



ESG for the Irish Funds Industry

The aim of this course is to introduce to participants the fundamental concepts with regard to ESG and its impact for the Irish Funds industry. The training is aimed at those working in the funds and asset management industry who need to understand the prominent sustainable finance/ESG legal requirements and objectives as well as future developments.

The course will focus on:

Sustainability and associated global challenges

- Core concept of sustainability, macro level sustainability challenges, climate as a specific sustainability challenge.

Policy responses to global sustainability challenges and implications at a global, country and business level

- UN SDGs and Paris Agreement, biodiversity COP
 - What does Net Zero and nature-positive mean, how does it play out globally, at country level, at industry sector and at business level (focus on financial services and Net Zero commitments) and for individuals. EU Sustainable Finance Action Plan, Green Deal, Fit for 55; who/what is driving the agenda and why; introduce Ireland's sustainable finance roadmap, climate action plan etc.

Relevance of sustainable finance to the economy, business and financial industry

- The why, what and how? Why is sustainable finance relevant to the economy, business and financial services; the business case; sustainable finance as a process of taking ESG into account, finance supporting economic growth while reducing pressures on the environment and society, transparency when it comes to risk and sustainable finance as an agenda driven by specific stakeholders; what are the drivers, catalysts and business case for financial industry and investment funds specifically? Climate-related financial risk.

Risks and opportunities associated with the growth of sustainable finance

- R -> greenwashing; inadequate governance-oversight-risk management; skills gap; disproportionate disclosure burden; cost of regulatory burden and risk of non-compliance; climate litigation; ESG cultural backlash; failure of regulation;
- O -> innovation; new product; talent attraction and retention; access to capital; improve risk management; get ahead of ESG compliance and reporting; enhanced brand and increase competitive advantage, steer capital to economic activities supporting E & S goals;
- Which Rs & Os are most relevant for investment funds.

Stakeholders in the ESG space as well as the impact these have on the investment industry

- Institutional investors (asset owners and asset managers), policy makers (EU, national governments), central banks and financial regulators (supra-national and national); financial services firms (across all FS sectors); data providers; rating agencies, standard setters, legal and other professional advisers, stock exchanges. Who and what is most relevant for the investment funds industry.

ESG products in the asset management and investment funds space

- Origin and evolution of ESG, ESG investing spectrum (traditional <-> impact investing); products in the asset management & investment funds space; UNEP FI initiative, UN PRI overview, resources and tools (How do asset managers utilise UN PRI? Can service providers become signatories to UN PRI and what does that mean); ESG across asset classes; Impact of SFDR and EU Taxonomy on fund products, EU and non-EU manager dimension.

ESG ratings in investment decisions

- Integrating sustainability in ratings and market research – disclosure requirements for credit ratings and ESG ratings; what are the issues here for fund products, underlying assets

Financial/Non-Financial reporting and disclosure methods

- Voluntary sustainability reporting ecosystem – TCFD – CSRD – ISSB – SFDR – EU Taxonomy. How this all impacts at fund & fund service provider level and at investee company / underlying asset level. Including a look at example SFDR disclosures; what is role of fund management companies proprietary v third party mancos, what does it mean for governance and oversight in a delegated fund structure.

Sustainable Finance Skillnet

Sustainable Finance Skillnet (SFS) is a national network that works to develop skills and leadership capacity to advance ESG best practice across Ireland's financial services ecosystem.

Ann Shiels FinLexSus



Ann Shiels established FinLexSus in January 2022, a sustainable finance regulatory business, working with regulated fund management companies and asset managers to upskill on, understand and implement EU sustainable finance regulatory requirements including SFDR and EU Taxonomy. Ann worked in the Irish funds and regulated financial services industry for over 20 years, mainly as a qualified solicitor in a large Irish corporate practice. Ann holds a certificate in Sustainable Finance from the University of Cambridge's Institute for Sustainability leadership, is a Green Team Network executive member and lectures in sustainable finance at the UCD Michael Smurfit Graduate Business School and the Institute of Bankers in Ireland.

Delivery

The programme will be delivered in-person, in IOB, 1 North Wall Quay, Dublin 1, D01 T8Y1

Dates

This training programme will be delivered on the following dates from 10am - 2pm.

- Wednesday 17 April
- Wednesday 24 April

Fee

Sustainable Finance Skillnet fee - €525
Programme fee (Non-funded) - €750

How to apply

For further information and to apply, please contact skills@isfcoe.org