Use real case studies to build internal buy-in

One of the most effective ways to create momentum internally is by showcasing **inspiring, relatable examples** — ideally from similar-sized businesses or local contexts.

One of the companies we interviewed in Bulgaria successfully embedded community development by integrating CSR into the role of their marketing manager. This dual responsibility gave the role both visibility and operational capacity, resulting in more strategic and consistent engagement.

Such stories help staff visualise what is possible, reduce perceived risks, and demonstrate that **even small actions can lead to significant impact** — if planned well and aligned with core business functions.

Cross-Country Insights:

Across **Austria** and **Bulgaria**, companies expressed an acute need for support in **social impact assessment, stakeholder engagement and tools for mobilising employees**. In **France**, staff showed strong intrinsic motivation but lacked **structured training opportunities and support from the management**. In **Greece**, there was a **call for hybrid solutions**: combining external expertise with internal learning and seminars. In **Italy**, CSR activities are present but lack formal structure, with most companies managing initiatives informally, without dedicated employees. In this regard, employee engagement is generally moderate and internally focused, while **impact measurement remains the most pressing challenge**. Companies express a growing interest in training—especially on ESG and CSR—and in strengthening their efforts toward vulnerable groups, but the level of awareness towards CSR topics remains mostly at a basic or moderate level.
These insights point to a **shared need for practical, accessible upskilling** that bridges the gap between values and execution.

Checklist example:

Ask yourself:

- Do we have internal champions for community development?
- Are we investing in the skills they need to lead successfully?
- Could we benefit from training, mentoring, or peer exchange to strengthen our efforts?

With the right knowledge, tools, and inspiration, every company — regardless of size or sector — can lead with purpose. Empowering your internal champions is the first step toward long-term, impactful community engagement.

If you don't know where to begin, check out our free blended learning offer – a CDM VET course, which is a training-action programme divided into three phases aimed to build competences of learners on how to improve the link between companies and local communities, through the co-design and the implementation of social impact and sustainable community initiatives. Contact our team or follow our LinkedIn page if you want to learn more about the course and how you could take part in the project.

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Outro: 10 Principles for effective community engagement

These guiding principles are distilled from cross-country insights and reflect what truly drives successful, sustainable, and authentic engagement between companies and communities. They are designed to inspire and guide SMEs taking their first — or next — steps in strategic community development.

1

Start with shared values, not just shared events.

Focus on what truly matters to both your company and the community. Build partnerships on mutual purpose — not just on calendar occasions.

2

Think long-term and local.

Impactful engagement goes beyond short-term sponsorships. Prioritise continuity, local relevance, and partnerships that grow over time.

3

Co-create with the community, not just for it.

The best initiatives are designed together. Involve community partners early, listen to their insights, and build solutions collaboratively.

4

Combine financial support with time and expertise.

Monetary donations are helpful — but lasting change often requires sharing know-how, employee time, and organisational capacity.

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5

Create visibility and trust through transparent communication.

Share your goals, limitations, and achievements honestly. Keep both internal and external stakeholders informed and involved.

6

Align actions with both social needs and business strengths.

Build initiatives that are meaningful to the community — and aligned with your company's values, expertise, and strategic direction.

7

Prioritise impact over image.

Focus on what creates real, measurable change — not just visibility or brand recognition.

8

Engage employees meaningfully.

Involve staff not only as volunteers but as idea contributors and ambassadors. Their motivation and connection matter.

9

Be open to learning and iteration.

Not every initiative will be perfect from the start. Treat community development as an evolving process — and improve along the way.

10

Make it part of your company's story — not just a side note.

Let your community engagement reflect your identity. Integrate it into your brand narrative, your strategy, and your culture.

CDM

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT MANAGER

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