

# HR at the heart of ESG

Turning responsibility  
into action through  
learning and culture



DEVELOR

# Introduction

The ESG conversation is no longer just a topic for the sustainability team. It's a boardroom priority. As environmental, social, and governance challenges reshape industries, forward-thinking organizations are turning to ESG as a lever for resilience, innovation, and talent engagement.

*"True transformation doesn't start with policy. It starts with people. That's why our approach focuses on mindset, culture, and leadership development, helping companies make ESG real across every level of the organization."*

Zsolt Pozvai / Global CEO



**At DEVELOR,  
we believe  
ESG is not just  
a regulatory  
necessity; it's  
a business  
transformation  
opportunity.**

## The three pillars of ESG — Explained in practice

Sustainability is no longer optional. From climate change to circular economy, environmental expectations are accelerating across industries. Smart companies go beyond compliance to build value through environmental innovation.



Did you know?

- Training large AI models can consume over 3 million liters of water, equivalent to filling an Olympic-sized pool.<sup>1</sup>
- Only 9% of all plastic waste is recycled globally. The rest ends up polluting land and sea.<sup>2</sup>
- Recycling aluminum saves 95% of the energy required to produce it from raw materials.<sup>3</sup>

# Environmental responsibility

<sup>1</sup> "Making AI Less 'Thirsty': Uncovering and Addressing the Secret Water Footprint of AI Models"

<sup>2</sup> UN Environment Programme

<sup>3</sup> International Aluminium Institute

# The three pillars of ESG — Explained in practice

## Social impact

Social responsibility entails creating inclusive, equitable, and mentally healthy work environments. From diversity and inclusion to employee well-being, the “S” in ESG is directly linked to performance, retention, and reputation.



Did you  
know?

- Gender-diverse executive teams are 25% more likely to outperform on profitability.<sup>1</sup>
- 75% of Millennials and Gen Z say they prefer to buy from or work for ESG-committed companies.<sup>2</sup>
- Companies on “Best Places to Work” lists outperform the stock market by 2% annually.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> “Diversity wins: How inclusion matters”  
McKinsey & Company

<sup>2</sup> McKinsey & Company

<sup>3</sup> 100 Best Companies to Work For in 2024 -  
Great Place To Work



## The three pillars of ESG — Explained in practice



Good governance is the foundation of long-term trust. From transparent reporting to ethical supply chains, governance shapes how companies are perceived by investors, employees, and regulators alike.

# Governance & Ethics



Did you know?

- 31% of European boards now have dedicated ESG committees — compared to only 8% in the U.S.<sup>1</sup>
- Investors are expected to allocate \$33.9 trillion to ESG-focused assets by 2026.<sup>2</sup>
- The EU's new Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Directive (CSDDD) holds companies accountable for ESG risks across their entire supply chain.

<sup>1</sup> Sustainability in the Spotlight - Harvard Law School

<sup>2</sup> Global ESG Report - PwC

# ESG Starts with HR: A strategic role beyond compliance

Even in companies where ESG is not yet a formal strategy, HR and L&D leaders are already feeling its effects. Regulatory changes, investor demands, and generational shifts are driving organizations to evolve, and HR is at the forefront of this transformation.



## Why ESG matters for HR and L&D

HR and L&D are no longer just support functions, they are now drivers of culture, values, and sustainable change.

**Regardless of formal ESG goals, these teams must:**

- Promote inclusive, diverse, and equitable workplaces
- Ensure psychological safety and well-being
- Prepare employees for sustainability-driven business changes
- Align talent and learning strategies with ESG expectations

*"Neglecting ESG is not just a missed opportunity. It's a business risk. Failing to act can lead to serious consequences across every area of the organization."*

Csaba Szabó / CEO, master trainer at  
DEVELOR Hungary





# Key challenges HR faces

## Limited ESG literacy:

Over 50% of HR professionals lack confidence in integrating ESG into learning and development strategies.

## Talent market pressure:

65% of employees want to work for companies with strong ESG values, and many will reject those that don't.

## Leadership gaps:

81% of L&D leaders say ESG is a core leadership skill, yet only 23% offer programs to develop it.

## Lack of measurable impact:

Only 21% of companies track ESG-related training outcomes.

## Fragmentation across departments:

Just 28% of organizations have a coordinated ESG education strategy.

## The opportunity

**For HR and L&D teams, ESG presents both a challenge and a leadership opportunity. Even in the absence of a company-wide ESG policy, these departments can become early adopters and internal influencers by:**

- Building foundational awareness around ESG principles.
- Reflect and integrate relevant ESG standards into HR policies.
- Foster the establishment of processes that promote ESG culture development across recruitment, onboarding, and daily work practices.
- Advocating for training on psychological safety, inclusive leadership, and sustainability literacy.
- Using learning as a lever for change, one that aligns the organization with external realities and employee expectations.



**ESG is not just a topic  
for sustainability teams.  
It's a culture shift,  
and it starts with HR.**

# Why ESG is here to stay

Some companies may breathe a sigh of relief at postponed international ESG reporting deadlines, but that's the wrong conclusion.

*"Postponement doesn't mean postponing action. It means you now have the time to get it right."*

Eka Khoperia / Lead of ESG Learning  
Experience, Trainer, Coach, Consultant  
at DEVELOR Georgia



**One of the reasons behind current regulatory extensions isn't to give businesses a way out. It's to give them time to prepare.**

**Organizations now have the opportunity to:**

- Understand what ESG really means for their business.
- Build awareness and engagement internally.
- Plan deliberately and integrate ESG into operations.
- Act proactively, rather than reacting under pressure.



**This is not the moment to wait.  
It's the moment to lead.**



# What makes DEVELOR's ESG approach unique?

At DEVELOR, we create learning experiences that drive motivation through engaging, gamified elements, making training immersive and impactful. Our approach is practical and experiential, incorporating simulations and interactive exercises that enable participants to truly engage with, experience, and understand the topic in a hands-on manner, rather than just conceptually.

*"Sustainability starts when people care. We help them care deeply, clearly, and confidently."*

Réka Greff / Head of Learning  
Experience at DEVELOR International



**We believe that behavioral change starts with meaning. The most powerful motivation comes from understanding the „why“ behind a topic.**

That is why the courses in our ESG portfolio are designed to guide participants through the deeper purpose of ESG, showing them its significance and impact. Rather than focusing solely on technical knowledge, we emphasize a mindset shift that helps individuals adopt a sustainable approach both personally and professionally.

**Our core mission is to create real, positive change.**

Through our unique approach, we strive to connect with participants on a deeper level, helping them uncover the foundations, root causes, and broader implications of sustainability.

## We combine:

- **Experiential learning** – gamified simulations and real-world scenarios that inspire action
- **Purpose-driven content** – showing the deeper why behind sustainability
- **Human-centered design** – focused on emotional engagement, inclusion, and cultural relevance
- **Tailored solutions** – adapted to your business context and ESG maturity level

**With over 30 years of experience in leadership and organizational development, we translate complex ESG topics into actionable, business-driven solutions across industries, geographies, and roles.**

# Green Mindset

Change is inevitable

[Learn more about this program](#)



## What it does:

- Introduces climate change fundamentals, carbon footprint management, and sustainability principles.
- Uses interactive games (SAVEARTH) and case studies to make ESG engaging and relatable.
- Encourages employees to connect ESG goals with their daily actions.

## What makes it special:

- Gamified learning: The SAVEARTH simulation enables participants to experience sustainability challenges in a practical and engaging manner.



**Impact:** Employees develop a sustainability-oriented mindset, fostering a culture where ESG becomes a natural part of business decisions.

## Benefits/Results for participants:

- Enhanced awareness of climate risks and sustainability opportunities.
- Clear understanding of how daily business operations impact ESG performance.
- Ability to contribute to corporate ESG goals through individual actions.

## Company benefits:

- Helps companies embed sustainability into corporate culture.
- Reduces resistance to ESG initiatives by fostering employee engagement.

This course was co-authored by TBC Bank and DEVELOR, with financial support from the European Union.

# Green Business

Ensure the future

[Learn more about this program](#)



## What it does:

- Guides companies in identifying ESG-driven business opportunities and risk mitigation strategies.
- Supports organizations in developing realistic action plans for ESG transformation.

## What makes it special:

- Highly interactive workshop tailored to specific business sectors.
- Immediate practical application: Teams leave with a clear ESG action plan.

## Benefits/Results for participants:

- Understanding of ESG's impact on financial and business success.
- Ability to identify sustainability risks and opportunities in business operations.
- Practical tools to develop an ESG roadmap aligned with corporate strategy.

## Company benefits:

- Reduces financial and reputational risks associated with sustainability non-compliance.
- Helps organizations turn ESG compliance into business growth opportunities.



**Impact:** Bridges the gap between corporate strategy and sustainability goals.

This course was co-authored by TBC Bank and DEVELOR, with financial support from the European Union.

# CELEMI Sustainability Simulation

ESG decision-making &  
strategy execution

[Learn more about this program](#)



## What it does:

- Provides a team-based business simulation, where participants navigate ESG-related risks and opportunities.
- Helps decision-makers understand the long-term financial impact of sustainability choices.
- Demonstrates the consequences of short-term vs. long-term ESG strategies.

## What makes it special:

- A highly engaging and realistic learning experience through a business simulation.
- Competitive, team-based learning experience that mirrors real-world business challenges.
- Immediate application: participants make sustainability decisions under business constraints.
- Helps organizations see the financial implications of ESG choices in a practical setting.

## Benefits/Results for participants:

- Ability to make strategic ESG decisions with confidence.
- Improved understanding of financial vs. sustainability trade-offs.
- Experience in collaborative ESG problem-solving.

## Company benefits:

- Helps companies align ESG strategy with profitability.
- Ensures cross-functional ESG understanding and collaboration.
- Reduces risks by preparing teams for regulatory and investor demands.

**Impact:** Leaders and employees gain a practical, hands-on understanding of ESG trade-offs, helping them make informed sustainability decisions.





# Psychological Safety

## Creating an ESG-aligned workplace culture

[Learn more about this program](#)



### What it does:

- Helps leaders understand the importance of Psychological Safety, and its impact on team performance.
- Make leaders aware of their responsibility and tasks in creating Psychological Safety.
- Teaches practical leadership techniques and routines to build and maintain safety in teams.

### What makes it special:

- Provides a structured framework for building psychological safety in a team.
- Uses experiential learning methodology through a complex case study, during which participants act as external advisors to a management team, analyze workplace scenarios, and propose ways to enhance psychological safety for teams and the organization.
- Going beyond the theoretical level, it provides concrete, practical suggestions for leaders to create psychological safety.

### Benefits/Results for participants:

- Improved leadership skills to create an open and trust-based environment.
- Better team collaboration, leading to higher productivity and innovation.
- Enhanced confidence in driving innovation and managing change.

### Company benefits:

- Psychological safety allows employees to speak up, take risks, and innovate, aligning with ESG-driven goals of sustainable business practices.
- ESG frameworks emphasize employee welfare, and psychological safety contributes to lower stress, better mental health, and improved retention rates.
- By integrating psychological safety into ESG strategies, companies can create a resilient, ethical, and high-performing work culture.



**Impact:** Employees feel empowered to take an active role in ESG initiatives, fostering an inclusive and innovation-driven culture of sustainability.

# Diversity & Inclusion (DEI)

Strengthening the "S" in ESG

[Learn more about this program](#)



## What it does:

- Make participants more sensitive to exclusion, discrimination, and inequalities at work.
- Raises awareness of biases and systemic barriers in organizations.
- Teaches inclusive leadership skills to create diverse and high-performing teams.

## What makes it special:

- Uses a highly interactive, experiential learning approach to create a long-lasting impact.
- Helps organizations move beyond compliance toward real inclusion.
- Provides actionable strategies for embedding DEI into corporate culture.

## Benefits/Results for participants:

- Increased awareness of biases and strategies to mitigate them.
- Learn how to become an advocate for an inclusive culture.
- Strengthened ability to contribute to DEI initiatives.

## Company benefits:

- Enhances workforce engagement and retention.
- Improves company reputation in ESG social responsibility efforts.
- Builds resilient and high-performing teams aligned with sustainability values.



**Impact:** Companies strengthen their ESG „S“ (social) pillar, ensuring that sustainability is embedded in workplace culture and leadership practices.

# Lead the change, or follow the consequences

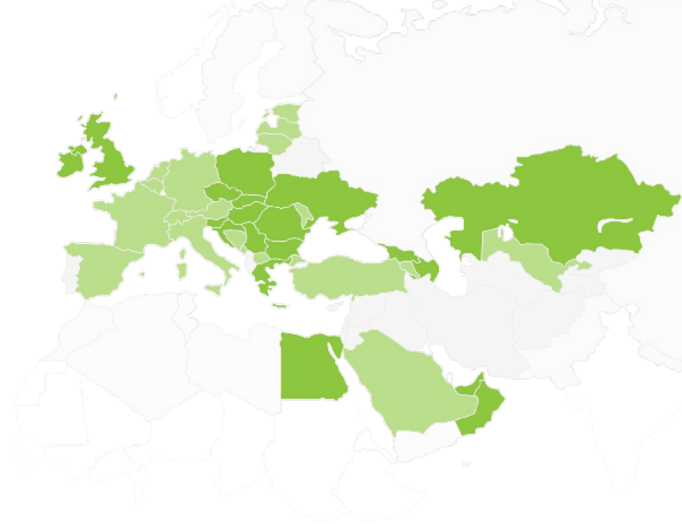
- Embrace ESG or be left behind.
- Educate and empower your people,  
or risk losing them to purpose-driven  
companies.
- Embed sustainability or risk irrelevance.

These are your choices.

The future belongs to organizations that act with responsibility,  
lead with purpose, and cultivate resilient and ethical cultures.  
By integrating ESG into your people strategy and leadership  
DNA, you don't just comply, you compete, attract, and grow.

Ready to move from awareness to action?  
Let DEVELOR be your partner on the ESG journey.

DEVELOR



## About DEVELOR

**DEVELOR is a leading international training and development network** dedicated to unlocking the full potential of individuals and organizations. Through our wide range of services, including professional training, coaching, consulting, and both individual and team diagnostics, we help transform workplaces into homes of growth where teams and leaders thrive.

**We are passionate about creating long-lasting partnerships that drive sustainable growth.** Our expert solutions are designed to address today's challenges and prepare your organization for the future. With DEVELOR, you'll build a resilient, mentally healthy workforce that's ready to succeed and grow.