

# 2024

Sustainability at  
**columbus**



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# Foreword

## Dear readers,

It is a particular honour for us to present to you the first sustainability report of G. Staeble GmbH u. Co. KG. As a family-owned company with a heritage dating back to 1899, we have always been committed to long-term responsibility and sustainable business practices. Sustainability is deeply rooted in our corporate identity and shapes every area of our business activities — from the manufacture of our products and our production processes through to our social and environmental commitments.

This report reflects our determined commitment to act responsibly not only in production and in sustainable processes, but in every facet of our business. Our vision is to actively help shape a sustainable future. For more than a century, we have been convinced that ecological and economic action are inseparably linked. This conviction forms the foundation of our success and is the key to the long-term resilience and future viability of G. Staeble GmbH u. Co. KG.

We provide you with a transparent insight into the concrete targets and measures we are pursuing in the area of sustainability. In doing so, we place particular emphasis on optimising our production processes and reducing our ecological footprint. At the same time, we are aware that the path to a fully sustainable future is far from complete. We are determined to work continuously on improving our performance in order to set new standards.

We invite you to read this report and to share our vision of a sustainable future. With confidence and determination, we look ahead to the challenges before us and are firmly committed to continuing — together with our employees, partners, customers and suppliers — to actively help create the foundations for a sustainable and prosperous economy.



Jörg-Peter Staeble  
Managing Director



Marc Oliver Staeble  
Managing Director



# Our path to greater transparency

With this sustainability report, we are providing a structured insight into our central sustainability topics for the first time for financial year 2024. We show where we stand, how we proceed and where we are focusing. The report is both a starting point and a working basis for the further development of our sustainability management.

**100**

Years of experience  
Since 1926

**> 3500**

Cleaning machines / year  
Made in Germany

**143**

Employees  
Experience meets precision

**1**

Production site  
Stuttgart, Germany

**30m €**

Revenue 2024  
Sustainable growth

## 01.

### Reporting scope

The report covers our site in Stuttgart. The production facility is fully included in the data collection, analysis and assessment of our sustainability performance.

## 02.

### Data basis

Our data basis consists of internal analyses and reports from 2024 and 2025. These include, among other things, the greenhouse gas inventory, the double materiality assessment, the further development of our sustainability strategy, and an initial climate risk assessment. Ongoing monitoring data is included as a supplement.

## 03.

### Methodological framework

In order to clearly determine relevant sustainability topics, we carried out a double materiality assessment in 2025. Methodologically, it is aligned with the European Sustainability Reporting Standards (ESRS) and was validated by an audit firm.

## 04.

### ESG focus and objective

Even without a formal ESRS obligation, we align our reporting with the ESG dimensions of Environment, Social and Governance. Our objective is to create transparency and to lay a robust foundation for the further development of our sustainability management.

# A clear view. Concrete steps.

2024 was a year of focused progress. We invested in efficiency, built transparency and strengthened product responsibility – adapting processes, capturing our full emissions footprint for the first time, and rolling out concrete solutions that save resources and make our operations more resilient. The following highlights show where we took action and what we achieved.

# 1

## Taking water treatment further

In 2024, we developed and certified dedicated water treatment systems for all production areas. These systems enable the repeated use of process water through filtration and purification. This reduces water consumption and increases the efficiency of our internal testing processes.

# 2

## Emissions fully assessed for the first time

In 2024, we comprehensively recorded all direct and indirect emissions across Scopes 1, 2 and 3 for the first time. This greenhouse gas inventory provides transparency on key emission sources and establishes the foundation for targeted reduction measures and the further development of our climate goals.

# 3

## Sustainability built into product

With the RA 55|BM 40 CYCLE we are placing a clear focus on material circularity, energy efficiency and reparability. The machine is made of 100 % single-grade recycle and is designed for a long service life.

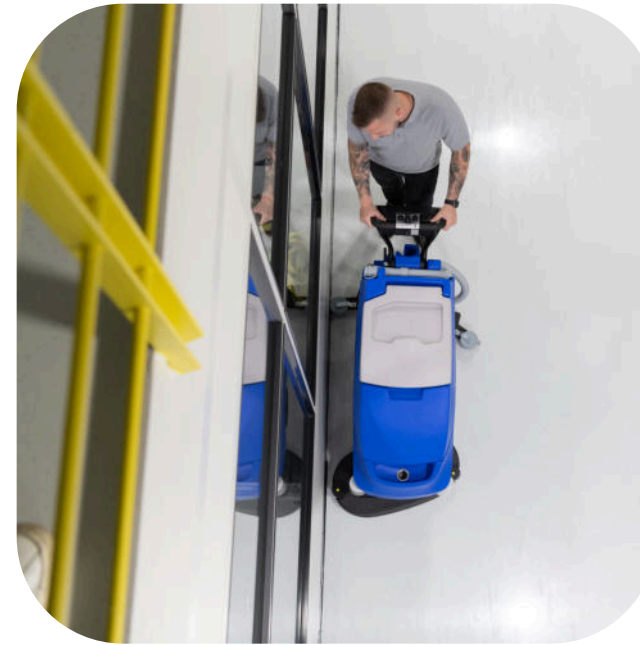
# 4

## Infrastructure modernised for the future

We also modernised our office building to improve energy efficiency, resource conservation and workplace quality. Structural and technical upgrades help reduce energy demand over the long term while creating a sustainable and future-ready working environment.

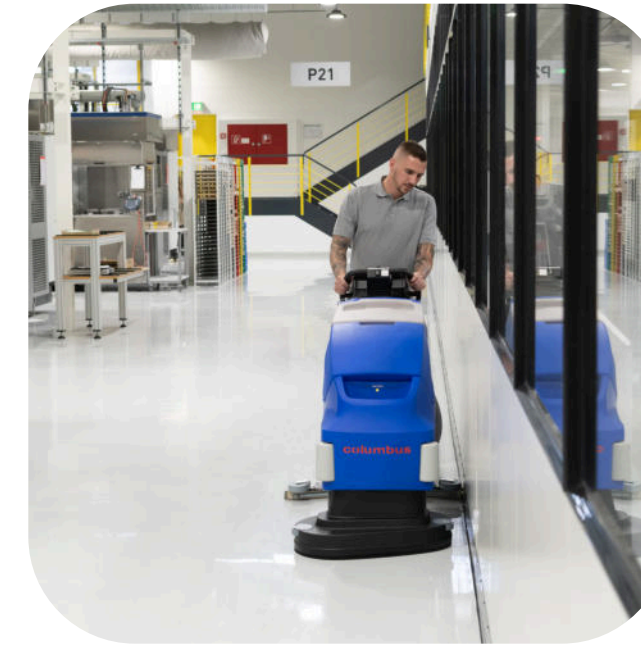
# Clean thinking. Responsible action.

For decades, columbus has stood for professional cleaning technology made in Germany. We develop, manufacture and market high-quality cleaning machines for contract cleaning, industry, retail and public facilities. At the core of our philosophy is “Clean Quality”: durable, robust and user-friendly machines engineered for outstanding cleaning performance, economic efficiency and responsible resource management.



## Reliable

As a traditional, family-owned company, we don't think in quarters, but in service life. Our ambition is to build extremely durable, high-quality cleaning machines. In doing so, we create the foundation for sustainable economic success — both for our company and for our customers.



## Sustainable

Durability, reparability and the responsible use of resources are at the heart of our product development. Energy-efficient technologies, intelligent dosing systems and long-lasting materials help to reduce environmental impacts and enable sustainable cleaning.



## Efficient

Our cleaning systems combine high cleaning performance with economical operation. Efficient area performance, low resource consumption and low-maintenance designs enable long-term, cost-effective use.

# A business model built for the future.

Our industry is changing: rising demands on efficiency, sustainability and labour deployment are reshaping professional cleaning over the long term. columbus responds to these developments with innovative technologies, durable products and new usage concepts.



## Autonomy – an indispensable part of professional cleaning

Autonomous cleaning systems play a key role in the future of professional cleaning. By integrating autonomous technologies into our portfolio and collaborating with leading robotics partners, columbus is actively shaping this development. Our solutions ensure consistently high cleaning quality, increase efficiency and support more sustainable use of resources. At the same time, autonomous solutions relieve cleaning staff of physically demanding routine tasks and help address structural challenges such as labour shortages. The data they generate also creates transparency in cleaning operations and enables the continuous optimisation of processes and workflows.



## Giving machines a second life – our refurbishment program

A further contribution to future viability is the responsible handling of existing resources. columbus operates a structured refurbishment program for used machines. After their operational life, machines are inspected, refurbished and reintroduced to the market. This extends product lifecycles, reduces resource consumption and provides customers with cost-effective access to proven cleaning technology.

# Standards that create reliability.

At columbus, sustainability is not an add-on but part of our operational practice. Our energy management system, certified in accordance with ISO 50001, provides the framework to record energy consumption transparently, to assess it in a targeted manner and to improve it continuously.

## Systematic energy monitoring

Through data-based analysis of our energy consumption, we identify optimisation potential at an early stage and implement targeted efficiency measures.

## Modernisation of our infrastructure

Through the energetic further development of our buildings and the optimisation of our operating facilities, we are permanently reducing our energy requirement and lowering emissions.

## Quality management

Our production, certified in accordance with ISO 9001, follows clearly defined quality standards. Every columbus cleaning machine is comprehensively tested — from electrical safety and cleaning performance through to functional reliability in daily use. Standardised testing processes, documented procedures and consistent end-of-line inspections ensure consistently high product quality and maximum operational safety. Our management system ensures stable processes and a consistently reliable performance of our machines. Customers thus benefit from durable solutions, high availability and economic efficiency in their everyday work.

## Energy-efficient lighting

The large-scale conversion to LED technology with intelligent sensor control significantly reduces our electricity consumption while at the same time improving working conditions.

## Clear targets and continuous improvement

Binding energy targets, regular reviews of progress and the active involvement of our employees ensure that sustainability remains measurable and effective.

In addition, our ISO 14001 certification ensures that environmental aspects are systematically considered throughout the entire value chain. Regular assessments help reduce environmental impacts and embed continuous improvement into our operations. In this way, we work to clearly defined standards and continuously enhance our environmental performance in a measurable and transparent manner.



## EcoVadis Bronze Medal

The sustainability measures implemented during the 2024 and 2025 financial years were recognised in January 2026 as part of the EcoVadis sustainability rating. As a result, we rank among the top 35% of companies assessed worldwide, achieving particularly strong scores in the areas of Labour & Human Rights (68/100) and Ethics (74/100).

We view this recognition as both an achievement and a commitment to continuously improve our sustainability management and further enhance transparency throughout our value chain in a measurable way.

Link:  
[https://recognition.ecovadis.com/\\_EmXzxt-MIEa1qsgg8q5kAQ](https://recognition.ecovadis.com/_EmXzxt-MIEa1qsgg8q5kAQ)

# Cleanliness is more than a condition. It is a principle.

Our values shape the way we work. They guide our actions in development, in manufacturing and in how we interact with one another. And they show what is important to us. In daily operations and in every decision.

Customer focus	<b>1.</b>	PRINCIPLE	Customer satisfaction is at the heart of everything we do. Through direct dialogue, we understand requirements early and develop solutions that fit.	IMPACT	Our products meet the highest quality and safety standards. They are reliable, durable and resource-efficient.
Innovation	<b>2.</b>	PRINCIPLE	Continuous innovation drives our success. We continuously improve our processes and technologies and implement new solutions with purpose.	IMPACT	This strengthens our customers' competitiveness and ensures that our cleaning solutions meet the environmental and economic demands of the future.
People	<b>3.</b>	PRINCIPLE	Respectful collaboration is a central part of our sustainability strategy. We act fairly and as partners, creating space for personal growth and accountability.	IMPACT	Teamwork and open communication create an environment where people can develop their skills and quality is achieved together.
Responsibility	<b>4.</b>	PRINCIPLE	As a long-established family business, we are committed to Germany as a business location and act with foresight and responsibility.	IMPACT	We take the environment, society and future generations into account in our decisions, thereby safeguarding our long-term success.
Energy and environment	<b>5.</b>	PRINCIPLE	We work to international standards and rely on modern technology and clear processes to improve our energy and environmental performance continuously.	IMPACT	This enables us to measurably reduce resource consumption and emissions – directly in production and step by step.
Sustainability	<b>6.</b>	PRINCIPLE	Sustainability is at the core of everything we do. It shapes our products, our processes and our corporate culture.	IMPACT	We combine tradition and innovation, contributing to a resource-efficient and responsible way of doing business that strengthens our market position in the long term.

# Looking ahead. Since 1926.

Sustainability is a unifying principle for us. It guides decisions, structures processes and is firmly embedded in our corporate governance. This creates a clear framework that encompasses all areas — from development through production and beyond.

## More than a goal: a principle.

## Strategic integration

Sustainability has been an integral part of our corporate philosophy since the company was founded in 1926. It shapes our strategic decisions and our daily work — from the development of our cleaning machines through manufacturing to handover to our customers.

## Three-pillar approach

As a long-established family business, we follow a three-pillar approach that combines ecological, social and economic responsibility. This structure forms the foundation for sustainable growth and long-term value creation — for employees, stakeholders and future generations.

## Preparation of the report

The data basis was collected in 2024 and 2025 across the entire consolidation scope. The compact report focuses on selected key figures and was reviewed and released by management.

As a family-owned business, we combine established structures with a forward-looking approach to management. In order to systematically integrate sustainability into our strategy, we conducted a double materiality assessment in 2025. It is based on the data foundation from 2024.

# We focus on what matters most.

We have identified our central sustainability topics on the basis of double materiality. It forms the methodological foundation for reporting in accordance with ESRS and CSRD. The results show which topics shape our business and where we are setting targeted priorities. In particular, these include:

## Climate change mitigation and adaptation

We examine how we can further reduce our greenhouse gas emissions and which risks arise from climate change and changing regulatory frameworks. At the same time, we consider opportunities that arise from technological and organisational adjustments.

## Energy and emissions

Our production requires the responsible use of energy. Through continuous efficiency improvements, targeted process optimisations and the modernisation of our infrastructure, we are reducing our energy consumption and sustainably lowering emissions.

## Working conditions (own workforce)

Fair and safe working conditions are a given for us. They foster motivation, collaboration and quality in everyday work.

## Supply chain

Our values-based corporate culture stands for responsibility, transparency and reliability. It forms the foundation for long-term partnerships – internally as well as externally.

## Circular economy

Durability, reparability and the use of recyclable materials shape our products. We use this approach to specifically save resources in the production process and to strengthen material cycles.

## Workers (value chain)

We maintain clear standards throughout our supply chain, ensuring that social considerations extend beyond our own organisation.

## Consumers and end-users

Quality, safety and reliability of our products are at the centre of our work. Our ambition is to create trust through stable processes and clearly defined standards.

# Environment

# Understanding energy. Reducing emissions.

The responsible handling of the challenges of climate change is firmly embedded in our corporate philosophy. As a manufacturer of durable cleaning machines, we see it as our task to continuously reduce energy use and emissions – in production as well as in the operation of our machines at our customers' premises. And by deliberately preparing our processes for climate-related risks. Our focus is on efficient processes, lower energy consumption and the responsible use of resources. In doing so, we consider the impact along the entire value chain.

# Climate change mitigation and adaptation

Dealing with the challenges of climate change is part of our corporate responsibility. As a manufacturer of cleaning machines, we focus on the areas where we can have a direct impact: the development, production and further improvement of our products as well as the design of our own operational processes. We continuously optimise our energy and resource efficiency, systematically record our greenhouse gas emissions and strengthen the durability and reparability of our machines. In this way, we reduce environmental impacts along the value chain and at the same time create resilient structures that enable us to respond flexibly to climate-related change.

# Our environmental priorities

## Energy efficiency

Optimisation of energy consumption in production and use.

## Transparency on CO<sub>2</sub> Emissions

Regular GHG inventories and the structured recording of Scope 1–3 serve as a basis for well-founded decisions.

## Circular economy

Reuse, recyclability and durable product concepts.

## Material use

We use recycled materials, sustainable natural materials and modular solutions – including in our office spaces.

## Environment-related ISO certifications

ISO 50001 Energy management.  
ISO 14001 Environmental management.

# Making emissions visible. Taking responsibility.

In order to reduce emissions in a targeted way, transparency is needed. We therefore record and assess the direct and indirect emissions of our business activities in Scopes 1, 2 and 3 in accordance with the internationally recognised Greenhouse Gas Protocol (GHG Protocol). The 2024 greenhouse gas inventory forms the basis for our climate targets and clearly shows where the main emission drivers lie.

## Classification of the GHG scopes

### Scope 1

Includes direct emissions from owned sources, such as heating systems or company vehicles.

### Scope 2

Describes indirect emissions from purchased energy such as electricity or heat.

### Scope 3

Includes further indirect emissions along the value chain, including purchased materials, transportation, business travel, commuting and the use of our products. The systematic recording and analysis of these emissions is a key part of our ongoing work. It helps us to identify relevant reduction potentials, derive target measures and continuously improve our environmental performance step by step.

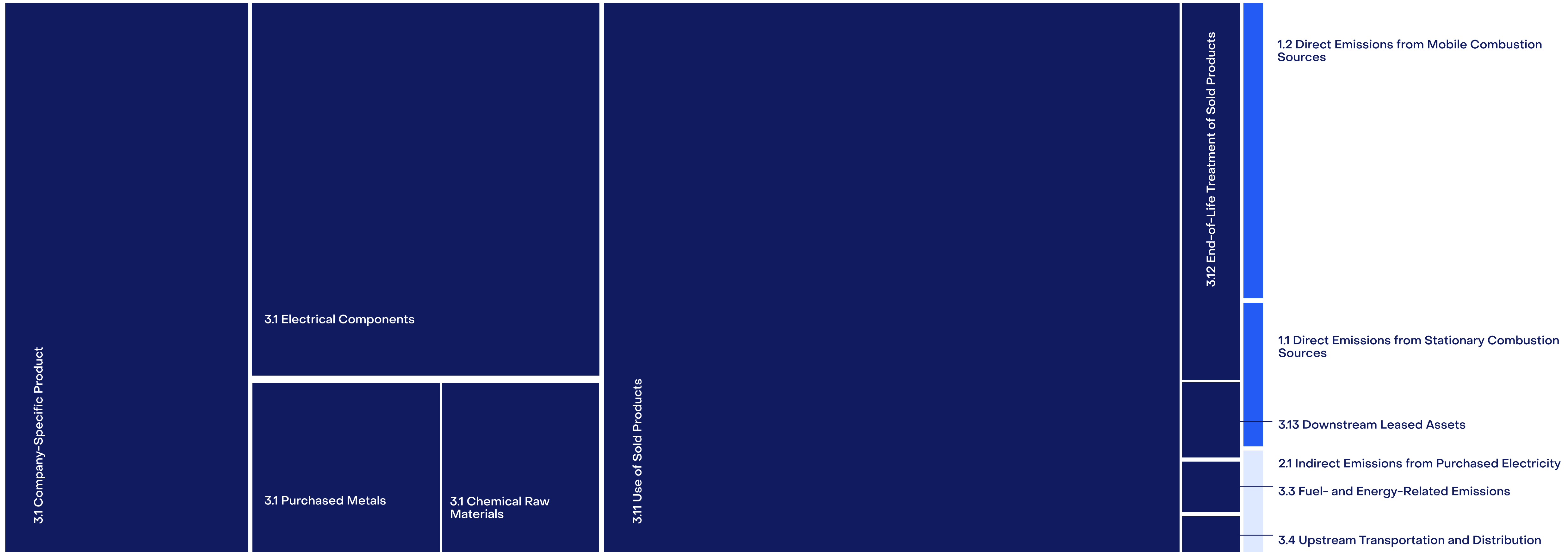
# GHG emissions by scope, 2024 (in tonnes CO<sub>2</sub>e)



GHG EMISSIONS BY SCOPE in t CO<sub>2</sub>eq

SCOPE 1	SCOPE 2 <small>market-based</small>	SCOPE 3
632,5	158,74	47.085,93
<b>TOTAL GHG EMISSIONS</b>		<b>47.877,17</b>

# Distribution of CO<sub>2</sub>e emissions by category



# Our commitment to greater energy efficiency

We use energy responsibly and focus deliberately on efficiency improvements. Our goal is to reduce the energy consumption in our production facilities and to make processes more efficient. To achieve this, we optimize both our operational workflows and logistics.

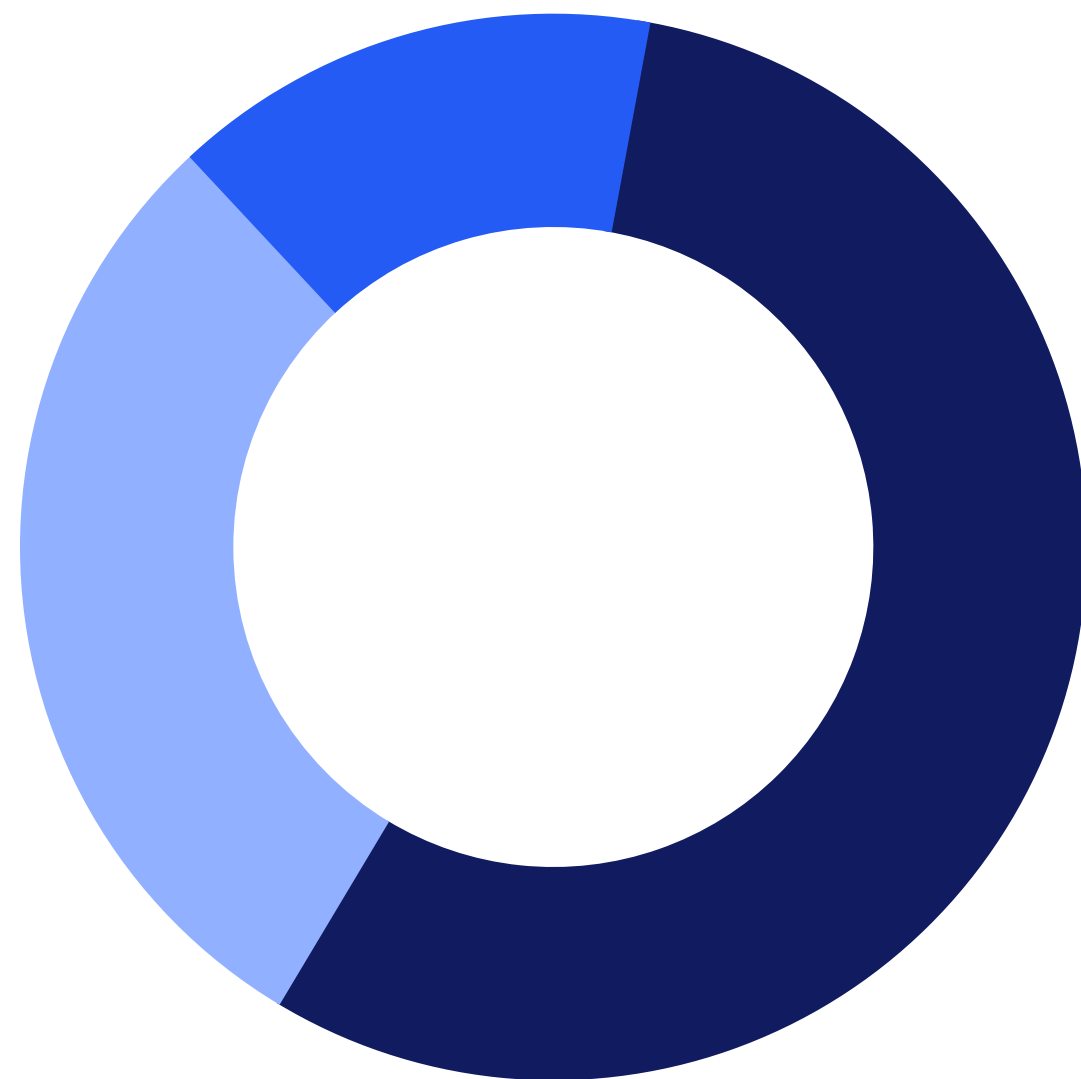
Concrete measures and continuous improvement.

We are investing in modern technologies to save energy and continuously examine further solutions to increase our energy efficiency. Our energy and environmental management is aligned with recognised standards and is monitored regularly. In this way, we are continuously developing our energy performance – in a structured and measurable way, with focus on long-term impact.

## CONSUMPTION (MWH)

<b>TOTAL ENERGY CONSUMPTION</b>	<b>3.050,13</b>
<b>OF WHICH FOSSIL SOURCES</b>	<b>3048,94</b>
<b>FUEL CONSUMPTION FROM CRUDE OIL / PETROLEUM PRODUCTS</b>	<b>1732,81</b>
<b>FUEL CONSUMPTION FROM NATURAL GAS</b>	<b>958,37</b>
<b>ELECTRICITY, HEAT, STEAM OR COOLING FROM FOSSIL SOURCES (PURCHASED)</b>	<b>357,76</b>
FUEL CONSUMPTION FROM COAL / COAL PRODUCTS	0
FUEL CONSUMPTION FROM OTHER FOSSIL SOURCES	0
<b>OF WHICH: RENEWABLE SOURCES</b>	<b>1,19</b>
FUEL CONSUMPTION FROM RENEWABLE SOURCES (BIOMASS, BIOGAS, ETC.)	0
ELECTRICITY*, HEAT, STEAM OR COOLING FROM RENEWABLE SOURCES (PURCHASED)	1,19
SELF-GENERATED RENEWABLE ENERGY	0
<b>OF WHICH NUCLEAR SOURCES</b>	<b>0</b>

\* STANDARD ELECTRICITY TARIFF; CONTAINS 62.6 % RENEWABLE SOURCES.



# Reduction targets

The path to decarbonisation requires clear priorities and reliable data. We start where emissions are most significantly generated and guide our actions based on our greenhouse gas inventory along Scopes 1–3.

The key levers are at the center of our approach: the reduction of indirect emissions in the supply chain and the optimisation of a sustainable energy supply.

In this way, we combine ecological responsibility with economic stability and create a solid foundation for the further development of our climate strategy.

On this basis, we continuously examine how we can design our processes to be resilient to climate-related risks and at the same time develop solutions that support our customers in resource-conserving and energy-efficient operation.

## Target 1

### Scope 1. Operations and logistics

Reduction of direct emissions through the optimisation of internal processes and the gradual transformation of mobility and energy use at our sites.

## Target 2

### Scope 2. Energy supply

We are working to gradually shift our electricity procurement towards certified renewable sources in order to sustainably reduce the environmental impact of our sites.

## Target 3

### Scope 3. Supply chain and products

As a family-owned company with a long tradition, we do not think in quarters, but in service life. Our ambition is to build highly durable, premium-quality cleaning machines. In doing so, we create the foundation for sustainable economic success – both for our company and for our customers.

# Our contribution to reducing greenhouse gas emissions

## Water treatment

Water plays a central role in the test runs of our cleaning machines. To reduce consumption, we have developed our own water treatment systems. They filter and clean process water so that we can use it multiple times. This significantly reduces the demand for fresh water and at the same time strengthens the efficiency of our internal workflows.

## Increasing energy efficiency through LED retrofit

In 2024 we fully converted the lighting on the ground floor and in the outdoor warehouse at the Stuttgart site to LED technology. Over an area of 1,774 m<sup>2</sup>, the new solution replaces fluorescent tubes and halogen spotlights. Electricity consumption per lamp decreases by around 67 %. In addition, motion detectors and clearly defined lighting zones control the lighting according to actual demand. This further reduces energy use and creates modern, efficient working conditions.

## Further measures

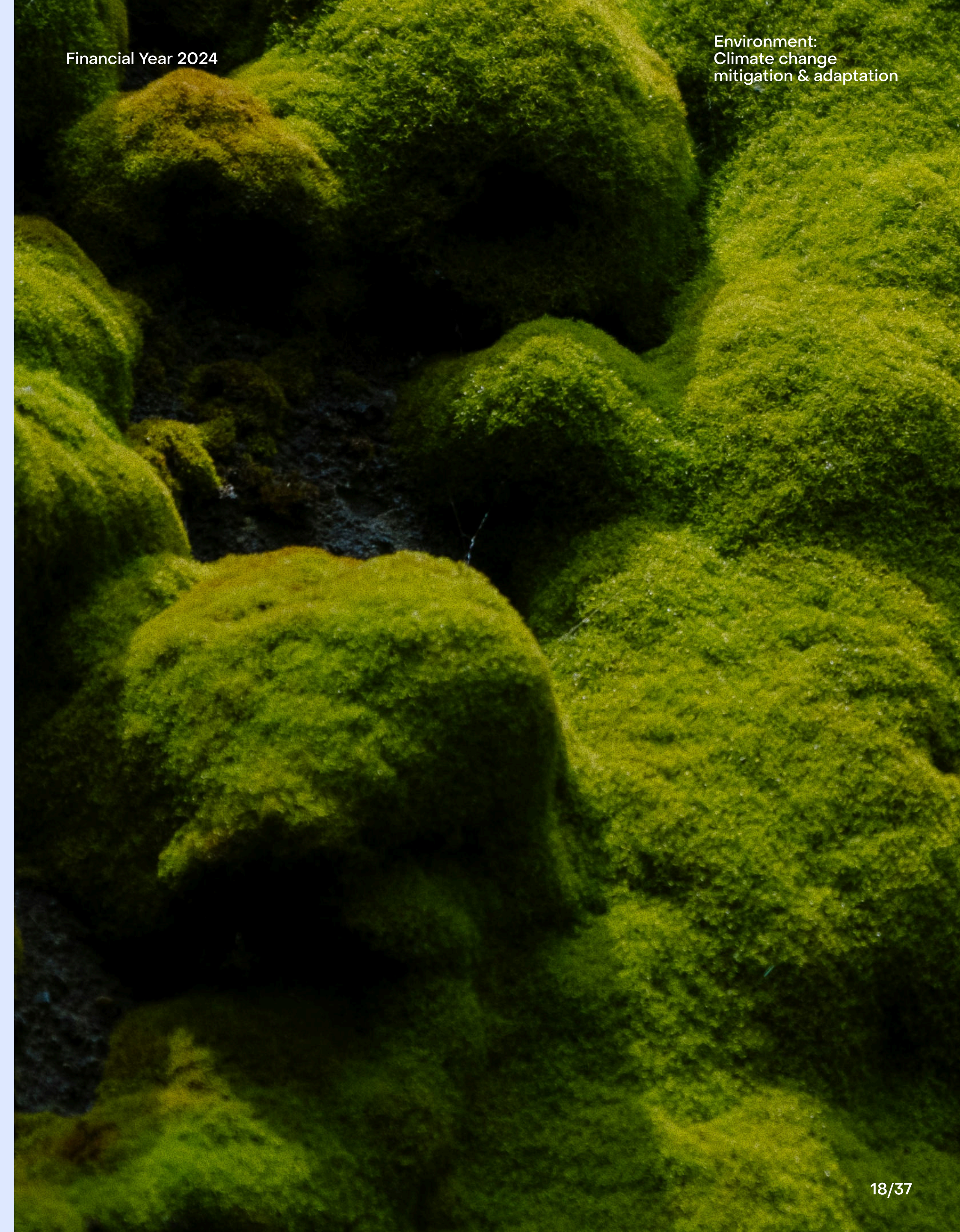
We are continuously reviewing how we can further optimise processes and implement additional measures to reduce emissions. In this work, new technical developments as well as findings from monitoring and analysis are taken into account.

## Climate risk assessment

Adapting to climate change is a material topic for columbus. As part of the double materiality assessment, we view climate-related risks and opportunities as central to our long-term stability. A climate risk and resilience assessment is planned for 2025. It will identify physical and transition risks and derive suitable adaptation strategies from them. The results will form an important basis for our strategic further development and will be published in the next sustainability report.

## Product Carbon Footprint

From 2026 onwards, we will determine the Product Carbon Footprint for selected products. This makes emissions visible along the entire life cycle — from material sourcing through production to delivery. The results will help us to identify further reduction potential and implement it in a targeted manner.

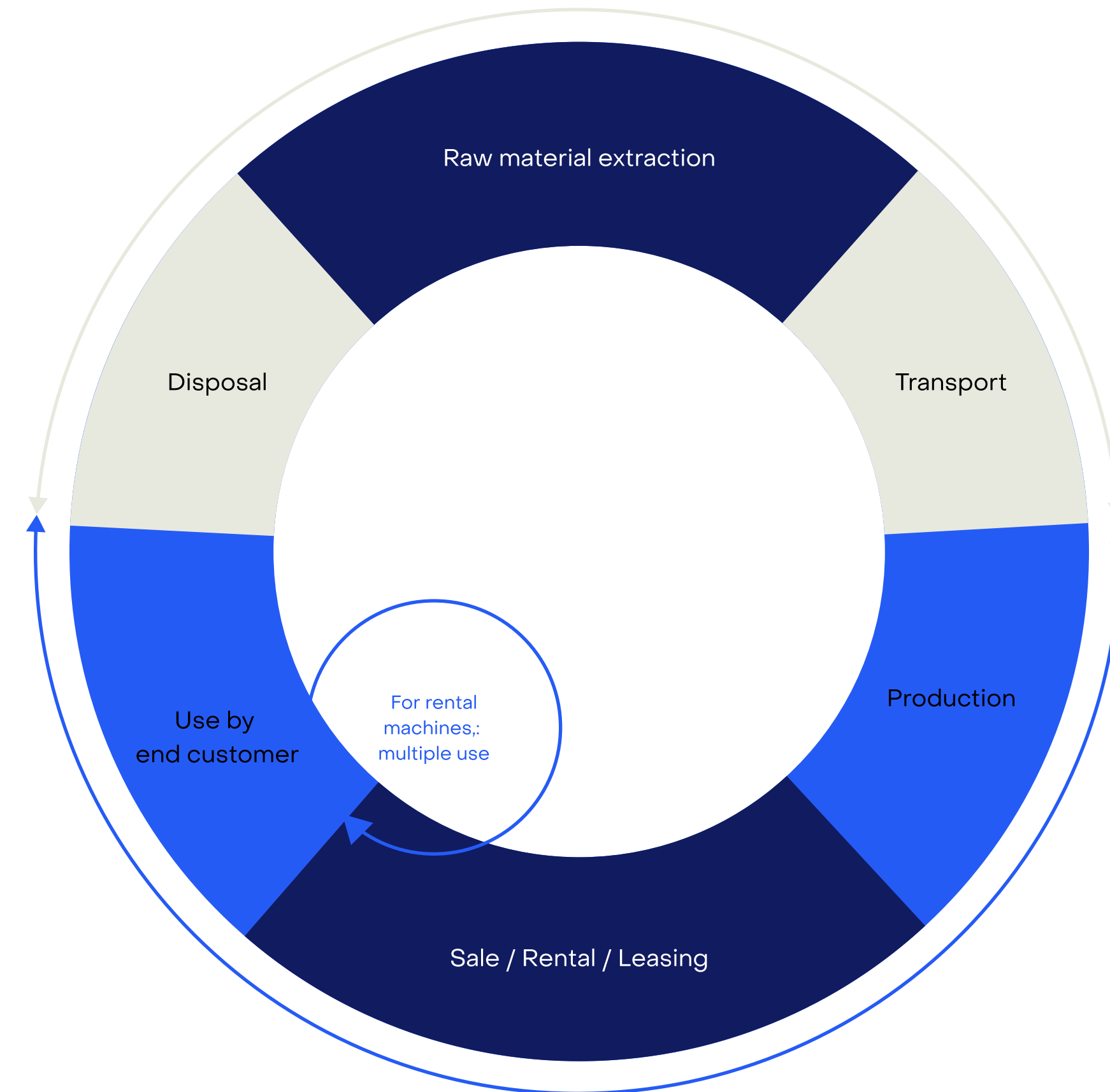


# Designed for circularity. Built for everyday use.

columbus develops cleaning machines that are built to withstand everyday work conditions — day after day, across a wide range of applications. From hand-guided devices through to ride-on machines, our solutions are designed for the long term and remain in use for many years thanks to accessories and spare parts.

For us, sustainability begins right here: with machines that work reliably, consume few resources and do not need to be replaced prematurely. Our ambition is simple and consistent: only what lasts a long time is truly sustainable.

That is why we construct our products to be robust and repair-friendly. We rely on recyclable materials and technical solutions that reduce energy and material use. Intelligent dosing systems and efficient drives support economical operation. The result is a cycle that works in everyday operations — with machines whose components can be reused or recycled at the end of their life cycle.



## Design for recycling

Our columbus cleaning machines are designed from the outset for durability, easy maintenance and recyclability. During the design phase, particular attention is paid to easy access to components and straightforward disassembly, enabling efficient maintenance, repair and refurbishment. The modular design also allows individual components to be replaced or repaired with ease, significantly extending the service life of the machines.

## Returns management and rental programme

Products returned through our rental programme undergo a thorough inspection to assess their condition and operational capability. Depending on the outcome, machines are either sold as used equipment or professionally refurbished. During refurbishment, wear parts are inspected, replaced where necessary and the machines are restored to full working order before being rented out again. This approach maximises machine utilisation, extends service life and optimises material and resource efficiency throughout the product lifecycle.

## Durability and spare-parts availability

Our machines remain reliable and operational for many years thanks to a comprehensive spare parts programme and professional customer service. Regular repairs and maintenance can be carried out to preserve machine performance. Spare parts remain available over an extended period, ensuring that machines can be serviced and repaired whenever required. This significantly extends product life and reduces raw material consumption by preventing the premature replacement of fully functional machines.

## Reuse of spare parts

Machines that are no longer fully operational are carefully assessed, and usable components are systematically identified and recovered. These spare parts are then inspected and, where appropriate, reused for repairs, maintenance or the refurbishment of other machines. This process not only reduces waste but also lowers the demand for new raw materials. At the same time, it promotes efficient material reuse and contributes to a more sustainable lifecycle for our machines.

# RA 55|BM 40 CYCLE

With the RA 55|BM 40 CYCLE, we are placing a clear focus on circular thinking. The tank is made of 100 percent single-grade recyclate. Produced and recycled in Germany. Without re-colouring.

Energy-efficient drives, an optimised water flow and demand-based dosing reduce electricity, water and chemical consumption in operation. The robust construction and high reparability extend the service life and reduce waste. In this way, the machine supports resource-conserving use across the entire life cycle.

## Water reuse instead of water consumption in production

Water plays a central role in the test runs of our cleaning machines. To reduce consumption, in 2024 we developed, certified and commissioned our own water treatment systems across all production areas. Each system is tailored to the specific process requirements.

With a tank capacity of 460 litres, all products can be tested under realistic conditions. The resulting process water is filtered and treated so that it can be used multiple times. This reduces water demand and makes our workflows more efficient.

The difference becomes particularly clear in direct comparison: without water treatment, approximately 208,590 litres of water would be required for these test runs. Through the use of our water treatment systems, this demand is reduced to approximately 13,240 litres. This corresponds to a saving of around 93.65 % of water.



# Our office building in transition

In 2024 we completed the modernisation of our office building, investing around €1.5 million. The objective was a working environment that combines energy efficiency, resource conservation and good working conditions.

## Energy efficiency

Heating, ventilation and air-conditioning systems have been completely renewed. LED lighting and optimised daylight use reduce electricity demand. Ceiling flocking ensures balanced temperatures.

## Materials and resource use

We rely on durable natural materials and modular wooden furniture. Non-reusable components were disposed of professionally.

## Room quality and working environment

An open spatial concept, plants and ergonomic furniture improve acoustics, air quality and comfort. Impact-sound and room-sound insulation as well as central air-conditioning units support focused work.

## Water and sanitation

Water-saving fittings and decentralised instantaneous water heaters reduce water and energy consumption.

## Fire protection, noise protection and digitalisation

Optimised materials improve fire and sound protection. Fibre-optic cabling strengthens the digital infrastructure for flexible forms of working.

# Again. And again. And again.

For columbus, circular economy means developing products in such a way that they can be used for a long time and that their components can be returned to the material cycle at the end of their life cycle. On this basis, we have defined concrete targets.

## 01. Target

Improve packaging.  
Conserve resources.

Packaging is an integral part of our logistics and delivery processes. We therefore continuously review the design, material use and reusability of our packaging solutions. Our focus is on increasing the share of recyclable materials and making packaging reusable wherever it is logistically sensible. At the same time, we ensure that product protection, transport capability and efficiency along the supply chain remain fully guaranteed.

## 02. Target

Digitalise processes.  
Reduce paper consumption.

The digitalisation of logistics and production processes offers great potential to conserve resources and make workflows more efficient. We are therefore driving forward the gradual transition of paper-based documentation and processes to digital solutions – for example in production documents, logistics documents or internal approvals. The objective is to reduce paper consumption over the long term and at the same time increase transparency and traceability in our processes.

## 03. Target

Understand waste.  
strengthen prevention.

A detailed waste assessment already provides valuable insights into waste types, volumes and disposal routes. Building on this, we identify and document key waste streams across our value chain – from incoming goods and production to packaging and distribution. This enables us to implement targeted measures to improve material efficiency, strengthen reuse and separation practices, and further reduce waste volumes over time.

# Waste management and circular economy in figures

The following table shows how our waste quantities are composed and where we have already made progress. A large part of the non-hazardous waste is already sent for recycling today. We are building on this. Going forward, we will further increase recycling rates, refine our separation systems and work even more closely with specialised recycling partners to consistently close material cycles.



# Social

# Values are shown in everyday actions.

As a family-owned company, we think in generations rather than quarters. This long-term perspective shapes our actions and creates reliability for the people who work at columbus – today and in the future. For us, responsibility is something tangible. It is reflected in our daily interactions, our collaboration with customers and our commitment to the region where our roots lie.

This mindset defines the way we work together: short decision-making paths, flat hierarchies and a hands-on approach. It enables us to act pragmatically, tackle challenges directly and provide meaningful support to our employees in their day-to-day work.

A culture of respect and trust brings all of this together. It forms the foundation of a working environment shaped by openness, mutual appreciation and strong teamwork.

# Collaboration begins with listening.

A respectful, appreciative and collegial working environment shapes how we deal with each other. It creates trust and provides space to take on responsibility – in one's own area of work as well as in the team. We are committed to open communication. Every voice counts – from the workshop to the management. In this way we remain close to the issues that concern our employees and foster a way of cooperating that is transparent and based on mutual trust.

The fact that many colleagues have been working at columbus for many years and that turnover is low confirms this approach. It shows that we create an environment in which people feel comfortable, can develop further and want to stay.

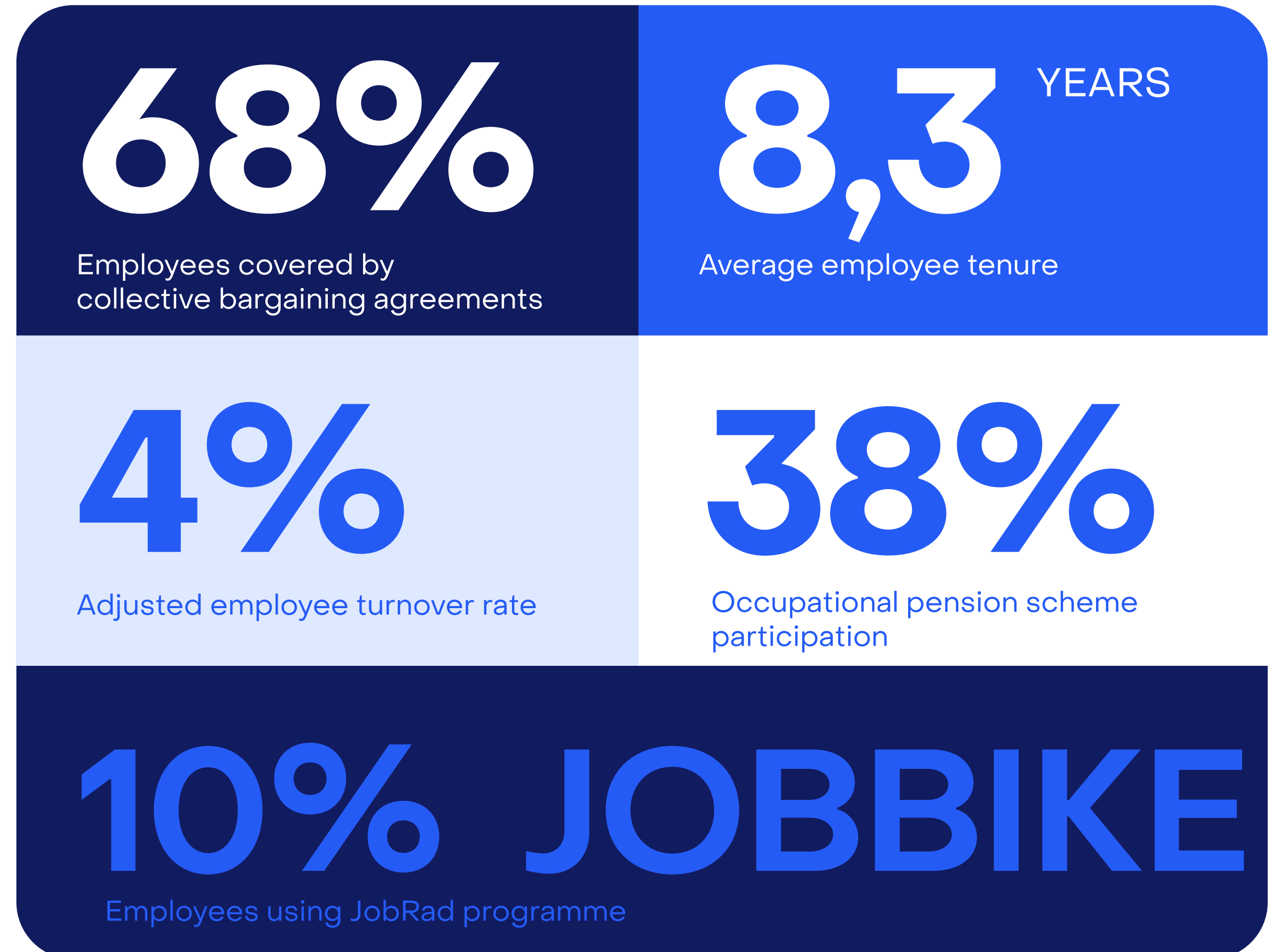


# Good work needs good conditions.

We create regulated and fair working conditions based on transparency, appreciation and safety. We orient ourselves on current collective-bargaining developments and thereby ensure market-aligned remuneration structures. Regular salary reviews and feedback discussions ensure that performance, achievement of objectives and development prospects are assessed in a comprehensible manner.

We additionally recognise exceptional performance through bonus payments and other forms of compensation, such as special bonuses, inflation compensation payments, one-time payments or subsidies for further training. Clear working hours, transparent overtime arrangements and flexible time off provide planning security and support the reconcilability of work and everyday life.

For transparency in everyday work, we use the digital time-tracking system ATOSS at all locations. In special situations, we also support our employees through operational hardship assistance of up to €600.



# Work that fits life.

Supporting a healthy work-life balance is an integral part of our approach to responsible people management. Depending on the role, our employees work within fixed schedules, complemented where possible by flexible working hours and flexitime arrangements.

In addition, we offer flexible working models such as part-time work and remote working options. While not every area allows the same degree of flexibility, we aim to find individual solutions whenever circumstances require it – balancing personal needs with operational requirements.

# WORK

# LIFE



# Respect is not an extra.

Diversity is part of our everyday work. Different perspectives, experiences and backgrounds enrich collaboration and strengthen our company. That is why we create an environment in which everyone has equal opportunities.

When selecting new employees, qualifications, experience and motivation are what matter. Personal characteristics such as gender, origin, age or disability play no role. We uphold this principle throughout our organisation.

Transparent criteria across all career levels and an open corporate culture ensure that development opportunities remain accessible to everyone. Respect, fairness and appreciation are the foundation of our collaboration.

# Growing together.

The development of our employees is an integral part of our people management approach. Together with managers, individual development plans are created that foster professional competencies as well as personal abilities. The HR department supports this process continuously.

We promote talent in a targeted way. Training, project responsibility and contribution to strategic topics open up new fields of learning and development steps. In this way, experience, responsibility and competence grow in everyday work.

We think of development in long-term terms. We support our employees in achieving their professional goals within the company and in taking on responsibility. This strengthens people and secures the future of our company.

## GENDER PAY GAP

Basis: gross hourly wage of men.



# Safety as a standard

Health and safety have a firm place in our everyday work. New employees receive a structured introduction with technical training and safety-relevant instructions at the start. We provide personal protective equipment and check it regularly.

These measures are part of our systematic occupational health and safety system. We identify risks early, define clear procedures and continuously inspect work equipment. The handling of hazardous substances follows fixed standards and is regularly inspected, including by external specialist bodies.

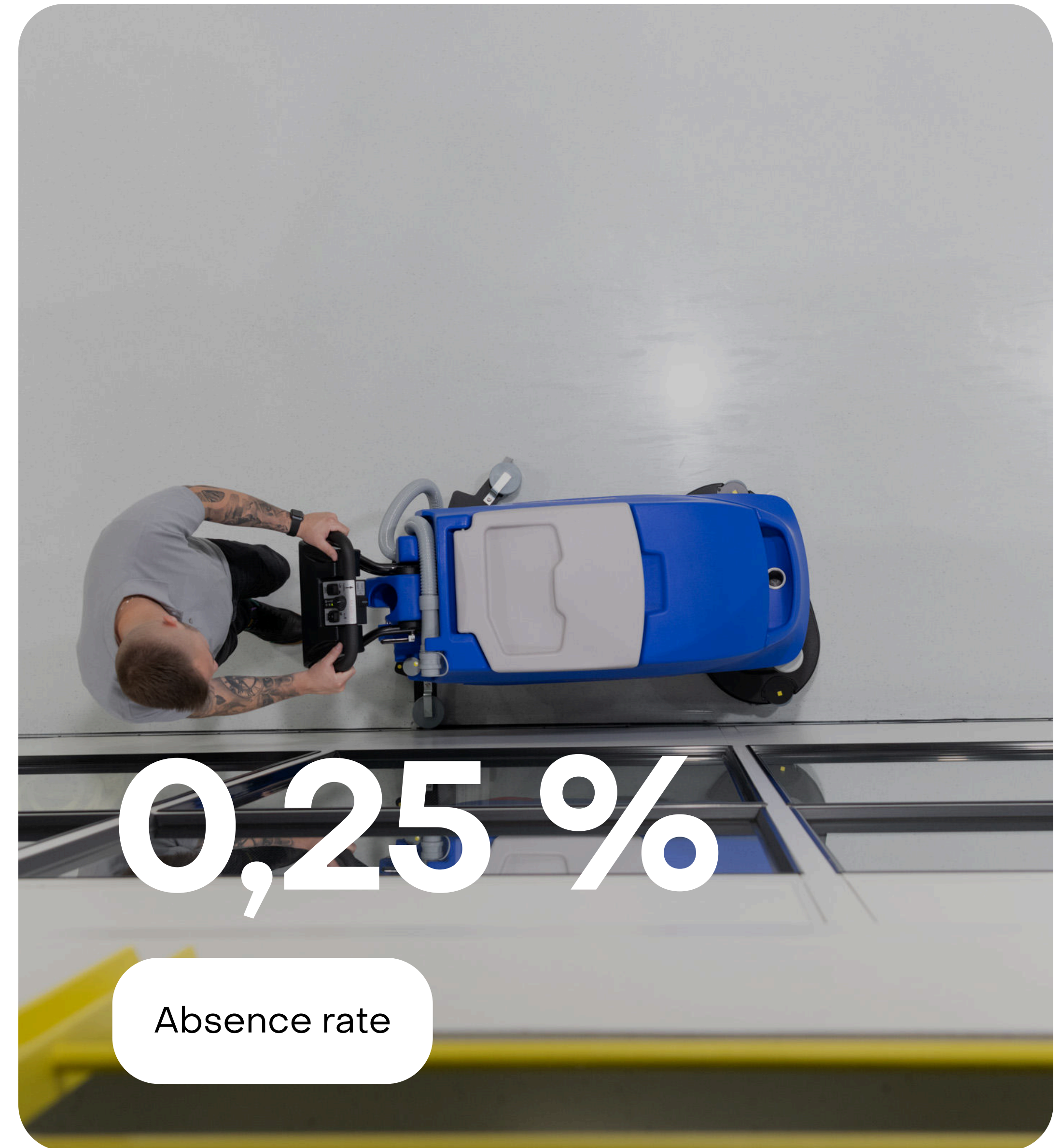
In addition, we support our employees in the areas of ergonomics, stress prevention and health promotion. In this way, we create a working environment that provides safety and keeps people healthy over the long term.

Absence rate (Stuttgart site): 0,25 %

Total working days (all employees): 24.172,5

Days lost due to illness or work-related injuries: 62

Work-related accidents (Stuttgart site): 5



# Responsibility starts at the source.

Responsibility starts with the selection of our suppliers. We work closely with national and international partners with whom we maintain long-term, trusted relationships. Shared standards in quality, reliability and responsible business conduct form the foundation of our collaboration.

Regular dialogue and direct engagement ensure transparency throughout the supply chain. Ongoing discussions and on-site visits provide valuable insights into working practices and quality standards. This enables us to identify developments early, address concerns proactively and work together on effective solutions when needed.

In addition, we provide a digital whistleblowing system that allows concerns to be reported anonymously, including those related to our supply chain. All reports are reviewed and handled responsibly. In 2024, no reports were submitted through our whistleblowing system and no human rights violations were identified through personal inspections.

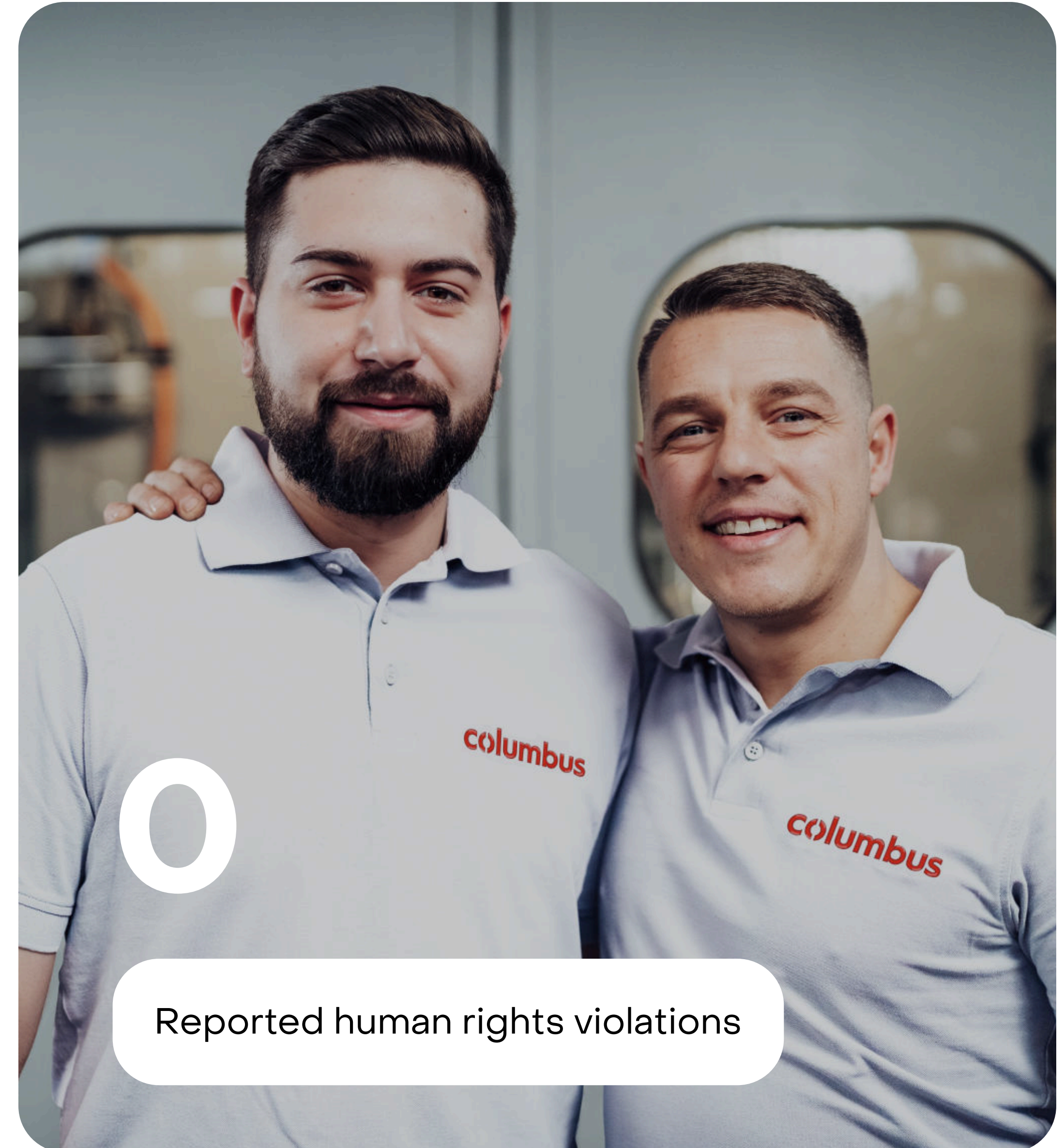
Digital Whistleblowing System: [staehe.hintbox.de](https://staehe.hintbox.de)

# Open communication is part of our everyday work.

At our site, the works council represents the interests of employees and is in regular exchange with management. In this way, information from all areas of the company comes together and remains traceable.

This dialogue is complemented by information sessions in which current topics are communicated transparently and space is provided for questions. In this way, we create orientation and strengthen the shared understanding of decisions and developments.

In addition, a digital whistleblowing system is available that also enables anonymous reports. Concerns, suggestions for improvement or indications of possible misconduct are taken seriously and carefully reviewed. The objective is a working environment characterised by trust, safety and mutual responsibility.



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Reported human rights violations

# Different requirements. One reliable partner.

Sustainability becomes visible where our machines are used every day. With a clear industry focus, we combine individual requirements with high quality standards. The result is cleaning solutions that are durable, reliable and practical in everyday use – helping our customers work more efficiently every day.

## Contract cleaners

In professional cleaning operations, efficiency and cleaning performance are what matter. Our machines are robust, efficient and easy to use – built to deliver reliable performance, day after day.

## Retail

Cleaning needs to be fast and must not disrupt daily operations. Compact, agile machines ensure clean sales areas while minimising time and labour requirements.

## Industry

Production and warehouse facilities demand power and endurance. columbus offers machines for large areas and heavy soiling, designed for continuous operation while using resources efficiently.

## Transport & Logistics

Railway stations, airports and logistics centres require flexible cleaning solutions. Different floor types, high foot traffic and large areas call for machines that combine manoeuvrability, strong performance and fast operational readiness.

## Healthcare

In hospitals, care facilities and medical practices, hygiene is the highest priority. columbus machines support high hygiene standards and simplify everyday cleaning tasks through intuitive operation.

# Durability across the entire life cycle

For us, sustainability does not end with delivery. We support our machines across their entire life cycle. With maintenance, repairs and a reliable supply of spare-parts, we ensure that they remain in use for many years. This reduces downtime, saves resources and noticeably extends the service life.

In addition, we offer flexible leasing models, for example for large retail chains. They enable the use of modern, efficient technology without high initial investment and ensure that the latest and resource-efficient machines are always in use.

# Knowledge that has an impact

Good technology only unfolds its potential through the right deployment. We therefore support our customers with consultancy and practice-oriented training.

The focus is on efficient operation, careful maintenance and the targeted use of cleaning agents. In this way, water, energy and chemicals can be saved – while at the same time extending the service life of the machines.

Our training courses are tailored individually to the sector, the area of application and the requirements. In this way, we strengthen the personal responsibility of users and combine ecological impact with economic benefit – directly in everyday work.

# Governance

# Leadership that provides direction.

Responsible corporate governance is not a formal framework for us – it is part of our everyday practice. It provides direction, builds trust, and lays the foundation for long-term success. Our governance is guided by clear values, transparent decision-making, and a commitment to involving people rather than making decisions over their heads. This creates a corporate culture that fosters collaboration and enables sustainable growth.

## Stakeholder-dialogue & transparency

We regularly involve our key internal and external stakeholders in development and decision-making processes. These include employees, the works council, customers and financial institutions. A central foundation is our 2025 Double Materiality Assessment, which is based on targeted surveys and interviews and clearly identifies our key focus areas.

## Active engagement in everyday work

Corporate culture is shaped through daily interaction. Regular employee discussions, team meetings, open feedback, and workshops help ensure that concerns are addressed at an early stage. The works council also serves as an important voice for employees, strengthening trust and collaboration throughout the company.

## Values & standards of conduct

To firmly embed our values within the organization, we are working on the introduction of a Code of Conduct. From 2026 onwards, it will define clear guidelines for responsible and ethical behavior across the company and provide practical guidance for everyday decision-making.

## Whistleblower system

In addition, we have established a whistleblower system in accordance with the EU Whistleblower Directive. Employees can report concerns confidentially. Whistleblowers are protected, and trained contact persons ensure that all reports are handled carefully, impartially, and responsibly.

# Taking responsibility together.

Sustainable business practices begin with collaboration. That is why we continuously develop our supply chain and embed sustainability throughout every stage of the value chain. The foundation is provided by clear purchasing policies and long-term partnerships with national and international suppliers. Going beyond legal requirements, our Supplier Code of Conduct establishes binding guidelines based on existing standards and provides a clear framework for responsible behavior.

We also consider the social dimension of sustainability to be a key prerequisite for future success. Through regular exchanges, risk assessments and supplier self-assessments, we make the sustainability performance of our suppliers measurable and continuously improve it. Together with our partners, we are building a stable and future-proof supply chain.

# Preventing unethical business practices.

Integrity is essential to maintaining trust. It shapes our collaboration and relationships with business partners. Clear guidelines provide a binding framework and ensure that we act transparently and in compliance with applicable laws.

Bribery, corruption and improper influence have no place at columbus. To ensure fair competition, conflicts of interest are identified and managed appropriately. Employees are encouraged to raise concerns at an early stage and take responsibility.

Binding standards on anti-corruption, fraud, money laundering and anti-competitive conduct provide guidance and reliability. An anonymous whistleblower system ensures that suspected violations can be reported securely and investigated consistently.

# Protecting data. Securing trust.

The protection of personal data and the security of our IT systems are essential. We comply with all applicable data protection requirements and create a reliable basis for handling the data of employees, customers and business partners.

Our employees receive regular training to promote responsible handling of information and increase awareness of security risks. Access rights are clearly defined and strictly assigned according to the principle of least privilege. In this way, we reduce risks from the outset.

Technical and organisational measures protect our IT infrastructure. These include firewalls, encryption, secure networks, regular backups and modern updates and controls. Additional safeguards are implemented for particularly sensitive data to ensure confidentiality, integrity and availability over the long term.

# Disclosure index in accordance with ESRS

This sustainability report is aligned with the European Sustainability Reporting Standards (ESRS). The contents presented in the report are based on the ESRS disclosure requirements and are bundled thematically and prepared in an understandable way. The formal ESRS terminology is not the primary focus in this context.

A disclosure index establishes the assignment of report contents to the respective ESRS requirements and at the same time fulfils the requirements of Disclosure Requirement IRO-2. In this way, we make transparent which ESRS disclosure requirements underlie the individual contents and on which pages they are addressed in the report.

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# 2024

## Sustainability at **columbus**

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