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# CSRD and its Double Meaning for Sustainable MICE and Business Hotels Worldwide - All Inclusive

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10–12 minutes

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## **The Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive (CSRD) – A Summary of the Changes**

In summary, the CSRD is an EU regulation that requires companies of a certain size to produce a standardized sustainability report. There was a reporting requirement before, but it was limited to the financial impact of sustainability management. However, this does not reflect today's reality, which makes sustainable action by companies indispensable and unavoidable. With the CSRD, the EU has therefore enshrined the principle of dual materiality, which means that reporting covers not only the impact of sustainable initiatives on the company (and its finances), but also the impact of the company on people and the environment. Also new is the standardization of reporting according to EU requirements, which ensures comparability, and the mandatory external audit, which also applies to financial reporting.

For more information on CSRD, who it primarily affects, and details on innovations and implementations, see, among others, the website of [the Europea Commission](#).

### **Why is it Important for Sustainable Economic Development?**

The CSRD places sustainability reporting on an equal footing with financial reporting, thereby sending an important signal: business can only be sustainable and responsible if it takes responsibility for the environment and its fellow human beings. In addition, reporting forces large companies in particular, which can have a significant leverage effect, to address their impacts, review the efficiency of their sustainability measures, and expand them where necessary.

## Impact on the Hospitality Industry

The sustainability reporting requirement will, of course, also affect hotels and accommodation providers. Initially, it will affect large hotel companies and those that are part of a group, followed by medium and small hotel companies in the following years. Detailed reporting will be required, and sustainable hotels will have an advantage: in most cases, they already produce sustainability reports and monitor their initiatives, whether it's energy consumption, water use, or waste production. Credible and detailed sustainability certifications that already produce reports and conduct external audits will also become more important. Not only for their own reporting but also to appeal to business travelers and companies taking advantage of MICE offerings.

*MICE stands for Meeting, Incentive, Conference, and Event and refers to hotels or venues that specialize in meeting the needs of business travelers.*

This is how the hospitality industry in general, and sustainable hotels in particular, are facing new challenges:

- As sustainability reporting becomes more standardized, existing structures and processes may need to be adapted or redesigned.
- The offer of the hotels in the MICE industry has to be adapted to the new needs of the business travelers and the event organizers.
- To do this, one's sustainability must be communicated in a transparent, understandable, and credible way. Read more about this in our [newsletter series on sustainability communication in tourism](#).

**Selection from the Green Pearls® Portfolio: Sustainable**

## Hotels with Conference Services

With its new MEET° room, [OLM Nature Escape](#) in South Tyrol offers a sustainable option for business meetings and intensive workshops. The round shape of the meeting room reflects the architecture of the eco-aparthotel and can accommodate up to 20 people. Equipped with modern technology, it meets the high demands of today’s business meetings. The OLM team has already seen an increase in demand for this offer, which clearly shows that sustainable conference options are gaining in importance.

Located just a few kilometers from Munich, the former stud farm [Gut Sonnenhausen](#) offers an exceptional conference atmosphere. Surrounded by meadows and forests, several conference rooms are available, all of which create an inspiring environment with works of art and proximity to nature. Modern (presentation) technology is available in all rooms, and regional organic products are provided for your physical well-being. The estate places great emphasis on sustainability, even in the supporting program for workshops and conferences. Herbal workshops, garden tours, or guided nature hikes enrich every event.

At [Klosterhof – Alpine Hideaway & Spa](#) in Bavaria, companies have access to a variety of meeting rooms that can be customized to meet their needs. In addition to modern technical equipment, there are wellness offerings that can be combined with meetings. After a productive day, business travelers can relax in the hotel’s spa or the surrounding countryside. In addition, it is possible to integrate special programs such as burnout prevention or nutritional counseling into the conference concept, making Klosterhof particularly interesting for holistic, sustainable meetings.

[Hotel Okelmann’s](#) in Lower Saxony also offers several conference

rooms for small and large events. The family-run hotel is committed to sustainability and fairness. All conference packages include organic and fair-trade coffee, as well as regional snacks and organic meals. They also offer mindful team events with local partners, such as organic coffee tastings or alpaca hikes.

[You can find more sustainable business hotels in our newsroom.](#)

## **The Dual Role of MICE and Business Hotels in Relation to the Directive: An Assessment by Three Industry Players**

As mentioned above, sustainable business hotels and hotels specializing in MICE customers have a dual role. On the one hand, they are already or will be required to produce a sustainability report based on the CSRD. On the other hand, they are becoming increasingly important to business travelers and conference organizers because of their reporting obligations, which include the impacts and emissions caused by conferences, events, and business travel.

Stephan Bode, owner of the award-winning conference and wellness hotel [SCHWARZWALD PANORAMA](#), has also noticed. As an established pioneer in the field of sustainability, companies have long been coming to the hotel to hold certified green meetings or climate-friendly conferences. According to Bode in an interview with Green Pearls®, the numbers are increasing. He sees the reason for this in the increasing external pressure, for example from the CSRD, to act sustainably.

*«In my opinion, there are no arguments against sustainability and there is no such thing as „it's too expensive“. How expensive is it*

<p><i>then? How expensive is it if we do nothing? [...] Every company can do something; every individual can do something.»</i></p> <p><b>Stephan Bode, SCHWARZWALD PANORAMA</b></p>
<p>More and more companies are taking advantage of the opportunity to use the SCHWARZWALD PANORAMA not only as a conference venue but also as a source of inspiration for their own initiatives, explains Stephan Bode. He himself is increasingly in demand as a speaker in his own hotel, he adds.</p>
<p><b>In Erlangen, Sustainable Conference Offerings have been Expanded</b></p> <p>Ben Förtsch’s <a href="#">Hotel Luise</a> in Erlangen, Germany, is considered a pioneer and beacon among sustainable hotels. In addition to numerous other projects, the range of conference and event services has been significantly expanded in recent years. Existing rooms have been redesigned, renovated, and upgraded. New venues have been added, such as the Room 20 Lounge. Common to all is a biophilic design with lots of greenery and live plants, as well as various upcycling elements and, in some cases, access to the outdoors. „Of course, every conference is held as a green meeting: sustainable conference materials, organic drinks and food, and any CO2 produced is offset,” says Laura Heufelder of Hotel Luise.</p>
<p>The hotel offers assistance in designing an individual supporting program for the conference, workshop, or product presentation, for example with guided tours through the microforest or the hotel. It is difficult to say whether the demand for green meetings has increased as a result of the CSRD, says Heufelder. The hotel has</p>

seen an increase in demand, but this is certainly also due to the expanded range of services and the increased reach and awareness resulting from projects such as the [Wall of Change](#).

## **The CSRD also has Implications for Hotels outside Europe**

Hotels in Europe are not the only ones affected. An international trend is emerging. The Thai luxury resort [Keemala](#) in Phuket, known for its unique architecture, is already seeing a growing demand for green meeting concepts, but is taking a relaxed approach to the challenge. „With our sustainable practices and facilities, we are well equipped to meet these demands,” the team wrote in response to an inquiry from Green Pearls®. With eco-friendly meeting rooms with natural ventilation, energy-efficient lighting, and eco-materials, as well as the ability to adapt rooms to different group sizes or move the meeting outside, the resort offers a high degree of flexibility and customization when it comes to organizing business events. In addition, the resort offers the benefits of holistic sustainability management: green catering with local products (some from the resort’s garden), comprehensive waste management to reduce waste, no single-use plastics, and an experienced event management team that has organized numerous events. This means that sustainability requirements can also be met for meetings held abroad.

## **Sustainability is Taken on a New Level of Importance**

The CSRD poses far-reaching challenges for companies in all sectors, both in terms of reporting content and implementation.

Sustainable hotels have an advantage in some areas due to the reporting and monitoring structures that are often already in place, but they also face increased demands from their (business) customers. In general, the CSRD provides a legal framework and an impetus for sustainable action in the economy that has long been lacking – in tourism as well as in other sectors.