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**Green innovation and circular economy: The
case of the B-Corp platform**

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1. INTRODUCTION

Nowadays society faces many challenges such as sustainability, unemployment, especially youth unemployment, high levels of pollution, sustainable energy, climate change, migration, among others. For Europe, since the beginning of the 1990s, sustainable development has been fundamental. In fact a project has been developed with increasing importance within the governmental policies of both the European Union and the member countries.

The choice of the theme green innovation for me was a different challenge from the other available themes related to an issue that had been worrying me for some years now, climate change. With the elaboration of this work I would like to explain the possible actions that can be carried out to change to more sustainable habits and to know which companies carry out their production or provide their services in a sustainable method.

The main objective of the first part of the study is to diagnose the present and future environmental initiatives developed by the European Union to establish in society and in all governments to achieve the objectives set by the European Union to reach a sustainable economy and social equity.

In the second part it has the purpose of knowing current companies, mechanisms and requirements to know what a type B certification consists of. That guarantees that the production or provision of services of the different companies that are in the analysed web page, B-Corp, is carried out in an efficient and respectful way with the environment. In this way we will be able to get to know the pioneering companies in this new economic model and have them as a reference for future new organizations.

In the following pages I will try to analyse these challenges especially those related to pollution, sustainable energy and climate change. I will define the concepts of the green economy and the circular economy, explain the strategies promoted by the European Union to fight climate change and the measures adopted. I will also talk about the ecological transition from the current model to an economy based on the circular economy that will be the engine of the transition and thus slow down climate change, and I will explain the principles and basic characteristics of this new model. We will look at some control and support measures proposed by the European Union and the possible benefits that are expected to be achieved with this new model of the circular economy.

Furthermore, I will talk about the action plan established by the European Union for the implementation of measures and standards in the coming years in order to reach the

objectives set in 2050 and achieve climate neutrality. To finish, I will make a study of the B-corp web page that will explain its history, main characteristics, the role it plays and I will analyse some results that it offers us highlighting some companies that provide their services or make a production that respects the environment.

The methodology used in the first blocks of the study will be based on secondary sources of information. Consequently, I analysed information from diverse studies and also information available from the European Union for subsequent analysis, extraction of ideas and main conclusions, defining the main concepts by preparing a theoretical part. The third block will consist of the study of the B-corp website and finally the conclusions drawn from this study and the references.

BLOCK 1. GREEN INNOVATION

2. GREEN ECONOMY

We are currently in a model of intensive growth based on the intensive use of natural resources, water, fossil fuels, etc. This is what some authors call the waste model, which in turn negatively affects the economy and society due to the increase in prices of both energy and food.

In this model we have suffered three major crises in the 21st century: economic crisis, climate change and energy crisis have favoured the drive by governments to overcome these major problems crises and try to make the growth model more sustainable. Environmental sustainability has become a very important factor that favours job creation and social inclusion.

Jaca et al. (2017) suggest that the green economy is about reducing the environmental impact and using resources efficiently, but at the same time they insist on expansionist growth and infinite growth. This approach does not solve the problems from the base because they are oriented towards those who do not comply with the rules will pay a penalty, do not promote changes in the system to solve the problems.

One way of explaining sustainability is with the so-called green economy. Its main feature is that all processes are ecological and sustainable seeking to reduce the impact and risks that they exert on the environment. The main measures that governments have considered are to improve public environmental policies.

The United Nations, UNEP (2010) cited in Ramos - Díaz (2015: 434-435) affirm: "The green economy is responsible for seeking to reduce both environmental risks and biodiversity with lower carbon emissions and more efficient use of resources. All this in

the most social way possible to reduce social differences". Additionally, it also suggests that the green economy is an essential element of 21st century policy and must therefore integrate social equity and economic well-being with ecological risk reduction.

The green economy is essential for the consolidation of employment and sustainable development, according to the international labour organization, from now on ILO, its best programme allows for solutions to environmental problems and thus to face global challenges. Promoting social inclusion and economic development by involving both employers and workers and government. This is why the ecological transformation of systems is so necessary to make good resource management efficient and to lower carbon emissions, transforming society to be more sustainable.

The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, from now on OECD distinguishes capacity as the fundamental merit of the green economy with the aim of achieving economic growth by ensuring the sustainability of the natural resources on which we depend for their further use.

Ramos - Díaz (2015) explains that the way in which the green economy is approached from the most important government organizations is based on imposing a price on nature in order to be able to negotiate with it using it as another financial product limiting the new possibilities of a new sustainable growth model.

The phenomenon of ecological transition is about introducing us to a new economic model based on environmental sustainability, to leave the current one, which is based on expansive growth. This new sustainable system integrates both social and economic aspects, with new production, consumption and distribution processes that are more respectful of the environment, replacing the capitalist model of mass consumption, profit maximization and increased wealth with a sustainable model.

Ramos - Díaz (2015) suggest these two measures to boost green energy:

1. United Nations, ILO, EU defend that the crisis is a good opportunity to approve a series of measures for the improvement of the economy that benefits the environmental sectors.
2. Linking social and economic aspects, that is to say driving change by integrating social welfare with economic growth. Creating a more sustainable economic system but at the same time including equality and poverty reduction as a great more inclusive model that takes into account these three variables.

Moreover in the double energy transition we find some challenges that the new economic model has to face in order to achieve a good consolidation and expansion. First we see more developed economies with higher incomes trying to achieve a more sustainable model with less dependence on raw materials and fossil energy with the progress of new more efficient and clean energies.

Secondly, we find developing economies that are still in the growth phase from agricultural to industrial models with the increase of fossil energies.

Cosbey, Khor and Ocampo (2012) cited in Ramos - Díaz (2015: 437-438) say:

This double energy transition is generating an intense debate on the real possibilities of the Green Economy to respond to the great energy and social challenges we face. The United Nations provides positive keys to overcome this double transition by recommending that high-income economies consolidate their transition to sustainable production and consumption patterns and at the same time transfer knowledge and financial resources to developing economies to facilitate their energy transition.

With regard to the more developed economies, based on their main objective of regular growth, they have to introduce measures and practices that are more sustainable with the environment, but taking care that these measures are introduced gradually over time and are not in a perpetual transition to achieve a 100% sustainable model.

With the financial crises of recent years and their subsequent recoveries, the energy transition has been negatively affected due to the lack of investment and the difficulty in obtaining financing for the development and implementation of new forms of production. For these reasons and the current approach to the Green Economy as a model benefits global corporations through their financial resources and by using nature as an asset of their own from which they can continue to benefit.

Fischer & Fasol (2013) and Unmüßig, et al. (2012) cited in Ramos - Díaz (2015) describe that the green economy continues to leave out the fundamental principles of human rights because it continues with the model of capitalism that seeks exclusivity with respect to value and price, this being the highest possible. For these reasons it continues to promote the increase of social differences and the destruction of resources.

The concepts of sustainability, environmentally friendly growth, among others, have been introduced into the meetings and objectives of the European Union since the late 1990s. Various strategies have been formulated and updated over the years.

In the same way, increasing resource efficiency as a major global strategy along with the growth of emerging economies and globalization has fostered global competition for recyclable and sustainable products. This has led to higher prices due to the scarcity of available resources in the different markets affecting especially countries dependent on others with a large number of imports, e.g. the EU. For this reason some non-EU companies have easy and cheap access to resources facilitating a competitive advantage over their competitors.

Ecorys and IDEA (2009) cited in Koen Rademaekers et al. (2012) propose the existence of a positive connection between a country's competitiveness and resource efficiency, arguing from the evidence that it increases the higher this productivity is in certain sectors.

In addition, the EU's dependence on imports and the scarcity of own resources are a major threat to global competitiveness, making resource efficiency a strategic factor in the labour market that is very important for the European economy.

For this reasons, Ecorys and IDEA (2009) cited in Koen Rademaekers et al. (2012) argue that thanks to the interest in increasing resource efficiency and the adoption of environmental regulation, the European Union's ecological industry has become a very important source of employment and economic growth.

However, the problem observed in this growth has been that it has been driven by underdeveloped countries have successfully created more efficient and environmentally friendly technologies, this development has caused more developed countries to promote this new vision of sustainable growth to remain competitive globally.

Europe must create and maintain a competitive advantage, it is important that companies invest in resource efficiency and environmentally friendly technologies, just as using resources efficiently will reduce costs.

To promote green jobs it is important to implement and promote sustainable innovation, thus improving the industries dependent on these resources that are treated more sustainably with the introduction of more innovative and respectful processes obtaining in turn both economic benefits, ecological and improving the image offered to customers to increase their competitive position.

3. EUROPE STRATEGY

3.1. Europe 2020 strategy

The Europe 2020 Strategy is launched in 2010 by the European Union and pretends to boost the socio-economic progress of the member countries based on sustainable development. It seeks to unify aspects such as intelligent growth, where it unifies innovation and education, sustainable growth, which brings together greenhouse gas emissions, environmental impact and climate change, and finally social growth that is based on reducing poverty and employment.

This European strategy is aligned with some research effort. For example, Maastricht (1992) cited in Ramos - Díaz (2015:449) affirm: "growth must be sustainable, intelligent and inclusive, sustaining in the commercialization of the environment and in a modification of the productive model based on the requirements of the growth and stability pacts". This also included in the article Europe 2020 Strategy (Eurostat, 2017) which details the Union's agenda for employment and growth for the decade making a special mention to sustainable, intelligent and inclusive growth as resources to increase productivity, competitiveness and implement a sustainable economy.

The relationship between energy and climate change is based on the use of fossil fuels to obtain energy. Indeed these fossil fuels are the ones that increase global warming. Aware of this problem, the Europe's strategy reinforced in the Paris Agreement in 2015 seeks to reduce consumption of fossil fuels and to boost an economy where energy efficiency and renewable energy sources predominate.

However, for the time being, the strategy still has a weak reference in European countries due to their limited economic and political influence in the environmental sectors. If full integration and innovation are to be achieved, the strategy must increase its ambition to maximize the exploitation of the available potential. In order to do so, the strategy sets out a number of objectives to motivate and force all EU countries to improve on sustainability.

These are the main areas where targets have been set to achieve the results of the strategy, along with some examples:

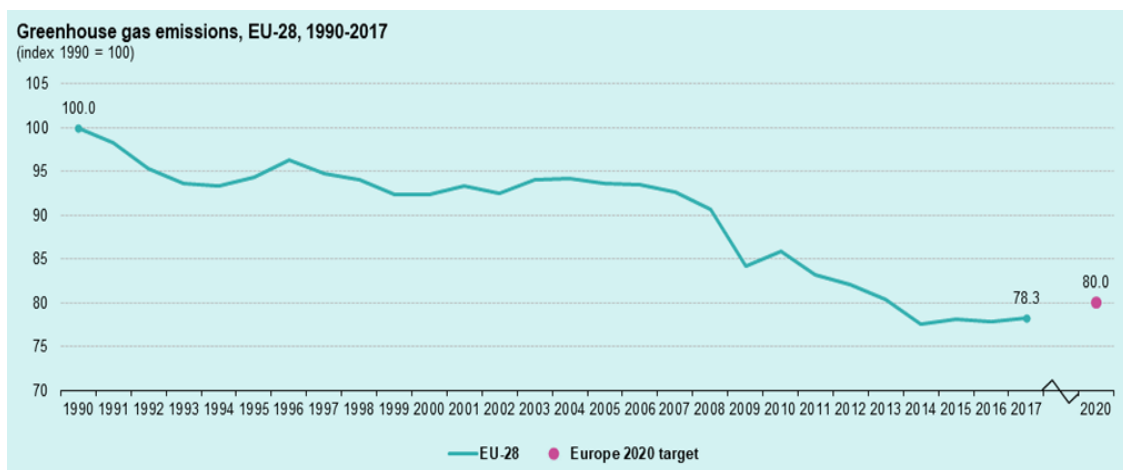
- Employment, seventy-five percent of the population between the ages of 20 and 64 is available for work.
- Research and development, more than 3% of GDP must be invested in R&D.

- Climate change and energy, greenhouse gases will be reduced by at least 20% compared to the early 1990s. Final energy consumption from renewable sources will be increased by 20 percent. Finally, energy efficiency will be increased by 20%.
- Education, early school abandon will be reduced by more than 10% and the 40% of the population aged 30-34 will have completed higher education.
- Poverty and social exclusion, reduce by more than 20 million people at risk of social exclusion and poverty.

At the moment, in the final phase of the strategy, we see that European countries have become involved and the strategy has promoted the socio-economic progress of member countries. Employment is at one of the best levels, targets on education and greenhouse gas emissions have been met, energy efficiency and renewable energy guidelines are the right ones to achieve the targets. On the other hand, investment and development in innovation and research as well as social inclusion to fight social exclusion and poverty still need to be boosted.

According to the statement next steps for a sustainable European future (European Commission, 2016), the union's commitment is to allocate twenty percent of the budget to the battle to halt climate change. Horizon 2020 has to devote at least 60% to sustainable development and 35% of the budget to combating climate change.

Figure 1: Greenhouse gas emissions, EU-28, 1990-2017



Note: Total emissions, including international aviation and indirect CO2, but excluding emissions from land use, land use change, and forestry (LULUCF).
Source: EEA, Eurostat (online data code: t2020_30)

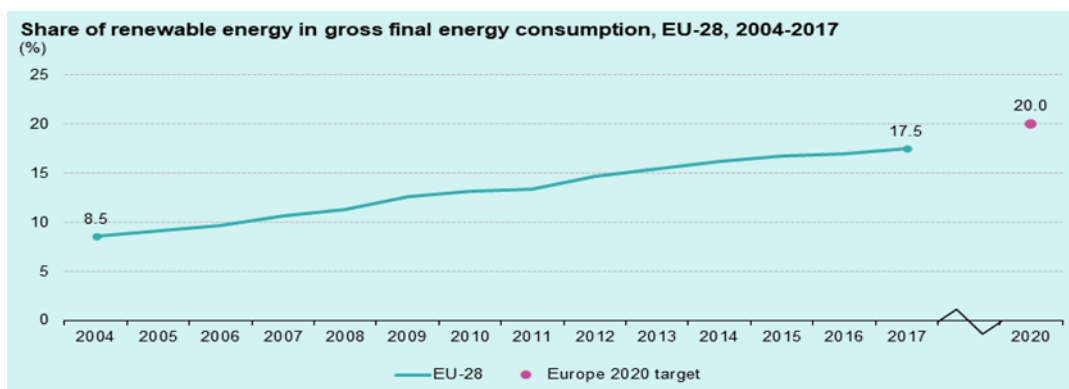
eurostat

Source: Eurostat

The figure above shows the evolution of greenhouse gas emissions from 1990 to 2017. It has been reduced by 21.7%. Between 1990 and 1994 we observe the first period of

greater reduction as a result of the modernization of the industrial sector and structural changes of the economy. During the economic crisis (2008-2009), emissions were reduced by 7.2% due to a drop in industrial production, energy demand and transport. From 1998 to 2007 was a period of stability of emissions (92-94%), due to the improvement in waste management, reduction of livestock and fertilizers and the increase of renewable energies. Finally, from 2010 this decrease is thanks to the development of renewable energy sources, the improvement in energy intensity and the economic slowdown.

Figure 2: Share of renewable energy in gross final energy consumption, EU-28, 2004-2017



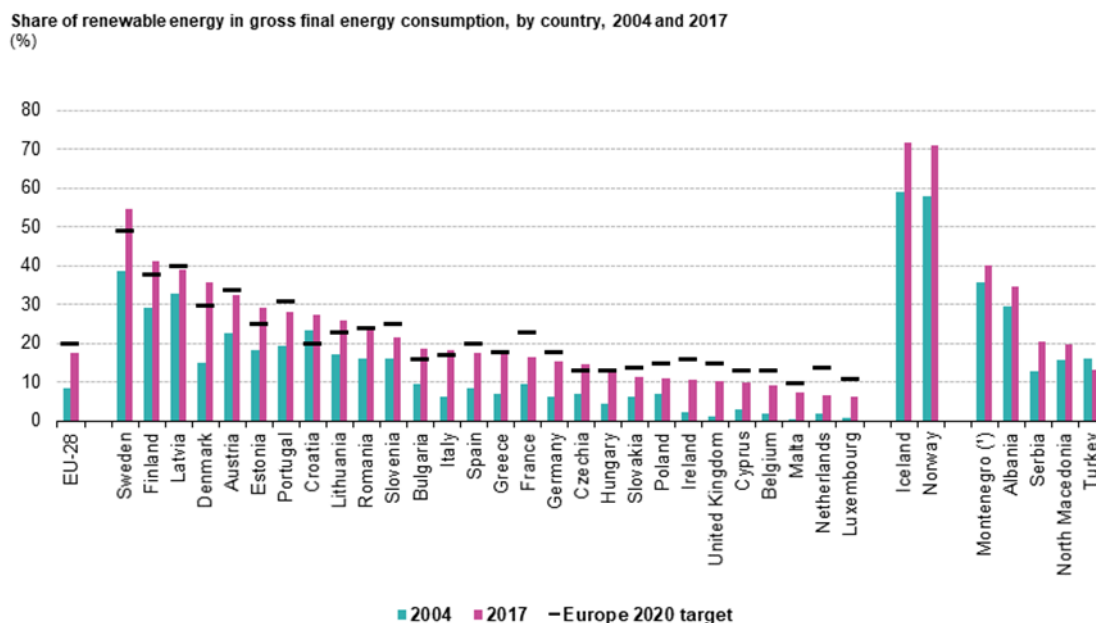
Source: Eurostat (online data code: t2020_31)



Source: Eurostat

Share of renewable energies in final energy consumption. In the period 2004-2017, the growth of renewable energies has steadily intensified thanks to the rapid increase in technology developed in this sector, the emergence of schemes supporting renewable energy technologies and the fall in costs, driven in turn by aid, credit and subsidy policies.

Figure 3: Share of renewable energy in gross final energy consumption, by country, 2004-2017



(*) 2005 data (instead of 2004)

Source: Eurostat (online data code: t2020_31)



Source: Eurostat

Share of renewable energies in gross final energy consumption, by country. On figure 3, we note that all countries have increased the share of renewable energies with respect to 2004, but Iceland and Norway stand out. The European average has not yet reached the target for 2020, we can see that some countries have already exceeded the target such as Sweden, Finland and others.

3.2. Europe 2030 strategy

The European Commission (2016: 3) declares: "Agenda 2030 is a commitment to eradicate poverty and achieve sustainable development by 2030 worldwide by ensuring that no one is left behind".

With this strategy, Europe seeks to integrate the three dimensions of sustainable development: environmental, economic and social in a balanced way. It also achieves an international agreement in which justice, security, social inclusion and peace must be pursued jointly and mutually reinforcing.

Following the review in 2018, the targets (qualitative and quantitative) for energy efficiency and renewable energy were increased to, in relation to 1990 (European Commission, 2020):

- 40% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions
- Renewable energies with a share of more than 32% of total consumption
- 32.5% improvement in energy efficiency

The European Union has oriented the strategy in two directions of work. Firstly, it will develop a policy framework that includes all the objectives, assessing the current situation, setting priorities and looking for the problems that sustainability faces. Secondly, it will set out the long-term objectives of sustainable development and how far and the mechanisms to be achieved.

The European budget will also be affected by these measures and will have to be rethought to take account of new forms of growth and financing. Consequently, to achieve these objectives and the commitments of the Paris Agreement, Europe has approved rules for the member states which in turn will have to develop them internally, adapted to their country and the different characteristics. These policies will be crucial to achieving the socio-economic objectives set.

- Natural resources: more restrictive measures in the conservation and more sustainable management of oceans to make them cleaner and safer. Protection of fauna and its natural habitat by increasing the number of protected natural areas and allowing them to recover lost biodiversity.

- Sustainable production and consumption: policies to raise public awareness of responsible consumption, and the circular economy plays a key role in resource efficiency and production. The circular economy will generate the opportunity for the production system to become more efficient and sustainable, requiring fewer resources and not harming the planet.

- Energy and energy efficiency: the European Union has committed itself to spending 20% of the budget on climate protection. All sectors will reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and a series of measures will be issued to boost the energy transition by achieving the development of renewable energies and energy efficiency which in turn will improve employment and growth in the economy.

- Economic and social growth: the strategy aims to achieve an employment rate among the population aged 20-64 of 75% in order to promote sustainable, inclusive and sustainable growth. The European Union has put in place policies that support action, will drive the financial market to support sustainable growth, investment and boost employment both at European and global level.

- Sustainable infrastructures and industrialisation: Europe has the European Investment Plan, Structural and Investment Funds for investment in research, innovation and infrastructure as well as loans to small, risky companies. Transport, energy and telecommunications infrastructures are financed by the Connect Europe plan. With the 2020 horizon Research and Innovation Framework Programme, it fully funds the development of innovation and research to achieve the objectives.

- Sustainable and inclusive cities: in order to reach and adapt to climate change at the regional and local level, the Covenant of Mayors has been created, which seeks to ensure safe, affordable and sustainable access to energy.

These joint legislations, both European and those of each country, will have benefits that will guarantee security to coordinate the efforts of all countries as well as attract investors. In the same way, the legislative framework allows us to move towards a low-carbon economy and to build an energy system that guarantees consumers energy at affordable prices, with a secure supply and with less dependence on the outside world, as well as the emergence of a greater number of employment opportunities.

To achieve these objectives, Europe makes available to society various financial instruments to enhance and complement the necessary policies and actions. The main investment policy of the European Union is the union of European Investment Funds and Structural Funds that seek to link society, territory and economy in the different regions and their different levels in order to reduce the differences between them. The research and innovation programme supports many projects that support the objectives for the promotion of sustainable development.

Investment Programme for Europe: by mid 2020, through the European Fund for Strategic Investments, investments of 500 billion euros will be made to the economy. These investments will be made in different sectors, such as health, energy, education, water, infrastructure, agriculture, transport, industry and will promote the ideas of the circular economy, renewable energies and the reduction of climate change.

3.3. Europe 2050 strategy

The main objective of the European Union's long-term strategy for 2050 is to achieve climate neutrality (European Commission, 2018). To this end, the union presented a strategy setting out the route to be followed to achieve this neutrality through various actions such as investment in technologies, educating the population on recycling and consumption behaviour, increasing the financing of new production processes, ensuring a fair and secure economic transition.

In order to achieve this goal the economy must undergo a major transformation in (Jean-Claude Juncker, 2018):

- Energy must not depend at all on fossil sources that is to say, the electricity supply must provide own renewable energies to minimize the dependence on external supply
- Transport sector based on zero emission vehicles using electric cars or new sustainable fuels
- Transforming the economic model to a circular economy
- Creating connected infrastructure for the least use of energy and resources that is in turn used as efficiently as possible
- Counteract the carbon emissions already emitted by helping the regeneration of the planet

The European Union in the period 2021-2027 (European Commission, 2018) will allocate EUR 42.3 million in support of transport infrastructure (EUR 30.6 million), energy (EUR 8.7 million) and digitisation (EUR 3 million).

BLOCK 2. CIRCULAR ECONOMY

Boulding, Pearce and Turner cited in Jaca et al. (2017) explain that the Earth can function as a closed, cyclical and ecological system that gives the opportunity to reuse limited resources by transforming them into unlimited ones. In 1990 the name Circular Economy was formulated. Moreover, Jaca et al. (2017: 85) propose:

The circular economy is a paradigm that aims to generate economic prosperity, protect the environment and prevent pollution, thus facilitating sustainable development.

As a result, it is concluded that the Circular Economy is a paradigm of action that has evolved from the concept of sustainability and its application in the economy, society, and the necessary care of the environment around us. Thus, the Circular Economy has become a paradigm that seeks sustainable development, proposing different strategies throughout the chain of production and use of products and services.

On the other hand, Steffen et al. (2015) cited in Cerdá and Khalilova (2016) suggest that the current linear model is not sustainable over time because it is reaching its physical limits. This model, which is based on take, do, throw, believes that it has a large amount of resources at its disposal for a low price of both energy and materials and that in turn a very accessible system of discarding what is no longer of interest to it has led to a level of growth never observed before.

Today the demands of citizens and the priorities of political representatives are focused on liberating growth to promote employment and end unemployment, working on the competitiveness of EU industry to achieve a better position and gain attractiveness by protecting and using own resources more effectively.

Frérot (2014: 2) says "Europe must set a precedent by making the circular economy and resource efficiency an engine of economic growth".

The current economic development has a double impact on the environment, on the one hand, this is the first phase that consists of the extraction of resources, this produces that these resources are reduced arriving at the exhaustion. On the other hand, there is the final phase which is when the useful life of the product ends generating waste and spillage that is usually thrown into the natural environment contaminating it.

Cerdá and Khalilova (2016) explain the circular economy from its design is based on regeneration and reconstruction keeping the components, materials and products at their highest level. Two cycles are observed technical and biological.

The authors of the circular economy define it as a cycle of continuous development that maintains and increases natural resources, optimizes them and reduces the risks of the system, managing limited stocks and renewable flows. It can be effectively implemented at any scale.

Jaca et al. (2017) describe: the circular economy gives the opportunity to give solution to the different problems that the current economic growth faces because it drives a flow in a cyclical method for the obtaining, transformation, distribution, use and recovery of the energy and materials of the services and products that are in the market. This new model is based on the principle of the 3 Rs, recycle, reduce and reuse, with the possibility of being applicable to the entire life cycle of products and services.

4. TERMS OF ACTION OF THE CIRCULAR ECONOMY

The circular economy search for solutions to try to reduce the impoverishment of natural resources. The idea of this type of economy is that waste from some processes becomes a resource for others and can be reused, promoting recycling and reuse. Transforming both consumption habits and production processes.

The aim of the circular economy is to preserve the value of products, resources and materials for as long as possible by reintegrating them at the end of their use into the product cycle, thus generating as little waste as possible. It will be better for the environment if we discard fewer products and extract less material.

In the circular economy, the design of goods and services is very important to ensure that the movement of energy and materials is fully circular and can be adapted to the whole process. In this way the life cycle of products and the principles of the nature of each product will be coherent.

Below will explain the main terms of action on which the circular economy is based:

- Extraction: this is the way in which industries obtain resources from the environment, so companies should try to make the extraction and use of them as effective, efficient and responsible as possible in terms of technical and biological resources. In this way, companies should select their suppliers and the materials they need using the environmental criteria that best suit their needs, taking into account that they have the least impact on nature.

- Transform: once the resources and materials have been extracted, in the development phase they will be done through ecological innovations and new technological practices (eco-innovations) that ensure that the process and the final product or services are environmentally friendly.

- Distribution: this is the phase of delivery of the product or service to the customer, in which companies must organize the route in the most sustainable and efficient way possible. This process will be carried out by means of recyclable and sustainable packaging, the most ecological routes, etc.

- Use: once the service or product is in the hands of the final consumer, the previous production processes will ensure that energy consumption will be as low as possible with maximum efficiency. In the circular economy, once it loses effectiveness, it will be repaired or used for other purposes with less need for efficiency on the part of the product.

- Recovery: As for the waste, it can be recovered in two ways, on the one hand as a technical resource which can be reincorporated into the industrial process or on the other hand as a biological resource which can be returned to the biosphere.

Companies must innovate in their business models, on the one hand to allow customers to return the product after use and thus extend its life cycle through maintenance and after-sales service. On the other hand, by promoting the Product Service System which consists of the use of physical products through a service, in this way the producer or distributor of the service remains the owner who is responsible for its management, distribution and maintenance.

Depending on the scope and level of influence of the level of integration and the stakeholders, the execution of the circular economy in the market can be classified in different levels:

- Macro level: these are the initiatives developed in national or regional environments, for example eco-municipalities, ecological provinces or eco-cities.
- Medium level: it is about the interaction between organizations to revalue, share resources and reuse waste, these resources can be found in eco-industrial parks.
- Micro level: this is the individual level of each company that focuses on internal improvement of both its practices and production processes to make them more ecological.

5. PRINCIPLES OF A CIRCULAR ECONOMY

The circular economy is based on the following principles, which offer the possibility of implementing a circular economy on any scale.

1. Stocks must be controlled so that they are limited and movements of renewable resources are balanced in order to increase and preserve natural capital.

This economy, when possible, tries to increase the natural capital by boosting nutrient flows to the system by establishing optimal conditions for the soil to regenerate. In the face of the need for more natural resources that are not in the circular circuit, the new resources will be intelligently selected and in turn will be extracted with sustainable resource treatment processes and technologies to be as environmentally friendly as possible and to obtain these resources in the most efficient way.

2. Resources must always be at their optimum performance point, this will be achieved by circulating components, products and materials and these must be at their maximum level of utility with respect to their biological and technological cycles.

To achieve maximum utility of all the above mentioned components the system must be designed to offer the possibility to renew, rework and recycle. In this way, we ensure that the components and materials of the economy are kept circulating usefully through the circuit. Recycling is a priority to achieve a better fit by reusing the energy used and the element itself as well as its characteristics. Through this system, the life of the product is further extended and reuse is optimized.

3. Boost the effectiveness of the system by creating new patents and planning for the elimination of negative externalities.

These measures incorporate the reduction of the damage that has been caused to areas and systems that harm people, for example mobility, education, food, infrastructure, entertainment or health. They also deal with the externalities of water pollution, air noise, land, climate change and emissions of toxic substances.

The basic stages of the circular economy process are intelligently designed products, and production processes must be sustainable in order to save resources in their manufacture. Thanks to these new production processes, inefficient use of resources will be avoided and new business opportunities will be created with more efficient ways of producing.

With the definition, principles and terms of the circular economy defined in the previous paragraphs, we can observe the main characteristics of the circular economy.

6. MAIN CHARACTERISTICS OF A CIRCULAR ECONOMY

- ❖ Less use of natural resources and reduction of materials:
 - To provide more value with lower materials, through optimal and less exploitation of raw materials.
 - Minimize dependence on foreign imports of natural resources.
 - Natural resources used efficiently.
 - Reduce total energy and water consumption.

- ❖ Equitable distribution of natural resources, energy and recyclable materials
 - Replacing non-renewable resources with renewable ones.
 - Increase the number of recycled and recyclable materials that replace current unsustainable materials.
 - Extracting natural resources and raw materials in an environmentally friendly and sustainable manner.

- ❖ Reduction of greenhouse gas emissions:
 - Reduction of greenhouse gas emissions throughout the material cycle by using less raw materials and achieving them in a more sustainable way.
 - Cleaner material cycles producing less pollution.

- ❖ Reduce waste and material losses:
 - Reduce the accumulation of waste.
 - Restrict to reach the extinction of the amount of waste and residues spilled and incinerated.

- To reduce losses due to the dissolution and evaporation of resources with an important value.
- ❖ Protect the value of essential components, products and materials of the economy:
 - To increase the useful life of materials and products.
 - Reuse of components.
 - Maintain and protect the value of resources present in the economy through high quality value recycling.

One of the highlights of this model is that the circular economy offers important reforms to encourage the creation of new jobs, boost both economic and social growth and promote new, more sustainable patterns of production and consumption. Indeed, this new model helps to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, reduce water, air and soil pollution and save energy.

For Europe, this transition to a circular economy is an opportunity to modernise the economy and to promote social inclusion. The creation of new jobs adapted to the new needs of a greener and more competitive economy with a vision of a better future, reduces unemployment and social inequalities while favouring a mutually supportive ecological and social transition. In this vein, Ramon - Reyero (2019: 10) affirms:

The Circular Economy allows for energy savings and significant environmental benefits. It is also a strategy with sufficient potential to improve the competitiveness of companies by increasing their profits and creating jobs at the local level. All this without forgetting the impulse to generate new opportunities for social integration.

7. EUROPEAN UNION INITIATIVES TO BOOST THE CIRCULAR ECONOMY

The European Union will accompany this new model with an investment of more than 10 billion euros to boost the action plan for the transition to a circular economy. In 2017, a follow-up commission on the circular economy was set up to promote new initiatives to encourage investment, support the circular economy and seek to develop alternative resources. Some initiatives in different areas are (European Commission, 2016):

- On plastics and water: this comprehensive strategy aims to increase quality, cost-effectiveness and encourage recycling and reuse to reduce consumption. This strategy will encourage European industry to create a new type of plastic that is less dependent on fossil fuels and less polluting for the oceans. The reuse of reusable water will be encouraged by promoting proper wastewater treatment and setting minimum requirements for reused water.

- Prevention of food waste and sustainable food systems: this action will be guided by the European platform on combating food waste and losses which will seek to support the United Nations target of at least halving per capita food waste worldwide by 2030. This movement is intended to promote the donation of food and to ensure that food used for animal feed is treated more safely and that the expiry dates on food are more effective.

- Energy: the European Union is very vulnerable to disruptions in energy supply due to its high dependence on the outside world; it is considered the world's largest importer. For this reason, the Union seeks to achieve energy security, energy efficiency, market integration and the creation of indigenous energy sources, especially renewable energies, in order to promote their use and reduce imports from abroad, while promoting local economic sectors and reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

To achieve the objective of ensuring safe, affordable and sustainable energy for the population, the European Union promotes energy cooperation and integration. At the heart of this strategy are energy efficiency and renewable energies which have a greater role to play in the battle against climate change and this in turn increases energy security and creates the industrial and technological dominance of the European Union over global competitors.

- Transport: the European Union wants to continue to lead by example and policies to regulate and end carbon emissions, manage hazards from natural disasters and strengthen adaptation to climate change. Simultaneously increasing and establishing measures to boost private and public investment in modernization of all sectors through innovation.

The aim is to make the transport system efficient and competitive in the use of resources. This is what the strategy of low emissions in the mobility sector consists of, that is to say, transport with zero emissions. In the maritime and aviation sector, the European Union is leading global negotiations and agreements that seek to reduce emissions. For the time being, they are negotiating the proposals to be followed in order to achieve the transition of the economy to a low-emission economy.

- Sustainable financial system: in order to adapt to the Paris Agreements on ecological transition, regulators, finance ministers and industry have considered this issue as a priority to see what can be done to adapt quickly to the change in the economy. To try to provide the necessary support for new investment policies and to ensure that growth is sustainable, that sectors are helped to adapt to the new scenario that will produce climate

change, that the use of resources is efficient and that there is a move towards a more circular economy.

- Capital markets union: these initiatives are directly linked to the sustainable financial system. Long-term investments in green transition will be boosted, green bonds will be offered, among other resources still under consideration. On the other hand, a system has been set up to ensure transparency when investing by offering secure and real information on diversity, financial, social, rights, corruption, etc.

The European Union's definition of sustainable financing will provide an opportunity to identify, priority and plan the necessary policy reforms that will be needed to stimulate and enable the movement of both private and public capital in favour of investments that promote sustainable development.

8. ACTION PLAN ON FUTURE EUROPEAN UNION POLICIES FOR THE CIRCULAR ECONOMY

To achieve climate neutrality by 2050, it is necessary to expand the scope of the circular economy and in turn remove dependence on resource use as the main source of economic growth. The European Green Pact pioneered the strategy for a climate-neutral economy.

In order to achieve this objective, the European Union must encourage this transformation from the current model to a growth model based on regeneration, that is to say one that gives back to the environment more than it uses, limiting the consumption of resources to those available as well as encouraging their recycling and reuse within the circular system.

The European Green Pact's objective of accelerating change to transform the economy towards a circular economy will be driven by the looking forward programme set out by the European Union to achieve a more competitive and cleaner Europe involving consumers, economic operators and society. This programme will in turn ensure that new policies are adapted and equitable for a sustainable future, that they foster new opportunities and reduce the burdens on business and citizens arising from the transition.

Before achieving climate neutrality, it will be essential to achieve a full circular economy. To achieve this objective, the European Union will have to intensify the link between greenhouse gas reductions and the circularity of processes and products. This will be done through the following aspects (European Commission, 2020):

- It will study how to periodically measure the effects of the circular economy in moderation with climate change and how it is adapting to this new environment.
- In order to take advantage of the benefits that the circular economy will provide with the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions both at the level of each country and the union, tools will be developed to make the best use of them.
- In future reviews of each member country's climate and energy plans, it will promote the role of the circular economy.

In order to achieve climate neutrality, both the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions and the absorption of gases already emitted will be necessary. Some processes that can be used would be protection of forests, restoration of ecosystems and control that avoids expelling carbon from agriculture.

In order to promote circularity in these areas and carbon sequestration, the European Union will investigate legislation regulating and certifying carbon sequestration that is based on transparent and rigorous accounting of emissions that has the opportunity to be monitored and that does not falsify data to ensure its accuracy.

Furthermore, the ecological design organises the energy-related and energy-efficient characteristics of products in the circular circuit into which they are to be incorporated so that they are as efficient as possible and meet the necessary conditions. In order to make products sustainable within the model of a climate-neutral economy, the Union will promote an initiative to regulate sustainable product policy. It will be based on increasing the scope of the ecological design direction to reach all products not only those related to energy.

The European Union will analyse the opportunity to establish the principles of sustainability governing the following aspects in order to guide future policies and legislation:

- To increase the possibilities of reusing, recycling, repairing, and making products more durable; to reduce the dangerous chemicals in these products while increasing the resource and energy efficiency required.
- To promote the manufacture of new products with recycled materials without decreasing their productivity being new high quality and safe products.
- Reduce the carbon footprint.
- Try to reduce programmed obsolescence and restrict single-use products.

- Prohibition unsold durable products from being destroyed.
- Incentives for those products that can be repaired.

With the subsequent reviews by the European Union on ecological design, consideration will be given to introducing obligatory requirements and measures to prosper towards a more sustainable economy by increasing the scope of application to services. The introduction of measures across the whole value chain of products, from the moment of their start of production to the end of their life, will also be assessed.

Another fundamental piece in the introduction of the new economic system is the involvement of consumers to modify their behaviour and consumption habits. The union will review the legislation to protect consumers and offer them the possibility to save, with these regulations it is guaranteed that all consumers will have at their disposal in the shops the necessary information about the product, its useful life, the available repair services, manuals and necessary repair parts.

Besides this, the organizations will be required to justify their ecological claims that their producer is sustainable, and the European Union will carry out checks to be included in the design of the ecological label, detailing recycling criteria, durability and product content.

European public authorities have a high potential and are therefore an important driver in the demand for sustainable products, so the Union will introduce obligatory targets and minimum criteria for green public procurement in all regions and sectors. Regular requirements for monitoring these new Green Public Procurement incorporations will be gradually introduced. Internal growth will also be encouraged through the development of training, dissemination or guidance of good practice.

The essential aspect of the transformation of industry towards climate neutrality with high long-term competitiveness is circularity. It will produce great savings in materials throughout both the value chain and the different production processes, generating added value by being more sustainable products and generating new business opportunities.

In line with the objectives of the industrial strategy to promote greater circularity of resources, the European Union will introduce the following actions (European Commission, 2020):

- Review the industrial emissions directive to assess the options for making industrial processes more circular, integrating the most sustainable industrial processes that will serve as a reference in future documents

- Development of an industry-driven certification and notification system to promote industry mix and implementation of the new processes
- Promote the use of digital technologies for tracking, tracing and mapping resources
- Environmental verification system to promote the incorporation of EU-certified green technologies

For SMEs the new strategy will encourage collaboration between them through advice and training, the European Resource Efficiency Knowledge Centre will be responsible for knowledge transfer and mobilisation of private finance to support the establishment of the circular economy.

The European Union in order to control the amount of waste generated by non-recyclable plastic packaging (European Commission, 2020):

- In the following review of non-financial information the Commission will increase the dissemination of environmental data by companies
- Support the development initiative by companies to carry out environmental accounting both in financial terms and in terms of the returns obtained from the circular economy
- Improve the corporate governance environment to encourage the integration of sustainability principles into business strategies
- The forthcoming revisions of the European Semester reorientation and guidelines on State aid for energy and the environment will reflect the objectives related to the circular economy
- Support will continue to be given on a larger scale to the application of economic instruments such as value-added taxes used by some members of the Union to boost the circular economy with some activities aimed at final consumers and in the field of environmental taxation we will find taxes on the incineration and dumping of waste.

8.1. Reduction of waste and toxic substances

In order to reduce the amount and generation of waste, the European Union will improve the implementation of the requirements imposed on producers, encourage the exchange of information and provide incentives in the recycling of waste.

The European Union will consider coordinating separate waste collection systems to achieve higher quality recycling by helping public authorities, citizens and businesses to better organise waste which will depend on the efficiency of separate waste collection.

The most effective connections of the different models of separate waste collection in the regions will be evaluated in accordance with their conditions and regulations, both the accessibility of the collection points and their densities including those in public spaces will be analysed.

This study will include aspects such as the unification of colours and symbols on the different waste bins for the whole territory, information campaigns and labels on products. Another objective will be the use and standardisation of quality management systems that guarantee quality in the collection of waste for subsequent reuse or recycling, mainly in waste destined for food preservation.

With respect to chemical substances, the one in charge of promoting the transition to a safer model since its design is the REACH Regulation, which seeks the progressive substitution of dangerous substances in order to protect the environment and citizens. In contrast, secondary raw materials have no regulation or protection to increase confidence in the use of these raw materials in the European Union (European Commission, 2020):

- It will support the establishment of solutions that contribute to increasing the quality level in the classification of waste collection that allows for the removal of elements and substances that pollute waste.
- It will develop processes to reduce as much as possible the presence of harmful substances found in recycled materials and articles that cause problems in the environment or the health of the population.
- It will work together with industry to develop a progressive system that unifies the management and monitoring of information on dangerous substances, especially those that are more harmful to health and those that generate problems throughout the production process and subsequent recycling, so that they can be identified and appropriate measures established in line with policies on sustainable products and their treatment.
- The amendment of the annexes to the Regulations on organic pollutants will be considered in conjunction with the obligations of the Stockholm Convention in accordance with its technical and scientific progress.
- To carry out the management and classification of dangerous waste in such a way as to give the possibility of introducing cleaner recycling streams, which will allow a greater classification of mixtures and chemical substances.

Secondary raw materials create challenges with respect to primary raw materials in terms of performance, safety, cost and availability, and requirements on recycled content seek to reduce and control these imbalances. To ensure the proper functioning and expansion of recycling in the economy the European Union:

- It will assess the possibility of transforming the criteria in force in the European Union into a condition of waste, unifying the initiatives of the Member States to create a common criterion on waste flows and thus act jointly in the treatment and monitoring of waste and by-products.
- It will establish restrictions on uses and a time frame for extremely dangerous substances only in cases where their use is an essential requirement.
- It will study the feasibility of setting up a marking observatory to study essential secondary materials.

Review of Europe Union waste shipment rules to help prepare materials that can be recycled and reused. Exports of waste that is harmful to health and the environment will also be restricted. And finally, the European Union will support the adoption of measures to combat environmental crime by strengthening controls on the shipment of waste and preventing illegal exports.

9. BENEFITS OF CIRCULAR ECONOMY

The circular economy gives us the opportunity to reorient the economy towards a more competitive and sustainable one, with benefits for the industry, the population and businesses such as the following (Eurostat, 2020):

- More efficient and innovative ways to consume and produce, generates the opportunity to multiply the productivity of resources obtained from nature
- Protection from unstable prices and lack of resources for companies
- New opportunities for social integration and new jobs
- Increased recycling, optimization of waste treatment and reduction of landfill
- The new processes need less energy and this will lead to considerable savings as energy is more efficient thanks to the combination of reduced dependence on energy with high emissions of greenhouse gases from outside and improved energy processes that are safer and more sustainable
- The environment will benefit in areas such as increased biodiversity, climate, reduced soil, water and air pollution.

Some economic benefits that the circular economy can offer are (European Commission, 2020):

- Reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 450 million tons by 2030
- Increase of the GDP of the whole European Union by an additional 0.5% until 2030
- Creation of 700,000 new jobs
- For the companies the saving of 8% in their annual turnover, would mean the saving of 600,000 million Euros.

10. EUROPEAN UNION SUPPORT AND CONTROL MEASURES

Maintaining the European Union's environmental package is essential to ensure that sustainability is protected and prolonged in the long term. Just as they cannot be separated from broader economic and social challenges. The Seventh Environmental Action Programme states that it is essential to improve and maintain the natural resources that will serve the economic sectors and that can provide their services.

In order to be able to control and review the monitoring of the progress of the established objectives, the European Union will review the environmental regulations and their correct application, in the same way it will promote initiatives that offer simpler and more accessible information on the environment, it will also support the countries that are part of the union in the execution of the environmental regulation and will have easier access to justice.

With regard to financial control, the European Union will set up a committee of experts with a high level of expertise in financial matters to ensure that the measures adopted are working properly and on track, ensuring and developing new measures to boost the overall strategy, taking into account the challenges that will be faced over time and the changing economy depending on the situation. They will also assess how the financial measures put in place can be expanded to other sustainable sectors, with this monitoring the European Union will achieve notable leadership internationally and maintain it in the development of sustainable markets.

The commission to ensure the efficient and effective implementation of new policies on new sustainable products:

- It will establish a European Data Area for Intelligent Circular Applications, providing data and information on different value chains and products.

- It will increase the cooperation of authorities in each country, through market surveillance measures and concerted inspections to ensure that all applicable environmental obligations on products on the market of member countries are met in order to make them sustainable.

The European Regional Development Fund together with Horizon Europe and the LIFE programme to provide solutions to the market will increase support for the whole process of innovation and private funding for innovation.

Marie Skłodowska Curie actions will support training, mobility of researchers in the circular economy and the development of new skills.

In addition, Horizon Europe will support the development of materials, data and indicators, activities for the elimination and substitution of hazardous substances and the incorporation of new products with a new approach to ensure the reliability of these products from the outset at the design stage. It will also promote new technologies for both product design and recycling, new circular business models. All these measures will take into account the objectives set to achieve a fully circular economy supported by new digital tools.

The European Institute of Innovation and Technology will be responsible for coordinating the innovative initiatives in the field of the circular economy of research bodies, representatives of SMEs, industry and universities, where they will all come together to collaborate in the Innovation and Knowledge Communities.

The European Union will raise the industrial and intellectual property strategy to defend the industrial and intellectual property regime as a fundamental factor in driving the development of new business models and the circular economy, since this regime will be responsible for supporting the competitiveness of the Union's businesses in the ecological transition with the support of digitisation.

With the new actions to boost the circular economy, the European Union will have to update the monitoring framework which will be based on European statistics, incorporating new indicators that are related to the new actions and adapted for better monitoring, in order to be able to monitor whether the new actions help to achieve the new objectives of climate neutrality, increasing the circularity of the economy and reducing pollution.

We will continue to develop indicators that analyse the use of resources such as the footprint of materials and consumption, in order to measure how much of these resources are used and what consequences this generates for the environment. In this way, we will

be able to observe consumption and production patterns that will allow us to evaluate and monitor them in order to reorient policies for the future to achieve neutral economic growth both in the European Union and in the rest of the world.

BLOCK 3. CASE STUDY

11. INTRODUCTION PLATFORM B CORP

B- Corp is an organization that helps people who try to do well through their business, especially for the planet, with the aim of being a global movement. It is a new model of companies that seek a balance between economic and social benefits. They integrate a legal requirement that takes into account at the time of making decisions all the environment that involves you, suppliers, workers, customers, environment and community. The leaders of the B movement, both those who research it and those who are part of it, take into account that the companies of the B Corp community produce and increase their financial volume through business activity and in turn have a positive commitment to society and the environment. For these reasons, B Corp certification was created to preserve the sustainable missions of each company in the face of possible future changes in management that would not affect the development of daily activity (B Corporation, 2019).

As B Corp Spain¹ says:

We lead a global movement of people who use the power of business to generate positive impact. Movement B is made up of everyone who works, buys, invests, learns, teaches or supports businesses that strive to create a better world.

Furthermore, Arguello, 2016 argues that the main objective of Companies B, is the common good which in turn requires these companies to be economically successful, both for shareholders and investors, and to have the capacity to make investments in the community in which they are located and the environment.

Its vision is that one day all companies will compete not only to be the best in the world, but also to be the best for the world and that, as a result, will allow society to enjoy a more shared and lasting prosperity (Certified B Corporation)².

The organization seeks to drive systemic change through:

¹ <https://www.bcorpSpain.es/> Accessed 4 May 2020

² <https://bcorporation.net/> Accessed 6 May 2020

- Building a society of Type B certified corporations that meet a series of high requirements in environmental, social, legal responsibility and public transparency matters.
- Promoting the unification of missions of the different innovative corporate organizations, such as the unification of the benefits sought by the organizations to form common interests in society and seek the joint benefit that helps create powerful businesses with a long future.
- To offer help to all the companies of the world, institutions, investors and population to know the impact of the multiple companies of the platform, by means of the Analysis and the Evaluation of Impact B that manages the impact of these companies in the planet and ecosystem in which it is found.
- To be a source of inspiration through the movement B the Change for the whole society with the narrative of own experiences of companies that are part of the platform.

About B Corps | Certified B Corporation³:

B-certified companies are companies that meet the highest standards of verified social and environmental performance, public transparency and legal accountability to balance profit and purpose. B Corps is accelerating a global culture change to redefine business success and build a more inclusive and sustainable economy.

Because governments or non-profit organizations cannot be the only ones facing the resolution of society's greatest problems. B Corp strives to reduce levels of poverty, social inequality, improve the environment, increase more decent and higher quality jobs, and stronger communities. B Corp, through the power of organizations, leverages the growth of these organizations and their benefits to achieve greater positive rewards for the environment, employees, and the society in which they are located.

The organization has created a community of business leaders and fosters a global movement by people using their businesses as a force for the common good of both society and the planet. The aspirations and values of Platform B Corporation are set out in the Platform's Statement of Interdependence.

³ <https://bcorporation.net/about-b-corps> Accessed 26 April 2020

11.1. Declaration of interdependence of platform B Corp

The new B Corporation is a new type of corporation that focuses its global economy on the common good through its business. It aims to generate profits not only for shareholders but also for all stakeholders.

The organization, as a leader in this new type of emerging economy, believes that

- There must be the change sought by society for a better world
- All organizations should run their business with a sense of the importance of both the location and all the people in the organization
- Seek ways to ensure that their practices, products or services and benefits do not harm and offer the possibility of overall benefit
- In order to achieve the objectives of the organization it is essential that people's behaviour takes into account that each person depends on others and for that reason we are responsible both for ourselves and the people around us and future generations.

11.2. Certification B Corp

About B Corps | Certified B Corporation⁴ "The B Corp Certification is a third party certification administered by the non-profit B Lab, based in part on a company's verified performance in the B impact assessment".

Jiménez, 2017 defines: "The B Impact Assessment (BIA), was created by B Lab to deliver the B certification to companies that had a social and environmental purpose, with the objective of committing to change and get to have a positive impact". We will explain later.

B Corp certification evaluates the level of service or product and the positive impact generated by the company in general. Because it is a fundamental aspect when an organization is evaluated by consumers. It is the only certification that measures the environmental and social performance produced by companies.

In addition, such evaluation of Impact B takes into consideration how the business model and the operations carried out by the organizations affect their workers, the community in which they are located, the environment and their customers. Taking into account everything from incoming materials, supply chain to employee benefits and donations, B

⁴ <https://bcorporation.net/about-b-corps> Accessed 26 April 2020

Corp certification is proof that a company meets the highest and most verified performance standards.

Certification | Certified B Corporation⁵:

Certified B companies obtain a verified minimum score in Impact Assessment B, a rigorous evaluation of a company's impact on its workers, customers, community and environment, and make their Impact Assessment B report transparent on bcorporation.net. Certified B corporations also amend their legal governance documents to require their board of directors to balance profit and purpose.

Furthermore, together with certification and third-party validation with respect to legal responsibilities and public transparency, it positively reinforces the credibility, value and trust of the B Corp. The non-profit organization B Lab is responsible for administering B Corp.

Moreover, the positive impact generated by the companies is supported by the requirements of accountability and transparency. With the certification, apart from pointing out where each company stands out, it implies taking into account the impact produced by each of the parts that form an organization, both internal and external, in order to incorporate them into the legal structure of the organization in the long term.

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11.3. Certification Requirements

In order to obtain the B Corp certification, a series of requirements must be met, which we will explain later. Depending on the structure and size of the company the process and certification requirements may vary. For this reason, depending on the characteristics of each company, the process must be adapted to it.

The process can be divided into the following blocks:

1. Complete the evaluation:

It is an online platform that evaluates for free the behaviour of a company, how it interacts with its workers, customers and environment. The B Impact Assessment (BIA) is the first

⁵ <https://bcorporation.net/certification> Accessed 28 April 2020

step to get the B Corp. The BIA measures the impact of the company's routine operations and business model, both in the way it is done and the way it is done. These answers will determine the total score the company receives, which must be a minimum of 80 points to achieve certification.

The steps to follow to complete Impact Assessment B are as follows (Measure What Matters Most | B Impact Assessment⁶):

- First, Evaluate:

The evaluation questionnaire through a series of questions will guide companies to know what they need to create a better organization for their workers, the environment and society. These questions will be determined by the company's sector, size and market in the same way that the time needed for completion will also depend on the complexity of the company. The content of the assessment will be reviewed by the independent Standards Advisory Board of B Lab (Certification Requirements | Certified B Corporation⁷).

- Second, Compare:

Comparison of the results obtained in the previous step with other companies in order to know how to position yourself. You get two answers, the snapshot that highlights the questions that have the best impact and where you could improve. The second answer is the Impact Report B that shows a more detailed view of the whole in which the company is and how its answers affect it.

- Third, improve:

Creation of a personalized plan to improve the company using the guides available on the website where the questionnaire has been carried out as a guide for improvements and new good practices.

2. Comply with legal requirements:

B Corp has a search engine that shows the legal requirements of each country so that companies can find out where they are affected by the government of the country in which they operate. The schedule will also depend, according to its structure and location, on the specific legal requirements. In addition, with the drop-down menus offered by the website, companies can find out how they could comply with such

⁶ https://bimpactassessment.net/?_ga=2.243910149.1889264995.1588008701-429636049.1555783461
Accessed 28 April 2020

⁷ <https://bcorporation.net/certification/meet-the-requirements> Accessed 30 April 2020

requirements and know what impact the decisions made within the organization generate. With this information it will be the one that determines which agreement will be signed from B Corp to complete the certification (Legal Requirements | Certified B Corporation⁸).

3. Verification and transparency (Certification | Certified B Corporation⁹)

Once the BIA Evaluation is completed, B Lab will be in charge of verifying the score and deciding if the company complies with the 80 points required to obtain the certification. A virtual meeting will be held with B Lab managers to review and send confidential documentation to validate the BIA responses. The committee will also review the company's background such as public records, brand, executives, news related to the company and other related issues. The background will be evaluated and scored in the same way as those provided in the evaluation. In addition, the BIA score will need to be updated and verified every 3 years to maintain certification.

B Corp in order to maintain credibility each year will conduct a random and thorough review of 10% of the companies that have certification. Similarly, upon obtaining certification, the certification becomes public within the B Corporation to be consulted by other members of the community.

With the certifications of public character of all the companies that form the community B Corp serve as an example for future incorporations. As B Corp says (Resource Library | Certified B Corporation¹⁰):

We will guide you through topics including the case for certification, the steps to get there and deep dives to improve your score. Explore live web seminars and our recording library featuring B Corp speakers from a variety of industries and regions.

4. Sign agreement and pay annual fee

The last step before receiving certification is to sign the agreement with the organization and pay the corresponding annual fees. The fees will depend on the country, size and sector in which the company operates, the organization also makes discounts based on sales.

Once the certification has been obtained, the company has to modify its statutes. It has one year to do so, giving priority to the part of ensuring and protecting the social and

⁸ <https://bcorporation.net/certification/legal-requirements> Accessed 28 April 2020

⁹ <https://bcorporation.net/certification> Accessed 28 April 2020

¹⁰ <https://bcorporation.net/for-b-corps/resource-library> Accessed 29 April 2020

environmental objectives within the mission. This change must be notarized, included in the public deed and registered in the commercial register to be eligible for re-certification.

11.4. Who certifies B Corps?

About B Lab | Certified B Corporation¹¹:

B Lab is a non-profit organization that serves a global movement of people who use business as a force for good. B Lab initiatives include B Corp certification, administration of B Impact Management programs and software, and advocacy of governance structures such as the benefits' corporation.

The main objective of B Lab is to accelerate global change through business to help make society better and this change lasting and meaningful. The vision of B Lab is an equitable, regenerative and inclusive economic system for both the planet and society. For these reasons, B Lab strongly believes that through the business community with certification contributes to this social and climate change by offering real alternatives applicable in all areas. All efforts made by the platform are made in order to achieve the goal of a better world. It is supported by the business community that has the certification and infrastructure that has been created since its inception and that is growing with the incorporation of new leading companies that serve as an example for future businesses and institutions that promote change in the economy.

As mentioned above the B Corp certification is granted by B Lab, this non-profit laboratory is formed by analysts who are governed by standards available at the offices in New York, Pennsylvania and Amsterdam. Likewise, these standards are supervised by the Standards Advisory Council, government agencies being independent of B Lab to ensure the veracity of the standards. In addition, Standards and Governance | Certified B Corporation¹²:

B Lab is governed by a dynamic process of broad, transparent and multi-stakeholder participation. The Board of Directors establishes Advisory Boards to ensure the continuous incorporation of best thinking and practice into the mission and activities of B Lab. The Board also has the ultimate authority to make decisions on recommendations coming from the Advisory Councils and oversees strategy, budget and operations.

In turn, (B Economy | Certified B Corporation¹³) B Lab through the governance of profit corporation tries to: "Promote legal structures aligned with the mission, such as the profit

¹¹ <https://bcorporation.net/about-b-lab> Accessed 30 April 2020

¹² <https://bcorporation.net/node/39533> Accessed 30 April 2020

¹³ <https://bcorporation.net/b-economy> Accessed 30 April 2020

corporation that unites the interests of business with those of society". Thanks to these new corporations, they provide the opportunity for freedom in defining the objectives to be achieved based on goals beyond their monetary benefits to the entrepreneurs. The mission of the organizations is also protected regardless of changes in leadership and ownership. In order to encourage the adoption of these types of structures throughout the world, B Lab cooperates with capital markets, policymakers and businesses around the globe.

11.5. Multipliers B

In the page of B Corp Spain they explain in more detail who the multipliers are, what they can do, who can be a multiplier among others.

B Corp defines multipliers as, New Index - B Corp Spain¹⁴:

B Multipliers are drivers and agents of change that are helping in the necessary but complex transition of large, medium and small companies towards new impact business models. They do this through the B Corp impact measurement tool, already used by more than 70,000 companies worldwide.

Anyone who wishes can be a B-multiplier, whether they are managers, directors, entrepreneurs, teachers, consultants, individuals, associations, etc., who are interested in participating in the ecological transformation movement. In addition, all those who seek to achieve a new economy can be multipliers who teach, advice, participate or are dedicated to promoting and accelerating the process of change towards a more sustainable economy.

To become a multiplier B the page has a training program and agenda available on the web, through theoretical knowledge, tools and concrete cases of the platform with an estimated duration of 11 hours. These trainings allow new multipliers to know how to manage and guide companies and all their dimensions during the process of Impact Assessment B.

Once the agents become B multipliers the functions they can do are (New Index - B Corp Spain):

1. Multiply: promote and transmit the philosophy of the B Corp movement within your areas of relevance.

¹⁴ <https://www.bcorpSpain.es/multiplicadores-b-page> Accessed 5 May 2020

2. Accompany: using the B instruments learned in training to get more companies to become part of the B Corp community. Multipliers can advise, accompany and guide companies that want to become part of the community throughout the evaluation and subsequent certification process.

3. Get connected: multipliers from the same region organize themselves to create and develop projects to expand and strengthen the movement. Because they share similar visions and values, this cooperation is easier and also gives you the opportunity to inspire, reflect and learn from each other.

4. Participate: as a multiplier there is the possibility to participate in the different spaces available in the B Corp. Spaces such as the B Afternoons, B Good Day, European Summit, +B Meetings in Latin America, B Multipliers' Meetings, among others.

5. Entrepreneurship: Multipliers are encouraged to become part of the community by creating their own B Corp.

6. Keep on training: Multipliers are encouraged to register for the courses and programs offered by the platform, both B Corp, B Labs and the different partners.

11.6. Why do companies certify?

By obtaining the B Corp certification, an international distinction is achieved for a movement that aims at a positive change for society, both environmental and social. In this way, a company that seeks to achieve this certification tries to be different from its competitors, through its internal policy of contributing to improving the environment and the surrounding community.

Nowadays, for organizations, obtaining certification favours the image of the brand or company. Below are some reasons why it is important to achieve certification (Certification | Certified B Corporation¹⁵):

- It leads to a movement: the B Corp organization creates standards to follow in terms of legal structures and performance of activities by companies that inspire the rest of the world to reach the top through good practices.

- Building relationships: With B Corp certification, organizations become part of a business community of leaders with beliefs that help solve environmental and social problems. They can connect with each other through events, face-to-face or online

¹⁵<https://bcorporation.net/certification> Accessed 28 April 2020

meetings, increase and improve relationships with customers and suppliers within the same community, and even exchange knowledge.

- Attract talent: Companies with a mission that highlights the values of good practices such as those protected by B Corp certification involve and attract future potential employees of the organizations. Today, the majority of people seek their new jobs in companies that perform their functions positively and at the same time have a good social and environmental performance.

- Improve impact: one way to set new improvement goals, track performance over time and create a positive environmental and social impact is by maintaining B Corp certification with the B Impact Assessment being conducted in order to obtain and maintain this certification.

- Amplify your voice: A positive way to fulfil your mission and stand out from the crowd is by having a third party confirm that the company is B Corp certified. If a website, product, service, etc; bears the B Corp seal it is communicating that it is a leader in positive impact by allowing people to put their trust and money in more quickly.

- Protecting the mission: thanks to the B Corp legal framework helps protect the mission whenever necessary through leadership changes, capital increases ensuring that organizations are built with a solid legal foundation that will last over time and with long-term goals. At the same time it gives greater flexibility when evaluating possible alternatives at the time of sale or liquidation.

And as they say in Quiero ser B Corp - B Corp Spain¹⁶: "Being a B Corp goes beyond the certification of a product or service. B Corp is the only certification that measures the social and environmental performance of the company as a whole and defines its business identity".

In addition, the B Corp platform offers its users who are part of the movement's platform an agenda of training through courses, webinars, projects, among others for continuous training and improvement of organizations. Companies can both receive these trainings and offer them themselves, being the platform a knowledge and talent promotion portal. On the other hand, in Spain the B Corp Spain community has created alliances between companies, universities and public administrations.

Moreover, belonging to a global community where they share a brand and an ideal about the environment and society offers the opportunity to learn from each other, collaborate

¹⁶ <https://www.bcorpSpain.es/convertirse-en-bcorp> Accessed 4 May 2020

and help each other by creating business agreements that promote inclusive growth, smart differentiating themselves from the rest and becoming companies that lead the change towards a more sustainable economy. In order to solve environmental and social problems, these companies that have been created to solve these problems, will try to solve them through their activities and businesses, thus reducing their severity or solving them completely so that they do not continue to affect society in the future (B Corporation Spain¹⁷).

In the same way, B Lab has a Claims section where citizens have the possibility of filing complaints against certified companies that do not comply with the requirements, obligations or rights. This complaint can be made by means of the e-mail specifically enabled for this function, which is available on the website; it is advisable to attach evidence to support the arguments so that the organization can act and take action more quickly.

12. DIRECTORY B CORP

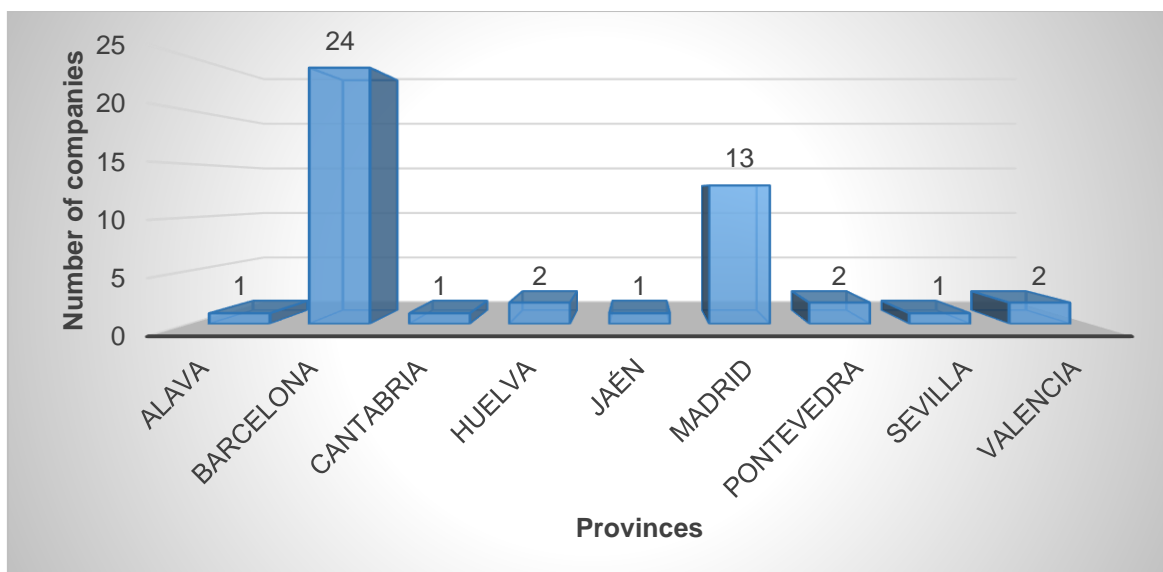
In the directory on page B Corp we find all the companies that have a B certification. As mentioned above, the organization currently has 2,500 companies in more than 50 countries that are B-certified.

For these reasons, the website has a search engine that gives the opportunity to visualize the companies belonging to the community. This search is carried out by means of different filters such as: country, the different sectors to which the companies belong, provinces within a country and finally the population (these last two options are possible after choosing the country, due to the fact that not all countries are structured in the same way).

In Spain the B Corp movement became official in 2013, in the general page of B Corp we find that in Spain there are 47 companies that have a B Corp. Next, we will see how the companies are distributed by province and which are the sectors with more companies that have a B certification.

¹⁷ <https://www.bcorpSpain.es/> Accessed 4 May 2020

Figure 4: Number of B Corp certified companies in Spain by province.



Source: *Elaborated by the author from: Directory B Corp*

In figure 4 we can see that the two provinces with the highest number of companies with B Corp certification are Barcelona with 24 companies and Madrid with 13 companies while the rest of the provinces have a maximum of 2 companies. The first Spanish certification was obtained by the company Alma Natura, located in the province of Huelva and was in December 2013. While the last one is 21 Gramos in April 2019 and located in Madrid (B Corporation¹⁸).

The possible reasons for this phenomenon may be due to the current concentration of the main industries, since it coincides with the provinces with the highest industrial concentration in the whole of Spain. Together they are the main Spanish cities in terms of new business opportunities and with a greater concentration of talent. These can be influential factors in the search for new strategies for companies to boost the achievement of objectives, find new clients and open up to new markets. Therefore, obtaining certification provides them with the opportunity to gain greater visibility in new markets and to gain a beneficial company image and prestige with respect to their competitors.

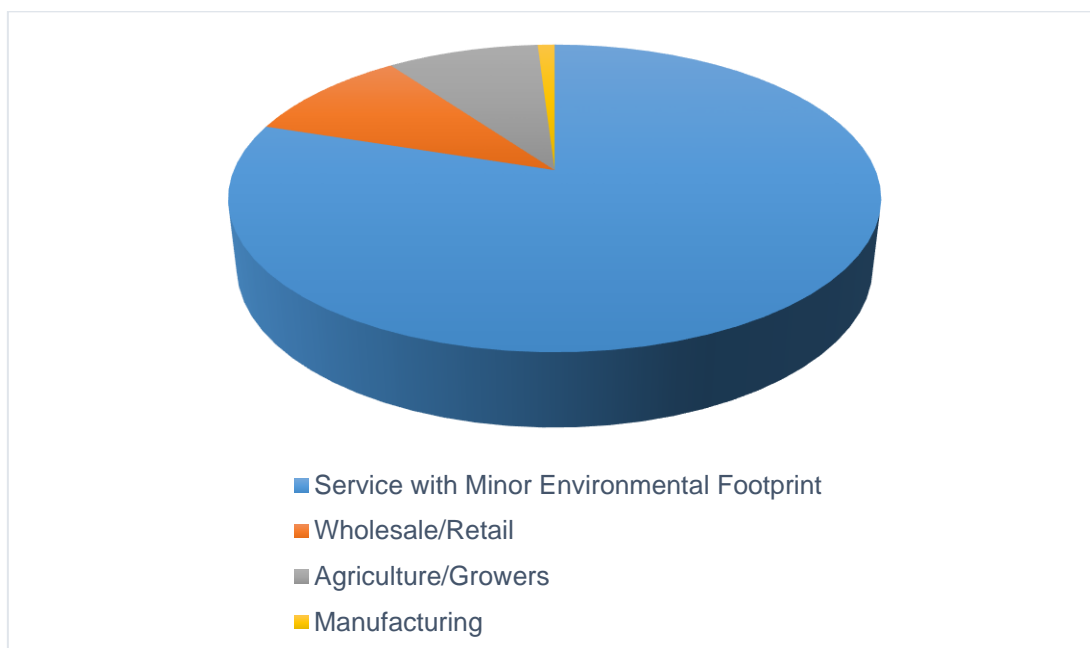
On the other hand, the absence of certifications in other Spanish provinces may be due to the fact that most Spanish companies are small and family businesses. These reasons can affect the fact that companies do not see the need to invest in certification as they do not consider it a necessity without valuing the benefits that it could bring them. In

¹⁸ <https://bcorporation.net/directory> Accessed 2 May 2020

addition, the certification process requires time, money and is not permanent and has to be renewed every 3 years.

Fortunately, the number of certifications by Spanish companies follows a positive trend, this helps the movement grow and become stronger and more visible to other companies and consumers who in turn are increasingly aware and looking for products and services that are more sustainable.

Figure 5: Sectors with the highest number of certifications in Spain



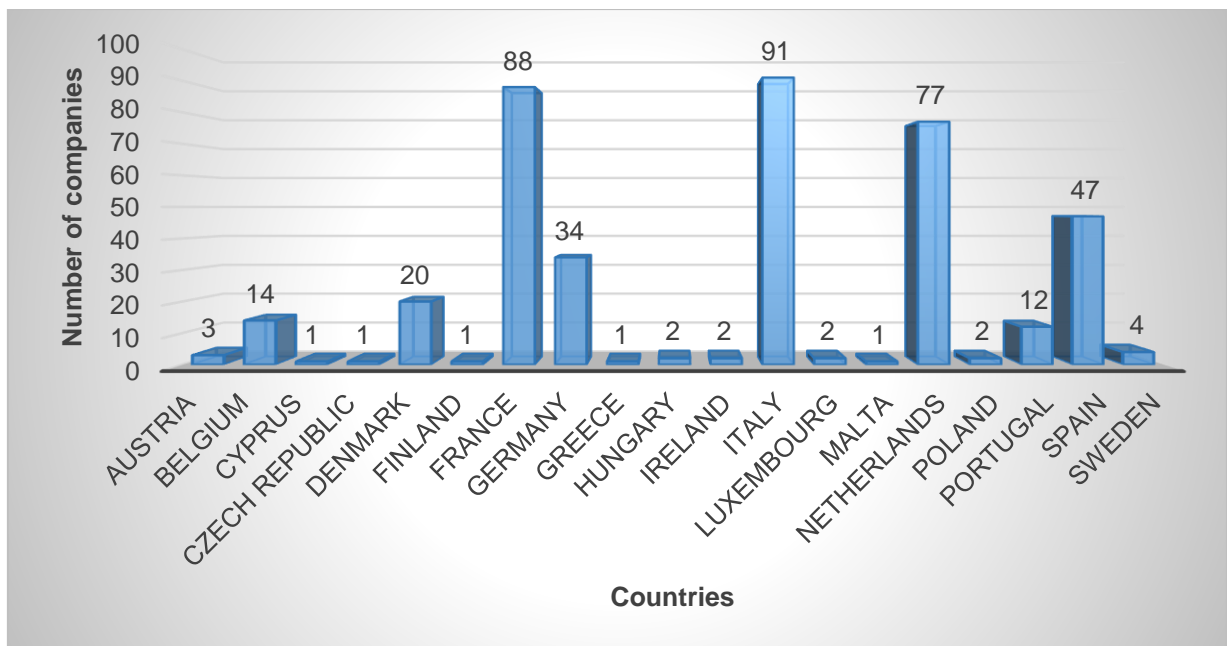
Source: Elaborated by the author from: Directory B Corp

On this occasion we analysed the sectors with the highest number of B certifications in Spain and the sector with the highest number is the sector with the smallest environmental footprint followed by agriculture and retail, finally we would find the manufacturing sector.

The reasons why the predominant sector is the one with the lowest environmental impact are due to the company's commitment to the environment. That is to say, in order to obtain the B Corp certification the companies must fulfil a series of requirements to obtain the minimum necessary score, it is for that reason that it is in his companies with a smaller environmental impact since it is in his statutes from the creation or later modification the support to obtain a more sustainable and respectful economy with the environment.

In the case of non-producing companies, it is easier to be part of the sector with a smaller environmental footprint due to its nature and lower need for natural resources. Their good practices are focused on achieving a higher score in other evaluable sections of the certification, such as the relationship with employees and customers. On the other hand, the sectors highlighted in figure 5, companies in charge of manufacturing, agriculture or retailers, will focus their efforts on ensuring that their daily activities are carried out sustainably, without leaving aside the relations with workers and customers, which are also taken into account when evaluating for certification, positively scoring all activities that are carried out with a respectful vision and in search of conservation and improvement of the environment. At the same time, it seeks new efficient and ecological ways of production that can improve current and future society.

Figure 6: Number of B Corp certified companies in Europe



Source: *Elaborated by the author from: Directory B Corp*

In figure 6 we study the certifications that each member country of the European Union has, with Italy being the country with the highest number of certifications, with a total of 91 companies, followed by France with 88 certified companies and the Netherlands with 77 certifications. Most of the other countries have around 1 or 2 certifications, except Germany with 34, Denmark with 20 and Belgium with 14.

Both the number of companies and the sectors in which they are located will increase over the years thanks to the importance and relevance of environmental awareness in

recent years and that people are increasingly concerned about this issue and perform small actions that influence globally, for example, consumption of sustainable products, reduction of use of plastics and many smaller gestures that society begins to make in their daily lives.

12.1. The Best Companies 2019 List by B Corporation

According to the B Corp platform the certified companies that lead the B movement, being an example for the rest of the companies pointing the way to achieve the objectives. Through business processes that are environmentally friendly and economically profitable. Below are the lists of the best companies according to the score obtained in the BIA and the most respectful of the environment.

Figure 7: Best for the World: Overall List

Number	Name	Certified Since	Location	Sector	Over Impact Score B
1	Abacus Wealth Partners, LLC	October, 2007	Santa Monica, California, United States	Service with Minor Environmental Footprint	133
2	850zip Community & Business Memberships	September, 2017	Phoenix, Arizona, United States	Service with Minor Environmental Footprint	131,7
3	Bridges Fund Management Equity and debt impact investments	July, 2015	London, London, United Kingdom	Service with Minor Environmental Footprint	130,2
4	4YOU2 Idiomas Language School	February, 2014	São Paulo, Sao Paulo, Brazil	Service with Minor Environmental Footprint	124,3
5	3Sisters Sustainable Management, LLC	January, 2011	Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, United States	Service with Minor Environmental Footprint	124,1

Source: Elaborated by the author from: B Corporation 2019¹⁹

In Best for the World: Environment List | Certified B Corporation, 2020 they argue that the following companies are

Environmental honoured are taking bold steps to preserve our most valuable resources. With planet-friendly practices and environmental initiatives, these companies are

¹⁹ <https://bcorporation.net/2019-best-for-the-world-overall> Accessed 12 May 2020

considering the impact of their daily footprint, including use of energy, materials, facilities, supply chain and more.

Figure 8: Best for the World: Environment List

Number	Name	Certified Since	Location	Sector	Over B Impact Score
1	10Power Solar project development and finance in markets lacking access to electricity.	April, 2019	San Francisco, California, United States	Service with Minor Environmental Footprint	107,9
2	3 Phases Renewables	June, 2017	El Segundo, California, United States	Service with Minor Environmental Footprint	104,9
3	4 Pines Brewing Company Handcrafted Beer Brewed Naturally	January, 2017	Sydney, New South Wales, Australia	Manufacturing	97,9
4	7group, LLC Sustainability Consulting	December, 2014	Sinking Spring, Pennsylvania, United States	Service with Minor Environmental Footprint	90,8
5	4th Bin Inc. Electronic Waste Collection and Recycling	August, 2012	Long Island City, New York, United States	Service with Minor Environmental Footprint	90,3

Source: Elaborated by the author from: B Corporation 2019²⁰

B Corp Spain writes an article in the Medium platform where it collects the best rated companies in Spain, which are in the different lists of the best companies according to score in the different areas evaluated in the BIA evaluation questionnaire. These lists are classified as: the best overall score, consumers, community, workers, environment, governance and changemakers.

Figure 9: The best companies in Spain

Number	Name	Certified Since	Location	Sector	Over B Impact Score	Lists of the best for the world where it appears
1	AlmaNatura Rural	December, 2013	Arroyomolinos de Leon, Huelva, Spain	Service with Minor Environmental Footprint	153,8	Customers and Overall
2	Roots for Sustainability (R4S)	October, 2014	Barcelona, Catalonia, Spain	Service with Minor Environmental Footprint	131,2	Changemakers and Customers
3	Cuento de Luz	November, 2015	Pozuelo de Alarcon, Madrid, Spain	Wholesale/ Retail	127,6	Community and Overall

²⁰ <https://bcorporation.net/2019-best-for-the-world-environment> Accessed 12 May 2020

4	Worldcoo	May, 2015	Barcelona, Catalonia, Spain	Service with Minor Environmental Footprint	124,1	Changemakers, Customers, Governance and Overall
5	Specialisterna e Spain	November, 2018	Sant Cugat del Vallès, Barcelona, Spain	Service with Minor Environmental Footprint	118,6	Community
6	Visualfy	November, 2017	Benissanó, Valencia, Spain	Service with Minor Environmental Footprint	115,5	Customers
7	Integral	February, 2017	Barcelona, Catalonia, Spain	Service with Minor Environmental Footprint	108,4	Workers
8	BIKOnsulting, S. Coop.	May, 2016	Vitoria-Gasteiz, Alava, Spain	Service with Minor Environmental Footprint	105,4	Changemakers
9	Veritas	June, 2016	Barcelona, Catalonia, Spain	Wholesale/Retail	96,8	Changemakers
10	MANRESAN A de MICROBACTERIOLOGIA, S.L	April, 2016	Badalona, Catalonia, Spain	Wholesale/Retail	95,2	Governance
11	Farmidable	December, 2018	Las Rozas, Madrid, Spain	Agriculture/Growers	88,5	Community
12	21gramos	April, 2019	Madrid, Madrid, Spain	Service with Minor Environmental Footprint	82,2	Workers
13	Steelter	September, 2016	Barcelona, Catalonia, Spain	Service with Minor Environmental Footprint	81,9	Governance

Source: Elaborated by the author from: B Corporation Spain 2019 and Medium²¹

13. CONCLUSION

The first objective of this work has been to investigate and diagnose the state of the European Union in terms of green innovation. And the second has been to carry out an analysis of the B Corporation website which is a driving force behind the B movement in the world.

In the first part, the green economy has been analysed together with the sustainability strategies of Europe, which are expanding to all the member countries of the union and have the purpose and capacity to be an adoption example to the rest of the world.

²¹ <https://medium.com/@BCorpSpain/conoce-a-las-14-mejores-empresas-b-corp-esp%C3%B1olas-para-el-mundo-8089bbf32106> Accessed 14 May 2020

Currently, society is in a model of intensive growth where waste or use and throw away are the main principles.

The global crises of the last century has encouraged a change of perspective, both on the part of the population and the governments. For these reasons, many authors speak of a new economic model, the Green Commendation, which is based mainly on a new concept of production, distribution and marketing that is more respectful of the environment. It also implies a new way of shopping by consumers that generates less negative impact on the planet.

This new economic model will provide the possibility to improve and solve current problems together both in sustainable development and in the different social problems. Therefore, with the growing awareness on the part of society along with the economic problems, the perfect opportunity is seen for this transition to change from the current economic model to a more sustainable model that gives the opportunity to obtain social and economic benefits for all.

On the other hand, some authors also observe negative aspects such as that this model does not solve environmental problems but simply puts a price on pollution, just as it excludes fundamental human rights due to the search for the highest possible profit. In turn, the European Union's high dependence on resources from outside makes it difficult to obtain greater competitiveness in the global market.

Since the 1990s, Europe's concern about these problems has been growing and different strategies have been developed to try to reduce and solve these problems. The different strategies (Europe 2020 strategy, 2030 and 2050) seek to provide solutions to current environmental, economic and social problems in order to achieve a better future.

The objectives to be achieved with the strategies are: to reduce dependence on the outside world, thus increasing internal competitiveness, and to obtain a competitive advantage over competitors in the increasingly complex and dynamic global market. To achieve a sustainable and environmentally friendly economy which in turn will boost employment thanks to the need for sustainable innovation.

The European Union makes available to the different organizations, both public and private, investment funds, economic aids, training aids and public awareness in order to achieve the objectives established in the meetings that are held to review and update the objectives set out in the strategies. Similarly, the legislation must be reviewed periodically to adapt to new situations both in the market and in society to promote and

enable change in the economic and social model as it is a transition that must be carried out jointly.

As a result of environmental and social problems a new economic model has emerged, the so-called circular economy. With this new economic model a new vision is created when producing, consuming, using resources and recycling them being much more respectful with the environment. At the same time, this new behaviour achieves the inclusion of society and the environment as fundamental factors for global change, both economic and social, obtaining a positive result for everyone.

The proposal by the circular economy to achieve economic growth is based on closing the cycles of production and materials so that they are used more intensively, obtaining the maximum possible performance in the same way that their extraction is carried out in the most respectful way possible with the environment in which they are found and their subsequent recycling once their useful life is over. With this new way of using resources, innovation and business opportunities are boosted by having to adapt to new situations.

Therefore, regarding the terms of action of the circular economy: extract, transform, distribute, use and recover to be carried out sustainably, a change in all processes will be necessary, involving companies, government administrations and the population. Thanks to the intelligent design of products and services, taking into account the characteristics and needs of each process and resources, the opportunity to implement the circular economy at any scale can be enabled.

In this way, with the circular economy approach, it is possible to reduce the use of materials and natural resources, which are distributed in an equitable manner, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and protect the value of products and materials.

For the European Union, this new economic model allows the modernisation both economically and socially, creating new jobs that adapt to the new situation, boosting a new competitive advantage over its global competitors. The use of new technologies and innovation will be fundamental to this sustainable development and to increase the competitiveness of European companies.

As far as citizens are concerned, the circular economy offers them better quality, efficient, affordable and longer lasting products that will have the possibility of being repaired, reused or recycled with a greater guarantee.

The European Union established an action plan to promote the transition from the current economic model to the circular economy model, creating a monitoring commission to

control initiatives in the different areas (plastic, water, waste prevention, energy, transport and financial system) in order to regulate that these meet the objectives and support them.

The European Union's action plan is in charge of setting the path to reach climate neutrality in 2050, supported by policies that promote and regulate sustainability in business models, services, products and aid for the transformation of the current consumption model. This action plan will be introduced progressively, adapting to new situations and driving change towards a more sustainable society. To do this, it will be necessary for the European Union to have the support of the governmental organizations of all the countries of the union that support and adopt the action plan to achieve the benefits of the new circular economic model.

The circular economy will provide a more efficient and sustainable way to consume and produce, improve innovation, recover biodiversity, reduce air, soil and water pollution, increase the European Union's GDP, among others.

The increase in public awareness has led many companies to become involved in this new economic trend, such as the page analysed B Corporation. This non-profit organization includes some of these companies that have the certification that accredits them as companies that respect the environment and the community that surrounds them. In addition, of the different instruments and requirements necessary to obtain the certification and the benefits that this one brings to him. The companies that make up the B Corp community are an example to society and serve as an example to many companies.

With the creation of the B movement, the opportunity is given to show society the problems and solutions in terms of sustainability and social equality. This community helps new companies to improve in order to achieve certification or simply to be more respectful of the environment around them. With respect to consumers, it shows them that companies are adapting to their needs.

B Corporation has numerous instruments and professionals that carry out the project, the one in charge of granting the certification is the B Lab, constituted by expert analysts and an independent Standards Advisory Council that ensure that the certifications issued are correct. These certifications mean an increase in value for the companies that hold them, because they improve their image, attract talent, become part of a community that offers them visibility, both in the domestic and foreign markets, protect the mission from changes in the company's management and give the opportunity to learn from other companies and share knowledge and new processes.

With the analysis of the directory of the B Corp page I have been able to observe the number of companies that have certification and in which sector they are located. In Europe there are a total of 403 companies with B certification, the countries with more certified companies are Italy with 91, France with 88, the Netherlands with 77 and Spain is in fourth position with 47 certified companies.

The first company that obtained the certification in Spain was Alma Natura in December 2013, the company is located in the province of Huelva. From 2013 until today the number of certifications has been increasing positively being more and more companies that obtain the certification, being 21 Grams the last one in obtaining it in April 2019. These two companies are in the list of the best Spanish companies with B certification Alma Natura is in the first position of this list and 21 Grams is in the position number 12.

The main sector in which certified companies are found is that of Service with minor environmental footprint, in this sector it is easier to achieve certification due to the nature of the company which involves positive aspects that make it increase its score in the evaluation by not carrying out activities that directly influence the environment.

Barcelona with 24 companies and Madrid with 13 companies are the communities with the highest number of certified companies. This greater number of companies in these communities coincides with the fact that they are located in areas with a greater concentration of industry and talent.

In spite of in the recent years the B Corp movement has been increasing it is still unknown to most of the Spanish population. The companies that have the certification have not been in charge of announcing and informing the society about this new movement.

The lack of knowledge on the part of society, together with the lack of measures on the part of the Spanish government, makes it difficult to spread the B movement to achieve greater awareness in society. It is important that the different public governmental organizations adopt and comply with the action plan to publicize the new measures proposed by the European Union.

Offering information to citizens and educating them in the new economic model is very important for the promotion of this new economic trend, in the same way that movements such as the one promoted by the B Corporation page help the ecological transition, serving as support for society and an example of good practice.

Therefore, with this analysis of the current situation in Europe and Spain of how the ecological transition is, we can say that there is still a long way to go but the initiatives

and action plan proposed by the European Union to achieve climate neutrality and a new economic model are correct and affordable for governments to be installed. It is important that they implement them as soon as possible and that the committee monitors whether the objectives are actually being met. It is also necessary that initiatives such as the movement of the B Corp page by public institutions and the companies that form the community make themselves known to their clients to encourage dissemination.

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APPENDIX

Appendix 1: Opinions of users of the platform²²:

- Anna Badia from Veritas: "It is a luxury to be part of a global movement, working to build a better world through the most successful companies in the world".

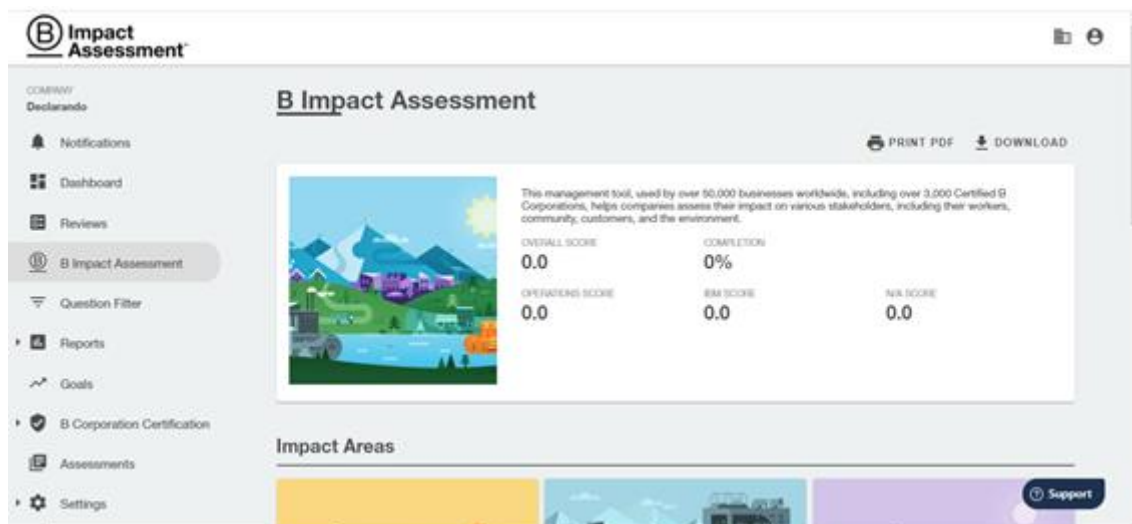
- Juanjo Manzano from Alma Natura: "When I buy a B Corp company I respond to social and environmental challenges of our society. It is a way to build a more humane world where success is not only measured by money".

- Carolina Blazquez of Ecoalf: "Being part of B Corp allows me to contract with many other companies and above all people with an objective totally aligned with mine: to generate a change. Knowing that you are not alone and that there are many of us working with a common purpose helps you move forward with more strength and, at the same time, makes you feel proud to be part of one of the best companies in the world".

Appendix 2: Main page of the questionnaire BIA

Below is the tab for the BIA²³ questionnaire to be completed for certification on page B Corp and some sample questionnaire questions from the different sections. You will need to register in order to access, registration is free of charge.

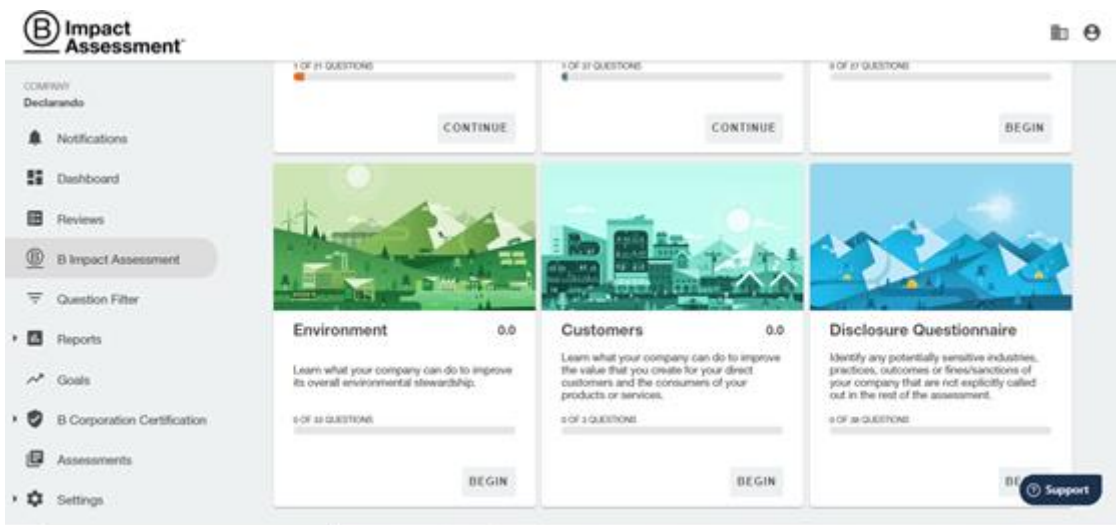
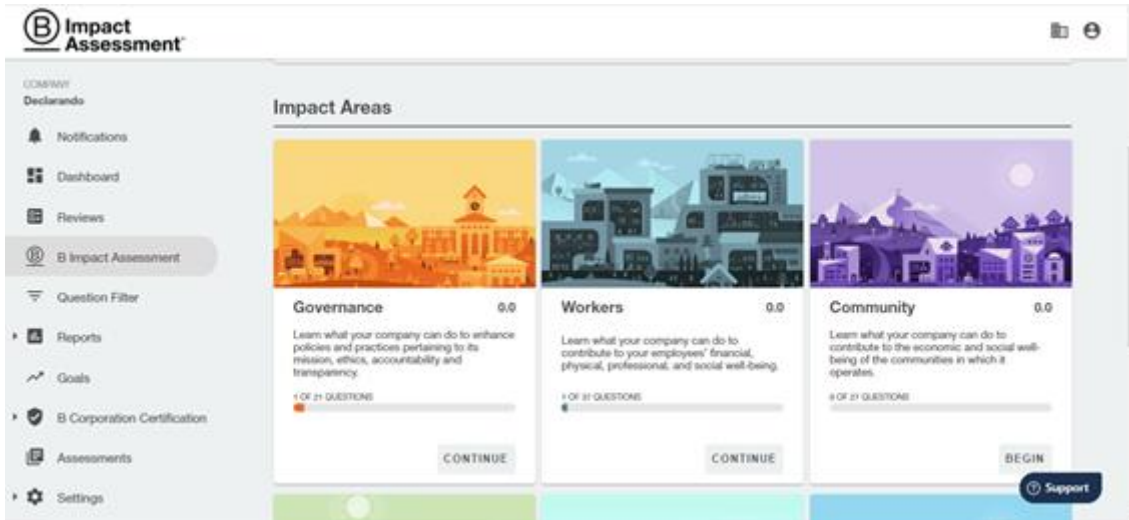
Main page of the questionnaire:



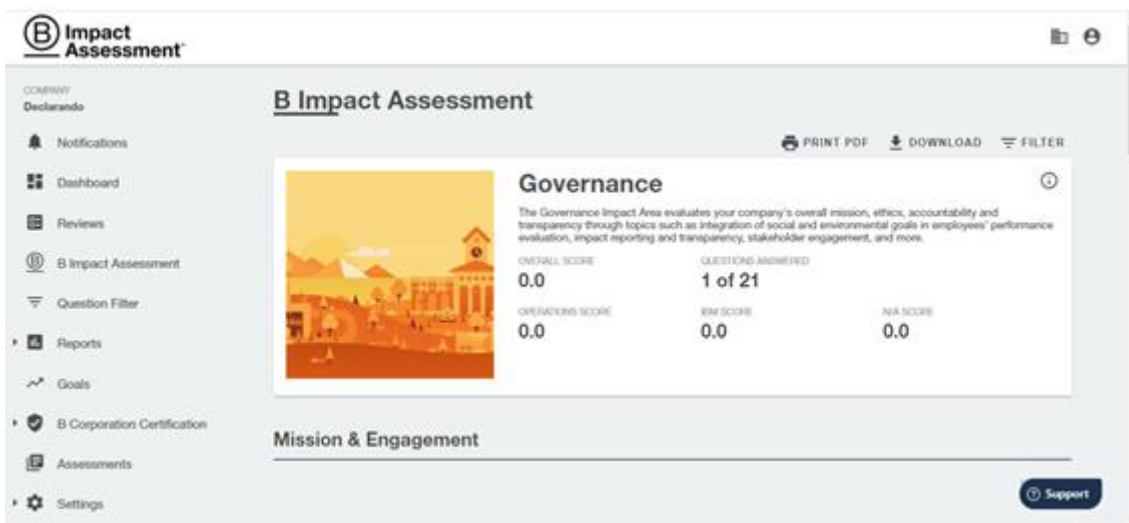
Main page of the questionnaire where the different areas to be answered are distinguished:

²² https://issuu.com/bcorpsspain/docs/memoria_anual_b_lab_spain_2018

²³ https://bimpactassessment.net/?_ga=2.43191013.1785519245.1589110764-429636049.1555783461



Pages of the different areas:




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Workers

The Workers Impact Area evaluates your company's contribution to its employees' financial, physical, professional, and social well-being through topics such as payment of a living wage, benefits, employee health and safety, professional development opportunities, and more.

OVERALL SCORE	QUESTIONS ANSWERED	
0.0	1 of 37	
OPERATIONS SCORE	EM SCORE	NA SCORE
0.0	0.0	0.0

Workers Impact Area Introduction

This section gives you a chance to articulate the qualifications for being considered a worker in the company before answering related questions.

[Support](#)


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Community

The Community Impact Area evaluates your company's contribution to the economic and social well-being of the communities in which it operates, through topics such as diversity and inclusion, job creation, civic engagement and philanthropy, supply chain management, and more.

OVERALL SCORE	QUESTIONS ANSWERED	
0.0	0 of 27	
OPERATIONS SCORE	EM SCORE	NA SCORE
0.0	0.0	0.0

Community Impact Area Introduction

This section of the assessment identifies specific ways that a company's business model may be designed to deliver a specific, material, positive impact for their community.

[Support](#)


B Impact Assessment

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Environment

The Environment Impact Area evaluates your company's overall environmental stewardship, including how the company manages general environmental impacts as well as specific topics like climate, water use and impacts on land and life.

OVERALL SCORE	QUESTIONS ANSWERED	
0.0	0 of 33	
OPERATIONS SCORE	EM SCORE	NA SCORE
0.0	0.0	0.0

Environment Impact Area Introduction

This section allows your company to provide data on its energy use, carbon footprint and waste management.

[Support](#)

B Impact Assessment

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Customers

The Customers Impact Area evaluates the value that your company creates for your direct customers and the consumers of your products or services through topics such as ethical and positive marketing, warranty and quality assurance of products and services, data privacy, data security, and more.

OVERALL SCORE	QUESTIONS ANSWERED	
0.0	0 of 3	
OPERATIONS SCORE	BIM SCORE	NA SCORE
0.0	0.0	0.0

Customers Impact Area Introduction

This section of the assessment identifies specific ways that a company's product may be designed to deliver a specific, material, positive impact for its customers beyond the value normally provided from goods or services.

Support

B Impact Assessment

COMPANY Declarando

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Disclosure Questionnaire

Disclosure Questionnaire

The Disclosure Questionnaire identifies any potentially sensitive industries, practices, outcomes or functions of your company. It does not factor into a company's B Impact Assessment score, but is reviewed to determine eligibility for B Corp Certification.

QUESTIONS ANSWERED

0 of 38

Disclosure Industries

Disclosure questions on specific production and trade.

Support

Appendix 3: Sample questions from the BIA questionnaire

- Governance

B Impact Assessment

Governance

Mission & Engagement

Level of Impact Focus

Describe your company's approach to creating positive impact.

This is an unweighted question that will not impact your score and is asked only for research/benchmarking purposes.

- Creating positive social or environmental impact is not a focus for our business
- We occasionally think about the social and environmental impact of some aspects of our business, but not frequently.
- We frequently consider our social and environmental impact, but it isn't a high priority in decision-making.
- We consistently incorporate social and environmental impact into decision-making because we consider it important to the success and profitability of our business.
- We treat our social and environmental impact as a primary measure of success for our business and prioritize it even in cases where it may not drive profitability.

Points Available: 0.00

OPERATIONS
0.0

Support

Mission Statement Characteristics

Does your company's formal, written corporate mission statement include any of the following?

A formal written corporate mission statement is one that is either publicly facing or formally shared with the employees of the company. Please check all that apply.

- No social or environmental commitment
- A general commitment to social or environmental responsibility (e.g. to conserve the environment)
- A commitment to a specific positive social impact (e.g. poverty alleviation, sustainable economic development)
- A commitment to a specific positive environmental impact (e.g. reducing waste sent to landfills through upcycled products)
- A commitment to serve a target beneficiary group in need (e.g. low-income customers, smallholder farmers)
- We have no written mission statement

Points Available: 0.50

Mission Statement

Please share the text of your formal mission statement here.

Please share the text of your formal mission statement here:

Points Available: 0.00

Social and Environmental Decision-Making

How does your company integrate social and environmental performance into decision-making?

Your answers determine which future questions in the assessment are applicable to your company.

- Employee training that includes social or environmental issues material to our company or its mission
- Manager roles with job descriptions that explicitly incorporate social and environmental performance
- Performance reviews that formally incorporate social and environmental issues
- Compensation and job descriptions of executive team members that include social and environmental performance
- Board of Directors review of social and environmental performance
- We measure our externalities in monetary terms and incorporate them into our financial balances
- Other - please describe
- None of the above

Points Available: 1.00

- Workers

B Impact Assessment

Workers

Workers Impact Area Introduction

This section gives you a chance to articulate the qualifications for being considered a worker in the company before answering related questions.

OPERATIONS

0.0

Majority Hourly vs. Salaried Workers

Are the majority (greater than 50%) of your employees paid on a fixed salary or a daily or hourly wage?

This is a REQUIRED question that determines the set of additional questions your company will respond to regarding your employee impact.

- Fixed Salary
- Daily or hourly wage

Points Available: 0.00

 Support

Use Of Contracted Labor

Is any of your company's labor performed by subcontracted organizations or individuals, such as outsourced staffing services or independent contractors?

Your answers determine which future questions in the assessment are applicable to your company.

- Yes, some of our labor is contracted to third party subcontractors that manage staff on our behalf
- Yes, we hire individual independent contractors who are contracted to work 20+ hours per week for the company indefinitely, or for longer than a 6 month period
- While we utilize independent contractors, they do not work exclusively for the company and do not work for us greater than 20 hours per week for longer than a 6 month period
- None of the above

Points Available: 0.00

Workers Impact Business Model Introduction

Is your company structured to benefit its employees in either of the following ways?

Your answers determine which future questions in the assessment are applicable to your company.

- Ownership structures that provide significant equity (>40%) and empowerment to all employees (e.g. employee-owned companies, cooperatives)
- Providing high quality jobs or professional development for individuals with chronic barriers to employment (workforce development programs)
- None of the above

Points Available: 0.00

of Full Time Workers

Number of Total Full-Time Workers

Current Total Full-Time Workers

Current Total Full-Time Workers

- We do not track this

Points Available: 0.00

- Community

B Impact Assessment

Community

Community Impact Area Introduction

This section of the assessment identifies specific ways that a company's business model may be designed to deliver a specific, material, positive impact for their community.

OPERATIONS
0.0

Community Oriented Impact Business Model

Does your company's business model create a specific positive benefit for stakeholders such as charitable partners, vendors or suppliers in need, or your local community?

Your answers determine which future questions in the assessment are applicable to your company.

- Yes
- No

Points Available: 0.00

Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion

OPERATIONS
0.0

 Support

Diverse Ownership and Leadership

Is your company majority-owned or -led by individuals from any of the following underrepresented groups?

Please select all that apply.

- Led by a woman
- Led by an individual from an underrepresented racial or ethnic minority
- Led by another underrepresented individual (veterans, LGBT, etc.)
- Majority owned by women
- Majority owned by individuals from underrepresented racial or ethnic minorities
- Majority owned by other underrepresented individuals (veterans, LGBT, etc.)
- None of the above

Points Available: 1.03

Creating and Managing Inclusive Work Environments

Which of the following practices does your company have in place around diversity, equity, and inclusion?

- We include a statement in all our job postings with a commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion
- We conduct anonymous or "blind" reviews of applications or resumes without attaching names or identifiable characteristics
- We conduct analyses of our job description language and requirements to ensure they are inclusive and equitable
- We offer trainings for all employees on topics related to diversity, equity, and inclusion
- We have set specific, measurable diversity improvement goals
- We have conducted a pay equity analysis by gender, race/ethnicity, or other demographic factors and, if necessary, implemented equal compensation improvement plans or policies
- None of the above

Points Available: 1.03

- Environment

B Impact Assessment

Environment

Environment Impact Area Introduction

This section allows your company to provide data on its energy use, carbon footprint and waste management.

OPERATIONS
0.0

Type of Facilities

What kind of facilities does your business primarily operate in?

Your answers determine which future questions in the assessment are applicable to your company.

- Company-owned office space
- Leased office space
- Co-working Space
- Virtual or home offices

Points Available: 0.00

Environmental Business Model

Are your company's products or process structured to restore or preserve the environment in any of the following ways?

Answering affirmatively will opt you into additional sections of the B Impact Assessment with more specific questions about this Impact Business Model.

- Through a manufacturing, wholesale or agriculture process which is designed to significantly reduce environmental impact compared to typical practices for the industry
- Through a product or service that preserves, conserves, or restores the environment or resources
- None of the above

Points Available: 0.00

 Support

Environmental Management

OPERATIONS
0.0

Green Building Standards

What percentage of company facilities (by area, both owned by company or leased) is certified to meet the requirements of an accredited green building program?

- <20%
- 20-49%
- 50-79%
- 80%+
- N/A

Points Available: 1.40

Facility Improvement with Landlord

If you lease your facilities, have you worked with your landlord to implement or maintain any of the following?

- Energy efficiency improvements
- Water efficiency improvements
- Waste reduction programs (including recycling)
- None of the above
- N/A - Company does not lease majority of facilities

Points Available: 1.40

- Customers

B Impact Assessment

Customers

Customers Impact Area Introduction

This section of the assessment identifies specific ways that a company's product may be designed to deliver a specific, material, positive impact for its customers beyond the value normally provided from goods or services.

OPERATIONS
0.0

Customer Impact Business Model Introduction

Does your product/service address a social or economic problem for or through your customers?

Your answers determine which future questions in the assessment are applicable to your company.

- Yes
- No

Points Available: 0.00

Customer Stewardship

OPERATIONS
0.0

 Support

Managing Customer Stewardship

Does your company do any of the following to manage the impact and value created for your customers or consumers?

- We offer product / service guarantees, warranties, or protection policies
- We have third party quality certifications or accreditations
- We have formal quality control mechanisms
- We have feedback / customer service feedback or complaint mechanisms
- We monitor customer or consumer satisfaction
- We assess the outcomes produced for our customers through the use of our product or service
- We have written policies in place for ethical marketing, advertisement, or customer engagement
- We manage the privacy and security of client / customer data
- None of the above

Points Available: 1.25

Managing Product Impacts

Does the company do any of the following with regards to managing the potential impact their products have on customers / beneficiaries?

- Company regularly monitors customer outcomes and well-being
- Company has formal program to incorporate customer testing and feedback into product design
- Company has formal programs in place to continuously improve outcomes produced for customers (including reducing negative effects or increasing positive effects)
- Other
- None of the above

Points Available: 1.25

- Disclosure Questionnaire

B Impact Assessment

Disclosure Questionnaire

Disclosure Industries

Disclosure questions on specific production and trade.

Gambling

Please indicate if the company is involved in production of or trade in any the following. Select Yes for all options that apply.

- Gambling
- Yes
 - No

Points Available: 0.00

Disclosure Pornography

Please indicate if the company is involved in production of or trade in any the following. Select Yes for all options that apply.

- Pornography
- Yes
 - No

Points Available: 0.00

 Support

Payday, Short Term, or High Interest Lending

Please indicate if the company is involved in production of or trade in any the following. Select Yes for all options that apply.

Payday, short-term, or high-interest lending

- Yes
- No

Points Available: 0.00

Illegal Products or Subject to Phase Out

Please indicate if the company is involved in production of or trade in any the following. Select Yes for all options that apply.

Products or activities that are illegal under country laws or regulations where they have operated, banned in international conventions or agreements, or subject to international phase-out or regulation

- Yes
- No

Points Available: 0.00

Industries at Risk of Human Rights Violations

Please indicate if the company is involved in production of or trade in any the following. Select Yes for all options that apply.

Industries reliant upon materials at high risk of human rights infringements (e.g. conflict minerals)

- Yes
- No

Points Available: 0.00