



accting

Advancing behavioural
Change Through
an INclusive Green deal



Inspiration for Corporate Social Responsibility policies: To contribute to the Green Deal and become more inclusive

**Recommendations to businesses/employers to mitigate
the negative impacts of Green Deal policies**

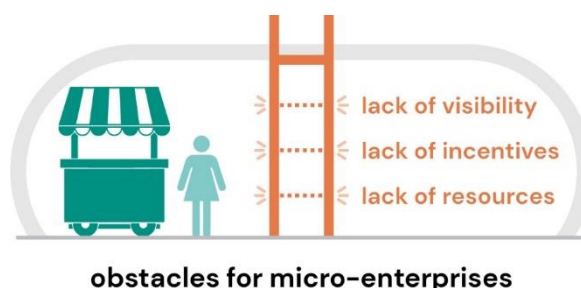
July 2023

This factsheet provides inspiration for those in charge of designing Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) policies in enterprises, based on insights and lessons learned from the ACCTING research project. These potential actions are directed at making the necessary transition that the Green Deal aims to achieve, in an inclusive way to ensure that no-one is left behind. The recommendations included in this factsheet cover different domains of the Green Deal, for which ACCTING has collected evidence.

Findings from ACCTING

1) Clean and efficient energy transition

- Energy communities organise collective and citizen-driven energy actions that help pave the way for a clean energy transition, while moving citizens to the fore. They contribute to increasing public involvement of citizens and social actors in renewable energy projects. Solidarity is a key principle of the just, clean energy transition embedded within the Europe Green Deal, which specifically recognises an important role for community energy systems. Nevertheless, energy communities that address energy poverty and try to have vulnerable groups among their members (i.e., Solidarity Energy Communities) are the exception.
- Most micro-enterprises do not design/implement EEMs, both because those who manage these enterprises have little awareness of them and – in cases where they do – because they face multiple obstacles (lack of resources and skills, lack of incentives and assistance from third parties, etc.). Moreover, it is not easy to identify and reach these micro-enterprises: as seen during ACCTING's research phase, these micro-entrepreneurs are often 'hidden'.



2) Protecting our biodiversity and ecosystems

- Education and training are an important way to promote environmentally beneficial practices and, in the process, change people's behaviour. This is especially the case for younger generations who have grown up in a more technologically intensive world, and who might be more amenable to new forms of training that are attention-grabbing and (potentially) low-cost. Biodiversity protection and habitat preservation – as well as adequate knowledge to engage in these practices – is emphasised by people living near biodiversity hotspots like natural parks and other natural areas.



- The damage caused by private actors and other economic stakeholders to natural habitats and biodiversity may take many forms, ranging from environmental pollution and overexploitation of natural resources to the wider-scale negative impact of industrialisation and consumerism on smaller communities adhering to traditional ways of life. Economic motivations that lead to these situations are counteracted by the responsibilities towards nature often upheld by active (local/indigenous) citizens.

3) Healthy food system for people and the planet

- Bottom-up initiatives that allow people to cultivate their own (organic) food – i.e., through (urban) community gardens – can play a crucial role in raising awareness about the sustainability of food systems and their importance for human health. Moreover, urban and small-scale farming has transformative potential: they can enable or complement short food supply chains for locals, as well as for businesses searching for sustainable food sourcing options.

4) Providing efficient, safe and environmentally friendly transport

- People face everyday choices of transport modes for commuting to work, going to school, and other travel. For many, particularly those in transport poverty, these choices are about how they use the limited resources that are available to them (i.e., time, money ...). The transition to more sustainable means of transportation can be used as an opportunity to provide ways of reducing these daily struggles for vulnerable groups, i.e., by cycling, walking, and/or using reliable and frequent public transport.
- Cycling communities and wider social movements can enable change by providing cyclists with a sense of belonging and with a joint platform for promoting cycling as an alternative to using the car. Despite infrastructural challenges in many countries, there are still numerous examples in ACCTING's research of a shift to using bicycles. The turn to the bike reflects how cyclists feel empowered by the autonomy and wellbeing that cycling provides, while simultaneously being able to save money and contribute to a better environment and climate.



promoting sustainable mobility

Policy recommendations

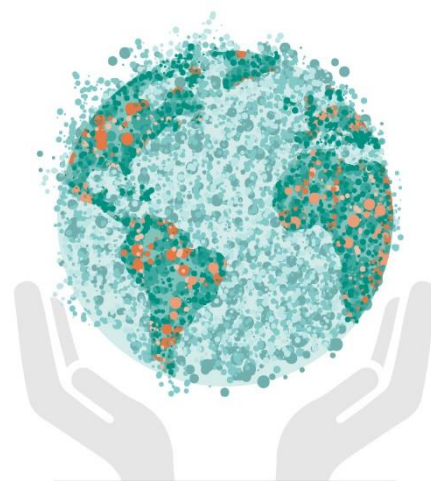
Clean and efficient energy transition

- Support and invest in energy communities that address energy poverty.
- Create (if absent) an energy community, including the enterprise and any people (and other businesses) living near the enterprise, addressing energy poverty according to the enterprise's territorial context (as far as possible).
- Support micro-enterprises (close to the enterprise or cooperating in any way with the enterprise) in the design and implementation of Energy Efficiency Measures (EEMs) to increase the environmental sustainability of their business. This support could be provided through personalised advice based on their own experience (on measures such as the introduction of solar panels, software systems to reduce energy consumption, better thermal insulation, optimisation of transport and mobility, etc.). It could also be provided through information and capacity-building on policies and procedures, available funds and projects, existing networks to join, etc.



Protecting our biodiversity and ecosystems

- Invest in (local) biodiversity and ecosystem preservation, as well as in 'giving-back programmes' that enable staff to volunteer for nature preservation initiatives during their working hours.
- Support local and/or indigenous communities that are working towards the promotion of biodiversity and the protection of the ecosystem by, among other actions, investing in the education and training of people outside these communities with regard to environmentally beneficial practices.
- Proactively promote the assessment of positive/negative effects for biodiversity in business operations and for the immediate surrounding areas, to increase awareness and to initiate beneficial measures.



Healthy food system for people and the planet

- Support and invest in local urban farmers and nearby small-scale food producers who have sustainability as a core value.
- Establish connections with local/short-chain sustainable food producers/farmers and purchase food from them (i.e., for catering needs), while encouraging adjacent companies and other businesses in the sector to do the same.

Providing efficient, safe and environmentally friendly transport

- Support and invest in local initiatives that promote cycling, walking, and other modes of sustainable mobility, especially among vulnerable communities (i.e., disabled people, older people, etc.).
- Incentivise use of soft modes of transport among employees (i.e., premium/bonus for cycling to work, boosting car-sharing/carpooling).



General recommendations

- Incentivise and reward suppliers that address vulnerabilities and promote behavioural change within their own working environment and through their own supply chains.
- Collectively engage with other businesses in initiatives that enable local enterprises and other community actors to pool resources to counter climate change and address vulnerable individuals, i.e., collective green purchase schemes, collective recycling and reuse initiatives, etc.
- Prioritise sustainable procurement practices by choosing suppliers based on their environmental footprint and sustainability practices, as well as by communicating the importance of taking environmental aspects into account to potential suppliers.
- Foster community partnerships with local environmental groups or other businesses to support broader sustainability initiatives.

Better Stories

In ACCTING, we look for inspiring bottom-up initiatives as Better Stories, a concept borrowed from Dina Georgis¹ to refer promising practices that can instil ideas for how to advance individual and collective behavioural change as envisioned by the Green Deal.



ITALY

Energy and Solidarity Community Naples East in San Giovanni a Teduccio is a renewable energy community that is also an educational community. It consists of the Family of Mary Foundation and 40 families in disadvantaged conditions, living in apartments adjacent to the Foundation's headquarters and connected to the same electrical substation. The initiative aims to contribute to the energy transition (including through education and awareness-raising), while at the same time fighting energy poverty. These families are in absolute or near-absolute poverty and very often previously lived in conditions of "energy illegality".



DENMARK

Måbjerg BioEnergy is a project situated in Måbjerg, in one of Denmark's most important agricultural areas. The project was a solution to environmental concerns arising from the effects of run-off from local animal production. Manure is typically spread onto fields, but this was found to release worrying amounts of nitrogen – which was seeping into the fields in question – with negative environmental impacts in the form of water eutrophication in local wetlands. With these wetlands now designated as habitat areas by the EU, the local agricultural industry was forced to change its practices. Local animal farmers worked with larger institutional stakeholders to initiate the development of a biogas plant converting the manure into biogases used to produce heat and electricity. The by-products from this process are also used as fertiliser and as fuel for further energy production.



TURKEY

The Women in Fisheries Society is a women-led NGO that works to improve fisherwomen's conditions, protect coastal ecosystems, and create sustainable economic activities among fishing communities. They organise trainings to empower women fishers, conduct awareness-raising activities, run social change projects developed and led by the women themselves, and carry out research to produce fair solutions that respect both nature and people in the fisheries sector.



SLOVAKIA

The civic association kRaj seeks to change attitudes towards beekeeping, shifting it from a leisure activity and hobby to an activity that protects the sustainability of the landscape and biodiversity, as well as offering a source of secondary income in economically underdeveloped regions. It involves people

¹ Georgis, D. (2013). *The better story: Queer affects from the Middle East*. Suny Press.

from local marginalised Roma communities in its activities, as they generally have little prior knowledge of biodiversity issues. The initiative also organises beekeeping and bee product processing courses for people with mental disabilities.



HUNGARY

Kiút is a work-integrated training programme mentoring vulnerable people in north-eastern Hungary on how to grow cucumbers on their land and generate income by selling the surplus through companies contracted by the NGO running the programme. The target group encompasses people living in extreme poverty – predominantly of Roma origin – who can become registered as primary producers or family entrepreneurs, and thus be able to live from their jobs as producers of sustainable agricultural food. In addition to practical agricultural, entrepreneurial, and accounting skills, underserved, vulnerable people acquire pro-environmental values and obtain education about sustainable food production and consumption.



DENMARK

Eat Grim is a Danish initiative that sells 'ugly' fruit and vegetables – which would otherwise be thrown away – at affordable prices. The initiative connects with food suppliers to buy their 'ugly' food, which it sells weekly to its community as food boxes. Eat Grim is supported directly by farmers in Denmark and Europe and it is completely led by women farmers. Their main objectives are to reduce food waste and change attitudes around food values by, for instance, learning to appreciate 'bad-looking' food. Moreover, they have a very clear mission related to reducing the broader impact of food production and consumption on the climate.



IRELAND

The Bike Hub is an Irish social enterprise running community bike shops in Dun Laoghaire (a suburb of Dublin) and Dublin City with several partners. It aims to make cycling accessible to as many people as possible in the local communities, fostering social and business activities by engaging with the local community through bike-related projects. Targeting young people, older people, women, people with disabilities, and refugees, they offer a range of services, like organising educational workshops, providing free rentals on a fleet of accessible bikes, restoring previously used bikes and donating them to people with low incomes, and organising bike repair and maintenance training courses.



ITALY

Jojob Real Time Carpooling is an Italian application designed to facilitate the daily commute of workers through tailored carpooling for individual companies or areas outside urban centres. The app offers a reliable and safe mobility alternative for employees, with the aim of reducing environmental and economic impact by spreading the culture of sustainable mobility. Jojob also organises incentive campaigns for employees to use carpooling, through cashback and gift cards. Moreover, the service allows companies and territories to visualise in real time the results in terms of CO₂, cost and usage savings.

Green Deal policy area

These recommendations cover the following Green Deal policy areas:

- [A clean and efficient energy transition](#)
- [Protecting our biodiversity and ecosystems](#)
- [A healthy food system for people and the planet](#)
- [Providing efficient, safe and environmentally friendly transport](#)

About ACCTING

ACCTING is an EU-funded project aiming to understand the impact of Green Deal policies on vulnerable groups, prevent inequalities, and produce knowledge and innovations to advance behavioural change at individual and collective levels.

Running until May 2025 and based on two research cycles, ACCTING mobilises research experimentation and innovation to promote an inclusive and socially just European Green Deal, focusing on the inequalities produced by its policies.

Find out more about the project and discover more factsheets at <https://accting.eu>

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