

THE VOICE OF PURPOSE

ESG communication, authenticity & trust

110

European companies
(COMPUSTAT, 2010-2023)

1,286

Consumers in four
experiments

4

ESG communication
profiles (2x2 taxonomy)



HOW AUTHENTICITY IS FORMED (BEHAVIORAL MECHANISM)



 **Specific, Solution-oriented**
messages reduce ambiguity and feel more credible

 **Broad ESG claims**
without evidence trigger skepticism ("symbolic overreach")

WHAT PAYS OFF (FINANCIAL PATTERNS BY PROFILE)

 **Authentic Specialists**
strongest profitability & efficiency (increased ROI/ROS/capital turnover)

 **Symbolic Specialists**
weaker profitability/efficiency (misalignment despite focus)

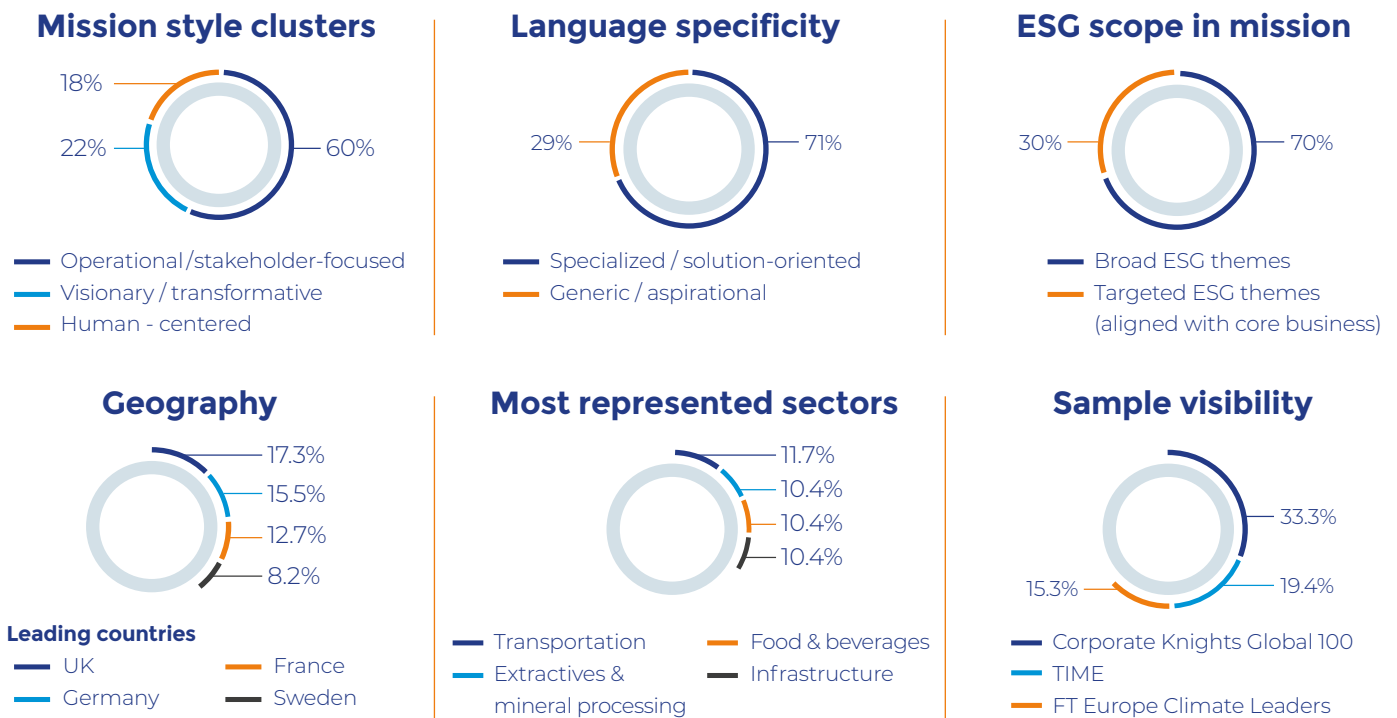
 **Sustainability Champions**
increased net sales & intangible assets (brand/reputation payoff)

 **Green-washing Risk Zone**
weakest outcomes; no intangible upside

2X2 ESG COMMUNICATION TAXONOMY (SCOPE X SDG ALIGNMENT)



HOW FIRMS COMMUNICATE (SHARES OF SAMPLE)



MATERIALITY, SDGs & MISSION-COMPLIANCE GAP (KEY STATS)

