

# Talent and Skills to Advance in Sustainable Finance

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With targeted talent development key to scaling up financial centres sustainable finance activities, [Barcelona Centre Financer Europeu \(BCFE\)](#), member of [Financial Centers for Sustainability \(FC4S\)](#), organized **Talent and Skills to Advance in Sustainable Finance** workshop. Barcelona Stock Exchange received more than 50 attendees in hybrid format (in person and online).

Mr. [Luis J. Herrero Borque](#), President of [Barcelona Centre Financer Europeu \(BCFE\)](#), was in charge of opening event and exposing the interest that sustainable finance talent agenda arouses.



One of the top challenges nowadays is the lack of sustainable finance talent and technical skills continues to be a critical issue to the growth of the sustainable finance. Therefore, talent development is a challenge facing all financial centers. In this journey, we had the opportunity of discussing with experts of [Barcelona Centre Financer Europeu \(BCFE\)](#) members, [Financial Centers for Sustainability \(FC4S\)](#) members and entities of Spain.

[Sustainable Finance Ireland](#) Director, who support Sustainable Finance Ireland Skillnet, Mr. Rahim O'Neill, provided the keynote speech. He highlighted “*Mapping of skills needs to particular roles is an ongoing need*” and “*Courses and learning still needs to move away from generalist to skills specific training – there is a supply challenge with this*”.



Then, Mr. [Josep Soler Albertí](#), CEO at [IEF - Institut d'Estudis Financers](#) and member of the Steering Committee of [Barcelona Centre Financer Europeu \(BCFE\)](#) for Sustainability (BCFE4S), was in charge of moderating the session.



Mr. [Josep Soler Albertí](#) started the first roundtable entitled **Models of training and certifications in Sustainable Finance**.



At first, Mr. [Sebastian Rink](#), Green and Sustainable Finance Expert at [Frankfurt School of Finance & Management](#), explained “*The emergence of different skill requirements in the field of sustainable finance leads to the need for diverse training offerings that differ in depth, format, length, and focus*”. Furthermore, “*The Spanish and the German situations on the sustainable finance skills gap are very similar. We are happy to continue the conversation with our Spanish friends*”.



Secondly, Mr. [Alvaro Drake Escribano](#), General Secretary at [IEB](#) and Director of Customized Training of the entity, explained “*IEB is training 3 different layers: short programs focused on board directors and executive committees of companies; programs more specialist and in detail between 40 and 50 hours in which they given tips and tools about sustainable finance; and last but not least, the key point is that IEB collaborates as independent accreditor in EFPA Spain certifications and, in particular, in ESG certification*”.



Next, Ms. [Claudia Antuña Rubio](#), [Analistas Financieros Internacionales \(AFI\)](#) partner, Investment analyst and AFI Global Investments SGIIC; emphasized “*Sustainability has positioned itself as a key element in the conception of traditional finance. Sustainability has ceased to be a tangential element to become a fundamental element in the professional development of any person of the financial sector. We must be aware that sustainability is a matter in constant evolution. And this requires a continuous update on the best market practices, regulatory impacts, or the new dynamics that lead the way in the different industries. That is why it is essential to invest in training in sustainability*”.



Then, Ms. [Eva Hernandez Castells](#), Head of Sustainable Finance at [IEF - Institut d'Estudis Financers](#) and member of the Steering Committee of [Barcelona Centre Financer Europeu \(BCFE\)](#) for Sustainability (BCFE4S), explained “*The training on sustainable finance has to develop and become more specialized as the industry evolves and becomes more sophisticated*” and “*There will be a demand for training on more practical topics, applicable to certain areas in the finance industry, such as compliance or risk management. Also, corporates will need training on sustainable finance issues to accomplish the requirements of financial institutions and investors*”.



Finally, Ms. [Andrea Carreras-Candi](#), General Director at [EFPA Spain](#), explained “*EFPA Spain with more than 35000 certificate holders, is the Spanish organization of the leading professional standards setting body for financial advisors and planners in Europe. Since 2000 we offer 4 qualifications designed to cover ESMA Guidelines (EIA, EIP, EFA and EFP). In Spain, since 2017 these four qualifications were included (to inform and advise financially to clients) in the list of the Spanish Regulatory Organism (CNMV). Furthermore, in 2019 we launched 2 qualifications which cover the knowledge for the real estate and mortgage sector. Last but not least, due to an increase in the awareness of clients and advisors to invest and recommend sustainable financial products, we launched March last year our EFPA ESG Advisor certificate. Up today we have more than 1100 professionals qualified with the EFPA ESG Certificate. All our certifications require continuous education (CPD’S) in order to keep them in force*”.



After this potential roundtable, started the second one, moderated by Mr. [Josep Soler Albertí](#) too and entitled ***Practical experience of how to train staff in ESG criteria.***

In the beginning, Ms. [Sandra Rockett](#), Director of Wealth & Corporate Distribution at [Irish Life Investment Managers \(ILIM\)](#), highlighted “*Sustainability is a unique strategic initiative which talks to several different business objectives and training and upskilling enables a number of very real and tangible business benefits; enables the transition of asset to a more sustainable versions; enables business meet the regulatory expectations and obligations; enables a real connection between our people, our purpose and our stakeholders; and ultimately helps us achieve a real and positive impact in terms of the footprint we leave on the environment and broader society*”.



Afterwards, Mr. [J. Javier Perez Hernando](#), Corporate Learning PO at [BBVA](#), explained “The key to train staff in BBVA is learning at the heart of the strategy to build sustainability capabilities globally. For doing that, we have learning tailored journeys, certificated & gamified progress and 3-layer learning map: the first is the beginner with extra resources and internal certification; then, when the first layer is passed, the second one is the intermediate with, on one hand, obligatory training with fundamentals and internal certification, and, on the other hand, specific training with business areas and HQ areas; and finally, the expert layer, with international and strategic training programs, specialized paths, international certifications and senior management”.



In the end, Mr. [Matteo Ghezzi](#), ESG Strategy Director at [Banco Sabadell](#), explained “Given the current situation is critical to educate the society in Sustainability to define a common roadmap to reach a sustainable transition. Banks have a central role in this transition for their relationship with all the society and the capability to finance and multiply impacts. That’s why we as Banco Sabadell has defined a sustainable commitment and have organized our activities based on 4 ESG pillars” and “Training in ESG and introducing new skills is vital to reach this commitment. We have developed our training programs on 3 layers: firstly, training on general ESG concepts for all the employees; secondly, training on the ESG skills required to perform our jobs (Sustainable finance); and thirdly, ad-hoc training to tackle concrete ESG challenges in our activity”.



Finally, the attendees in person and online had the opportunity of asking speakers and resolving any queries that could arise about the topics covered.

In closing this workshop, Mr. [Luis J. Herrero Borque](#), President of [Barcelona Centre Financier Europeu \(BCFE\)](#), was in charge of closing event and thanked those who participated, attended and made it possible, specially Barcelona Stock Exchange for hosting the event.



**[LINK TO THE RECORDING OF THE WORKSHOP](#)**