

Sustainability Report

2023/2024

Schlegel und Partner GmbH

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Preface

Dear readers,

We are pleased to present our third sustainability report, prepared in accordance with the GRI Standard. This report reflects Schlegel und Partner's commitment to addressing the challenges of our time and our dedication to sustainable business practices. As a leadership team, we take great pride in steering a company whose values and goals are deeply rooted in responsibility toward the environment and society. Since our founding in 1992, resource-efficient business practices have been at the core of our approach. Sustainability—defined by responsible behavior, sustainable outcomes for our clients, and conscious resource use—is one of our five key values. We actively support the development of transparent and comparable sustainability standards for companies, aligning ourselves with the German Sustainability Code.

The urgency of sustainable development has never been clearer. We stand at a critical juncture where collective action is no longer optional. Conflicts such as the war in Ukraine and tensions in the Middle East have underscored the need for global cooperation, yet many decision-makers still underestimate the urgency of sustainability. According to the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), 2024 marked the first time the global average temperature exceeded 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels, the highest ever recorded. Europe is warming faster than any other continent, facing more frequent heatwaves, altered rainfall patterns, and severe floods and droughts. Achieving the 1.5°C target demands immediate and far-reaching measures. Beyond the climate crisis, rising living costs and energy prices due to the Ukraine war posed significant challenges in recent years. In light of these pressures, Schlegel und Partner is more committed than ever to our responsibility toward the environment, society, and our employees. As a consulting firm, we have the opportunity to actively shape a more sustainable future. We see great potential in guiding our clients through targeted services to make informed decisions and identify long-term solutions that positively impact the world.

Sustainability is deeply embedded in our corporate culture and integrated into our management processes. This report covers the years 2023 and 2024, including activities from previous years. It follows the internationally recognized "Global Reporting Initiative" (GRI) guidelines. Milestones such as our Climate Partner certification since 2019, the successful data deletion of 500 GB of storage to reduce server capacities, the transition to 100% LED lighting, the window renovation, and our Ecovadis ranking of 60/100 have all demonstrated our significant progress. While we are on the right track, our journey continues. In addition to further reducing energy consumption for heating, cooling, and IT, we are currently planning additional measures. Our upcoming roof renovation presents an opportunity to consider switching to solar energy, furthering our commitment to sustainability.

Thank you for taking the time to engage with our approach to this vital issue. We welcome your questions and feedback. We extend our gratitude to our employees and partners for their contributions to achieving our goals. We look forward to continued success in the years ahead.



Amber Taylor *W. H. H.*

1 Company profile and strategic foundations

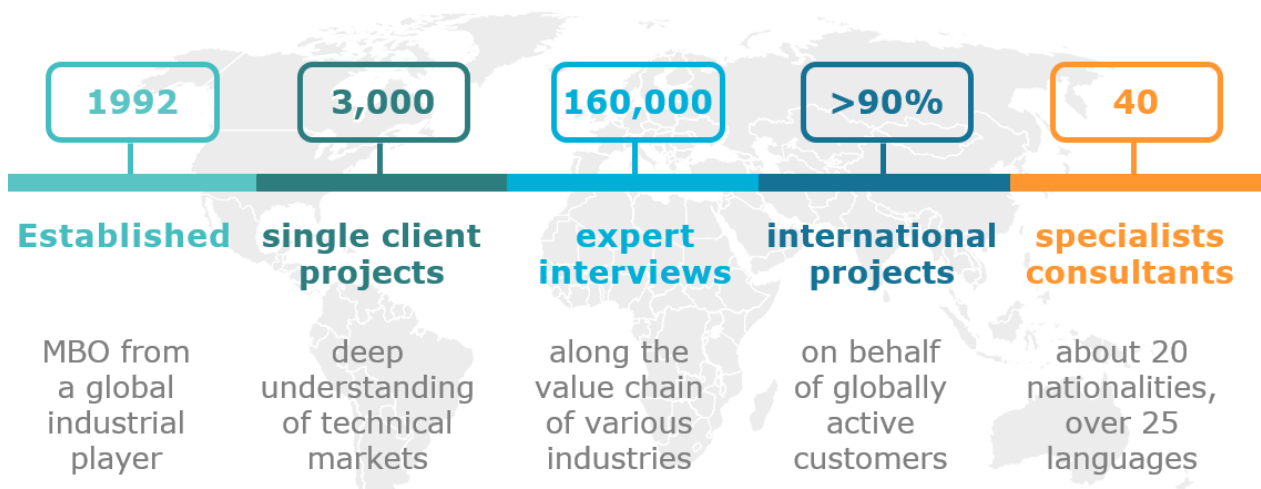
1.1 The company



Schlegel und Partner GmbH is an internationally operating market research and consultancy company for technology-focused industries. Based in Weinheim (Bergstraße), Germany, the firm provides customized business-to-business (B2B) market research and strategic consulting for complex products.

We accompany our clients throughout the entire value chain, taking full responsibility for results. We operate internationally, transforming information into knowledge and knowledge into strategy.

Since our founding in 1992 as a management buyout (MBO) from a global industrial technology group, we have successfully completed over 3000 projects with our globally active clients. Our team of around 40 specialist consultants from more than 20 countries is customer-oriented, agile, and flexible, creating synergies at a single location. Each of our consultants is multilingual and possesses deep expertise in their home markets, ensuring tailored solutions for your business growth.



At Schlegel und Partner GmbH, we are your trusted experts, specializing in customized B2B market research and strategic consulting. Our in-depth market analyses empower companies in 12 key industries to make informed decisions and enhance their competitiveness.



Chemicals and Process Industries

Right action and reaction



Nonwovens, Paper and Fabrics

Rolling out your success



Life Science and Biotechnology

Next generation is green



Building and Infrastructure

Building on secure foundations



Resources and Raw Materials

Stocking innovative ideas in bulk



Recycling and Waste Management

Strive to close the loop



Agribusiness and Food

Nourishing ideas for growth



Medical Technology

Your recipe for healthy growth



Mechanical and Plant Engineering

Turning assets into more



Mobility and Transportation

Success in automotive transition



Electrics and Electronics

Tapping your full potential



Energy Generation and Distribution

Generating success for your company

The company is managed by two Executive Partners and is organized into nine departments, consisting of three staff departments and six specialized divisions:

Staff Departments

Services
HR Development and Recruiting
IT

Specialized Divisions

Mobility and Transportation
Chemicals
Engineering Markets
Methods and Interaction
Life Science
Technical Textiles

1.2 Our values

Our five main values are partnership, versatility, sustainability, enthusiasm, and expertise.

We believe that working with colleagues and clients needs to be based on reliability, trust, and mutual appreciation. As we care about positive long-term relationships, treating our colleagues and clients as partners is very important to us.

Versatility makes Schlegel und Partner more competent. Our consultants are from various academic backgrounds and nationalities, and this brings various perspectives and creates synergies in global projects.



We are very conscious of sustainability. We pay attention to resource consumption in our work and strive to create sustainable results.

We are convinced that work with enthusiasm creates better results. Based on the affinity to technologies, our consultants enjoy our tasks and are committed to working on the topics.

Expertise is one of the main competencies of Schlegel und Partner. We own deep knowledge in various technical markets, with accumulated data in previous projects. That is the reason why many of our clients choose us as knowledge provider in specific technical market fields.

1.3 Our services

Schlegel und Partner provides market research and consultancy on technical topics in business-to-business fields. Our goal is to bridge the gap between market research and strategic consultancy, by transforming information into knowledge and knowledge into strategy.

Our portfolio includes strategic consulting, market exploration, competitor analysis, voice of customer analysis, trend analysis, foresight and innovation screening, support for mergers and acquisition activities, sourcing strategy and sales support, as well as regular economic development reportings.



We support our clients to make the right corporate and marketing decision through our comprehensive primary and secondary research and accumulated internal knowledge in specific market fields acquired over the past 30 years.

We conduct in-depth interviews with market experts and key decision makers along the industrial value chains. Primary interviews are an essential part of our research, as market-specific insights can be earned and specific inquiries of our customers can be answered through the interviews. Our approach is multi-disciplinary and 90% of the projects are global projects.

1.4 Our commitment to sustainable development

At Schlegel und Partner, we believe that true success is measured not just in economic terms, but in our ability to create positive impacts for people and the planet. Our sustainability strategy is deeply rooted in the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, guiding our efforts to build a more responsible and resilient future.

People-Centered Sustainability:

We prioritize the well-being of our employees and the communities we serve. Our initiatives include:

- Fostering employee engagement in social and environmental projects
- Maintaining strong partnerships with local educational institutions and stakeholders
- Ensuring workplace safety through comprehensive injury prevention programs
- Expanding our corporate health initiatives with new wellness offerings for employees
- Continuing our tradition of charitable donations and strategic partnerships with NGOs

Environmental Stewardship:

We're committed to reducing our ecological footprint through measurable actions:

- Achieving annual reductions in both electricity and gas consumption
- Exploring opportunities for energy-efficient roof renovations, including solar panel installations
- Completing the replacement of old windows and roller shutter systems to eliminate thermal bridges
- Raising employee awareness about the environmental impact of our operations, with special focus on energy, heating, water usage, and transportation choices
- Implementing strategies to significantly reduce CO2 emissions from business travel and commuting

Building a Sustainable Future:

Our approach combines immediate action with long-term planning. By integrating sustainability into our core operations and employee culture, we aim to create lasting positive change. These commitments reflect our dedication to being a responsible corporate citizen and our belief that sustainable business practices are essential for long-term success.

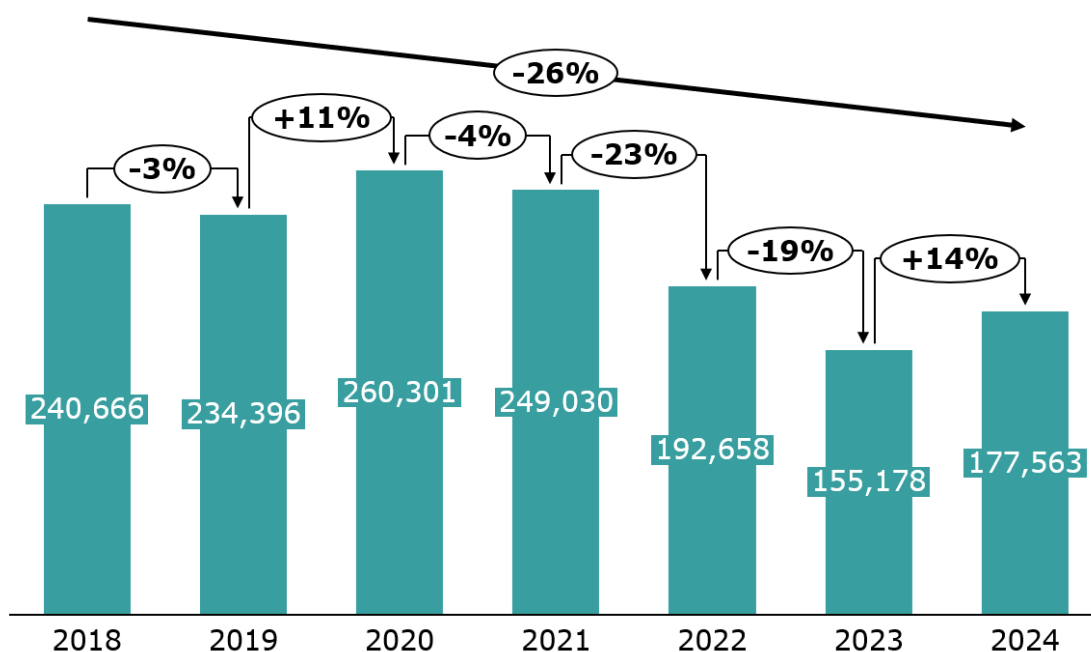
2 Environmental responsibility

2.1 Energy consumption

The measurement and management of energy consumption forms the basis for more efficiency. Our goal is to further reduce our energy consumption.

As a service provider, our company infrastructure consists of offices and subsequently, gas is used for heating. Reduction in gas consumption is limited to a certain degree, as maintenance of temperature is indispensable in creating a comfortable working environment, especially in winter. Still, we have been engaged in reducing gas use and thus, we have been taking different measures to save gas such as lowering temperature overnight and using room-thermostats in all offices to provide recommendations for room temperature and ventilation.

Between 2018 and 2024, our gas consumption decreased by 26%. In 2018, 241 thousand kWh were consumed. In following years, gas consumption increased and decreased, depending mainly on weather conditions and economic situations, like the general gas shortage in winter 2022/2023, in which we initiated further gas saving programs, with direct control modules locally installed at heaters for better temperature steering. This led to a current consumption of 178 thousand kWh (See Graph 1).



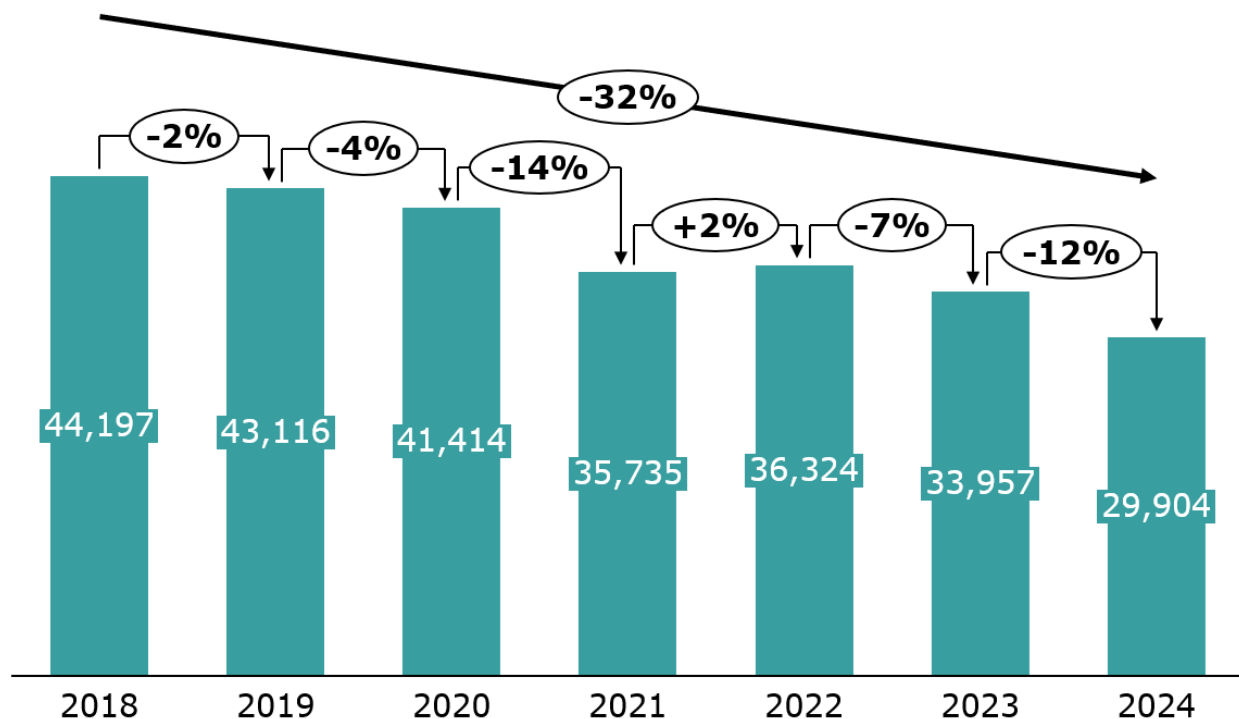
Graph 1: Gas consumption in kWh

Another major energy source is electricity, which is mainly utilized for electric devices and facilities at our offices. In order to reduce electricity consumption, we implemented several measures, such as replacing energy-intensive lighting devices by modern LED technologies, and substituting old energy intensive IT-infrastructure by modern devices with considerably lower energy consumption.

We prioritize the sourcing of low power consuming notebooks and implemented a long-term oriented cascade usage scheme. In addition, we could considerably reduce electricity consumption by establishing a cold-water hand-wash scheme.

Despite an increase in the number of employees during the last five years, electricity consumption has been going down progressively along this period passing from a consumption of 44 thousand kWh in 2018 to 29 thousand kWh in 2024, which corresponds to a 32% decrease in electricity consumption (See Graph 2).

It is Schlegel und Partner's goal to further reduce electricity consumption in the future. Having successfully transitioned all our lighting to LED, we are now considering the next step: integrating solar energy during our upcoming roof renovation. Additionally, we continue to invest in state-of-the-art green IT and optimize the usage of air conditioning systems.



Graph 2: Electricity consumption in kWh

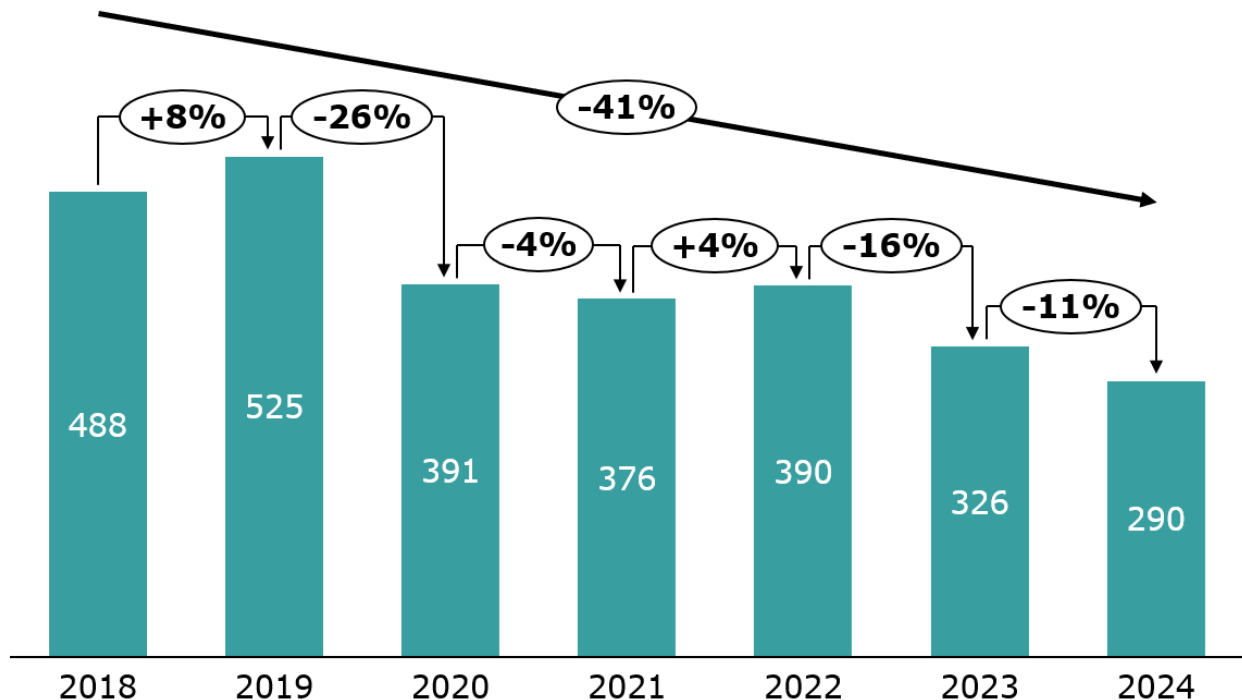
One key element for reducing both gas and electricity consumption are our ongoing investments in the renovation of our two main buildings, especially focusing on improved insulation, e.g., through the replacement of old windows and roller shutter systems to eliminate thermal bridges.

Further renovation measures for increased energy efficiency are currently being explored. A second key initiative that shall bring significant energy savings is the recent closure of another office building that had recently been used inefficiently, compensated through better use of existing office space.

2.2 Water consumption

In our company, water is used for hygiene, cleaning, and garden irrigation. At the beginning of the pandemic, our water consumption dropped by 26% due to a reduced presence of employees in the office. This downward trend continued as new working habits, such as increased home office arrangements, further reduced water usage. Overall, our water consumption has reached a new minimum, with a total decrease of 41% since we began monitoring this data. In 2024, we achieved an even lower consumption of 290 m³ (see Graph 3).

Our goal is to achieve a turnaround in water consumption in the future and to reduce water usage per employee year by year. We aim to accomplish this by further increasing awareness of water consumption among our colleagues. Additionally, we are considering installing water-saving adapters for our faucets in the future.



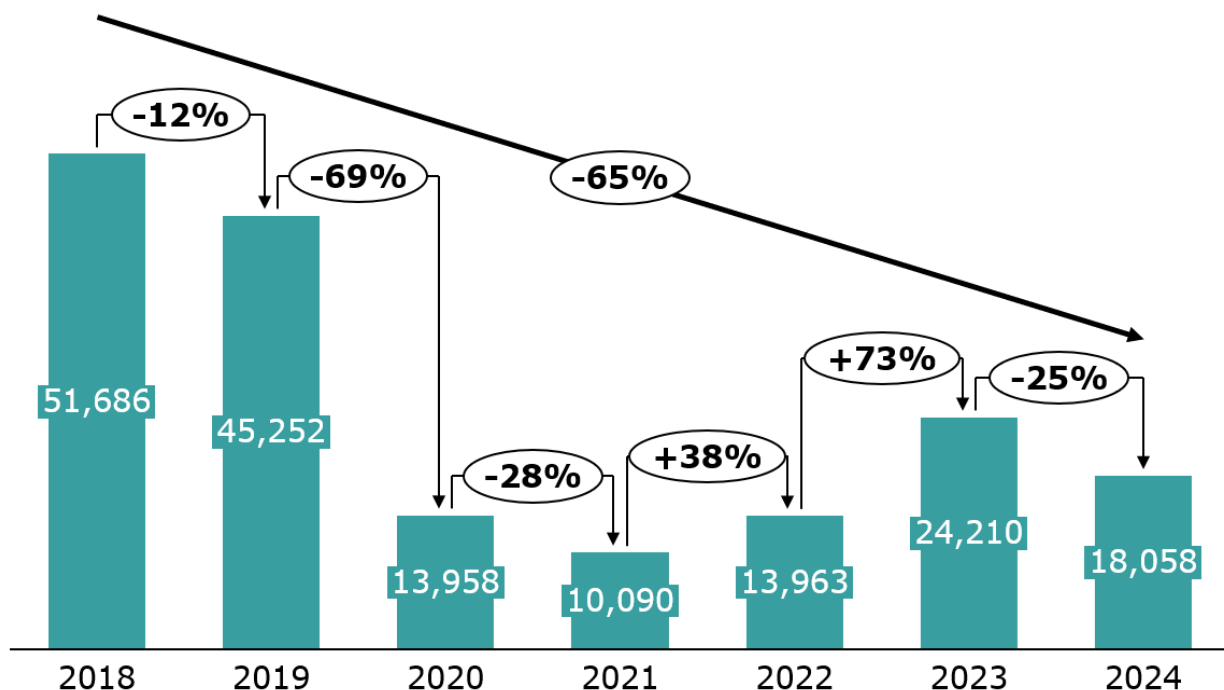
Graph 3: Water consumption in cubic meters

2.3 Business trips

As growth consultants, we closely interact with our clients and market experts. To exchange knowledge and to develop strategies with our customers, we are very flexible and mobile. We also often visit business and scientific events, including conferences and exhibitions, in order to learn about the latest trends in the market. This makes business trips an unavoidable part of our work.

As we are aware of the environmental impact of business trips, we actively avoid the use of road vehicles and flights, opting for public transport whenever possible. Encouraged by this policy, we continue to make considerable progress in reducing our carbon footprint.

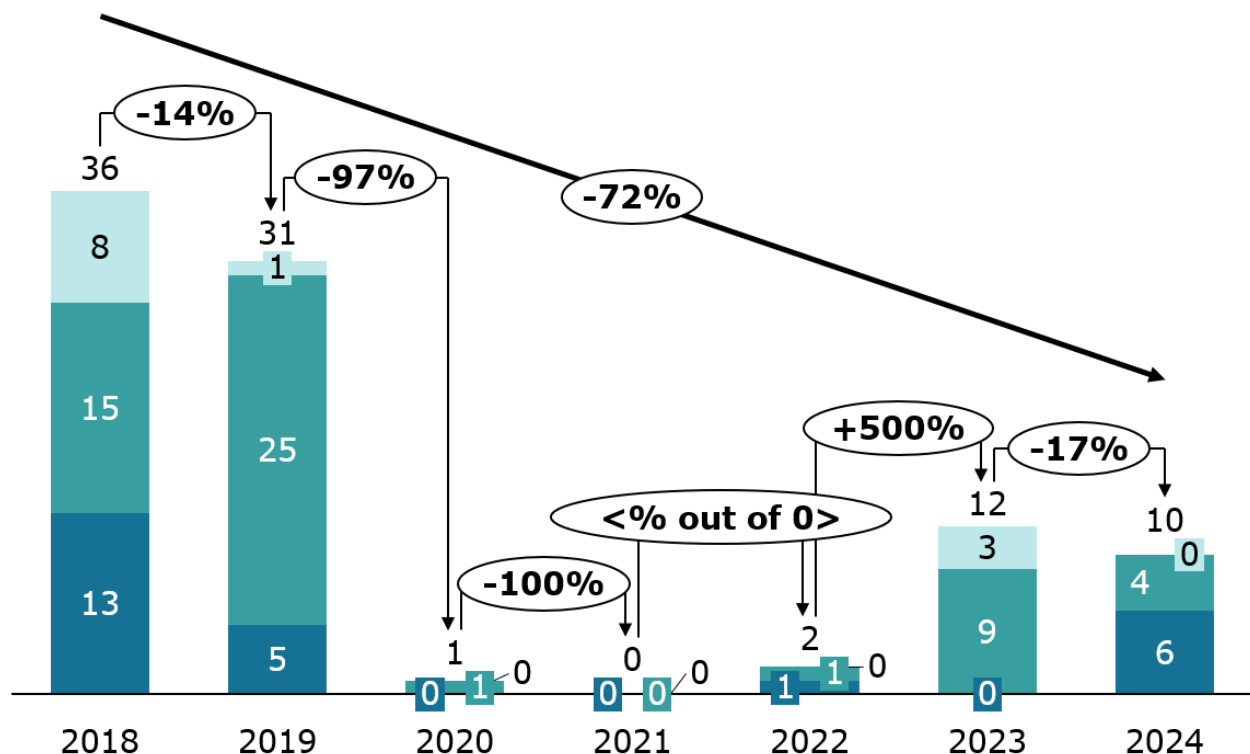
Until 2019, our internal car fleet consisted of three internal combustion engine (ICE) vehicles. In 2020, we reduced our fleet to two cars due to the decreased need for business travel, which significantly lowered our mileage. Between 2019 and 2020, business travel per car dropped by 69%, reaching just 14,000 km. The pandemic further reduced the number and frequency of business trips from 2020 to 2021 to minimize personal contact and prevent the spread of Covid-19. With the easing of Covid-19 restrictions in 2022, business travel increased again, reaching 18,000 km in 2024. Overall, we achieved a 65% reduction in business travel mileage, and we aim to maintain this low level in the coming years by continuing to encourage our employees to use the train when a good connection is available (see Graph 4).



Graph 4: Business trips by fleet vehicle

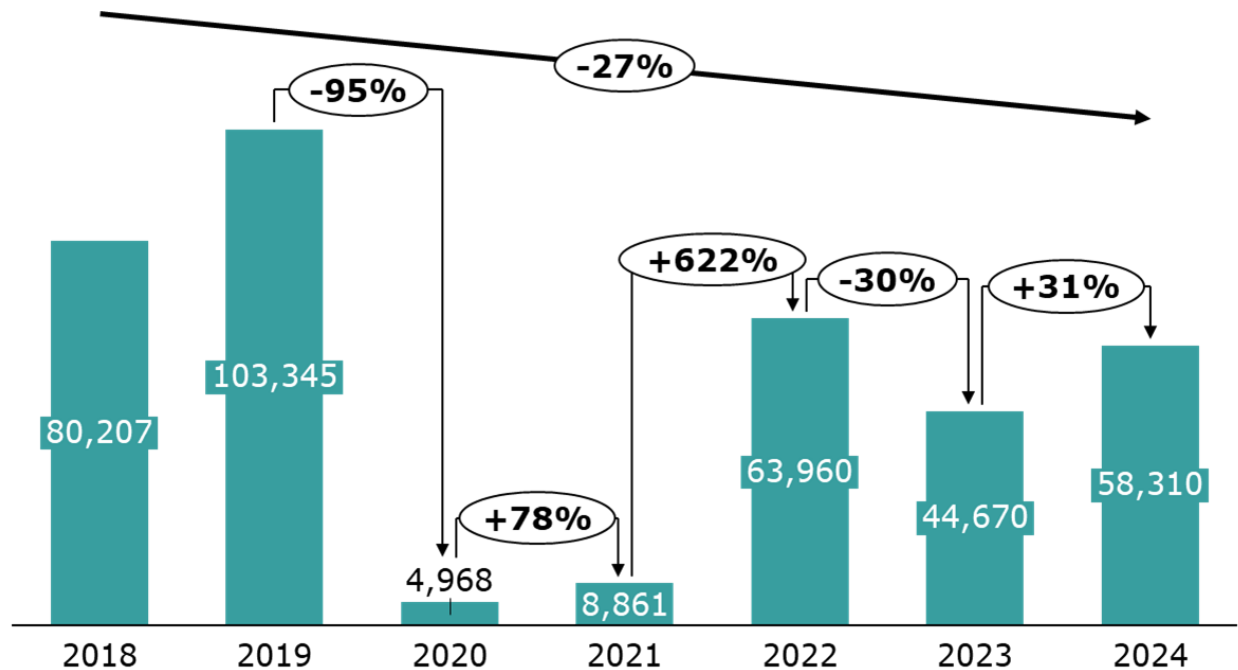
Regarding air travel, the changes over the past five years have been particularly remarkable. While we conducted 36 flights in 2018, this number dropped to just 10 flights in 2024, representing a 72% reduction. During the Covid-19 pandemic from 2020 to 2022, air travel was significantly limited. We completed only one flight within Europe in 2020 and none in 2021. In 2022, we flew twice, once to an intercontinental destination and once within Europe.

This year, we achieved another milestone by eliminating domestic flights entirely. We aim to maintain this achievement in the future by continuing to hold most customer meetings online and only booking flights in exceptional cases (see Graph 5).



Graph 5: Business trips by flight disaggregated by destination

On the other hand, we have been replacing our transportation means by increasing the use of public transportation, particularly trains. This is further promoted by the provision of the BahnCard Business to employees with increased travel volume. Overall, business trips by train increased roughly by 30% between 2018 and 2019. The lack of personal visits during Covid times drastically reduced the use of trains. With the re-opening of events in presence from 2022, we substantially increased the number of business trips again. This remained at a similar level over the past two years, with a slight tendency towards decrease, leading to the current amount of 58,310 km in 2024. Taking pre-Covid years into consideration, these recent developments represent a mid-term decrease of 27% (See Graph 6).



Graph 6: Business trips by train

It is worth mentioning that the long-term trend compared to pre-pandemic times shows a reduction in all travel modes, comparing 2018 to 2024, with more than 33,000 km reduction for fleet vehicles, a reduction by 26 flights, and almost 22,000 km reduction in distance travelled by train.

An important contribution to further reducing traffic volume can be attributed to the trend toward using web meetings. This trend, triggered and reinforced by the Covid pandemic, has now become firmly established and makes it possible to eliminate many business trips, especially for minor matters. At the same time, we believe it is important to continue working on making travel efficient and sustainable.

For the coming years, we will make further use of public transportation instead of fleet vehicles and flights for our business trips. In addition, the integration of an E-car in our company vehicle fleet is under evaluation. The recent change in the transportation means for our business trips clearly shows that our internal policy successfully contributes to more sustainable mobility.

2.4 Material consumption

In our company, consumption of materials is generally low. Schlegel und Partner maintains a conscious approach to material consumption, with paper representing the most significant component of our resource usage. Recognizing the environmental impact of paper consumption, we have actively promoted paper-saving practices among our colleagues. This awareness campaign has yielded measurable results over the years.

Our paper consumption has shown a clear downward trend since 2018. After using 32,500 pages in 2018, we reduced consumption by 20% to 26,000 pages in 2019. This positive trend continued with a further reduction to 20,000 pages in 2020. While there was a slight increase to 25,000 pages in 2021 and 2022, we returned to our 2020 level with 20,000 pages consumed in 2024.

These improvements reflect our ongoing efforts to minimize paper usage through digital workflows and careful consideration of printing needs. By maintaining this focus on sustainable practices, we expect to achieve further reductions in paper consumption in the coming years. Our commitment to resource efficiency remains an integral part of our environmental responsibility strategy.

2.5 Waste

For many years now, Schlegel und Partner successfully implemented waste and recycling material separation schemes.

To minimize the volume of residual waste, we continue to take care of the following principles:

- Office waste material is separated in specific boxes for packaging & paper, glass, and residual waste
- Batteries and other materials containing eco hazardous substances (e.g. fluorescent lamps) are centrally collected and verifiably properly disposed of
- Outdated IT infrastructure is usually internally used for more than five years at places where top performance is not required anymore
- Depleted toner cartridges are returned to manufacturers for refilling
- Employees are encouraged to use re-usable containers for take-away food

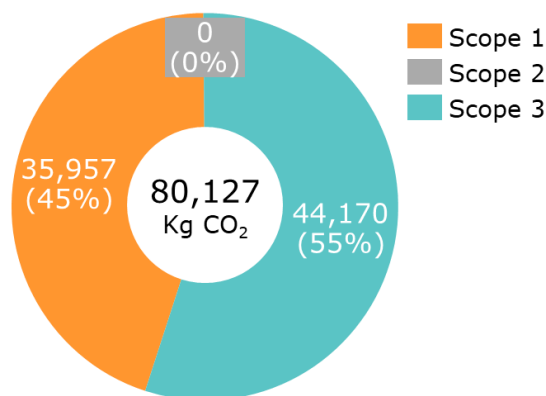
2.6 Greenhouse gas emissions

Schlegel und Partner recognizes climate change as one of the most pressing global challenges facing future generations. In 2019, we established a comprehensive carbon management strategy with three key pillars: avoiding unnecessary emissions, reducing existing emissions, and compensating for unavoidable emissions. This approach aligns with our commitment to contribute meaningfully to global greenhouse gas reduction efforts.

To operationalize this strategy, we have implemented several targeted initiatives. Our sustainable transportation policy prioritizes rail travel over other modes of transportation for business trips. We've undertaken significant energy efficiency measures, including the replacement of energy-intensive lighting and IT equipment with more efficient alternatives. Additionally, we've conducted thorough assessments to identify opportunities for reducing energy consumption in our heating systems.

These proactive measures demonstrate our commitment to environmental stewardship and our recognition of the urgent need to address climate change through concrete actions. By continuously evaluating and improving our carbon management practices, we aim to set an example for responsible corporate environmental performance.

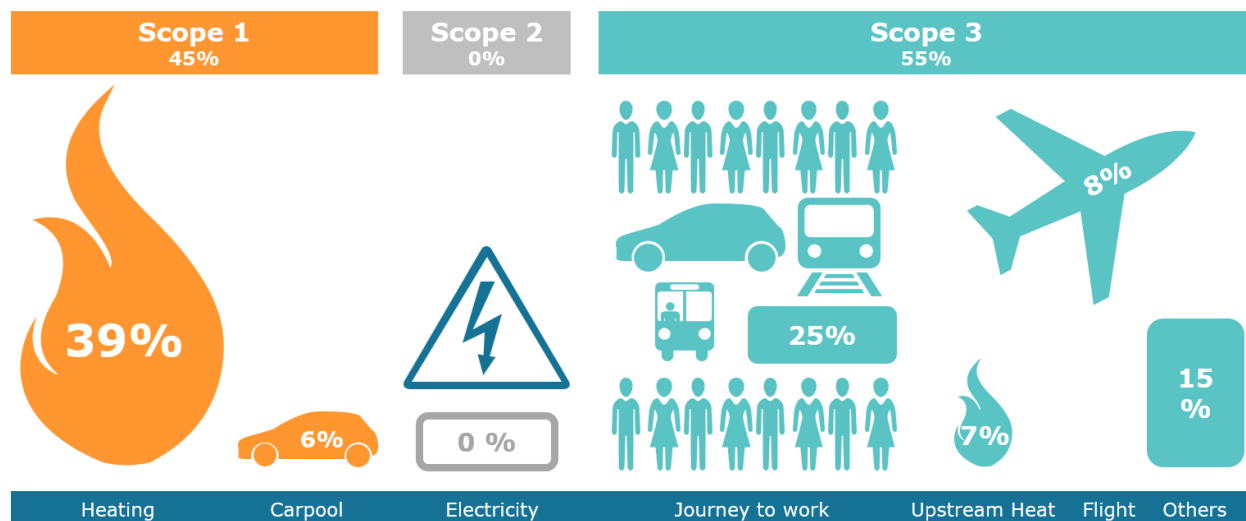
Consequently, we have been monitoring our carbon footprint since 2018, using the established scope 1, 2, and 3 framework, achieving significant reductions in our environmental impact. In 2023, we recorded a total of 80 tons of CO₂ emissions, representing a remarkable 65% reduction from our baseline year of 2018 when emissions stood at 227 tons. This substantial decrease can be attributed both to the pandemic's impact on business travel and office presence, as well as to our proactive sustainability initiatives.



Graph 7: Breakdown of CO₂ emissions into Scope 1, 2, and 3

Our emissions are categorized according to the Scope framework. Scope 1 emissions, which we directly control, account for 45% of our total footprint, with heating systems being our largest single emission source at 39%. Scope 2 emissions, generated indirectly through electricity consumption, have been completely eliminated since 2020 through our transition to 100% renewable energy sources.

Scope 3 emissions, occurring indirectly in our value chain, constitute the majority at 55%, with employee commuting representing 25% of our total emissions. In this regard, from the total emissions in 2023, 45% belonged to Scope 1, 0% to Scope 2 and 55% to Scope 3 (see Graph 7 and Graph 8).



Graph 8: Breakdown of CO₂ emissions into the largest sources of CO₂ emissions

A significant portion of this decrease is attributable to changes in business travel and office presence due to Covid-19. However, additional measures have also contributed to this reduction, including:

- The use of 100% electricity from renewable resources since 2020
- Our sustainable business travel scheme, which prioritizes public transportation over private vehicles
- Workplace energy conservation initiatives focusing on lighting, computer usage, and heating efficiency

Looking ahead, we remain committed to further reducing our environmental impact. Our primary focus is on minimizing Scope 3 emissions, particularly through sustainable commuting solutions for our employees. We will continue optimizing our Scope 1 emissions sources, with special attention to improving heating system efficiency. By maintaining our use of renewable electricity, we ensure that our Scope 2 emissions remain at zero. These ongoing efforts demonstrate our dedication to continuous improvement in environmental stewardship.

3 Social responsibility

3.1 Commitment to employee development & growth

At Schlegel und Partner, we are deeply committed to fostering a supportive and growth-oriented work environment for all our colleagues. Our systematic mentoring program ensures that new entrants receive comprehensive guidance throughout their onboarding process and at every stage of their career development. This structured approach is complemented by mandatory training and seminar modules, which are carefully tailored to the individual skills and requirements of our consultants, reflecting the tasks and expectations at the various stages of our structured career path.



Qualification Modules for New Entrants

Our new consultants benefit from a robust training framework, including a 100-day mentoring program with a 2-stage onboarding process, and in-depth training sessions covering essential topics such as data protection, knowledge management, research skills, data analysis, interview techniques, language proficiency (English and additional languages), successful networking, project management, result presentation, and client communication.

Career Development for Senior Consultants

As our consultants progress toward the role of Senior Consultant, they participate in an advanced development program comprising 10 dedicated modules. This includes specialized training in advanced project and personnel management, enhanced client communication and presentation skills, research tools, strategy development and consulting.

Overarching skill development activities

For each employee, we have a contingent of about 100 hours for qualification matters per year. This is implemented in individual trainings and coaching as well as in regular sessions:

- Schlegel Academy: a monthly in-house program designed to enhance core competencies, as well as our yearly academy week with focused training sessions.
- Language school: professional competencies in foreign languages, German for non-natives
- External coaching adapted to individual needs
- Visits to trade fairs and conferences for individual knowledge enhancement
- Special external training, e.g., on management, communication or software topics

Recognition for Excellence

Our commitment to employee development and satisfaction has been consistently recognized. In 2023 and 2024, Schlegel und Partner was again honored as a "TOP COMPANY" by Kununu and ranked among the top 5% of employers in Germany by Focus Top Arbeitgeber im Mittelstand. This achievement reflects our dedication to maintaining standards well above the industry average.

By investing in continuous learning and professional growth, we ensure that our colleagues thrive in a dynamic and fulfilling work environment.



3.2 Community engagement & social impact

At Schlegel und Partner, we see social responsibility as an ongoing commitment—one that strengthens communities, advances education, and protects our planet for future generations. We believe in creating meaningful impact, both locally and globally. Our commitment to social responsibility is woven into our company culture, driving initiatives that empower communities, support education, and promote environmental stewardship.

Global Impact & Humanitarian Support

In 2019, our team assembled eleven hand prostheses for Helping Hands, which were delivered to recipients in Zimbabwe, directly improving lives through innovative assistive technology. We engaged our team in similar activities in the following years, e.g., most recently with the hands-on support in developing the outdoor area for a children's and youth facility specializing in animal-assisted education.

For years, we have been official partners of Médecins Sans Frontières (Doctors Without Borders), contributing EUR 6,600 to their lifesaving work also in 2024. Furthermore, we have long supported regional workshops for the blind with EUR 1,000 yearly, supporting vocational training and employment opportunities, helping to enhance accessibility and independence.

Education & Future Talent Development

We are dedicated to fostering the next generation of professionals through mentorship and scholarship:

- **MaMi Mentoring Program (Mannheim University of Applied Sciences):** MaMi is a cooperation between the Mannheim University of Applied Sciences and medium-sized companies. Since 2018, we have participated in this initiative, bridging the gap between academic theory and real-world industry applications. Schlegel und Partner awarded the SME scholarship to young industrial engineers at the Mannheim University of Applied Sciences, thereby promoting future talent. Our SME Scholarship supports talented industrial engineering students, investing in their future careers.
- **University of Mannheim Mentoring Program:** As a corporate partner, we guide students and young professionals through career development.
- **Alumni Mentoring Program:** In collaboration with the Association of Friends and the Career Center at Mannheim University of Applied Sciences, we support graduates in their professional journeys.
- **Further regular collaborations** with University of Bozen (Italy), University of Münster (Germany), University of Warwick (United Kingdom), and further institutions like IAESTE.

Environmental Stewardship & Carbon Compensation

While we prioritize avoiding and reducing CO₂ emissions, we also take responsibility for unavoidable emissions through carbon compensation. In partnership with ClimatePartner, we supported a renewable hydropower project in Laos, contributing to reduced fossil fuel dependency in the Luang Namtha region, where energy shortages require costly imports, and improved living conditions for rural communities by providing sustainable, affordable energy. The program was Gold Standard VER certified, ensuring the project's environmental integrity and social impact.

4 Governmental responsibility

4.1 Compliance

As an internationally active company, we bear a special responsibility toward our customers, partners, employees, and society. The foundation of our actions is our binding Schlegel und Partner Compliance Guideline, which defines legal requirements, ethical principles, and internal standards. They ensure fair, transparent, and responsible working practices in all areas.

The Compliance Guideline is aimed at all employees of Schlegel und Partner GmbH as well as its executive bodies and representatives. Every employee is obliged to comply with the laws, regulations, codes and internal guidelines applicable in his or her area of responsibility and to act fairly, respectfully and trustworthily in all activities and business relationships. It is the duty of every employee to uphold and promote the reputation of our company. Conflicts of interest between business and private matters must be avoided, and no unlawful advantages must be obtained for oneself or others.

The Compliance Guideline addresses the following ethical pillars of our actions:

- Equal treatment: diversity is an important part of our self-image. In our dealings with colleagues, employees and business partners, we strictly oppose discrimination on the basis of origin, gender, religion, disability, age or sexual identity.
- Fair competition: we pursue reputable, legally unobjectionable and recognized business practices and behave fairly in competition at all times. Compliance with the applicable national and international antitrust and competition laws is a matter of course for us.
- Prohibition of corruption: any behavior that could give rise to suspicion of bribery must be avoided. Exceptions are made for invitations to business meals within the usual and appropriate framework, invitations to general customary occasions and small gifts from guests. Any appearance of a conflict of interest in the granting or acceptance of benefits must be avoided.
- Intellectual property of third parties: we respect the intellectual property of third parties. We try to avoid conflicts in dealing with the intellectual property of third parties that arise in the course of our work at all costs. If we come across information that leads to a conflict of conscience in this context, we always check it carefully to ensure that it can be used in accordance with compliance requirements. Furthermore, we do not obtain access to information by improper means at any time.
- Confidentiality and data privacy: our work is associated with a high degree of responsibility towards our customers, and all involved third parties. This applies both to the collection and further use of data during our projects and to the handling of our customers' data. This is reflected in our technical, organizational and processual matters.

All employees of Schlegel und Partner GmbH, including managers and board members, receive training on compliance-related topics when they join the company and regularly thereafter. The aim is to raise awareness of compliance risks among all employees and to provide them with knowledge of relevant regulations; this applies not only to national regulations, but also to important foreign laws and international agreements.

4.2 Confidentiality and data protection

The high degree of responsibility towards our customers and for the processed data is enshrined in our Compliance Guidelines. In order to live up to this responsibility and our own standards of transparency and reliability, we regard compliance-compliant behavior as a basic prerequisite. Our technical and organizational measures are designed to bring along the necessary tools and foundation to ensure its implementation.

In the interests of our clients, we treat all information made available or obtained in the course of carrying out the order as strictly confidential, to use it only for the purpose of carrying out the order and not to pass it on to third parties.

Any personal data that falls under data privacy regulations is handled with the strictest care. We implemented strict data protection guidelines under immediate supervision of the executive partners and support of a data protection officer, supplemented by regular training for all employees. We also consult our customers to take into account and comply with data protection requirements in our projects. Also, we comply with all requirements to protect the subjects of our research projects, protecting the right for confidentiality of all survey participants in primary research.

All employees of Schlegel und Partner are obliged to comply with respective regulations and to contribute to the reliable protection of personal data and technical or business-related confidential information against unauthorized use. All employees receive training on confidentiality and data protection matters when they join the company and regularly thereafter.

4.3 Health and workplace safety

Beyond compliance, we actively promote employee health and workplace safety measures that reflect our broader understanding of responsibility:

- **Occupational health and safety:** To ensure safety at the workplace, we regularly conduct trainings about safety measures at our company, including workplace organization, safe handling of electrical equipment and machines, and emergency protocols. Dedicated, certified officers oversee safety standards and ensure safety and well-being in the workplace. Through regular trainings, we ensure all employees are informed and up-to-date about our safety measures.
- **First responders and fire safety officers:** We have trained first responders and fire safety officers for all buildings, with first responders taking refresher courses every 2 years.
- **Ergonomics and eye health:** Since our employees work with a computer for most of the time, ergonomics for back injury prevention, safety and eye health are major health topics. We check the computer workstations and monitors at the workplace regularly. If special measures are required, we offer support and necessary aids such as monitor glasses.
- **Prevention:** We implement preventive health check-ups carried out by an external service provider, as well as free, voluntary influenza vaccination by our company physician.

- Hygiene concept: We implemented a strict hygiene concept at our company. We equip each building with disinfection materials and ventilate each room regularly. Cleaning agents are carefully selected by our service team. We try to avoid potentially harmful substances wherever possible, and if available, source certified eco-friendly products. Measures were further enhanced especially during the Covid pandemic, with vast disinfectant availability in all buildings, regular ventilation schemes, and supply of equipment (self-tests, masks).
- Employee health: Since 2023, we installed weekly health courses open to all employees. Available courses included yoga, meditation, preventive back training, back therapy and fascia training.
- Feedback culture: We implemented various measures to foster feedback culture throughout the organization, supporting our aspiration to open, fair and respectful communication. Two dedicated feedback officers are installed to help in case of conflicts or with mediation. Our biannual employee appraisal with the respective direct supervisor includes regular feedback as a fixed component.
- Participation and mental health: In 2021, we implemented structured, anonymous employee engagement survey, also covering psychological hazards and sources of mental stress. This was further systematized, implementing the survey as anonymous online survey, followed up by communication and implementation sessions. This biennial frequency will be continued in 2025.

Legal notice

Reporting period

This sustainability report covers the years 2023 and 2024, as well as comparative data from 2018 to 2024. The editorial deadline for this report was August 31, 2025.

Contents of the report

This report is based on the DNK and the G4 guidelines of the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI), which is internationally recognized as standard.

Compilation

The project managers weighted the possible topics in advance together with the management and other employees involved. The relevant data was calculated or, if information was already available, collected.

Publisher

Schlegel und Partner GmbH
Ludwigstraße 6
69469 Weinheim
Germany

Executive Partners: Dierk Plümer, Dr. Annika Trümpler

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