

**SUSTAINABILITY
REPORT 2023**



BUILDING A EUROPEAN SAAS CHAMPION

CREATING TRUSTED
COMPANIES »

Inhaltsverzeichnis

Notes on the use of the report	3
Foreword	4
KPIs - EQS key figures 2023	6
EQS Group AG	7
Responsible corporate governance	16
Ethics and integrity	37
Customers and products	57
Corporate culture and employees	69
Environmental protection	86
Supply chain	96
Report profile	100
Content index	102
Imprint	122

Notes on the use of the report

This sustainability report is published as a linked PDF. This means that all the information contained in the report can be found quickly and easily. Further online information, e.g. on the EQS website, is available via the links in the PDF. The following symbols will help with navigating the report:

🔗 Link to an external site, e.g. www.eqs.com/de/

📄 Reference to a page in the report

The page references within the tables are also linked.

In terms of content, the sustainability report follows the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) Update 2021 standards. The GRI standards, the principles of the UN Global Compact (UNGC) and the indicators of the Sustainability Accounting Standards Board (SASB) are shown to the right of the text. In the content index, we provide an overview of where GRI indicators, European Sustainability Reporting Standards (ESRS), UN Global Compact principles and answers to questions from the UN Global Compact Communication on Progress questionnaire can be found in the report. We also provide an overview of SASB standards in a table format.

📄 Content index, page 102

📄 SASB – Software and IT Services, page 119

You will find further details on the reporting procedure in the report profile.

📄 Report profile, page 100

Since 2021, EQS Group AG has been a participant in the UN Global Compact initiative and is committed to its ten principles on human rights, labour, environment and anti-corruption. GRI standards that refer to the principles of the UN Global Compact are marked in the report. A table overview of the principles is provided at the end of the report.

📄 UN Global Compact, page 122

Foreword

(GRI 2-22)

Dear readers and friends of the EQS Group,

Thank you for accompanying us on the next step of our sustainability journey! Your feedback and questions drive our further develop in governance, environment and social (ESG) affairs. We are proud to present to you our third sustainability report.

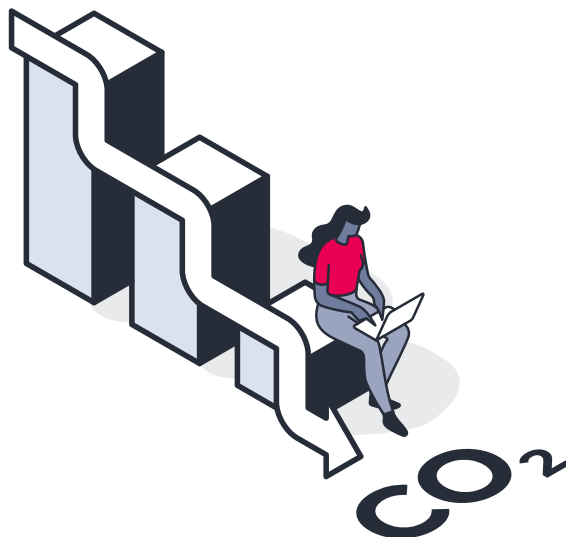
This is a good time for us to take stock: What have we achieved? What have we learned? What can we do better?



We have reached a point at which our sustainability work and our voluntary reporting are at a good level. We achieved good results in two different sustainability ratings. A good result that also spurs us on to become even better.

External requirements are becoming ever more specific and demanding at the same time. This makes it all the more important for us to concentrate on what really is essential. We fully support all sustainability issues, regardless of how much influence we have on them as a company. In our day-to-day business, however, we deliberately focus on the areas where we can make a difference. That is why you will read more about integrity, the impact of our mission “creating trusted companies” and the reduction of CO₂ emissions in this report than about biodiversity, for example.

Achieving climate neutrality is a good example for why we also need a great deal of perseverance and persistence when it comes to sustainability issues. We would often like to change things and implement projects much more quickly, but we also need those around us to do so. And that is sometimes slower than we would like. One example of this is the supply of renewable energy to our offices, where we made great progress last year, particularly at our headquarters in Munich, or another example is climate protection in the data centres.



The offsetting of CO₂ emissions in 2023 was criticised in many media reports across the globe. Rightly so. When looking at possible offsetting options, we also realised that this is a very complex and multi-layered issue if we want to do it well and live up to our standards of transparency and honesty. For us, trust is a sign of quality in everything we do.



Our next step is to prepare the mandatory report (ESRS). And a lot has happened behind the scenes at EQS in 2023, such as the automated calculation of HR key figures. Externally, this progress is reflected in the rise of further HR key figures. Internally, it is a great help with many potential synergistic effects.

And so the journey continues. We are delighted at your contribution with questions, advice, action and lots of inspiration, and hope you enjoy reading this report.

Yours sincerely,

Achim Weick

KPIs - EQS key figures 2023

Locations
worldwide

14



Number of countries
where our customers
are headquartered

98

Number of employee
nationalities

54



Women on the
Supervisory Board

40%



Number of employees
by gender

male

332

non-binary

1

female

229



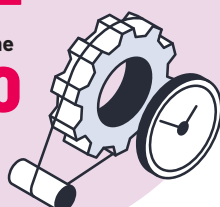
Number of employees by type
of employment

part-time

92

full-time

470



Tonnes of CO₂e emissions

735 t CO₂e

Tonnes of CO₂e emissions
per employee and year

1.31 t CO₂e



Net Promoter Score

41





EQS Group AG

EQS Group is a leading international cloud software provider in the areas of corporate compliance, investor relations and sustainability reporting. Across the globe, thousands of companies use EQS Group products in order to create trust by reliably and securely fulfilling complex regulatory requirements, minimising risks and reporting transparently on their business performance and its impact on society and the climate.

Company

EQS Group AG is headquartered in Munich, Germany, and is managed in the legal form of a stock corporation (Aktiengesellschaft). Since 2 February 2024, Pineapple German Bidco GmbH is holding approximately 98 percent of the share capital of EQS Group AG. Pineapple German Bidco GmbH is a holding company controlled by funds managed and/or advised by Thoma Bravo, L.P.

GRI 2-1

🔗 More details on company stock

📅 Changes in the reporting period, page 9

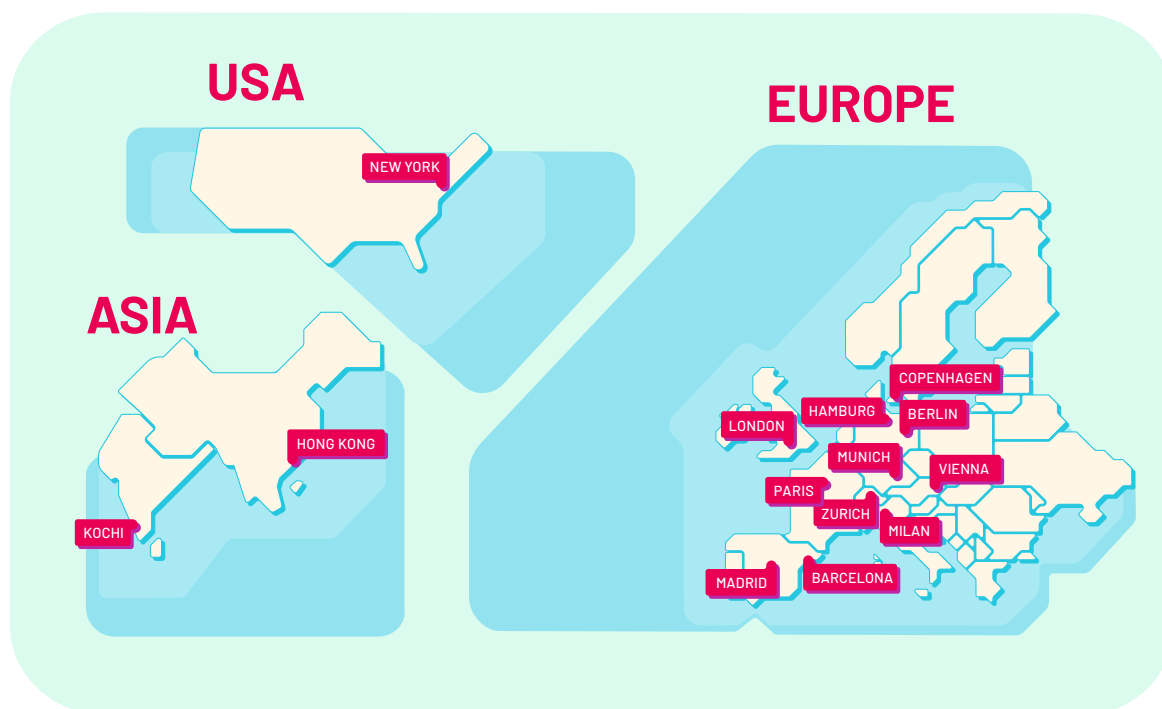
EQS Group was founded in Munich in 2000. Today, the Group has almost 600 employees at 14 locations worldwide. From there, we serve customers with headquarters in 98 countries (2022:78). EQS Group divides these into the following geographical markets:

🇩🇪 DACH: Germany, Austria and Switzerland

🌐 International: Denmark, France, Hong Kong, Italy, Spain, the United Kingdom, and the USA

In addition to the headquarters in Munich, Berlin and Kochi (India) are further technological locations with a focus on software development. The office in Kochi is not actively involved in the sale of EQS Group products and services.

Locations (GRI 2-1)



The majority of EQS Group products are bundled in the cloud-based software EQS COCKPIT. The product portfolio includes the management of compliance processes and applications for investor communication.

GRI 2-6

■ Products, page 61

In recent years, we have continuously expanded our range of services and consolidated our position as the market leader in digital investor relations (IR) in the German-speaking region (DACH). Currently, 39 of the DAX40 customers use the EQS IR COCKPIT.

■ Customers and products, page 57

In terms of sustainability, we strive for a partnership-based and long-term business relationship with our suppliers and service providers. The supply chain is therefore an integral part of the EQS sustainability strategy.

■ Sustainability strategy and goals, page 31

■ Supply chain, page 96

Changes in the reporting period

GRI 2-4
GRI 2-6

No companies were acquired and no new locations were established in 2023. The amalgamation with Business Keeper GmbH was completed in the reporting period.

The companies belonging to EQS Group AG, EQS Financial Markets & Media GmbH, EquityStory RS, LLC (Russia) and EQS Group doo (Serbia), are in the process of being liquidated or have been liquidated. We closed the sites in Moscow and Belgrade in 2023.

↪ Annual Report 2023, page 26

The term of office of one Supervisory Board member came to an end in the reporting year, meaning that new elections were held for this position. In addition, a number of new committee appointments were made following the Annual General Meeting.

■ Corporate governance, page 12

In the reporting year, we expanded the use of the web-based procurement system implemented in 2022 and revised the purchasing guidelines. The aim is to standardise processes and take greater account of sustainability aspects. There were no other significant changes in the supply chain in the reporting period.

■ Supply chain, page 96

On 16 November 2023, EQS Group AG signed an investor agreement with Pineapple German Bidco GmbH to acquire all outstanding shares at EUR 40.00 each in cash. Pineapple German Bidco GmbH is a holding company controlled by funds managed and/or advised by Thoma Bravo, L.P. The investor agreement also sets out the framework of the partnership, which includes assurances for employees, business partners and other stakeholders. The takeover offer made by Pineapple German Bidco GmbH

on 4 December 2023 to the shareholders of EQS Group AG to acquire all shares in the company was completed on 2 February 2024. Subsequently, the shares of the Executive Board members were transferred in accordance with the offer (in full except for Achim Weick) and the loans to the Executive Board members were repaid. Pineapple German Bidco GmbH has informed EQS Group AG that it holds approximately 98 per cent of the share capital of EQS Group AG and has submitted a request pursuant to section 327a paragraph 1 sentence 1 of the German Stock Corporation Act (Aktiengesetz), according to which the general meeting of EQS Group AG shall resolve on the transfer of the shares of the remaining shareholders (minority shareholders) to Pineapple German Bidco GmbH as majority shareholder in return for an appropriate cash compensation (so-called squeeze-out under stock corporation law). EQS Group AG will inform about the date of the general meeting at which a corresponding transfer resolution shall be adopted in accordance with legal requirements.

↪ Press release from November 2023

↪ Press release from March 2024

↪ Events after the balance sheet date, Annual Report 2023, page 95

Economic performance

All information on the course of the past financial year of EQS Group AG, consisting of the balance sheet, income statement, notes and management report, is published in the Annual Report.

The Supervisory Board is responsible for the preparation of the consolidated financial statements and the group management report.

↪ Annual Report 2023

EQS Group increased consolidated revenue from continued business operations by 15 per cent to EUR 69.40 million in the financial year 2023 (2022: EUR 60.30 million) and including discontinued business operations by 13 per cent to EUR 69.57 million (2022: EUR 61.43 million).

GRI 201-1

Geographical market: domestic vs. international (GRI 201-1)

	Domestic*	vs. 2022	International*	vs. 2022
Turnover	€ 43.85m	+10 %	€ 21.07m	+27 %
EBITDA	€ -0.99m	<-100 %	€ 4.27m	>100 %
SaaS customers	3,733	+70 %	4,525	+58 %

* from continued business operations

Group revenue (GRI 201-1)

	Compliance			Investor Relations		
in € thousands	2023	2022	2021	2023	2022	2021
Main geographical markets						
Domestic	35,369	31,437	23,248	13,077	12,409	12,670
International	14,577	10,878	7,459	6,549	6,707	6,846
Total	49,947	42,315	30,707	19,656	19,115	19,516
Most important product/service lines						
Cloud products	36,384	30,340	19,826	10,880	10,101	9,504
Cloud services	13,563	11,975	10,881	8,746	9,015	10,012
Total	49,947	42,315	30,707	19,656	19,115	19,516
Time of revenue realisation						
Services provided at a point in time	19,498	17,417	16,344	6,600	6,519	7,382
Services provided over a period of time	30,448	24,898	14,363	13,026	12,596	12,134
Total	49,947	42,315	30,707	19,656	19,115	19,516

EQS Group generated 70 per cent (2022: 71 per cent) of total sales in the domestic market (Germany).

In 2023, the Group's operating expenses (purchased services, personnel expenses, other expenses and expenses from valuation allowances on trade receivables) from continued business operations increased proportionally with the revenue development by 15 per cent to EUR 68.91 million (2022: EUR 59.86 million).

↪ Key financial figures

↪ Notes, Annual Report 2023, page 52

↪ Group economic report, Annual Report 2023, page 21

We fully comply with our tax obligations in all countries in which we operate. There are no tax-driven models that are independent of the operational business for the sole aim of achieving tax reductions.

GRI 207-1

Within the scope of group reporting according to the International Financial Reporting Standards (IRFS), EQS Group AG discloses, among other things, all current and deferred tax items in the Annual Report. The current tax expense is calculated on the basis of the taxable income for the year; the Group's tax liability is calculated on the basis of the applicable tax rates.

GRI 207-2

Deferred taxes are recognised as part of the calculation of taxable income and, where possible, on tax loss carryovers.

↪ Deferred taxes, Annual Report 2023, page 74

We pursue a risk-averse tax strategy and pay attention to the asset protection of the company in the operational implementation. In addition, we maintain a transparent exchange with the tax authorities.

Responsibility for the fulfilment of tax obligations lies with the Chief Financial Officer (CFO), who regularly reviews the tax strategy that has been in place for several years. Controls are carried out as part of risk management and through audits by the tax authorities. Each subsidiary also engages local tax advisors to ensure compliance with the applicable local regulations.

We are not aware of any business activities or locations with significant or potential negative impacts on local communities.

GRI 413-2

Corporate governance

Responsible and sustainable corporate governance is indispensable for the trust of our investors, business partners, customers and employees. We are therefore in favour of any further development of the German Corporate Governance Code that helps to increase transparency and strengthen investor confidence. EQS Group AG complies with the recommendations of the Government Commission on the German Corporate Governance Code as amended on 28 April 2022, published in the official section of the Federal Gazette on 27 June 2022, with the exception of the deviations listed and justified in the Declaration of Conformity.

↪ Declaration of Conformity

The German Corporate Governance Code contains international standards for good and responsible corporate governance, among other things, in relation to the topics of education and training, conflicts of interest, self-assessment and remuneration. On our company website, we introduce all members of the Executive and Supervisory Boards, publish our Declaration of Conformity with respect to the German Corporate Governance Code and provide information about our Annual General Meetings.

GRI 2-10
GRI 2-11
GRI 2-15
GRI 2-17
GRI 2-18

➞ Corporate governance at EQS Group

In the interests of responsible corporate governance, the Executive Board and the Supervisory Board work together closely and transparently. This is how we ensure successful management and effective control of our company. When we elect and nominate candidates for the Executive Board or Supervisory Board, we also follow the guidelines of the German Corporate Governance Code.

The Executive Board of EQS Group AG, which is appointed by the Supervisory Board, consists of four members. The extended Executive Board, the Management Board, also includes three other members. Of the seven members of the Management Board, one is a woman. This corresponds to 14 per cent of the Board. Women make up 40 per cent of the five-member Supervisory Board.

GRI 405-1

➞ Résumés of the Supervisory Board and Executive Board of EQS Group
➞ EQS Management Board

A total of ten Supervisory Board meetings were held in the financial year 2023. In these the Executive Board informed the Supervisory Board about the economic situation and business development. Further topics discussed included the entry into force of the Whistleblower Protection Act in Germany and other European countries as well as the evaluation of opportunities to accelerate growth through the participation of financial investors in EQS. In addition to the meetings, resolutions on current topics were passed using the written circular procedure. At the Annual General Meeting in June 2023, all proposed resolutions were adopted.

GRI 2-9
GRI 2-17
GRI 2-18

➞ Report of Supervisory Board, Annual Report 2023, page 9

Professor Dr Kerstin Lopatta is the Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) Officer of the Supervisory Board. In her, EQS Group AG has a proven sustainability expert who also provides support and advice on these issues to various organisations throughout Europe.

The remuneration of the Supervisory Board is set out in EQS Group's Articles of Association. In 2023, it amounted to a total of EUR 295,000.

GRI 2-18
GRI 2-19
GRI 2-20

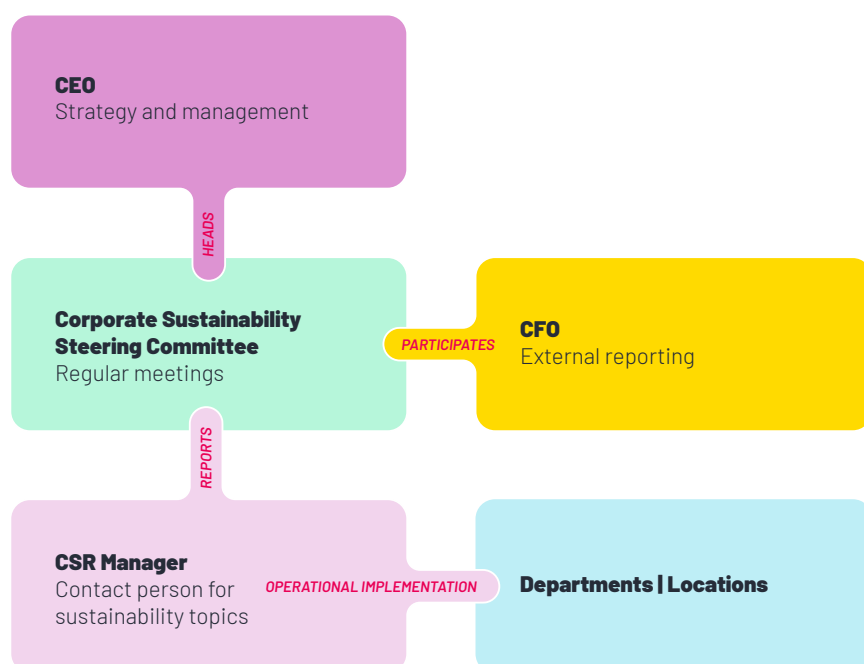
➞ EQS Group's Articles of Association

Management of sustainability issues

To emphasise the importance of sustainability for our company, the Corporate Sustainability Steering Committee was established in 2021, which consists of the CEO, the CFO and the CSR Manager. This committee meets several times a month to discuss measures and issues and implement specific steps.

GRI 2-12
GRI 2-13
GRI 2-14
GRI 2-16

Working methods of the Corporate Sustainability Steering Committee of EQS Group AG



All sustainability issues, the corresponding strategy and management are the responsibility of the Chief Executive Officer (CEO). The CSR Manager is responsible for the operational implementation of the issues. She reports directly to the CEO in the Corporate Sustainability Steering Committee. The CSR Manager is also the contact person for internal and external enquiries and can be reached using the contact details on the EQS website.

GRI 2-13
GRI 2-14

The tasks of the committee include:

- Further development of the sustainability strategy
- Integration of sustainability aspects in the general company strategy
- Internal monitoring of the achievement of sustainability goals
- Review of compliance with the principles of the UN Global Compact and related topics such as Communication on Progress (CoP) of the UN Global Compact

■ Expansion of internal sustainability expertise

The committee held a total of 20 meetings in 2023. In addition to the above-mentioned tasks, the members dealt with the following topics, among others:

- Sustainability reporting
- Diversity issues, such as the promotion of women in India
- Environment issues, such as conservation of resources and energy supply
- External communication
- Organisational matters, such as expansion of the sustainability team and budget
- Implementation of the Corporate Volunteering Guideline
- Dealing with external enquiries, e.g. external stakeholders questionnaires, ratings, energy audit, donations

■ Sustainability strategy and goals, page 31

In order to ensure the most comprehensive basis for decision-making possible, we actively involve the specialist departments and international locations when gathering information. The international locations are also increasingly involved in the selection and implementation of measures. One area of focus was environmental issues and the coordination of corporate volunteering activities. This is done through the respective Managing Directors or, depending on the issue, by selected local contacts.



Responsible corporate governance

EQS Group AG has grown from a start-up to a successful listed company with international offices and high growth rates. Ever since the company was founded, business success has gone hand in hand with responsibility – both for our operations as well as for the impact of our business activities. We hold ourselves to this.

Values, such as integrity, transparency and trustful collaboration are the guidelines that always direct employees and management at our company. They are an essential part of our daily cooperation, both internally as well as with customers, business partners, suppliers and investors.

We want to practise good and responsible corporate governance and use the Corporate Governance Code as a guideline.

GRI 2-23

■ Corporate governance, page 12

We also use various events to exchange ideas with our stakeholders. These include the Annual General Meeting, investor and bank conferences and customer events such as the European Compliance and Ethics Conference (ECEC) as well as the EQS Experience Day, both events organised by EQS Group.

GRI 2-29

■ Stakeholders, page 18

In past year, important topics at these events and in stakeholder communication in general included for instance regulatory issues such as the Supply Chain Due Diligence Act, whistleblower protection and, currently, sustainability. The requirements of our various stakeholders are also relevant impulses for EQS Group's business activities. We actively use the information gathered in exchange with stakeholders for product development and company alignment, for example in the development of the module Third Parties with a focus on the Supply Chain Due Diligence Act or in relation to new functionalities of the EQS whistleblowing systems.

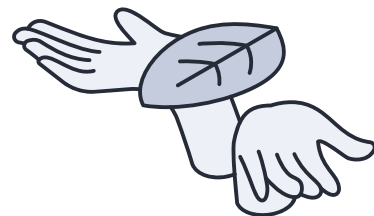
- Customers and products, page 57
- Stakeholder communication, page 20

Sustainable growth

For EQS Group, responsible growth is a key component of the company's DNA, alongside the successful development and establishment of sustainable products. Despite some challenges, we have built up our market presence step by step with a sense of perspective and a down-to-earth approach. A milestone was the acquisition of DGAP (Deutsche Gesellschaft für Ad-hoc-Publizität) in 2005. This was followed by consistent and targeted growth with organic and inorganic expansion and the broadening of business areas.

We have been building up our second business division, Corporate Compliance, since 2017. Thanks to active market consolidation, we have become the leading software provider of whistleblowing systems in Europe. By 2025, we intend to be the leading provider for corporate compliance and investor relations (IR) as well. As further regulatory requirements for groups as well as small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in compliance and governance are planned by then, we see great potential to develop innovative products and to continue growing sustainably. Our ambitious goals are always in line with our values and principles.

- Products, page 61
- Ethics and integrity, page 37



Support for sustainability initiatives

EQS Group AG is committed to the ten principles of the UN Global Compact and has been an official participant in the world's largest initiative for sustainable and responsible corporate governance since 2021. We are also a member of the association UN Global Compact Netzwerk Deutschland eV, founded in 2023.

GRI 2-23
GRI 2-24

As a participant, we commit to reporting annually on our progress in implementing the principles in the Communication on Progress (CoP). At the beginning of 2023, a digital platform was introduced by the UN Global Compact to ensure better comparability of developments among the participating companies and organisations. EQS Group AG has voluntarily entered its information, which is also documented in this sustainability report, on the interim platform currently in use.

In 2023, we also decided to cease the separate participation of our subsidiaries in the UN Global Compact and to manage the implementation of the ten principles centrally via the parent company.

The Corporate Sustainability Steering Committee is responsible for monitoring and ensuring compliance with the ten principles.

■ Working methods of the Corporate Sustainability Steering Committee of EQS Group AG, page 14

↪ UN Global Compact EQS Group Profile

■ UN Global Compact CoP questionnaire in the Content index, page 102

Stakeholders

EQS Group AG is in constant exchange with external and internal stakeholders. We want to learn about their different perspectives and expectations, and take them into account in our business activities. This process is an essential part of our strategic alignment because it enables us to harmonise our standpoints with those of our surroundings and the society.

GRI 2-29

We systematically pursue a strategic approach to identifying our stakeholders and their requirements. By doing so, we want to ensure that we proceed in a standardised manner worldwide while taking local circumstances into account. Among other things, we document the relationship between the respective stakeholder group and our company and how often and in what way we communicate with each other.

We determined and categorised the most relevant stakeholder groups for the organisation as a whole as well as for individual company divisions in 2021. We reviewed this selection in 2022 and adjusted it slightly. In the reporting year, a further review did not reveal any need for change. The following table shows the relationship between the individual stakeholder groups and EQS Group and how we communicate with each other. We base our classification on the AccountAbility AA1000 Stakeholder Engagement Standard.

Our stakeholder groups (GRI 2-29)

	Relationship with the organization	Levels of engagement	Communication	Type of relationship	Means of communication
Customers and users of EQS products					Personal conversation, email, phone call, website with product information, customer roadshow, webinar, conference, event
Employees of EQS Group					Personal conversation, email, phone call, video conference, intranet, BarCamp, event
Non-governmental organizations					Personal conversation, email, phone call
Rating agencies					Email, online questionnaire
Trade associations in the most important financial markets					Personal conversation, event, information material, lecture
Media and media networks					Personal conversation, email, phone call
Global investor network					Personal conversation, email, phone call, WebCast, investor conference
Universities and research institutions					Personal conversation, email, phone call, project based cooperation
Ministries, authorities, legislative bodies					Personal conversation, email, phone call, letter, official notification, online platform
Shareholders of EQS Group AG					Personal conversation, email, phone call, WebCast, investor conference, General Annual Meeting
National and international financial institutions					Personal conversation, email, phone call
Key suppliers and business partners					Personal conversation, email, phone call, procurement software, supplier platform

Relationship with the organization: close = medium = distant =
 Levels of engagement: high = medium = low =
 Communication: occasion-related = divers =
 Type of relationship: long-term = medium-term = short-term =

In addition to the stakeholder groups considered here, there are interested parties, e.g. users of EQS's online offering. They obtain information on specific topics on the websites, however, we do not consider them as our main stakeholders. The same applies for people, organisations, associations, etc. in the vicinity of our sites that we support, for example, through corporate volunteering campaigns or donations.

■ Social engagement, page 84

Some of the topics that we worked on in 2023 were brought to us by stakeholders, while we actively sought dialogue with our stakeholders on others. The general focus was on the importance of sustainability, the status of sustainability management and the implementation of related measures, amongst other things. In addition, our stakeholders also had individual concerns. For our employees, for example, fair pay and qualified training opportunities were important issues. For years, our customers have prioritised high quality and information security in relation to EQS products and services. Issues such as compliance with and respect for human rights as well as environmental and climate protection are becoming more important for all stakeholders due to increasing regulatory requirements. This can also be seen in the increased number of questionnaires, in which customers and investors enquire about our engagement in these areas. Our influence in connection with biodiversity is increasingly requested. However, as a non-manufacturing company, this issue does not affect us directly.

GRI 3-1
GRI 3-2

■ Environmental protection, S.86

In the reporting year, we asked our employees for their opinion on sustainability issues in EQS for the second time in a row, using an independent survey. The feedback was positive overall; the opportunity to volunteer during working hours and the option of working from home are, above all, highly valued by our employees. Colleagues called for improvements in the topics of business travel and internal communication. We have taken the information on board and are in the process of developing specific measures.

■ Work environment, page 75

Stakeholder communication

Communication and exchange with our stakeholders is very individual. With regard to external stakeholders, we use trade fairs, conferences, presentations and business contacts, for example. Digital channels and formats are becoming increasingly important.

GRI 2-29

EQS Group has been participating in the Sustainability Transformation Monitor (STM) since 2022. This joint project ran by Stiftung Mercator, the University of Hamburg, the Peer School for Sustainable Development and the Bertelsmann Stiftung researches the sustainability transformation of the economy. Regularly, trends and developments in this field are identified based on surveys of sustainability officers from both the real economy and financial markets.

➞ Sustainability Transformation Monitor (German)

Internally, EQS has different formats for communicating with our employees. Twice a year, so-called Global Performance Summits are held online. In these, senior executives of the international branches, the central functions of the Group as well as the Executive Board discuss current issues, set goals and proactively shape business and product development.

We then presented the results in BarCamps, company-wide hybrid gatherings, to involve all employees and get their feedback on these issues. An annual survey and regular staff discussions enable us to receive employee feedback. In addition, the Executive Board and Management can be contacted at any time by all employees via the internal communication channels.

■ Work environment, page 75

In 2023, our Annual General Meeting took place for the fourth time as a fully online Annual General Meeting. The new framework conditions of the German Stock Corporation Act, which replaced the exceptions made during the Covid-19 period, applied for the first time. Participants were able to exercise all their rights online as usual, and ask questions directly to the Executive Board during the general discussion.

➞ Annual General Meeting 2023



EQS has organised Europe's largest virtual conference on compliance and ethics issues every autumn since 2020 – at the European Compliance and Ethics Conference (ECEC). In 2023 for the first time, over 6,000 participants joined live for the presentations, panel discussions,

GRI 2-29

workshops and expert talks by specialists from business, science and politics. The programme was streamed in around 150 countries. The event focused on the question: “The future started yesterday – what’s happening tomorrow?”. More than 50 compliance experts discussed the future of compliance in a challenging environment with global crises and new technology. All ECEC presentations since 2020 are available online on the conference website.

🔗 [ECEC presentations 2023](#)

During the conference, the ECEC Award was presented once again. A jury of compliance, ethics and integrity experts selected three projects from the 25 applications received. The Dutch bank ABN Amro narrowly beat Iberdrola and Vodafone in the live voting of all participants with its “Dilemma on X-Day” project, which involves employees making decisions in an interactive way.

🔗 [ECEC Award 2023](#)



One further item on the programme at this year’s ECEC was the publication of the results of a study initiated by EQS and conducted in cooperation with Ansbach University of Applied Sciences, which deals with the implementation of the German Supply Chain Due Diligence Act (LkSG) in German companies. It is the most comprehensive study published on this topic to date. Those surveyed included representatives of 500 companies selected on a representative basis according to sector, number of employees and turnover, and they were asked about their experiences with the implementation of the LkSG.

GRI 2-29

🔗 [Study on the implementation of the Supply Chain Due Diligence Act \(LkSG\)](#)

The implementation of the LkSG was also a topic of a survey that EQS carried out at the beginning of 2023 among companies headquartered in Germany with 1,000 or more employees. In total, 185 companies took part. The participants are primarily active in the fields of compliance, law, purchasing, risk management, sustainability and management.

GRI 2-29

🔗 [LkSG Survey \(German\)](#)

At the EQS Experience Day 2023, compliance experts examined in interactive events, what a value-creating compliance strategy with future potential could look like under the motto of “How innovative is our compliance?”. The focus was on the personal exchange of experiences with compliance officers from Germany, Austria and Switzerland.

Other EQS activities in this area include the European Whistleblowing Report, which we have published in cooperation with the University of Applied Sciences of the Grisons (Switzerland) every two to three years since 2018. This analyses current compliance issues and highlights the effects of irregularities as well as measures and instruments for their prevention and detection. The last Whistleblowing Report was published in 2021, the next is planned for 2024.

➞ Whistleblowing Report 2021

In 2023, a survey on the status quo of whistleblowing legislation in European companies was also carried out with around 1,000 compliance officers. The aim was to develop an understanding of how companies are dealing with the new legal requirements for the protection of whistleblowers and how well they are prepared for future compliance challenges. Specifically, we asked in the survey what type of systems are used, how many reports are received each year and what the biggest challenges in this area are, according to the compliance experts surveyed.

➞ Whistleblowing Survey 2023

Another EQS survey entitled “Compliance & AI. What influence does AI technology have on compliance?” dealt with the topic of artificial intelligence (AI). A total of 217 compliance officers from Germany, Austria and Switzerland shared their thoughts on the legal and ethical issues associated with the introduction of AI technology, which AI models and services are already being used in their companies. They were also asked whether the development of their own AI models or AI-supported products is planned. We published the results of the survey and shared them with the compliance community in various webinars and presentations.

➞ Survey: Compliance and AI – What influence does AI technology have on compliance?

We introduced new trends and developments in the IR sector in cooperation with our partner law firm, Orrick, Herrington & Sutcliffe LLP, at the EQS Roadshow 2023. In addition to current developments in the capital market law and a review of the virtual annual general meeting season, the Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive (CSRD) was also discussed and what needs to be considered in the future when tagging sustainability reports.

➞ EQS-Roadshow 2023 (German)

As part of our investor relations product portfolio, we prepare an annual analysis of ad hoc reports in the German Prime Standard, which were distributed with the keywords “forecast change” or “profit warning”. Our current analysis was published at the beginning of 2024.

GRI 2-29

↪ Ad hoc reports in the German Prime Standard Analysis (German)

Since 2017, a representative of the Group has been a member of the DIN standards committee NA 175-00-01 AA, which advises on the compliance standards of the ISO 37000 series, among other things. This committee is made up of members from the business and science worlds, among others, who meet several times a year at regular intervals. Once a year, delegates from this committee take part in a global meeting for international coordination.

Our applications support several thousand European companies in fulfilling complex regulatory requirements. For this reason, it is important to us to incorporate our practical experience into the political decision-making process. It was therefore a logical step for us to be entered in the German Bundestag’s lobby register in 2023. Otherwise, we are neither politically active nor do we donate to political parties

GRI 415-1

↪ EQS Group in the German Bundestag’s lobby register (German)

Overview of our most important memberships (GRI 2-28)

Name	Website	Entity	Member since
Asociación Española de Compliance	https://www.asociacioncompliance.com/	EQS Group RegTech S.L.U.	2021
Associazione Nazionale dei Risk Manager e Responsabili Assicurazioni Aziendali	https://www.anra.it/	EQS Group S.R.L.	2022
Berufsverband der Compliance Manager e.V.	https://www.bvdcm.de/	EQS Group AG	2018
Cercle Investor Relations Austria	https://cira.at/	EQS Group GmbH	2011
Deutsches Institut für Compliance e.V.	https://www.dico-ev.de/	EQS Group AG	2012
Deutsches Institut für Interne Revision e.V.	https://www.diir.de/	EQS Group AG	2012
Deutsches Netzwerk Wirtschaftsethik – EBEN Deutschland e.V.	https://www.dnwe.de/	EQS Group AG	2000
Ethics & Compliance Switzerland	https://www.ethics-compliance.ch/	EQS Group AG (CH)	2015
Gesellschaft für Datenschutz und Datensicherheit e.V.	https://www.gdd.de/	EQS Group AG	2010
Associazione Italiana Internal Auditors (Internal Audit Association)	https://www.aiiaweb.it/	EQS Group S.R.L.	2019
Investor-Relations-Verband	https://www.dirk.org/	EQS Group AG	2006
Le Cercle de la Compliance	https://www.lecercledelacompliance.com/	EQS Group SAS	2018
Sicherheitsnetzwerk München e.V.	https://it-security-munich.net/	EQS Group AG	2020
Transparency International Deutschland e.V.	https://www.transparency.de/	EQS Group AG	2002
Transparency Schweiz	https://transparency.ch/	EQS Group AG (CH)	2021
UN Global Compact Netzwerk Deutschland e.V.	https://www.globalcompact.de/	EQS Group AG	2023
World Compliance Association	https://worldcomplianceassociation.com/	EQS Group RegTech S.L.U.	2021
Verein Investora	https://www.investora.ch/	EQS Group AG (CH)	2013

At many of our locations, we are also represented in the local chambers of foreign trade and compliance organisations.

GRI 2-28

➔ Overview of our memberships

Rating agencies

EQS Group AG took part in the EcoVadis rating for the first time in the reporting year and received a silver medal for its sustainability activities. Out of a possible 100 points, we received 69, which means the EQS Group is among the top two per cent of companies in the sector evaluated.

For the third time in a row, the Ethifinance rating was also carried out. This rating is based on data from 2022 and rates the level of transparency and the performance of companies in relation to ESG criteria. The EGS Group received a rating of 55/100 points. This result exceeds the benchmark value and shows an improvement over the previous year in all categories.

➔ EQS rating results



Material topics

For us, sustainability is above all about the interaction between our business activities and current social, economic and political developments, but also responsibility for the climate, the environment and nature. After an initial desktop analysis in 2021, we reassessed and reclassified our material topics internally and externally in a complex, multi-stage process in 2022. In the reporting year, a critical review did not reveal any need for change.

GRI 2-4
GRI 3-1

Materiality process (GRI 3-1)



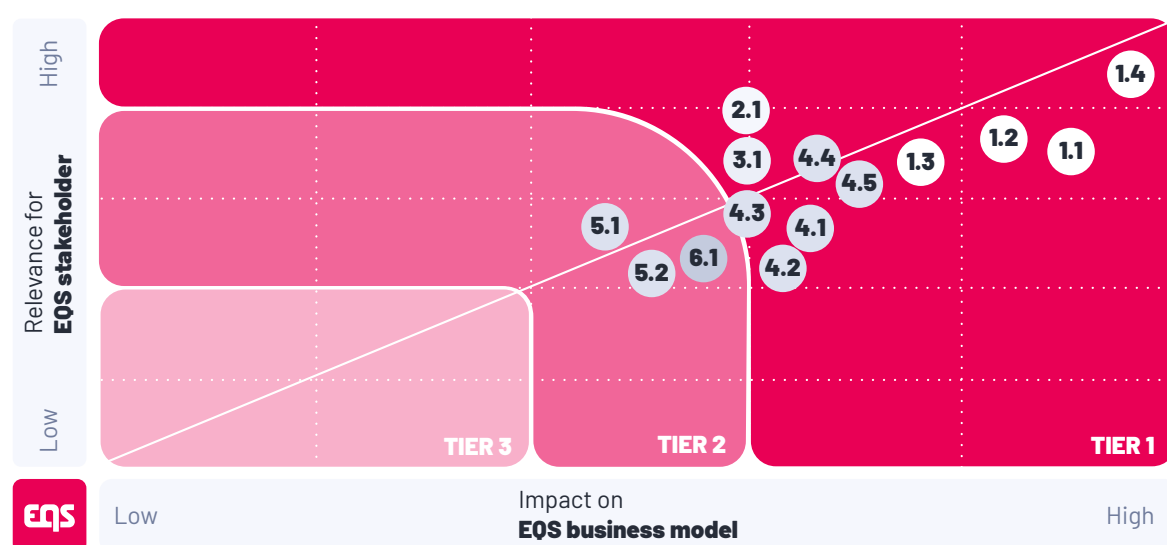
It was important for us to make initial preparations at an early stage, particularly with regard to the European Sustainability Reporting Standards (ESRS), the EU taxonomy, IFRS S1 and S2 and other external requirements. The analyses and discussions with specialist representatives and the Executive Board also had a very positive side effect: it further improved the awareness and understanding of colleagues with respect to sustainability. The information collected is available to all employees as an overview on the intranet.

To compare our material topics with the expectations of our stakeholders, we created a questionnaire in 2022 and sent it to representatives of the most relevant groups defined previously. For each material topic, internal and external EQS stakeholders had to assign points on a scale of 1 to 5 in order to map the importance of the respective issue in a materiality matrix. The importance of the topic for the stakeholders was assessed as well as the assumed impact on the EQS business model.

GRI 3-1

The new materiality matrix developed on this basis was finally discussed, slightly adjusted and approved by the Executive Board. Since then, it has also served as the basis for determining the areas of action and the structure of our sustainability report.

EQS Materiality Matrix (GRI 3-2)



○ Ethics and integrity	1.1 Ethical business conduct	page 41	
	1.2 Combating corruption and bribery	page 44	
	1.3 Observance of and respect for human rights	page 45	
	1.4 Data protection and information security	page 46	
● Customer satisfaction and service	2.1 Customer loyalty	page 58	SDG 12
● Innovation and product quality	3.1 Innovation and product quality	page 61	SDG 8
● Culture and People	4.1 Fair remuneration	page 80	
	4.2 Training and development	page 79	
	4.3 Diversity and individuality	page 83	
	4.4 Employee satisfaction	page 76	
	4.5 Health and well-being	page 77	
● Environmental	5.1 Climate change and air quality	page 89	SDG 13
	5.2 Use of resources	page 93	SDG 12
● Supply chain	6.1 Supply chain	page 96	

The material topics identified in 2022 form the blueprint for our further development in the area of sustainability. We review these regularly with regard to changing internal and external requirements and update, amend and expand them where necessary. This provides us with a good basis for making decisions on sustainability issues and necessary further measures.

GRI 3-1

In general, we see dealing with the material topics as an ongoing process that helps us to act more consciously and responsibly. We also want to align our areas of action and issues with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the requirements of the EU and the UN Global Compact in the future. For this, we will continue to regularly analyse where the EQS Group's business activities can strengthen positive effects and how negative effects can be minimised. In this context, we are also planning to continually develop and intensify the communication and involvement of stakeholders.

GRI 3-3

We describe the potential and actual impacts of our business activities, and relationships on society and the environment in the introductions to the respective material topics. This also provides us with a sound basis for making decisions on sustainability issues and necessary further measures.

Risk management

UNGC 1, 7

Our risk policy is an integral part of our corporate policy. Our goal of continuously increasing the value of the company while maintaining appropriate returns over the long term is directly linked to potential risks. Even when it comes to utilising new opportunities, a certain willingness to take risks is required. However, we deal with these risks responsibly, we conduct systematic risk management to identify and assess risks at an early stage, and develop and use measures to reduce risks. These are the tasks of the Executive Board as well as management in all business areas.

GRI 2-23

The overall risk for EQS Group AG is assessed on the basis of the company-wide risk management system. By combining the planning, management and control systems used and quantifying the risk in the form of allocated risk capital and analysing risk correlations, a realistic statement can be made at the present time about EQS Group AG's overall risk situation and its development.

We provide information on specific risks relating to the development of our company in chapter „Risk Report“ in the Annual Report.

➞ Risk report, Annual report 2023, page 33

Sustainability issues are part of our risk assessment. In the reporting year, we have included ESG as a category in the company-wide risks. We introduced the module Third Parties in 2023 to analyse risks in connection with the supply chain.

In 2023, we commissioned an external climate risk analysis of our locations for the first time in order to have the associated climate risks assessed. The intention is to integrate this information into the EQS-wide risk analysis in 2024.

GRI 2-5

■ Climate risk analysis, page 87

■ Supply chain, page 96

In 2023, there were a number of serious events that also had an impact on the business activities of EQS Group AG. As a result of the European Central Bank's expansionary monetary policy, Europe is subject to high inflation. In addition, the COVID-19 crisis and the Russian war against Ukraine have disrupted global supply chains and caused shortages in the supply of raw materials.

A consistently high level of risk is evident in the period under review with regard to the continuing demand for skilled labour. In the area of digital and cybersecurity risks, the risk level remains extremely high with a very high probability of occurrence. As a technology company, the EQS Group places great importance on the protection of customer data. IT infrastructure security, hardening, high availability and resistance to attacks are of paramount importance to us. Through continuous investment in an information security programme and various security controls, their ongoing evaluation of the effectiveness and comprehensive expansion of the global information security team, the EQS Group continuously strengthens the security situation with regard to internal and external threats. To achieve this, EQS Group is comprehensively expanding its global information security team. Through its global cyber insurance policies with industry-leading providers, EQS Group is extensively protected against damage from internal or external cyber incidents. Nevertheless, the risk for data security and property rights is very high as the number of attacks on IT infrastructures has risen sharply in the past. To further improve the security situation, EQS Group is constantly working on expanding its information security programme, the controls and their review with the help of external auditors. Regular internal trainings are also designed to raise awareness among all employees about information security and the risk of external attacks.

■ Data protection and information security, page 46

➔ Risk report, Annual report 2023, page 33

With regard to environmental protection, our business activities have a less serious impact than a manufacturing company, for example. Nevertheless, we are aware of our responsibility and are increasingly focusing on climate-related risks associated with our activities.

Climate change also provides opportunities in our business sector as our digital products, such as video and audio webcasts or virtual annual general meetings, reduce travel both for our customers and their stakeholders and therefore make an important contribution to the transformation towards a carbon neutral economy.

GRI 201-2

📖 Climate change and air quality, page 89

We divide the opportunities arising from our business strategy into three categories:

🔴 Opportunities from the development of framework conditions

🔴 Corporate strategy opportunities

🔴 Performance-related opportunities

In legal framework conditions, the expansion of reporting and compliance obligations (i.e. EU Whistleblower Directive, Supply Chain Due Diligence Act, Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive (CSRD)) has led to additional business opportunities for EQS Group. This is because, in addition to organisations and public bodies, some of the regulations already apply to companies with 50 or more employees. As a result, the potential customer base has also increased significantly. The EQS Group's product portfolio is being continuously expanded as part of these European regulatory initiatives.

📖 Customers and products, page 57

🔗 Opportunity report, Annual Report, page 39

Through the integration of the Integrity Line and the expansion of the EQS Compliance COCKPIT to include additional modules (Approvals, Policies, etc.) a complete compliance management system will be available to the majority of existing and future whistleblower customers in the future. This goes hand in hand with the opportunity of significantly higher average sales per customer. This means that significant increases in turnover are possible in the coming years.

In the case of EQS IR COCKPIT, the reduction of historic discounts for existing customers in particular offers additional sales potential compared to the list price. An increase in recurring revenue is also expected in this context in 2024, which will continue in subsequent years.

GRI 2-6

Performance-related opportunities are closely linked to the company's business activities. These include efficiency improvements as well as value enhancement potential, although the monetary effect is not directly quantifiable. These opportunities also include the introduction of purchasing software to optimise processes. By bundling order, for example,

better purchasing conditions have already been achieved. Likewise, the introduced controlling software is used to evaluate all available data on business development. It enables detailed analyses and therefore supports corporate management and decision-making.

■ Supply chain, page 96

🔗 Opportunity report, Annual Report 2023, page 39

Sustainability strategy and goals

EQS Group belongs to the first generation of internet companies. Two characteristics that have continued to distinguish us ever since our founding are agility and sustainability. For us, agility means constantly evolving, anticipating market trends as best we can and reacting quickly to changing customer requirements. If necessary, this goes as far as completely realigning our business model (pivot).

GRI 2-25

For us, **sustainability** means successful management in the long term that pays into our business purpose and is based on our corporate values. This means taking responsibility as a company and as part of society and the environment.

We see ourselves as a value-orientated company that, since its establishment in 2000 has been based on a **healthy corporate culture** that we see as the fundamental basis for our own actions. At the heart of this are our ten Work Principles and our five EQS Core Values: trust, transparency, team spirit, ownership and passion.

GRI 2-23

■ EQS Core Values (GRI 2-23), page 38

As our business purpose “Integrity and transparency create trust” and our corporate culture are in line with the UN Sustainable Development Goals, we do not need to bend when we choose an **ambitious, sustainable path**. On the contrary, in the coming years, we want to continue on our chosen path with great conviction and take our stakeholders with us on this journey.

For our **sustainability strategy**, this means in particular that we closely monitor current internal and external developments and constantly review or adjust our short- and long-term goals, while continuously updating our measures. The ESG breakdown (environment, social, governance) provides our framework for this. In the following, we would like to show which EQS values we use as a basis, what impact our business activities have and which goals and measures we have set ourselves.



Responsible corporate management (Governance):

EQS values that shape this area are: Integrity, transparency and trust. An integral and open corporate culture creates trust among all stakeholders and is the basis for sustainable business.

GRI 2-23

Impact of our business activities:

Governance is our DNA. As one of the pioneers for digital investor relations in Europe, we help several thousand companies to comply with laws and regulations safely and efficiently. In addition, we support our customers with communication, so that they can inform all their stakeholders simultaneously and comprehensively about everything important in the company.

Our clients place a great deal of trust in us because we process and publish highly sensitive information (insiders, whistleblowing). It is therefore crucial to our success that we pay the utmost attention to data protection and information security.

Focal points and goals:

GRI 2-25

- 1.** Dealing with data protection and information security forms the basis of our customers' trust. That is why we want to continue to set ourselves high standards and exceed them in the future. We are already the provider with the most as well as most extensive certifications in Europe with regard to data protection and information security for whistleblowing systems. We will continue to increase investments in security solutions and training disproportionately compared to other expenditure items.
- 2.** We have high standards of ethics and integrity within EQS and in collaboration with our business partners. Clear rules against corruption and bribery apply, which we have laid down in our Codes of Conduct. We provide those affected with the opportunity to report violations (including discrimination, sexual harassment, etc.) anonymously and without risk of retaliation using our internal whistleblowing channel.
- 3.** To fulfil the requirements of the Corporate Governance Code, we will introduce a long-term component for the remuneration of the Executive Board. The goal is to also tie this to relevant ESG criteria. In this way, we also want to show the outside world that sustainability is firmly anchored in the company's development and is a high priority.



GRI 2-19



Employment and social responsibility (Social):

EQS values that shape this area are: Trust, transparency and team spirit. They support the transition to a fairer working world that prioritises trust, openness and cooperation.

GRI 2-23

Impact of our business activities:

As Europe's leading provider of whistleblowing systems, our solutions support the European Commission as well as countries, cities and municipalities, organisations and associations, international corporations and many small companies in strengthening transparency and fairness in the corporate world. Our clients empower those affected to bring abuses to light and fight misconduct. This includes sexual harassment at the workplace, bullying and discrimination of any kind. Equal treatment of all employees regardless of gender, age and sexual orientation is only possible in an environment where malpractice can be addressed and pursued without fear.

Across the globe, thousands of companies use our other products in the fields of investor relations, compliance and ESG to create trust by reliably and securely fulfilling complex regulatory requirements, minimising risks and reporting transparently on their business activities and their impact on society and the environment.

GRI 2-6

Focal points and goals:

GRI 2-25

- 1.** Diversity also plays a key role at EQS. We have employees from 54 countries, which means we benefit greatly from different perspectives and approaches. We can still improve significantly in other aspects of diversity and inclusion. Above all, this includes increasing the proportion of women at all levels of the company. Our goal is therefore a female quota of 50 per cent, with equal pay, of course. We must achieve this goal in the coming years, even though we are aware that this is a great challenge, especially in the IT sector. We have the greatest leverage with promotions and when filling our vacancies. In this regard, we ensure a balanced number of applicants by gender.
- 2.** We want to offer all employees an attractive working environment, including a good work-life balance, and specifically promote women. In this context, we plan to support women at our locations through various models such as mentoring, internal networking or special development plans.
- 3.** But we also want to get involved outside of EQS. At our Indian location, for example, women are supported financially with scholarships for training in IT professions. We also want to increasingly support NGOs and non-profit organisations with heavily discounted EQS products and corporate volunteering



Environmental protection, resource conservation (Environmental):

The EQS value that shapes this area is: Ownership – We think like owners and act sustainably towards our planet and society.

GRI 2-23

Impact of our business activities:

Our digital products, such as video and audio webcasts, reduce our customers' travel and help contribute to reducing CO₂ emissions. With our financial reporting products, such as online annual reports and digital submission of annual financial statements, we help to significantly minimise our customers' consumption of paper.

GRI 2-6

However, we also produce emissions in the process, which is why we have set ourselves the goal of becoming carbon neutral in our operational emissions. Within EQS, we want to increase all employees' awareness of resource-saving behaviour in everyday working life and therefore also make a contribution to environmental protection through small individual and also EQS-wide measures.

EQS supports environmental projects, particularly in the areas of the protection of species and disaster prevention, both financially and through corporate volunteering by our employees. All employees receive an annual time allocation of one working day for this purpose.

■ Social engagement, page 84

Focal points and goals:



























GRI 2-25

- 1.** We are working towards climate neutral operations by 2025. IT hosting plays a crucial role in this. We are in close dialogue with our data centre service providers (e.g., Amazon, Microsoft, Telekom) to switch to 100 per cent green electricity, if this has not already happened. Some partners have submitted their implementation plans to us, others have yet to do so.
- 2.** We acknowledge the environmental impact of our company travel and we continuously work to minimize it. We want to continue this. There are no company cars at EQS, we avoid domestic flights within Europe and offset international flights. We raise our employees' awareness of the issue of environmental protection with training courses and programmes, such as job bikes.
- 3.** Another major leverage for reducing CO₂ emissions are our office buildings and their technical infrastructure. Wherever possible, we have already switched to renewable energy sources in Germany where we procure our own electricity. We are currently discussing possible adjustments with all other landlords and property managers. We are also considering alternatives here if we do not see consistent progress. When renting new offices, we pay attention to the climate neutrality of the buildings and sustainability in daily operations.

Our sustainability goals (GRI 2-25)

Target	Measures	Status
General		
We link management remuneration to ESG criteria.	Introduction of a long-term component in Executive Board remuneration	
We conduct sustainability ratings.	Conducting an external rating	
We will boost stakeholder involvement.	Expanding our targeted dialogues with investors, customers and service providers	
Ethics and integrity		
We are always up to date on compliance and integrity issues and incorporate legal framework conditions into our internal regulations in a timely manner.	Training of all employees on the topics of compliance and Code of Conduct	
	Introduction of risk management for human rights	
Customers and product responsibility		
We maintain our Net Promoter Score at a consistently high level.	Improving service quality through process optimisation and automation	
Our products comply with the current legal framework.	Ongoing implementation and review of legal and regulatory developments	
We consistently increase product quality and create long-term added value for our customers.	Expansion of quality assurance measures	
Product safety is our highest priority.	Ensuring product safety through external certifications	
	Carrying out external penetration tests	
	Expansion of the range of training courses on the topics of data protection and information security	
Corporate culture and employees		
We want to establish equal pay at all levels.	Analysis of the current situation by an external consultant	
We are significantly increasing the proportion of women.	Increase the proportion of women on the Supervisory Board to 40 per cent in 2022 and increase the proportion of women on the Executive Board to 20 per cent by 2023 at the latest	
	Ensure a balanced number of female and male applicants	
	Support women at our locations through various models such as mentoring, internal networking or dedicated development plans	
We are expanding our engagement in corporate volunteering.	Carry out at least one action per site with more than 10 employees, and at least 3 actions for sites with more than 50 employees	

fulfilled = in progress = in preparation = new = recurring =

Target	Measures	Status
Environment		 
We are anchoring the topic of resource conservation even more firmly in our corporate culture.	Conducting a risk analysis on the impact of climate change on EQS Group and our business model	
	Training all employees on the topics of environmental protection and resource conservation	 
We want to keep our CO ₂ footprint as small as possible. By 2025, we want to be climate-neutral in our operational emissions by reduction, and by climate contributions if necessary.	Analysis of the environmental impact of the data centres used by EQS	
	Revision of the calculation methodology of the corporate carbon footprint	
	Climate-neutral business travel by 2023 through reduction, digital solutions or compensation	 
	No company cars	 
	No domestic flights in Europe	 
	Analysis and adaptation of existing agreements at our locations	
	Use of 50 percent renewable electricity at EQS sites	
	When renting new offices, we pay attention to the climate neutrality of the buildings and sustainability in our day-to-day operations	
Supply chain		
We are expanding our supplier management processes.	Review of all new relevant suppliers in Germany in relation to sustainability criteria	 
	Introduction of human rights risk management for suppliers and business partners	
	Training our business partners in combating corruption	
fulfilled =  in progress =  in preparation =  new =  recurring = 		



Ethics and integrity

Integrity and transparency form the basis of our business activities. For us, these include compliance with applicable laws, regulations and external standards as well as internal company policies, but also data security and respect for human rights.

Values and principles

GRI 2-24
GRI 2-27

We respect and strive to comply with the values and provisions of the following guiding principles:

- Principles of the UN Global Compact
- Core labour standards of the International Labour Organization (ILO)
- UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR)
- OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises
- German Corporate Governance Code
- UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)
- Rio Declaration on Environment and Development
- United Nations Convention against Corruption
- EU Whistleblower Directive

These values are also reflected in our Codes of Conduct and the EQS Values and Principles. They form the basis of our work and determine our daily behaviour and our dealings with one another.

GRI 2-23

EQS Core Values (GRI 2-23)

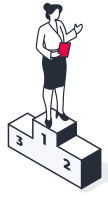


Conveying the EQS values and the ten EQS Work Principles is also an essential part of the mandatory training for new employees and, among others, the content of regularly held BarCamps. Animations on the EQS website, LinkedIn and Instagram also inform EQS employees, customers, partners and other external parties about business ethics issues

📖 Work environment, page 75

🔗 EQS Work Principles

EQS Work Principles (GRI 2-23)



Put the client first



Be ambitious
and humble



Challenge decisions,
but once they're made,
commit wholly to them



Have integrity and
demand it from others



Confront brutal facts,
yet never lose faith



Take responsibility
for poor results
("look in the mirror")



Give praise for
good results
("look out of the window")



Make mistakes, but
learn from them
("fail well")



Support and develop
your team members



Lead by example

Our corporate values are described in detail in the two Codes of Conduct: the EQS Group Code of Conduct and the Business Partner Code of Conduct.

GRI 2-23

➔ EQS Group Code of Conduct

➔ EQS Business Partner Code of Conduct

The EQS Group Code of Conduct sets out in detail what we expect from our employees: honest, transparent and trusting dealings with each other as well as with customers, competitors and suppliers. Making the right decision in day-to-day business can be difficult when different points of view clash. On one hand, a variety of experiences and opinions is a huge advantage for a company. On the other hand, it can also lead to contradicting interpretations and decisions. The EQS Group Code of Conduct is therefore intended to support employees in acting with integrity and transparency in every situation.

Our Business Partner Code of Conduct is part of the agreements between EQS Group and our business partners. In this, we describe, among other things, standards regarding human rights and the environment, which we are actively committed to upholding. All relevant trade-related laws (e.g. trade compliance), all essential import and export laws as well as laws and regulations relating to secondary boycotts are also included in the Business Partner Code of Conduct.

GRI 2-24

■ Supply chain, page 96

Both Codes of Conduct are reviewed at least once per year and adapted to changes in the law or other developments. A particular focus in the reporting year was on the issues of conflicts of interest and dealing with gifts and invitations. To this end, the Code of Conduct was revised and the "Gifts, Hospitality & Entertainment" and "Conflict of Interest" policies

were introduced. Practical implementation is supported by the module Approvals which has also been in use internally since the reporting year. It enables the reporting of conflicts of interest and the documentation and acquisition of authorisations for gifts and invitations such as business meals, concerts or sporting events.

The prohibition of insider trading and confidentiality regulations are also part of employment contracts.

Our policies are written in the corporate language English and available for employees on the intranet as well as on the module Policies, our application for the centralised management of policies. The Codes of Conduct are also included on the EQS and Ethics Line websites and can also be accessed by external users there. New employees are made aware of the policies as part of their induction and are bound by them. Onboarding sessions are also organised regularly, in which new employees are informed about the content of the policies and can ask questions about these.

GRI 2-23

■ Onboarding Sessions, page 82

Compliance Organisation

The EQS Compliance Steering Committee was renamed in the reporting year to Governance, Risk and Compliance (GRC) Committee. It is mandated by the Executive Board and chaired by the Chief Legal Officer. Other members are the Chief Financial Officer, the Chief Revenue Officer, the Chief Operating Officer and the Head of Culture & People. The committee is entrusted with the following tasks:

GRI 2-12
GRI 2-13

- Evaluation and approval of the EQS policies
- Determination and provision of resources to operate, monitor and improve the EQS Ethics Line, EQS' whistleblowing system
- Maintenance and continuous improvement of the EQS compliance management system
- Promotion of measures and activities for the continuous improvement of internal compliance
- Provision of a forum for the definition and implementation of all compliance-related issues
- Maintaining trusting relationships with the Executive Board, managing directors of the international EQS locations and department heads
- Receipt and further processing of reports relating to their area of responsibility and received via our whistleblowing system EQS Ethics Line

■ Management and coordination of the EQS Group's risk management system

■ Regular (re-)evaluation of the EQS Group's compliance principles

The GRC Committee meets at least once per quarter. The topics of the meetings include risk assessment, the definition of measures and their implementation review.

GRI 2-13

As part of our compliance and risk management, the Chief Compliance Officer is responsible for the planning, management and control of compliance-related measures, and for adhering to and updating the relevant principles as well as coordinating risk management. The head of the legal department currently carries out these tasks.

GRI 2-16

CEO Achim Weick explained the importance of the EQS values and principles for our mission "creating trusted companies" and for the corporate strategy in general in detail to all employees at a BarCamp in August 2023. Following the second Global Performance Summit in September, all employees were also informed about the values and corporate strategy in a hybrid BarCamp. In December 2023, all EQS employees were trained on the Code of Conduct at another BarCamp

■ BarCamps, page 76

Employees who have questions about the Codes of Conduct and all integrity issues can get in touch with various contacts whose contact details are listed on the intranet. In addition to the Chief Compliance Officer, these are colleagues primarily from the legal department.

Ethical business conduct

UNGC 10

EQS Group sees itself in a pioneering role when it comes to ethical and legally compliant business conduct, since it is a provider of products and services to effectively combat corruption and bribery and to fulfil regulatory reporting requirements.

GRI 2-27
GRI 205

Processes and implementation

We expressly reject anti-competitive practices and also require our business partners and suppliers to comply with applicable antitrust and competition laws and to respect intellectual property. Violations may, at the sole discretion of EQS Group, result in the immediate termination of the business relationship.

GRI 206

Our policies on corruption and bribery are part of the EQS Group Code of Conduct. Among other things, it explains which activities can cause a conflict of interest and the correct way to deal with these. If employees have any questions, they can always contact their manager as well as the legal department and its head in his function as Chief Compliance Officer.

GRI 205-2

Improper payments, such as bribes, are unacceptable in the context of our business activities. This also includes gifts, favours and hospitality if these are intended to compel the customer to make a certain decision. Business partners and suppliers of EQS Group are also not permitted to accept bribes in the course of business activities or to authorise third parties to do so on their behalf.

GRI 2-27

■ Policies, page 39

Breaches of accounting, accounting controls and auditing matters are investigated by the Supervisory Board; the investigation of all other breaches is overseen by the Head of Legal. The legal department also monitors compliance with all policies and laws relating to business agreements. Depending on the size, it is involved when contracts are concluded or when business-relevant contracts deviate from the general EQS standards.

GRI 2-16
GRI 2-27

Any report of a violation of applicable laws, our Codes of Conduct or other company policies by an employee is comprehensively reviewed by the GRC Committee. Further measures follow based on the results of the investigation. A violation may lead to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal. Violations of civil or criminal law will also be prosecuted.

The Compliance Management System (CMS) is a central element of the company. The CMS transparently bundles all policies and internal specifications. It encompasses tools and processes that ensure compliance with all relevant legal and regulatory requirements as well as internal policies. It is intended to provide employees and the company with a reliable basis for decision-making and at the same time contribute to maintaining integrity both internally and externally.

GRI 2-13

Risk management is an elementary component of the CMS. Corporate risks are continuously analysed and evaluated in order to be able to take measures to avert danger at an early stage.

The effectiveness of the CMS is regularly reviewed to identify potential for improvement. The aim is to optimize and further digitalize business processes. For this, we also use all functionalities of the EQS Compliance COCKPIT.

The experience and knowledge gained within EQS Group were also taken into account during the further development of the system in the reporting year. This led to the improvement of existing functions and new elements were added.

EQS Ethics Line

With the EQS Ethics Line, we operate an online whistleblowing system, which both our employees and all external parties, such as suppliers, customers and other third parties, can use to report violations of ethical principles and business practices around the clock, also in anonymous manner if they so wish. The languages available are German and English.
[EQS Ethics Line](#)

GRI 2-25
GRI 2-26

The reports are divided into the following categories:

- Bribery, corruption, kickbacks
- Problems relating to data protection and information security
- Bank and financial manipulation, including insider trading
- Violation of social standards and human rights
- Environmental protection or violations of environmental protection regulations
- Human resources
- Other

The report will be received by the person in charge for the respective area of responsibility and the Chief Compliance Officer. Based on the legal framework and the Codes of Conduct, they examine each case and initiate further measures if necessary.

GRI 2-16

After the GRC Committee's quarterly meetings, the Supervisory Board is informed by the Chief Legal Officer of whistleblowing reports received. In serious cases, this is done immediately.

GRI 2-12
GRI 2-16

The exact procedure for making a report and examples of reportable acts are described on the EQS Ethics Line website, which is accessible to all employees on the intranet. Further information can also be found here, for example on the confidential treatment of reports, the non-retaliation policy and on possible sanctions. There is also an explanatory video on the intranet that explains the whistleblowing system procedure.

GRI 2-26

[EQS Ethics Line Data Privacy Notice](#)
[EQS Whistleblowing Policy](#)

The web address of the whistleblowing system and other options for reporting a violation are listed in the EQS Group Code of Conduct and in the Business Partner Code of Conduct. In addition, all interested parties can access the whistleblowing system via a link in the footer of our company website and the Integrity Line product website. In the reporting year, two relevant reports were received via the EQS Ethics Line and were handled according to the regulations.

GRI 205-3

There are no known EQS Group AG violations of laws or regulations for 2023 or the previous year. No fines or non-monetary sanctions were imposed.

Training courses compliance, data protection and codes of conduct are held regularly for employees.

GRI 205-2

- Observance of and respect for human rights, page 45
- Data protection and information security, page 46
- Sustainability strategy and goals, page 31

Fighting corruption

UNGC 10

In the reporting year, corruption risks for EQS Group AG including all operating sites were examined as part of the annual risk assessment. No significant risks were identified.

GRI 205-1

In mid-2023, the sanctions list review was optimised and complemented by the automatic screening tool from Dow Jones. This accesses an international database with comprehensive personal and company profiles to support compliance with anti-money laundering (AML) regulations and sanctions control. This database is used to simplify the risk assessment process within our customer base. Relevant background information is made quickly and easily accessible, such as screening for potential sanctions. Since the tool was introduced, all customers have been synchronised with our Customer Relationship Manager tool via an API integration. If a risk is identified, the legal department is automatically informed. The legal department then carries out a manual review and authorisation procedure.

All new employees receive training as part of the onboarding sessions, in which they are made aware of anti-corruption issues, among other things. These onboarding events took place exclusively online in the reporting year, with some of the sessions held live and others were provided as recordings.

GRI 205-2
GRI 404-2

- Onboarding Sessions, page 82

The EQS anti-corruption guidelines are explained in detail in our Code of Conduct and are the subject of regular employee training courses. The most recent BarCamp was held in December 2023.

We bind our suppliers and business partners to the Business Partner Code of Conduct, in which we also explain our anti-corruption guidelines. Training of our business partners on the topics of the Business Partner Code of Conduct is planned.

We do not tolerate corruption or other criminal behaviour. We are not aware of any cases related to corruption for 2023.

GRI 205-3

In the reporting period, there were also no legal proceedings within EQS Group due to anti-competitive behaviour, cartel and monopoly formation.

GRI 206-1
SASB TC-SI-520a.1

Observance of and respect for human rights

UNGC 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6

The commitment to respect human rights and all associated values is an integral part of the EQS corporate policy. As human rights violations at EQS can occur primarily in the supply chain, the issue is becoming increasingly important for us. In our Codes of Conduct, we expressly distance ourselves from exploitative labour practices such as child, forced or compulsory labour. This also includes deception about working conditions, recruitment fees and the withholding or any other form of refusal of passports or other identity documents. We reject these practices without exception and expect our suppliers, consultants and other contractors to have an equally clear stance. This is emphasised by our commitment to the ten principles of the United Nations Global Compact.

GRI 408-1
GRI 409-1

- Support for sustainability initiatives, page 18
- Supply chain, page 96

The issues of forced labour, child labour and restriction of the freedom of association are included in the EQS Ethics Line. Behaviour of employees or business partners that restricts or violates the human rights of the injured parties and/or disregards the Codes of Conduct is considered a violation.

GRI 2-25
GRI 407-1
GRI 408-1
GRI 409-1

- EQS Ethics Line, page 43

There are no special on-site audits on human rights issues, but we are aware of the particular situation at our locations in India and Hong Kong and sensitize our colleagues there accordingly.

In 2023, we analysed the issue further and took all locations into account. Since the reporting year, we have also been using the Third Parties module internally for this purpose. However, the analysis did not reveal any serious risks for EQS Group.

- An overview of our compliance and IR products (GRI 2-6), page 63

We are not aware of any sites or suppliers where there was a risk of child or forced labour during the reporting period. We are aware that, according to international standards, child labour is permitted above a certain age and that there is a different cultural attitude to this issue in countries such as India and China. Nevertheless, we are fundamentally opposed to the employment of children or youths. At our Indian site Kochi, for example, we are working to educate and and raise awareness among our employees and business partners. In this way, we aim to further minimise the risk potential.

GRI 408-1
GRI 409-1
GRI 414-2

The BarCamp on the Code of Conduct training actively addressed the issue of human rights and thus trained especially employees who deal with potentially relevant service providers. Furthermore, all new employees are informed about the human rights topics of our Code of Conduct as part of the induction sessions.

GRI 404-2

Data protection and information security

Data protection and the secure handling of information are the basis of our business activities and an important part of the corporate image at EQS. The high importance of this topic is also emphasised by the Federal Office for Information Security in its current status report („The state of IT security in Germany in 2023”) with the conclusion: “The level of threat in cyberspace is higher than ever before”. The report warns of the significant threat posed by cybercrime, especially though ransomware. This assessment confirms that we must continue our efforts to ensure high security standards.

↪ Federal Office for Information Security

We define information security as the application of proven industry practices – both in terms of processes and technologies. In addition to the three key principles of information security, confidentiality, integrity and availability, we consider data protection to be a fourth principle. To implement them, we have various measures and tools at our disposal, such as certifications, training and business impact analyses. When selecting the tools, we are guided in particular by how effective and sensible the respective measure is.

■ Technical and organisational measures, page 51

We see ourselves as a “good corporate internet citizen”: We act responsibly and thereby protect ourselves and others. We also treat everyone who uses the internet alongside us with respect. In the case of the EQS Group, we understand this to mean protecting our customers’ data and making our efforts transparent.

Responsibilities and policies

The topic of data protection is covered by the legal department. The head of the legal department, who reports to the Executive Board, is responsible for monitoring compliance with and significant changes or amendments to the relevant laws and regulations. In addition, an external data protection officer works for EQS Group.

GRI 2-12
GRI 2-13

The information security department deals with the continuous improvement of information security in the company. It is divided into three areas, “Audits, Certifications and Assurance” (ACA), “Security Architecture” (SecArc) and “Security Operations” (SecOps) and is led by the Chief Information Security Officer (CISO). The latter also reports to the Executive Board. The team’s main tasks include raising employee awareness of information security and data protection, maintaining existing certifications, monitoring and improving product security and the company infrastructure, and following up on information security incidents.



Identified data security risks and vulnerabilities are reviewed and addressed by the Chief Information Security Officer and the Information Security Team. All business partners and suppliers who process personal data are carefully selected by EQS and also regularly reviewed for compliance with all policies relating to information security and data protection.

SASB TC-SI-230a.2

Our Public Vulnerability Disclosure Policy, accessible via the website, describes these processes in detail. The website also lists contact details for reporting potential vulnerabilities directly. The information security department is responsible for compliance with the policy and they work hand in hand with product development to implement the policy.

GRI 2-23
GRI 2-26

🔗 [EQS Public Vulnerability Disclosure Policy](#)

Information about suppliers and customers is processed ethically correct manner. This means that applicable laws as well as rules, regulations and standards for the protection of personal data and cyber security, including the EU General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) are complied with. This also applies to data protection requests under Chapter 3 GDPR, which are processed in accordance with the data subject rights request process.

GRI 2-27

■ Observance of and respect for human rights, page 45

Data that is transferred to us on a confidential basis is subject to the procedures described in the confidentiality agreements. These agreements are concluded within the framework of our labour, supplier or customer contracts.

Information security management system

As is custom in the IT sector, EQS has an information security team. This is led the Chief Information Security Officer (CISO), who reports directly to the Executive Board. The CISO and his team are responsible for ensuring an effective and cost-conscious information security programme. He is also responsible for its correct implementation and for carrying out company certifications and audits.

The company has set up an information security management system (ISMS) to implement the information security programme in order to be able to recognise, monitor and manage risks in information security. The ISMS describes the overarching security principles, binding processes and responsibilities. It is continuously updated and developed.

SASB TC-SI-230a.2

■ Certifications, page 53

Our Information Security Management Policy is supplemented by other internal policies, such as:

GRI 2-23

■ ■ ■ Personal Data Retention Policy and Data Privacy Policy

■ ■ ■ Information Security Policy Manual

Business Partner Code of Conduct in conjunction with the ISMS Supplier Policy

In addition, information security aspects have been incorporated into the procurement process as an independent component.

The Clean Desk and Clear Screen Policy, and policies regarding the correct use of email and the internet – together with modern technical controls on end devices, servers and the network – serve as a basis for security-compliant behaviour in the workplace.

■ Technical and organisational measures, page 51

To meet our information security requirements, we have set ourselves the following goals:

GRI 2-25

1. We have a “security by design” approach

The risks associated with information security play a central role in all our considerations and product developments. This attitude is an integral part of our corporate culture.

2. Information security is an important component of our basic understanding

The information security department provides advice and is involved in all critical processes and decisions.

3. We use the best technical security tools

Due to the high importance of information security and data protection, we only use security solutions that are state-of-the-art and therefore meet the very highest standards.

4. We invest in the continuous training and development of our team members

GRI 404-2

In addition to the professional skills of the team members, we also encourage their creativity and efficiency in a targeted manner – because EQS and our customers benefit from the best solutions. Training on information security is always tailored to the respective role and requirements.

5. We are attentive

We continuously monitor developments in information security. This enables us to quickly react to changes in a threat situation and adapt our measures and strengthen these if necessary.

Data protection and data processing

The protection of privacy and informational self-determination is an important matter for us. EQS Group AG is subject to the comprehensive data protection laws of Germany and the EU, including the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the ePrivacy Directive. EQS Group AG collects, processes and uses personal data exclusively in accordance with the applicable laws on data protection and data security. User data is only used by us for the purposes for which it was collected. There is no secondary use and we do not sell personal data to third parties. A personal data retention policy with detailed schedules for the retention and erasure of personal data is in place.

SASB TC-SI-220a.1
SASB TC-SI-220a.2

All processing of personal data by the EQS Group is listed in a record of processing activities in accordance with the requirements of the GDPR and documented on the EQS intranet. It is the responsibility of the individual departments to keep such a record of data processing activities. For this purpose, specific documents and instructions are available on the EQS intranet.

Prior to the introduction or release of a new product, service or process, the responsible officers of the relevant department, product team or service completes a record of data processing activities. If a record already exists, it will be revised when a change is made. The EQS data protection team reviews the legitimacy of the data processing activities and determines whether further steps are necessary. At least once a year, the record of data processing activities is reviewed by the persons involved and updated if necessary.

In the case of whistleblowing solutions for our customers, it should be noted that metadata is anonymised. Due to the way the systems are set up, EQS has no readable access to the data uploaded and stored in the system, as it is encrypted.

EQS conducts data protection impact assessments as required under GDPR Article 35. The data protection impact assessment is maintained as a continuously developed document as part of the compliance product programme. The data protection impact assessments are reviewed regularly (in most cases at least annually) to ensure that these are up to date. These must be repeated if the nature, scope, context or purpose of the processing of personal data changes significantly.

SASB TC-SI-220a.1

If the personal data is no longer up-to-date or no longer required, it is erased in accordance with the EQS Personal Data Retention Policy. The policy is available on the EQS intranet and sets out a general period after which personal data should be erased, exceptions to the general rule and the manner in which personal data should be erased or disposed of.

EQS fulfils requests for information about user data, insofar as this is required by law. EQS has introduced a procedure for exercising the rights of data subjects, which clearly sets out how to proceed when data subjects request information about their data.

SASB TC-SI-220a.4

If EQS is required by applicable law to disclose information pursuant to a court or regulatory order or an applicable stock exchange regulation, EQS will inform the user (as far as legally possible and practical) and make reasonable efforts to minimise the extent of such disclosure.

EQS Group has developed a data protection policy to familiarise employees with the requirements of data protection law, including local law and the EU General Data Protection Regulation. The policy helps to understand and implement our obligations regarding the collection, processing, retention and erasure of personal data. It must be followed by all employees of EQS Group and its affiliated companies, contractors and agents.

In the course of using the EQS website, we process users' personal data. Each user can freely decide whether to consent to the collection and processing of their personal data that is not absolutely necessary for the functionality of the website. EQS Group AG uses a consent management system that displays a banner when visiting our websites that enables each user to make an informed decision about what type of personal data they would like to allow to be collected, for what purpose and by which partner. Every user is free to withdraw their consent at any time.

SASB TC-SI-220a.1

➔ Privacy policy

Information about the name, category, purpose and retention period of each cookie is made available to users via our consent management system and our cookie policy.

➔ Cookie policy

Implementation and effects

Data protection violations and their handling are clearly defined in the corporate policies. Incidents must be reported without delay to the data protection officer. After carrying out a risk analysis – in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation – the affected users and/or customers as well as the competent supervisory authorities are informed without undue delay.

GRI 2-25
SASB TC-SI-220a.4
SASB TC-SI-230a.1

The requirements for protecting the rights of data subjects in accordance with GDPR Article 3 are also clearly defined and documented. In 2023, eight requests (2022: ten) from data subjects were made in connection with GDPR Chapter 3 (Rights of the data subject) and finally processed. Subsequently, there were no further complaints regarding data protection violations. There were also no court proceedings in connection with incidents involving a person's privacy.

GRI 418-1
SASB TC-SI-220a.3

With regard to data leaks, the EQS Group also continuously monitors the deep web and the dark web. In the reporting year, we did not discover any data leaks involving personal data.

GRI 418-1

■ Product safety and quality management, page 66

There have been no requests from government or law enforcement agencies to remove content from our website. In addition, there is no monitoring, blocking, content filtering or censorship due to official, judicial or prosecution requests or requirements.

SASB TC-SI-220a.4
SASB TC-SI-220a.5

Technical and organisational measures

As already described in the objectives above, we use various measures to protect all data and information. In addition to technical resources, this includes certifications, a risk analysis in relation to data protection and information security as well as internal training. If damage occurs as a result of hacker attacks or other acts of cybercrime despite the precautions we have taken, our defined measures and our comprehensive cyber insurance will take effect.

EQS Group has an established and effective incident and problem management system for dealing with incidents and an ISO-certified information security management system (ISMS). We also use further industry standards, such as CIS Controls, Cloud Security Alliance CAIQ, NIST SP-800 and the NIST Cybersecurity Framework. In addition, we voluntarily have the security of our products checked regularly by external audits conducted by independent bodies and IT security experts.

SASB TC-SI-230a.2

Data protection and information security are the foundation of the company. Cyber security risk management is part of this foundation as our products are provided as Software-as-a-Service (SaaS).

To ensure quality and security of our IT infrastructure, so-called "ethical hacking tests" (penetration tests) are also regularly carried out by external, internationally recognised security service providers. In addition, customers continuously audit the information security of the company and carry out their own penetration tests.

For our whistleblowing platforms, we analyse, for example, the web application using both manual and automated methods, taking the following aspects into account:

- Threat analysis (according to the Open Web Application Security Project® (OWASP®))

- Test of cryptography, architecture and system design
- Review of session and identity management
- Analysis of the authorisation concepts

Regular, secure and encrypted backups provide our customers with additional security. To ensure that no data is lost even in the event of an emergency, the backups are regularly tested.

Since 2022, EQS has driven forward several information security initiatives – on the one hand, to increase the security of our products, and on the other hand, to meet the needs of our customers, who will have to fulfil further requirements from 2024 due to new and amended regulations. Examples include ensuring a high level of cyber security (NIS2, DORA, PS21/3), guaranteeing fair access and fair reuse of data (EU Data Act) – and not least the use of artificial intelligence (EU AI Act). These initiatives include:

1. The “zero trust” principle is being implemented to provide EQS employees more flexibility and security, and improve security monitoring.
2. The establishment of an internal Security Operation Centre (SOC) and an external Managed Detection and Response Service (MDR) ensures continuous and comprehensive monitoring of IT security incidents. This should ensure the continuous detection, prevention and elimination of security threats and attacks against the EQS infrastructure and customer data.
3. An Incident Response Retainer Service is being introduced to ensure a timely and actionable response in the event of data breaches or security incidents and to create transparency for our customers.
4. The use of services is strictly controlled and verified so that EQS is more flexible but does not adopt the vulnerabilities of its suppliers.
5. Artificial intelligence is used both for the improvement of information security measures and in EQS products. This is done in a transparent manner that complies with the law on artificial intelligence. In doing so, our customers’ data sovereignty requirements are taken into account.

EQS is in contact with stakeholders and authorities to discuss trends in cybersecurity. In addition, all communication and encryption technologies used are regularly checked for compliance with the recommendations of national and international information security authorities (e.g. NIST, ENISA, BSI, CCN, CNIL).

We have developed a well-functioning system both internally as well as in collaboration with external service providers to be able to quickly and efficiently exchange vulnerability reports and implement measures. This enables us to respond to malware attacks immediately.

■ Analyses and security evaluations, page 55
🔗 EQS Public Vulnerability Disclosure Policy

In the reporting year, as in the previous year, we successfully organised a hackathon with a focus on “Security of EQS applications and services”, in which employees from software development, information security and product management developed innovative solutions and process improvements.

■ Product development, page 63

Certifications

EQS is certified as an ISO/IEC 27001 company. The certification is audited and renewed annually internally and externally. The overarching security principles, binding processes and responsibilities are described in our internal ISMS policy (Information Security Management System) in accordance with ISO/IEC 27001 and the guidelines of the Code of Practice for Information Security Controls (ISO/IEC 27002). This is associated with a defined test and approval procedure as part of product development, including the dual-control principle.

🔗 EQS Group ISO/IEC 27001 Certificate

SASB TC-SI-230a.2

In 2023, the various information security management systems (ISMS) that existed as a result of acquisitions were standardised. The new locations Berlin and Copenhagen, which each had an independent ISMS before the merger with EQS Group and were subject to individual ISO certification, were included in the EQS Group scope of certification ISO/IEC 27001 as part of a monitoring audit. The existing EQS locations in Kochi and Belgrade were also included in the scope of this certification. The locations in Munich and Zurich already had the ISO/IEC 27001 certificate.

ISO/IEC 27001 is the core standard for information security systems, to which further standards can be added in the application statement. In the reporting period, the following standards were also included in the scope of our ISMS and audited by an independent body:

- ISO/IEC 27017: This information security standard complements ISO 27001 and ISO 27002 by providing implementation controls and guidelines for cloud service providers and users.
- ISO/IEC 27018: This standard for data protection for cloud computing services provides important implementation controls and guidelines for regulating the processing of personal data.



By applying these additional standards, we want to ensure that all our customers' and other interested parties' information is processed securely in our cloud solutions and in accordance with the principles and requirements of the GDPR (EU General Data Protection Regulation).

In addition, we are committed to integrating and applying the controls and measures of the ISO/IEC 27701 (Privacy Information Management Systems) standard into our ISMS.

In autumn 2023, a TISAX assessment (level 3) was carried out at the Munich and Berlin locations. This is an sector-specific audit procedure for the automotive industry. This is based on a catalogue of questions from the German Association of the Automotive Industry (VDA ISA, Version 51). The audit also covered the handling of information with very high protection requirements and data protection for data processed on behalf of third parties in accordance with GDPR Article 28 and for special categories of personal data in accordance with GDPR Article 9.

The measures for information security and the protection of data for the EQS Integrity Line are regularly audited by independent experts in accordance with ISAE 3000. They fulfil the requirements for data protection (GDPR-compliant) as well as those of the EU Whistleblower Directive. In the next step, we plan to have the EQS Compliance COCKPIT as a whole audited in accordance with ISAE 3000. For EQS IR COCKPIT, annual audits are carried out for the News & Disclosure functions in accordance with ISAE 3000 to fulfil the strict requirements of the competent supervisory authorities in the UK and France, for example.

The EQS Integrity Line was certified based on the Esquema Nacional de Seguridad (ENS) in August 2023 for the EQS location in Spain. ENS is a Spanish information security framework for the public administration and its suppliers and business partners. The aim of ENS is to create the necessary security conditions for the use of electronic media by taking measures to ensure the security of systems, data, communication and electronic services, thereby enabling the exercise of rights and the fulfilment of obligations. The requirements overlap with those of ISO/IEC 27001, but in many cases specific the technical measures that are defined in ENS go beyond this.

[Download ENS Certificate \(Spanish\)](#)

No recertification processes for our whistleblowing platforms in accordance with the European Privacy Seal (EuroPriSe) were carried out by the certification bodies in the reporting year. In 2024, we will look into alternatives in order to be able to continue to demonstrate the conformity of the products with the GDPR. The EQS Integrity Line also meets the requirements of the Security Trust & Assurance Registry (STAR) Programme of the Cloud Security Alliance (CSA) v3; an upgrade to v4 is planned.



Further certificates and test confirmations that the EQS Integrity Line has received for successful penetration tests and external security checks can be found on the product websites.

➔ Security of EQS Integrity Line

The EQS central company locations for data processing are certified in accordance with ISO/IEC 27001, as are the data centres that process particularly sensitive data.

The certification of further locations, such as Barcelona, according to ISO/IEC 27001 is being planned. In future, we also want to achieve or carry out further external audits, for example in accordance with ISAE 3000 for other products and reports in accordance with ISAE3402/SOC2, and certification in accordance with ISO/IEC 27701.

Analyses and security evaluations

Within the framework of business impact analyses, risks with regard to data protection and information security and their effects on our business processes are analysed and documented, and appropriate measures are developed. Our IT specialists continuously monitor information on security-relevant patches, updates or other instructions to remedy security gaps.

We also carry out table-top exercises in which common threat scenarios are practised as realistically as possible with all relevant stakeholders. The findings are then analysed and implemented as part of the continuous improvement processes. For example, in December 2023, a comprehensive, multi-day table-top workshop was organised together with our Incident Response Retainer Service. The aim of the exercise was to identify potential gaps in EQS' security monitoring system. All of the findings were incorporated into the 2024 improvement guide.

We also use security scoring solutions from various providers for the external assessment of cyber security. However, these can only provide a one-dimensional IT assessment and therefore only partially capture the challenges. We have therefore developed and introduced our own maturity scale. It is precisely tailored to the needs of EQS and covers other factors such as event detection, response, communication, planning, budgeting, risk and control assessment as well as vulnerability management.

Further education and training

According to ISO/IEC 27001, the employees of the information security department are regularly trained on information security and IT infrastructure and participate in specialised conferences. In this way, we ensure that safety-critical roles and positions are filled exclusively by employees with the necessary qualifications and expertise.

As part of our onboarding sessions, all new employees are required to complete online training on information security and agree to the information security policies. In addition, online training courses on this topic are organised for all employees, for example on phishing in the reporting year. All employees must regularly participate in data protection training. In addition, employees are informed about current issues and threats by email, in the form of intranet articles or as part of BarCamps to ensure a constant awareness of information security and data protection. All colleagues are also trained according to their role and tasks; for example, software developers must take part in special training courses on secure application development.

GRI 404-2

In the reporting year, the launch of an online platform was prepared. This offers a comprehensive programme to raise employee awareness of information security and data protection issues and will be introduced in early 2024 after successful testing.

■ Training and development, page 79

■ Product safety and quality management, page 66



Customers and products

Customer satisfaction is a key factor in our success. We have been supporting customers across the world with our products and services for more than twenty years. When designing, developing and testing our products, we follow our extensive, internally defined quality assurance processes.

Client portfolio

The EQS Group is a leading international cloud software provider in the areas of investor relations, corporate compliance and sustainability reporting. Our client portfolio consists exclusively of B2B customers.

GRI 2-6

Our software solutions, EQS Integrity Line and BKMS® System, are the most used whistleblowing systems in Europe. These products are used by several thousands of customers in Europe, for example, around two thirds of DAX40 companies, SMEs and small companies, public sector organisations, authorities, NGOs, hospitals and clinics, universities and many other sectors.

■ Products, page 61

🔗 EQS Integrity Line reference list

In order to best meet the different regional needs of our customers, we have local offices in all major financial centres. From there we offer our products in a targeted manner in European and international markets without an EQS office. These include Australia, Benelux, Finland, Ireland, Norway, Poland, Portugal and Sweden. In total, we serve customers headquartered in 98 countries (2022: 78).

GRI 2-1

■ Locations (GRI 2-1), page 8

Across the globe, over 1,000 customers use our cloud platform EQS IR COCKPIT, in Germany as many as 39 of the DAX40 companies.

With regard to the EU Whistleblower Directive, which came into force on 16 December 2019, we expect strong growth in our corporate compliance segment: In the first stage, around 50,000 companies in Europe with more than 250 employees had to set up a secure whistleblowing channel. Since the end of 2023, companies with 50 or more employees have also been subject to this requirement in most European countries, this concerns almost 200,000 companies in the European Union.

In the 2023 financial year, the total number of SaaS customers rose to 8,258 (2022: 5,054). The most important indicator for us, the number of new customers, increased further with 3,415 SaaS customers (2022: 1,044). In the compliance segment, the customer base increased to a total of 6,915 SaaS customers (2022: 3,704).

GRI 2-6

↪ Financial performance, Annual Report 2023, page 22

■ Economic performance, page 10

Customer loyalty

We consider the best possible customer experience as crucial to our business success. With our secure and high-quality products and services, we always want to be as close as possible to our customers and their needs. Since the company was founded, it has therefore always been important to us to not only understand our customers' problems, but also their goals. To this day, it is our mission to develop the right solution on this principle and to offer the best possible service on an ongoing basis.

GRI 2-6

A very important key figure in this context is the net promoter score (NPS), which we use to measure customer loyalty. To determine the NPS, we ask our customers in online surveys whether they would recommend our products to others or not. The NPS value is derived from the results of the feedback.

All responses and results are automatically collected and analysed in the Customer Relationship Management System (CRM). The NPS can be viewed directly for each business unit in its dashboard.

Depending on the assessment and customer feedback, we may take further measures, such as a direct discussion to clarify issues, training for users or the provision of further information material. However, internal processes may also be initiated that lead to the development of new product functionalities.

The customer surveys always take place after the closure of a project or also within the framework of webinars. In addition, a survey is sent to all active customers in the last quarter of each year.

For 2023, the evaluations of the company-wide NPS in terms of customer loyalty resulted in a score of 41 (in a range of -100 to +100). This corresponds to the level of the global SaaS industry standard. The score was 43 in the previous year.

Internal targets per product segment (investor relations and compliance) are linked to the NPS. In addition, there are targets related to NPS for the countries in which we are operationally active.

We want to maintain this figure in the future and are working on increasing the response rate and frequency of data collection.

■ Sustainability strategy and goals, page 31

As part of the annual surveying of our customers, we determine the Customer Satisfaction Score (CSAT), which measures short-term customer satisfaction with a product or service, in addition to the long-term indicator for customer loyalty NPS. In the reporting year, as in the previous year, a CSAT of 87 was achieved, which is above the average SaaS industry value.

Another important key figure is the churn rate. In the reporting period, this was 4.2 per cent (2022: 5.4 per cent). The churn rate is measured as the percentage of inactive or lost customers in the last 12 months compared to the beginning of the period.

Customer service

Within EQS Group, the customer care department is divided between the compliance and investor relations product segments. The employees of these divisions are in direct contact with the clients in order to provide them with individual support and professional advice according to their needs. In addition to the standardised client survey, they often also receive a personal assessment of client satisfaction.

When introducing new products, customers have direct contacts at EQS who are responsible for the implementation. They also support the customers during the introduction of the software application. Customers also receive a feedback request after this process.

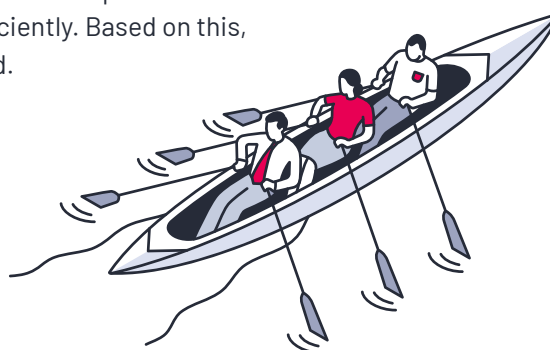
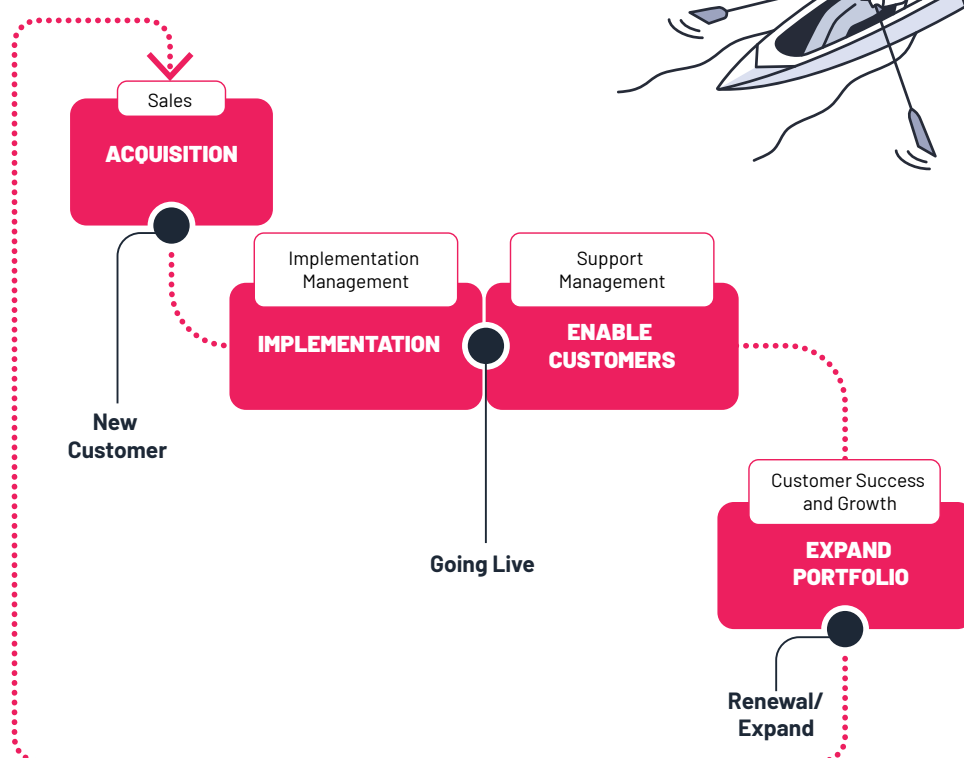
We want to provide our customers with competent contacts for their issues at all times. In addition to professional support, we see this as an expression of appreciation and good cooperation.

In this context, dealing with customer complaints is also an important issue. Although these may be rare at EQS, we take them very seriously and aim to use every complaint as constructively as possible. This means that we not only strive to improve the respective product, but that we also incorporate these findings into our processes and guidelines. All feedback from customers is recorded centrally in our ticket system. The teams involved systematically evaluate them accordingly, examine a complaint together and look for suitable solutions. The processing status of a complaint can be tracked at any time.

GRI 2-25

The ticket system has been in use since October 2023 and helps us to organise and respond to customer queries more efficiently. Based on this, key figures are automatically recorded and evaluated.

Life cycle of EQS Compliance COCKPIT customers



Our long-term goal regarding service quality is to provide the best customer experience. We strategically focus on further reducing response time, providing customers with expertise on product usage and thus increasing the value of the product.

Active measures

We divide our customer loyalty measures into direct and indirect customer contact. We also distinguish between IR and compliance products:

■ Direct customer contact:

Events, project onboarding, help with problems and questions

■ Indirect customer contact:

Marketing, professional added value for customers and prospective customers through whitepapers, blogs, whistleblowing reports, training and training documents on a self-service portal

Indirect customer contact also includes visitors to our company website, such as the Compliance Hub online portal. Here, we share our expertise in this area in the form of guidelines, case studies, webinars and other compliance events. In the Compliance Blog, we regularly publish contributions and specialist articles on current topics such as the Supply Chain Due Diligence Act, ESG reporting, human rights, corporate ethics, third-party risk management, Code of Conduct.

↗ Compliance blog

↗ Compliance knowledge

↗ Compliance webinars

We communicate current investor relations issues on our website in the IR knowledge section. We also regularly publish blog posts, guides and information about webinars here.

↗ Investor Relations Blog

Products

The EQS products are designed to support our customers with a wide range of requirements and, above all, to be useful and user-friendly. Taking centre stage is the so-called EQS COCKPIT, a cloud platform in which many of our products can be easily combined and used.

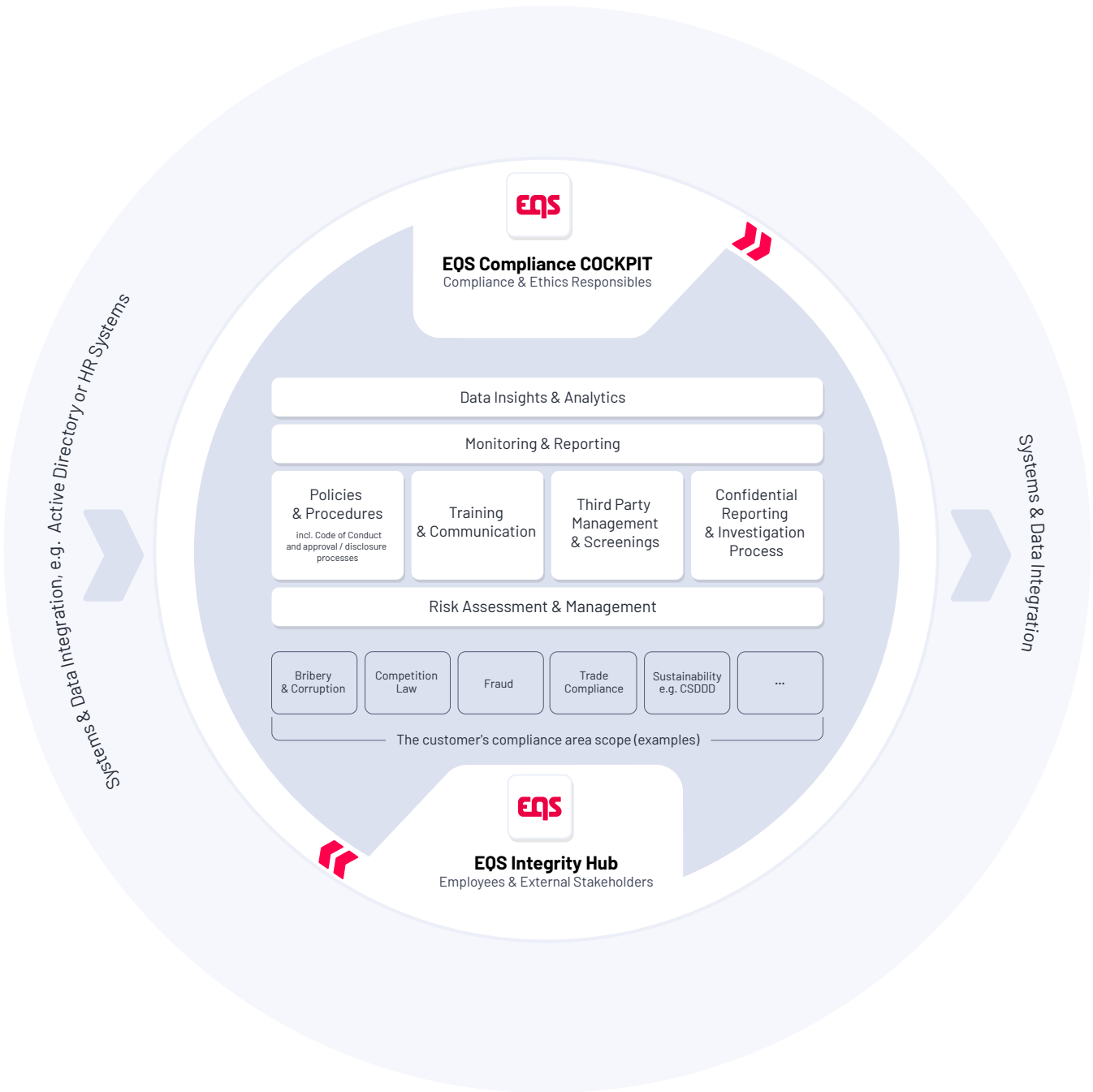
GRI 2-6

Let's take the German Supply Chain Due Diligence Act (LkSG) as an example: To meet the associated requirements, companies require, among other things, a whistleblowing system and risk management for the supply chain. The EQS Integrity Line and the newly-introduced module Third Parties – combined in the EQS Compliance COCKPIT – provide those responsible with all the information at a glance.

Products like the EQS Integrity Line, Third Parties or Approvals directly support the implementation of sustainability requirements and guidelines in companies and promote responsible action.

The system can be extended and expanded according to customer requirements. For example, analysis tools, targeted approval and information mechanisms are available to best meet the compliance requirements of each company.

EQS Compliance COCKPIT – Product vision



The EQS COCKPIT for the investor relations sector brings together online annual reports and many variants of financial communication as well as automated processes for ad hoc notifications in one tool and coordinates them with each other. We support IR officers in fulfilling reporting obligations and in efficient and secure investor communication.

An overview of our compliance and IR products (GRI 2-6)

Compliance	Investor Relations
EQS Compliance COCKPIT: Solution for the digitalisation of the entire compliance programme in companies	EQS IR COCKPIT: Platform for investor relations officers for the handling of all relevant processes
EQS Integrity Line¹ and BKMS[®] System: Anonymous and legally-compliant whistleblowing system	NewsWire²: Distribution of company and press releases
Disclosure²: Fulfilment of statutory disclosure obligations	Investors²: Identification of potential investors
Policies¹ and EQS Rulebook: Policy management and communication	Mailing²: Sending of mailings or event invitations
Approvals¹: Digital administration of approval and disclosure processes (e.g. for gifts, invitations and conflicts of interest)	CRM²: Management of investor relations contacts
EQS Insider Manager²: Management of insider lists in accordance with the Market Abuse Regulation	Webcasts²: Communication with existing and potential investors
Third Parties¹: Fulfilment of human rights and environmental due diligence obligations along the supply chain	IR websites and annual reports: Presentation of the equity story
Legal Entity Identifier (LEI): Assignment of an internationally standardised financial identifier	Stock Tools: Representation of the price trend
Filings: ESEF and XML submission to fulfil publication obligations	
K3/K4 reporting: Conversion and transmission to the Deutsche Bundesbank	

¹ Module is part of the EQS Compliance COCKPIT.

² Module is part of the EQS Investor Relations COCKPIT.

Product development

The development of a new EQS product is based on the following factors:

- New market requirements such as regulations, laws, trends or ideas
- New technological possibilities
- New combinations or mergers of existing products, data or features

Preparing suitable innovative solutions precisely tailored to customer needs is the main task of our product managers and software developers. To do this, they are guided by the state of the art and the latest findings on usability and user experience (UX). In addition, attention is paid to making the products as energy-efficient as possible.

As part of the “continuous discovery” process, our product managers – directly or via other departments such as customer service and sales – are always in close contact with the customers and keep themselves up to date on their needs and challenges. The combination of customer proximity and an understanding of the market is crucial for reflecting current requirements or legal developments in the products. Through rapid and practical implementation, we in turn help our customers to efficiently fulfil their obligations, for example as a listed company, or other legal requirements.

In the exchange with our customers, we fundamentally strive for fast feedback cycles and proactive product management.

We use different sources of information for possible new product ideas in all areas:

- Talks with (potential) customers
- Laws and regulations
- Participation and presentations at webinars
- Participation in conferences and events on site
- Discussions with colleagues who have customer contact
- Social media (LinkedIn)
- Industry publications
- Specialised or topic-specific newsletters
- Research in public sources such as websites

Another opportunity for professional dialogue in relation to our products is provided by the EQS Tech Blog. Here, all interested parties can freely access our experiences in the field of software development on the internet. At the same time, we want to introduce our products and the technology and methods used for them.

↪ [EQS Tech Blog](#)

The lighthouse customer concept is also valuable in the further development of our products. We refer to a defined group of typically five to ten customers with whom we already have a close and long-term business relationship as “lighthouse customers”. We ask them for input and feedback on already existing products and receive valuable tips and recommendations for improvement from them on further product development.

When developing new software functionalities, we also invite interested customers of this group to test the applications early and share their experiences with us. The feedback is channelled directly into product development.

Implementation and outlook

In the reporting period, our main focus was on the expansion and further development of our central cloud-based platform, EQS Compliance COCKPIT. In particular, the expansion of the digital whistleblowing system, Integrity Line, and the migration of existing customers from older versions of Integrity Line into the EQS Compliance COCKPIT were progressed. More than 1,000 companies are now using the EQS Compliance COCKPIT. Most of these customers currently use our digital whistleblowing system Integrity Line, but also have access to a freemium version of our guideline module Policies. Both Policies and Approvals were improved and, among other things, extended by an improved authorisation concept. The mapping of more complex approval processes is now possible.

Artificial intelligence (AI) was a much-used buzzword in public discussions during the reporting year. EQS Group also dealt with this topic in detail, particularly in connection with product development. We formed a team to look into the possibilities of integrating AI into our existing products. Where it makes sense and is feasible, we would like to use AI elements for individual functions in compliance with data protection standards. In the short term, AI technology will be used in policy communication; in the medium term, it will also be used for automations in the case management of whistleblowing products. We also looked at AI in compliance in a survey.

■ Stakeholder communication, page 20

As part of our 2024 product strategy, we are focusing on both the further functional expansion of our existing solutions to make them usable for more complex organisations, as well as the thematic expansion of the EQS Compliance COCKPIT. The latter includes the design and publication of a new module for recording, assessing and managing compliance risks. The module will be closely interlinked with other COCKPIT modules. This allows for the utilization of synergy effects that result from combining specialized, integrated applications.

In the future, we want to focus even more on product discovery. This means, we want to identify the most important customer needs and requirements early on in order to address them as quickly as possible. These may be new regulations that customers have to fulfil, new challenges in collaboration, communication or processes, or other challenges in our specialist areas that can be solved by software. In addition, we continuously invest in the user-friendliness of our applications. In the future, this will be increasingly supplemented by offers such as how-to articles, video tutorials, product updates and guided tours.

In 2023, we organised three EQS-internal hackathons in the software development field. In a general hackathon, the interdisciplinary teams were free to choose their project. Among other things, this has resulted in the Policy Buddy, an AI-based chatbot for policies that will be integrated into existing products.

Another hackathon focused on the topic of quality assurance. Around twenty teams worked on various projects to optimise quality management by improving existing processes, introducing new processes or new tools. At the third hackathon, fifteen teams dealt with information security. Topics included the identification and elimination of potential security risks in the products and the use of new tools for existing security processes. Four hackathons with different focal points are planned for 2024.

Product safety and quality management

We want to consistently improve the quality of our products and create long-term added value for our customers. To this end, we are constantly expanding our quality assurance measures. This includes the implementation of a strong and secure software development life cycle (SDLC), specialised training for our software developers, external certifications, audits and external penetration tests.

SASB TC-SI-550a.2

- Data protection and information security, page 46
- Sustainability strategy and goals, page 31

Requirements

In our experience, the best decisions are made by the people who are familiar with the issue in question and are responsible for the solution. That is why we have put together the four EQS Engineering Values which enable us to evaluate and openly discuss solutions to problems:

Resilience

We want to offer stable and secure systems. During development, we rely on mature, familiar technologies, but also thoroughly scrutinise new trends and technologies for their potential uses.

Workmanship:

When developing products and services, we proceed with great care and continually look for improvement potential. We use our internal Technical Maturity Framework as a guide.

■ Growing with change

In the fast-paced software industry, changes are part of everyday life. We always endeavour to adapt flexibly to new conditions in order to continuously improve ourselves, our products and our company.

■ Motivation

We invest a lot of energy and time in the development of our products. We support each other and never lose sight of the company goals.

The Engineering Values are based on the EQS Values of team spirit, transparency, responsibility, trust and passion.

■ EQS Core Values (GRI 2-23), page 38

Our internal information security management system in accordance with ISO/ IEC 27001 ensures the safety of our product, but also has an influence on the quality process. This is an integral part of product development. Quality assurance (QA) software developers are equal members of every development team, like the security experts. Together with the software developers, they are responsible for achieving the highest possible stability and quality of end products. For this purpose, test strategies are used that start with testing small code units and are integrated into other systems in the next step.

As part of best practice, each member of the development team is responsible for creating unit tests for their own code and for demonstrating that the code passes the basic tests. The code is then checked several times by two to three people and with various static and dynamic test tools. The code is also automatically checked for vulnerabilities and licence problems. No code is included in the production repositories that does not meet minimum standards.

As we provide Software as a Service (SaaS), all new functions, bug fixes and quality improvements are passed onto our customers at no additional cost.

The production-ready application is checked by an automatic vulnerability scanner. Problems identified are forwarded to the security team for prioritisation and then to software development.

Finally, the security of our products is checked regularly using internal and external ethical hacking tests (penetration tests). Each application is subjected to a penetration test by an renowned and specialised external security service provider at least once a year – or with every major revision.

■ Data protection and information security, page 46

The user-friendliness of our EQS Integrity Line whistleblowing system was awarded the WACA certificate, a seal of quality for online accessibility, in silver in 2021. The whistleblowing platform EQS Integrity Line in the EQS Compliance COCKPIT received the WACA certificate in bronze in November 2022 and the whistleblowing system BKMS® System was recertified in silver for a further three years.

↪ WACA certificates



Product information

EQS is subject to and complies with the GDPR and the strict European data protection and advertising laws and regulations.

One aspect of our global marketing is the preparation of relevant content for our target groups. We mainly use the following channels to do this:

GRI 417-1

Online

- Company website
- Email marketing
- Webinars
- Google marketing tools, e.g. Google AdWords and Google Display Marketing
- Social media, e.g. LinkedIn, Instagram, YouTube and X (formerly Twitter)
- Websites for events, such as the European Compliance and Ethics Conference (ECEC)

Offline

- Trade fairs, seminars and other events
- Adverts in (trade) journals
- Flyers, brochures, magazines and reports

Additional security and data protection certificates, such as ISO certificates or the WACA certificate for verification of accessibility, are usually listed in the product information and can be found on the respective product websites.

In the reporting period, there were no violations in relation to product and service information and the labelling of our products.

GRI 417-2
GRI 417-3



Corporate culture and employees

A positive corporate culture characterised by openness and transparency can only be created through respectful and trusting cooperation. It is essential both for the satisfaction of our employees and for the success of the EQS Group.

As a company that developed from a start-up, we want to retain the mentality from the early days and continue to live by it. Internal interaction is informal, and Executive Board members and managers can be contacted at any time via various communication channels. All employees receive regular feedback in discussions and performance appraisals. As part of the annual employee survey, we want to find out how satisfied our employees are with us as an employer and identify improvements from the answers if necessary.

■ Employee satisfaction, page 76

Our corporate culture is based on internally defined values and principles that we have summarised in the EQS Group Code of Conduct, among others. We also respect the values and specifications of various organisations, such as the core labour standards of the International Labour Organization (ILO) or the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises, and are committed to implementing these in day-to-day business. As part of these principles, we grant our employees the right to freedom of association. For the reporting period, no cases were reported at any of our subsidiaries or suppliers in which freedom of association or collective bargaining was jeopardised or violated.

↪ EQS Group Code of Conduct

GRI 2-23
GRI 407-1
UNGC 3

EQS personnel management is based on the fact that our employees act on their own responsibility and in line with our Core Value Ownership: We think like owners and act sustainably towards our planet and society. We promote flexible working practices and ensure that all employees can organise their working hours as flexibly as possible. We also attach great importance to modern, centrally located offices and a wide range of internal events.

■ EQS Core Values (GRI 2-23), page 38

A particular challenge in the area of sustainability in the reporting year for the entire company, but especially for the Culture & People department, was the multitude of (new) legal requirements and their implementation. The implementation of these requirements led to numerous digital and procedural changes, which demanded a significant amount of organisational effort.

In 2023, one of the focal points was optimizing the collection and evaluation of data in the human resources area. This led to a general improvement in data quality.

■ Employment, page 71

Responsibilities

All HR (Human Resources) tasks are centralised in the Culture & People department. This includes the globally active departments People Advisory, Operations and Service Delivery, Intelligence as well as Talent Attraction. The Culture & People department is subordinated to the Executive Board.

GRI 2-12
GRI 2-13

In 2023, the focus was on implementing the Culture & People strategy developed in the previous year and the associated restructuring in the Culture & People department. The aim is to link HR policy more closely with the EQS corporate culture, as well as to ensure fast processing and better service when dealing with HR issues.

The three main pillars of our HR strategy are "Capability Building", "Talents4EQS" and "Foundation".

Capability Building

EQS understands learning as a continuous process, which we call "Capability Building". It is an integral part of the Culture & People department and is expressed in the training and development programmes offered.

■ Opportunities and competencies, page 78

Talents4EQS

We bundle the aspects of diversity, employer branding and strategic HR planning under the umbrella term "Talents4EQS" to drive forward the development of a strong and visible employer brand and attract talent. We want to promote these talents and retain them in our company for as long as possible.

■ Talents4EQS, page 81

Foundation

"Foundation" includes the career opportunities within EQS, the design of the new working environment and the corporate culture at EQS in general.



The implementation of the Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (DEI) Guideline is another central element of our HR strategy. Through the use of our Diversity & Inclusion Standards in all projects and initiatives relating to new talent and the treatment of our employees, we enable and support the participation of all groups of people.

■ Diversity and individuality, page 83

Employment

As at 31 December 2023, 562 employees (2022: 579) worked for EQS Group, of which 332 were male (2022: 334), and 229 were female (2022: 244). The percentage of employees in 2023 who identify as non-binary remained unchanged at 0.2 per cent, i.e. one person (2022: 0.2 per cent). For data protection reasons, we will not provide any further details in the following overviews, but will only show female and male employees. In 2023, one new apprentice was taken on (2022: 2), a total of six people at EQS were in apprenticeships at the end of 2023 (2022: 7). In addition, 44 working students (2022: 61) worked for EQS and two students completed an internship at EQS.

GRI 2-7
SASB TC-SI-330a.3

The average length of service for permanent employees at the end of the reporting year was 4.41 years. This figure is almost unchanged compared to the previous year (4.34 years).

Age structure of employees

	2023		2022		2021	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
under 30 years old	134	24 %	160	27 %	170	30 %
between 30 and 50 years old	374	66 %	369	64 %	345	61 %
over 50 years old	54	10 %	50	9 %	50	9 %
Total	562		579		565	

Breakdown by employment status (GRI 2-7)

	2023		2022		2021	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Full-time	470	84 %	480	83 %	430	76 %
Part-time	92	16 %	99	17 %	135	24 %
Total	562		579		565	

Breakdown by employment type (GRI 2-7)

	2023		2022		2021	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Permanent	502	90 %	475	82 %	486	86 %
Temporary	60	10 %	104	18 %	79	14 %
Total	562		579		565	

Breakdown by gender (GRI 2-7)

	2023		2022		2021	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Female	229	41 %	244	42 %	214	38 %
Male	332	59 %	334	58 %	351	62 %
Non-binary	1	0.2 %	1	0.2 %	-	-
Total	562		579		565	

Regional distribution of employees (GRI 2-7, SASB TC-SI-330a.1)

	2023		2022		2021	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Asia	102	18 %	110	19 %	113	20 %
Europe	449	80 %	461	80 %	440	78 %
USA	11	2 %	8	1 %	12	2 %
Total	562		579		565	

With a 41 per cent (2022: 42 per cent) representation of women worldwide across all employment categories, EQS is above the industry average. For comparison: According to the industry association Bitkom, women accounted for 26 per cent of the workforce in the information and communication technology (ICT) sector in 2023 at companies with more than 500 employees in Germany.

GRI 2-7
GRI 405-1

↪ [bitkom press release \(German\)](#)

We want to further increase the proportion of women in the company and are therefore continuously expanding our recruitment measures. When selecting candidates for interviews, we ensure that there is a balanced number of male and female applicants and have also instructed external recruiting agencies to put forward at least as many female as male candidates. As a further building block in this process, we deliberately formulate job advertisements in a gender-neutral way.

↪ [Our current job advertisements](#)

There are also targeted projects at other locations to attract female applicants and interest them in EQS. In December 2023, for example, after intensive preparation, a cooperation was launched between the EQS branch in Kochi and the Cochin University of Science and Technology (CUSAT) located there to promote women in IT training. Initially, ten female students specialising in information technology and computer science at the university will be supported by having their tuition fees paid. In addition to financial support, the programme also includes the opportunity to complete an internship at EQS.

EQS Group AG primarily utilises temporary workers when a high workload or sickness-related absences need to be covered at short notice. In the reporting year, no temporary workers were required.

GRI 2-8

When we need special expertise, we occasionally rely on the support of freelancers.

Fluctuation

Like many other companies in Germany and other countries, we are also affected by a higher number of resignations than in previous years. Media and research have already come up with a name for this: "The Great Resignation". The reasons for this are a significant increase in employees' willingness to change jobs and a large number of vacancies with fewer jobseekers at the same time. On average, resignation rates are highest among middle-aged employees, with the technology and healthcare sectors particularly affected. To intensify our search for qualified employees for our company in the highly competitive tech market, we expanded our Talents4EQS team in the reporting year.

Fluctuation at EQS globally increased slightly in 2023 compared to 2022 and stood at 23 per cent (2022: 21). This is the value according to the definition of ISO 30414:2018 Human Resources Management, which refers to all categories of employment relationships, including student assistants. Among permanent employees, the fluctuation remained unchanged at 19 per cent.

GRI 401-1

Regional distribution of the fluctuation of permanent employees

(GRI 401-1)

	2023*
Asia	10 %
Europe	22 %
USA	11 %
Worldwide	19 %

* Comparative figures for previous years are not available as the analysis was carried out by region for the first time in the reporting year

We counter fluctuation with various measures adapted to the respective cause, e.g. network and team-building activities, events for employees and the development of dedicated career paths, such as in the Engineering and Product Management department.

GRI 404-2

■ Engineering mentoring, page 79

A key element in employee retention is our “Empower2Grow” career management system that was launched in the first quarter of 2023.

■ Training and development, page 79

Company benefits

We offer a variety of benefits to our employees. For example, as part of our training offer, full-time and part-time employees can access the online learning platform LinkedIn Learning.

GRI 401-2

■ Training and development, page 79

Company benefits such as a pension scheme, voluntary salary components and share participation are offered to all employees – regardless of location. In the reporting year, the majority of employees took advantage of the company benefits.

Employees can find other company offers on the intranet. These include, among other, webinars on mental health and appointments with a mental health coach, financial support for sports club memberships, the opportunity to lease a bike through EQS and the administration of bonus and additional benefits. These benefits depend on the possibilities of each location. For example, EQS is currently subsidising private health insurance for employees and their families in Kochi (India). The costs for

GRI 403-4
GRI 403-5
GRI 403-6

private health insurance are also covered at the locations in Spain. There are also allowances for meals there. The offer of these additional benefits is gradually being extended to employees at the locations in Austria, Italy and Switzerland.

■ Health and well-being, page 77

Parental leave

In the reporting year, a total of 30 employees (2022: 22) went on parental leave. 21 employees returned to work from parental leave (2022: 13).

GRI 401-3

Employees on parental leave (GRI 401-3)

	2023	2022	2021	2020
Female	16	15	11	7
Male	14	7	10	7
Total	30	22	21	14

Returning from parental leave (GRI 401-3)

	2023	2022	2021	2020
Female	7	7	9	3
Male	14	6	8	7
Total	21	13	17	10

As an employer, we support all employees who are entitled to take parental leave. Equality between women and men is very important to us in this respect. We expressly encourage our male employees taking parental leave. Seven women and eight men returned to work after parental leave and were still employed at EQS twelve months after their return. This corresponds to a rate of 71 per cent for 2023.

In countries where there is no legal regulation, we endeavour to provide appropriate offers. This is why we introduced a Family Friendly Policy in Great Britain in the first quarter of 2023, which contains provisions relating to parental leave that go beyond statutory obligations.

Work environment

We involve our employees in decision-making processes as early as possible so that they are informed about operational changes in good time. Internal communication takes place through different channels: Employees receive information via email, on Teams channels and on the intranet. They can also contact all colleagues at any time across hierarchical or divisional boundaries. We mainly use video calls to make contact quickly and easily, also between locations. The widespread use of online meetings and English as the corporate language promote dialogue and team building across locations and national borders.

GRI 402-1

An essential component of communication with our employees is the BarCamps. These Group-wide virtual events are specifically concerned with the presentation of internal topics. Furthermore, there is the opportunity to exchange ideas with superiors or colleagues from other locations or areas of responsibility. BarCamps always take place following important events, such as the Global Performance Summits, strategic decisions or acquisitions. In 2023, there were a total of 11 BarCamps. The topics included the EQS Core Values & Principles, the results of the employee survey, Empower2Grow, the Code of Conduct, information security and data protection and current developments regarding Artificial Intelligence. The individual events are recorded and are available on the intranet. All BarCamps are available online. In some locations, such as Munich and Barcelona, the BarCamps are held as hybrid events.

GRI 404-2

Our second employee survey on the topic of sustainability activities was conducted at the end of 2023. As in the previous year, around one third of employees took part. In addition to assessing the importance of sustainability activities at EQS and the topic of corporate volunteering, information on commuter behaviour was requested again. The results show us that our employees are informed about our sustainability activities, view these positively and support them personally. For this reason, we are planning to further expand the approach we have begun and to involve and motivate our colleagues even more. Our employees also want to get involved in society. We have therefore developed a company-wide concept in the area of corporate volunteering that applies at all locations.

■ Social engagement, page 84

Employee satisfaction

We see the satisfaction of our employees as an important building block for long-term corporate success. As part of an annual survey, Culture & People determines employee satisfaction with EQS Group as an employer, among other things. The results are used to continuously derive customised internal offers and measures for further improvement. In 2023, 409 out of 551 employees (2022: 446 out of 559) took part in the survey, which corresponds to a quota of 74.23 per cent (2022: 79.79). The survey revealed employee engagement of 68.3 per cent (2022: 73.43). The value for employee satisfaction was 3.97 out of 5 possible points (2022: 4.07).

SASB TC-SI-330a.2

An important topic in the context of employee satisfaction is the compatibility of private life and work. We want to enable our employees to have a good balance and have been continuously expanding the measures for years. We offer various programmes tailored to individual life situations, such as part-time models, flexible working hours, sabbaticals and mobile working. Sabbaticals have a fixed standard length of three months at EQS. In 2023, two employees used this benefit. Mobile working is regulated flexibly and individually at site level in hybrid work policies that are adapted to local conditions and which also incorporate our experience during the

COVID-19 pandemic. In principle, we want to enable our employees to organise their presence in the office flexibly, but we also take local customs into account. We also ensure that both the bond with employees and their solidarity with one another are maintained and promoted. In addition to the specifications, there is also the option of defining individual alternatives directly with line managers, ensuring that both interests are safeguarded.

In the reporting year, the trend towards working from home has declined. More colleagues come into the offices, which has a noticeably positive effect on general cooperation and teamwork. For this reason, we are trying to offer employees at some locations an additional incentive with small benefits and courtesies, such as fruit, a selection of free drinks and food offers.

Our location in Kochi was certified as a “Great Place to Work” for the first time in 2022. For the globally recognised seal of quality, employees are surveyed on topics such as trust in the company, management credibility, respect for employees, fairness in the workplace and team spirit. All employees at the location took part in the 2023 recertification process (2022: 83 per cent). The “trust index” increased to 85 per cent (2022: 78 per cent), and the values improved in every question category. The next certification is planned for 2024.

➞ Great Place to Work

Health and well-being

With individual guidelines and measures tailored to our industry and local conditions, we ensure that all EQS employees work in a safe environment and can benefit from extensive preventive support from EQS. We exceed minimum legal standards wherever possible, preventing injuries and work-related illnesses.

GRI 403-2
GRI 403-6

In 2022, a mental health coach provided a series of online presentations in English on topics such as building strength and resilience as well as stress awareness and relaxation. The presentations were recorded and are still available for all employees online. Moreover, personal online appointments can be made with the licensed physician and psychosomatic health development counsellor for individual support.

GRI 403-7

This offer is open to all EQS employees. No data about the appointments or details about the participants are passed on from the doctor to EQS.

Health issues and concerns can also be discussed on a decentralised basis with the local team management and complaints can be clarified with the responsible company doctors. Here we ensure that at least the local requirements relating to health issues are met. For the German locations, for example, these include the regular organisation of company first-aider and fire safety assistant training courses and the associated

GRI 403-3
GRI 403-4
GRI 403-5

refresher courses. In addition to the legally required fire drills in Germany, corresponding exercises were also carried out in India, Hong Kong and Denmark. In addition, risk assessments as well as hazard assessments are prepared depending on local requirements.

Vaccinations were offered at the Munich and Berlin locations, which our employees received directly from the company doctor.

First aid kits and contact information for emergencies are clearly visible to all employees in the offices. Defibrillators, including a comprehensive first aid kit, were also provided voluntarily for the Munich and Berlin locations.

GRI 403-6

As our employees work in an office environment or are mobile workers, occupational accidents with serious injuries are extremely rare. Occasionally, work and commuting accidents occur, which are recorded in the personnel system if they result in more than one working day of absence. In the reporting year, three accidents were reported. The average number of sick leave days per employee was 5.6 in the reporting year (2022: 4.5). Although this represents a slight increase in line with the national trend, but is well below the German average.

GRI 403-9

Further health impairments can arise, for example, from sitting at a desk for long periods of time. Depending on the location and individual situation, we provide ergonomic office furniture.

GRI 403-3
GRI 403-10

Our employees also demonstrate their awareness of health and sustainability in other ways. Colleagues from the Berlin and Munich locations took part in the "Stadtradeln" ("City cycling") initiative again in 2023. This is a locally organised competition, the aim of which is to cycle as many kilometres as possible as a team within a set period of 21 days. The feedback showed that the competition motivated the participants to cycle more often. It also strengthened team spirit. 13 employees (2022: 12) took part in Munich and cycled 1,640 km (2022: 1,508 km) in total. In Berlin, there were 11 participants (2022: 8), who cycled a total of 2,249 km (2022: 1,595 km).

↪ City Cycling

Opportunities and competencies

"Capability Building" is a building block of our People Strategy developed in 2022, with which we want to reposition the development of our employees and managers. In the future, the EQS Academy will offer a wide range of training programmes on professional and leadership skills as well as target group-orientated programmes. Another element of the strategy

is “Foundation”, where we have reorganised career management and will define further career paths in the individual job groups. As part of the EQS-internal further training programme, our employees can access an online learning platform.

Training and development

Through our diverse training programme, we ensure that all EQS Group employees can continuously refresh and expand their professional and management skills in their respective fields of activity. In this way, we increase the satisfaction of our employees and the attractiveness of EQS as an employer.

GRI 404-2

In 2023, we switched to LinkedIn Learning, the leading e-learning platform. In addition to more content, it also offers team-specific allocation of learning content so that we can develop targeted learning paths. Company content can also be integrated. On one hand, employees can use high-quality and sophisticatedly curated courses and on the other hand, also learn in a group by creating their own EQS content. This is the first building block of our People Academy and further topic-specific programmes will follow. Due to the changeover in the current reporting year, the comparability of the data is severely impaired, so we have decided not to publish the information on the hours of further training completed until 2024. In general, we also pay attention to the fairest possible distribution of female and male employees in training and further education.

GRI 404-1

Other options for further training include online courses and participation in webinars, tutorials and conferences. We offer onboarding sessions especially for our new colleagues.

GRI 404-2

■ Finding and integrating new colleagues, page 81

In the Engineering and Product Management departments, among others, promotion is possible via a career path with personnel or specialist responsibility. The respective tasks and responsibilities are based on the individual strengths and preferences of the employees. In this way, we want to create the best possible further development for both the employee and our company. Other departments are also working on developing similar concepts.

A self-organised mentoring programme, which is understood as a “learning relationship”, also promotes the long-term personal and professional development of employees in the Engineering department. Mentors and mentees can come from the same team or from other teams or departments. A mentor passes on their experience and knowledge to a less experienced colleague and also benefits by gaining new perspectives and insights into other departments and challenges.

The new EQS career and performance management model Empower2Grow was launched in 2023. It is in line with our vision, mission and values and reflects the requirements of the global and increasingly agile environment at EQS. For this purpose, a total of four questionnaires on various topics were developed, which are available to all employees in the HR tool. These questionnaires should be completed over the course of a year and form the basis for discussions with team management. Topics of the questionnaires include the evaluation of the roles and responsibilities of the team member and the team management as well as professional development opportunities. This process replaces the performance appraisals that previously only took place once a year. In addition, training at the employee level will be recorded more accurately. Culture & People introduced the model to employees in various webinars in the first quarter of 2023; these are still available internally. Employees can also find detailed information on the process and background on the intranet.

GRI 404-2
GRI 404-3

Furthermore, employees can give anonymous feedback to their management in the form of upward feedback via an internal evaluation platform. In 2023, 83 per cent (2022: 86 per cent) of employees made use of this option for a total of 37 managers. The feedback was very positive.

GRI 2-18

In addition, we carry out our regular 360-degree feedback reviews of our management candidates. The 360-degree feedback is a development tool that provides information about competences, behaviour and working relationships and forms the basis for personal development. Furthermore, this feedback is a prerequisite for promotion to manager or for taking on more extensive management responsibilities.

Fair remuneration

At EQS Group, we trust that our employees are intrinsically motivated and think and act for the long term. That is why we decided years ago to abolish the short-term bonus option and increase the basic salary.

To increase loyalty to the company and identification with our goals, we offer participation models for employees. Employees invest their own money and the number of shares purchased is doubled after different holding periods. These models are often dependent on local tax conditions and are therefore only available in locations where participation would not lead to tax disadvantages or excessive burdens for the employees. In 2023, 341 employees in Germany, Austria, France, Switzerland, the United Kingdom and the USA were eligible to participate in the EQS SharePlan; 144 colleagues made use of this option. This corresponds to a participation rate of 42 per cent.

In all measures and actions, we pursue the clearly defined goal of not allowing any differences in the salary structures of employees within EQS Group and consider fair pay to be an important instrument for employee satisfaction. Remuneration as well as fringe benefits for employees are orientated on the labour market.

UNGC 1, 2, 6
GRI 405-2

In 2023, 10 per cent of all employees worldwide (2022: 8 per cent) were covered by collective bargaining agreements.

GRI 2-30

In the case of defined contribution pension plans, the company makes contributions to public or private pension insurance institutions on the basis of statutory or contractual provisions or on a voluntary basis. After payment of the contributions, the company has no further payment obligations. In addition, defined benefit pension plans exist in various foreign companies, such as France, India, Italy and Switzerland, depending on the legal basis prevailing there.

GRI 2-30
GRI 201-3

➞ Employee benefits, Annual Report 2023, page 77

Talents4EQS

We want to find the applicants who will best fit into our teams and enrich it. In addition to professional expertise, we pay particular attention to soft skills so that our new colleagues can integrate into the EQS community well and practise the EQS Group values with full conviction.

Finding and integrating new colleagues

Our employees are at the centre of everything we do. We are convinced that committed employees make our teams and therefore EQS successful. With offices in 11 countries and in a total of 14 locations worldwide, we offer our applicants a wide range of opportunities to realise their full potential. Our corporate values form the basis for the selection of a new team member. We want to attract and inspire talent. That is why finding and hiring new employees is more than just recruiting for us.

SASB TC-SI-330a.1

Based on our needs analysis and the current needs of the teams, we start the Candidate Journey; a process to ensure that we find the best people and convince them to work for EQS. It is particularly important to us that those responsible in the Culture & People department and the specialist departments work closely together throughout the entire process in order to optimally meet the requirements and needs. In principle, all EQS Group recruitment decisions are based on business needs, job requirements and the necessary professional qualifications. However, we also pay particular attention to ensuring that applicants are a good fit for us and our corporate culture on a personal level. The decisive factor here is the consistency

GRI 405-1

of the personal attitude with our values. We welcome applicants from different backgrounds regardless of their country of birth, nationality, gender or religion, and comply with the respective immigration regulations in the necessary cases.

Regional distribution of new recruitments (GRI 401-1)

	2023*
Asia	3 %
Europe	94 %
Austria	1%
Denmark	1%
France	1%
Germany	62%
Italy	1%
Spain	31%
USA	3 %

** Comparative figures for previous years are not available as the analysis was carried out by region for the first time in the reporting year.*

To attract new employees and keep them at EQS in the long term, all new recruits are generally hired for an indefinite period, with the exception of trainees, students and those covering parental leave.

Customised support for our new team member begins with the onboarding. We support individual induction training with so-called onboarding templates, among other things. These multi-page task lists are intended to serve as a guide for orientation during the first year of employment. They were updated in the reporting year and contain both general content (EQS Values and Working Principles, relevant tools, training videos, guidelines etc.) and special information about the respective department. A so-called "buddy" also helps with the settling in process. In the first few months, we want to help our colleagues find their feet in their new role, understand our corporate culture and socialise with their team members and other departments.

GRI 404-2

In the reporting year, the topics of the onboarding sessions were expanded in terms of content. Among other things, the Corporate Sustainability section was newly included and implemented as a separate training course for the first time in April. In autumn, the sequence of the training sessions was also slightly adapted. Some focal points, such as EQS Culture, Strategy & Vision, International Setup and Culture & People, will be provided in mandatory live sessions from now on. For others, up-to-date recordings are available for new colleagues to view at any time.

Diversity and individuality

We benefit from different perspectives, nationalities, cultures and religions. This is proven by our global EQS team that is made up of colleagues of all ages from 54 nations who work together. We plan to continue increasing diversity in our teams; in particular to increase the proportion of women in management roles. We will also continue to develop the participation of people with disabilities in working life at EQS.

GRI 405-1

For us, the following aspects are the focus with regard to our employees: Internationality, equal opportunities and (professional) diversity. We are committed to the principles of diversity and individuality. Diversity is not only firmly anchored in our Code of Conduct, but also plays an important role in our daily working life. We see our many different cultures, religions, world views, work attitudes, personal experiences and social skills at EQS as a special feature and a great advantage. They are the basis for creative and productive teams that inspire each other and create innovative products. For this reason, we do not tolerate any form of discrimination at any time in our company as well as in our surroundings.

GRI 2-23

In 2023, one case of discrimination (2022: 1) was reported to us. We followed up on this immediately in order to take possible corrective action. The case turned out to be unsubstantiated.

GRI 406-1

The issue of equality is an important concern for us. In the still often male-dominated software environment, we strive to actively promote women. In the reporting year, we were able to fill the position of Chief Product Officer with a woman.

Since May 2022, the proportion of women on the Supervisory Board has been 40 percent. Overall, the proportion of women employed at EQS in the reporting period was 41 per cent (2022: 42).

UNGC 1, 2, 6
GRI 405-1
SASB TC-SI-330a.3

■ Employment, page 71

■ Proportion of women on the Executive Board and Supervisory Board, page 13

A new strategy with specific measures for diversity, equality and integration is currently being developed. Some measures have already been implemented, such as the consistent use of gender-neutral language and the clear presentation of our DEI policy to illustrate our commitment in job descriptions.

We also intend to draw up guidelines for employees involved in the recruitment process (Hiring Manager Enablement Guideline). These guidelines will include standardised criteria for reviewing CVs and standard questions to help assess each person equally and without bias.

Our French subsidiary, EQS Group SAS, took part in the nationwide DUOday initiative for the second time in 2023. On this day, companies and public institutions open their doors for people with disabilities in order to promote equal opportunities in employment. The EQS team in Paris applied to take part and spent the day with a woman whose eyesight is severely impaired. Participation in DUOday will be continued in the coming years.

➔ DUOday (French)

Social engagement

As an employer and client, we want to have a positive impact on economic, ecological and social development at our locations worldwide. We therefore support the social commitment of our employees, giving them time off to work for rescue organisations, fire brigades or the German Federal Agency for Technical Relief, thereby supporting many different projects and institutions.

A Corporate Volunteering Guideline was introduced at the beginning of 2022, which enables our employees to spend one working day per year volunteering. These projects should be dedicated to the key corporate objectives of promoting women in IT and anti-corruption, as well as environmental protection and social issues, and should be carried out as a team. On the one hand, we want to enable employees to do good for society, but on the other hand we also want to bring them together through shared experiences outside their usual working environment.

In 2023, EQS employees supported the organisation "Spendenbücke Ukraine" twice. On one occasion, for example, eleven colleagues checked and sorted clothing donations in a hangar at the former Tempelhof Airport. Around 40 boxes were packed, which were then transported by the organisation to Ukrainian arrival centres in Berlin and to Ukraine.

To help people in need and reduce food waste, EQS employees in Munich and Berlin helped out at regional food banks, sorting and distributing food.

At the "Elevate the Overlooked" event, EQS employees at our Kochi location (India) distributed parcels containing school supplies to 89 children in need.

Also at the Kochi location, a workshop on the topic "Menstruation hygiene and sustainability" was organised on International Women's Day. In addition to the topic of women's health, environmentally friendly alternative products to minimise waste were presented.

GRI 413-1

Corporate volunteering activities 2023

13%

of all employees

74

volunteers

10

activities

388

voluntary hours



In total, EQS employees independently organised ten different corporate volunteering activities (2022: eight), in which 74 people (2022: 75) took part and contributed 388 hours (2022: 507) all together.

EQS supports non-profit organisations and initiatives with donations. In the reporting year, donations were made to Transparency International Deutschland e.V., to the aid organisation Off Road Kids Foundation, to a WWF Germany project for the protection of the Baltic Sea, and to Doctors without Borders. We also decided not to send Christmas cards to all our customers at Christmas and instead donated EUR 2,000 to plant-for-the-planet.org.

In 2023, the amount of money donated was EUR 23,514.00 (2022: EUR 20,332.85). Contributions for memberships in associations are not included. In addition, material donations totalling EUR 5,825.00 were made.



Environmental protection

In EQS Group, we consider climate protection and the consistent reduction of energy and resource consumption to be important components of our understanding of sustainability. We acknowledge our responsibility and make our contribution to the transition to a sustainable economy with the environmental protection measures we have taken.

In our sustainability approach, we have deliberately set priorities that have the greatest possible positive impact on the environment and society. Even if EQS Group, as a Software as a Service (SaaS) provider, is not part of an energy-intensive industry, emissions and energy consumption are important factors for us and have top priority. In the review of our sustainability strategy, we therefore identified "Climate change and air quality" and "Use of resources" as material topics for EQS. Water consumption and waste production are of secondary importance for us.

GRI 3-2

Nevertheless, we favour a holistic approach and want to emphasise this even more strongly in our actions over the next few years and, where possible, incorporate it into our calculations. The calculation of emissions and energy consumption in particular shows us where we stand and what savings potential we have.

"Environmental protection in the supply chain", another important topic in environmental protection, is dealt with as a separate topic in the "Supply chain" chapter, along with other aspects.

■ Supply chain, page 96

Responsibilities and measures

The CSR Manager is responsible for environment-related queries within EQS Group. She is operationally responsible for measures and their implementation. She also coordinates the company-wide approach and continuously aligns it with the Executive Board. She is supported by the environment and emissions expert hired in November 2023. This newly created position in the Corporate Sustainability team emphasises the importance of environmental issues for EQS Group. The expert develops measures in the environment and emissions areas, ensures their implementation in close cooperation with the specialist departments and coordinates the calculation of corporate emissions. Among other things, the focus is on reducing emissions and our company's use of resources.

GRI 2-12
GRI 2-13

After we systematically surveyed all foreign subsidiaries in 2022 to determine the location-specific characteristics of environmental issues, we updated the data for the respective locations in the reporting year in order to record changes, for example due to relocations. The most important thing for us is making those responsible in the subsidiaries aware of this issue so that they can play an active role and help develop the measures – adapted to local conditions. Together, we want to improve step by step and create added value for the environment, society and not least for our company. The aim is to expand resource-conserving and sustainable measures and processes at all locations and record environmental data in even greater detail, broken down by location.

GRI 2-25
GRI 2-29

The internal environment guideline introduced in 2022, which was developed in conjunction with the environmental requirements from the Codes of Conduct, continues to apply. In addition to resource conservation, it also covers emissions and environmental protection in the supply chain.

GRI 2-23

■ Supply chain, page 96

In the reporting year, we implemented various measures to increase energy efficiency. These also led to a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions.

■ Climate change and air quality, page 89

We have also commissioned an external assessment of the risks of climate change for our locations for the first time. In addition to the German locations, Munich and Berlin, the Kochi (India) and Barcelona (Spain) locations were also reviewed. The analysis revealed a limited number of "high" or "highest" risks in Kochi and Barcelona. For both locations, water scarcity was classified as the highest risk. For the Kochi location, increased air temperature, temperature fluctuations and heat stress were also identified as high risks. The Munich and Berlin locations do not have any high or highest risks from climate change.

GRI 2-5

To further reduce the carbon footprint of our company, we have set ourselves the goal of becoming climate-neutral in our operational emissions by 2025. The data centres play a key role in this. According to estimates in a background paper published by the Borderstep Institute for innovation and sustainability in 2022, data centres in Germany alone consumed around 17 billion kilowatt hours of electricity in 2021 – and the trend is rising. The annual CO₂ emissions are estimated to be around 6 million tonnes.

GRI 305-5

↪ Borderstep Institute Background Paper (German)

Alongside public authorities and energy-intensive companies, data centres are the main addressees of the Energy Efficiency Act, which the German government passed on 18 November 2023. The goal is to lower energy consumption at federal and state level by 50 terawatt hours by 2030, and to reduce final energy consumption in Germany by 45 per cent compared to 2008 by 2045.

GRI 2-27

New and existing data centres must fulfil efficiency requirements in future, including the use of heat waste for energy generation and the use of electricity from renewable energy sources. Information on the energy consumption must also be recorded in a public register. A first review is scheduled to take place in 2027. This will provide information on how well the law is working and where Germany stands in comparison to its targets.

↪ Energy Efficiency Act (German)

In 2023, we compiled an up-to-date overview of the data centres used with a focus on sustainability. The existing sustainability certificates and assessments were also documented. The list will be updated once a year. We were also able to conduct on-site audits of data centres in 2023. The audits were carried out by the Corporate Sustainability team together with representatives from the Information Security team.

In 2022, we summarised our previous specifications for business trips in a travel policy that includes a chapter on sustainable travel. In it, we also continue to commit to doing without company cars. For business trips, we primarily use public transportation such as trains or local public transport. We have refrained from taking domestic flights at our European locations since 2020. The requirements of the travel policy have helped us to limit the CO₂ emissions caused by our business trips. To achieve climate neutrality of our business trips, we offset the remaining CO₂ emissions.

GRI 2-25

We also pay attention to environmental protection when travelling to our events. For example, we recommend to all ECEC participants that they travel in a way that is as environmentally friendly as possible. We are, of course, aware that flights cannot be completely avoided at international events. In the reporting year, the proportion of speakers travelling by train was approx. 70 per cent. For the Experience Day, which is aimed at compliance officers from Germany, Austria and Switzerland, it was possible to travel to the event with an inexpensive "event ticket" ("Veranstaltungsticket") thanks to a partnership with Deutsche Bahn.

If we want to improve our performance in terms of climate and environmental protection, we must also pay greater attention to the potential environmental impacts of our business activities in order to minimise them. That is why we also consider sustainability aspects when making significant business investments or acquisitions.

The base year for the collection of key figures is the 2020 financial year, even though this cannot be considered representative due to the COVID-19 impact. The comparative figures in this report relate to the previous year.

Climate change and air quality

UNGC 7, 8, 9

We want to utilise every opportunity to reduce our energy consumption and CO₂ emissions. Here we pay attention to emissions caused directly and indirectly; for example by the hosting infrastructure of the data centres, our office buildings and travel activities. We follow the principle: avoid, reduce and, if not otherwise possible, compensate.

GRI 2-25
GRI 302-4
GRI 305-5

This also applies to every EQS employee in their daily office routine: to reduce energy consumption, savings measures are already being implemented at many locations. For example, employees make sure that no lights are on and no windows are open at night and on weekends. Digital display boards and monitors are also switched off in the evening and at weekends. In addition, we are constantly optimising our IT equipment, using the most energy-efficient devices possible. We have reduced the number of printers in the offices in Munich and Berlin to a few centrally located devices, thereby reducing the number of pages printed.

GRI 2-25

In 2023, we started to record the use of our printers. Our aim is to identify trends and ways of managing them and to reduce paper and ink consumption.

In the reporting year, we reviewed and updated the emission calculations. We are planning the introduction of new software for calculating emissions. We are also reviewing the expansion of our emissions and climate reporting in accordance with CDP (formerly Carbon Disclosure Project) and SBTi (Science Based Targets initiative).

When analysing our locations, we found that there are structural and systematic challenges in supplying our buildings around the world with green electricity. Since the reporting year, we have been using direct electricity from renewable sources in all German offices. As part of EQS Group's initiative, the indirect electricity supply at the main site in Munich

SASB TC-SI-130a.3

was also converted to 100 per cent green electricity. When renting new office space, we always consider the environmental aspects of the buildings and their sustainability in daily operations. Currently, 52 per cent of the electricity consumed by EQS is from renewable sources.

At the data centres where we operate products for our customers, we have continued our cooperation with the operators. The focus here is on environmental aspects and, in addition to pure electricity consumption, also includes water consumption and general efficiency values.

■ Sustainability strategy and goals, page 31

Our employees at the German locations have been able to lease a bike via EQS Group since 2022. We want to help them in this way to protect the environment even on their daily commute to work. We also expressly support the use of public transport for the daily commute to the office.

For the financial years 2020 (base year), 2021, 2022 and 2023, EQS Group prepared a voluntary report on greenhouse gas emissions (GHG Report, Scope 1, 2 and 3). This covers all subsidiaries, whereby the data for some locations is based on projections. The audit was conducted by TÜV Rheinland Energy & Environment GmbH and based on the Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Protocol of 2004 and DIN EN ISO 14064:2019. We want to continue to inform our stakeholders transparently about our GHG emissions on an annual basis.

GRI 2-5

🔗 TÜV Certificate Calculation of CO₂e emissions (German)

Energy

When reporting our energy consumption, we focus on our internal fuel and electricity requirements for production, heat generation and cooling.

GRI 302-1
SASB TC-SI-130a.1

Energy consumption (GRI 302-1)

<i>in gigajoules</i>	2023	2022	2021	2020 (base year)
Scope 1 Fuel consumption*	1,317.81	1,720.90	1,488.10	1,330.85
Scope 2 Total	3,087.59	3,340.47	2,686.82	2,306.28
of which electricity	1,316.89	1,466.75	1,151.49	1,001.40
of which heating	550.69	753.58	469.54	343.37
of which cooling	1,220.01	1,120.14	1,065.79	961.45
of which steam	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Total energy consumption	4,405.40	5,061.36	4,174.92	3,637.12

* Fuels have so far largely been obtained from non-renewable sources (1,316.7 GJ in total); 1.11 GJ were obtained from renewable sources.

We report energy intensity as site-related energy consumption per employee.

GRI 302-3

Energy intensity (GRI 302-3)

	2023	2022	2021	2020 (base year)
Total energy consumption in gigajoules	4,405.40	5,061.36	4,174.92	3,637.12
Number of employees	562	579	565	414
Energy consumption within the organisation per employee	7.84	8.74	7.39	8.79

In 2023, TÜV SÜD Industrie Service GmbH carried out an energy audit at the German sites to record EQS Group AG's total energy consumption (§8 German Energy Services Act (EDL-G)).

Emissions

EQS Group's greenhouse gas footprint is reported in accordance with ISO 14064-1:2019 and the Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Protocol Corporate Accounting and Reporting Standard.

GRI 305-1
GRI 305-2
GRI 305-3

The emissions of EQS Group AG are calculated as CO₂ equivalents (CO₂e). The following greenhouse gases were taken into account in accordance with the Kyoto Protocol and ISO 14064-1:2019: carbon dioxide (CO₂), methane (CH₄), nitrous oxide (N₂O), hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs), sulfur hexafluoride (SF₆), perfluorocarbons (PCFs) and nitrogen trifluoride (NF₃).

We report on CO₂e emissions in accordance with GHG Scope 1, 2 and 3. The GHG Protocol divides these into various sub-categories that occur in connection with the company's business activities. We have selected the Scope 3 emission categories that are relevant for EQS Group or that were categorised with the highest relevance following the materiality analysis.

CO₂e emissions (GRI 305-1, GRI 305-2, GRI 305-3)

in t	2023	Change	2022	2021	2020 (base year)
Scope 1 (Stationary combustion and fugitive emissions)	99.893	-44.056	143.949	143.307	143.466
Scope 2 (Purchased electricity and purchased heating/cooling)	249.588	-27.216	276.804	260.860	244.549
Scope 3 (Business trips, commuting by employees, purchased services (data centres) and capital goods)	384.747	+92.012	292.735	158.634	172.327
Total	734.229	+20.740	713.488	562.801	560.342

For Scope 1, 2 and 3, CO₂, CH₄ and N₂O were included in each case. In Scope 1, PFCs and HFCs were also considered. The collection of data on direct and indirect GHG emissions follows the principle of operational control.

Sources of the emission factors:

Scope 1: International Energy Agency, Federal Office for the Environment - BAFU

Scope 2: International Energy Agency

Scope 3: DEFRA (UK Government), International Energy Agency

The intensity quotient was calculated on the basis of CO₂e emissions per employee (as of 31 December 2023). The emissions per employee were 1.31 tonnes in 2023 (2022: 1.23 tonnes) and therefore remained at a rather low level.

GRI 305-4

Developments in the reporting year

The changes in the individual categories (scopes) are the result of our active efforts to save energy and reduce emissions. In the reporting year, energy consumption was reduced by 655.96 GJ in comparison to the previous year. The efficiency measures led to a reduction of 15.8 tonnes CO₂e in Scope 1. This development is due in part to the following measures:

GRI 302-4
GRI 305-5

- 61 per cent through energy-saving measures in the office area,
- 29 per cent due to the move to shared offices (New York City, London, Zurich),
- 10 per cent through the reduction of office space (Kochi).



The emissions in Scope 2 were reduced by 28.2 tonnes CO₂e through the following measures:

GRI 305-5

- 68 per cent by switching to green electricity at the main site in Munich,
- 18 per cent due to the reduction of office space in Kochi,
- 14 per cent due to the move to shared offices.

Further savings are attributable to site closures in the reporting year. However, these are not part of our emissions reduction strategy.

At the same time, EQS Group recorded an increase in Scope 3 emissions, particularly for business trips, which was partially counterbalanced by a decline in the purchase of capital goods compared to the previous year. The emissions from business trips increased by 149 per cent compared to the previous year and continues the trend that began after the end of the COVID-19 pandemic. Around 66 per cent of this increase can be attributed to an increase in the distance travelled on business trips, while the remaining 34 per cent of the increase is due to changes in DEFRA emission factors.

GRI 305-3

↪ DEFRA 2023 Government Greenhouse Gas Conversion Factors for Company Reporting: Major changes to the Conversion Factors

Long-distance trips by mode of transport* (GRI 305-3)

Vehicle	2023			2022		
	Number of long-distance trips	Share of long-distance trips in per cent	Share of emissions from long-distance trips in per cent	Number of long-distance trips	Share of long-distance trips in per cent	Share of emissions from long-distance trips in per cent
Train	1,024	74.8 %	4.0 %	464	69.6 %	4.9 %
Flight	305	22.3 %	92.8 %	164	24.6 %	88.4 %
Car	32	2.3 %	3.1 %	29	4.4 %	6.4 %
Bus	8	0.6 %	0.1 %	10	1.5 %	0.3 %

*Business trips > 20 km (all locations)

Use of resources

UNGC 7, 8, 9

At EQS Group, we are committed to actively contributing to the circular economy. This topic is also considered important by our stakeholders. We pay attention to recycling opportunities, reduce our consumption and minimise waste wherever possible. As a service company without its own production facilities, EQS acts as a responsible consumer and influences the topic through its purchasing decisions and ongoing dialog with its business partners.

In 2023, we again reviewed the use of resources together with the international locations and defined measures on this basis. All employees were trained to use resources responsibly. Topics included saving potential for energy and water.

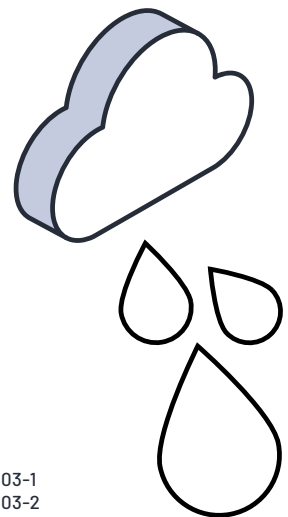
GRI 2-25

We also want to use consumables that are as sustainable as possible, such as printer paper, kitchen rolls and paper towels made from recycled paper with corresponding environmental labels, and introduce their use at all locations. As part of a new tendering process for the supplier of office supplies, the product range in the procurement portal for Munich and Berlin was restricted to the purchase of selected, sustainable products (e.g. recycled copy paper).

Water

As a rule, we distinguish between direct and indirect consumption when collecting water data. By direct water consumption we mean the water that our employees use or that is required for the operation of our buildings. We can influence both parameters ourselves. The water returned to the sewage system meets the usual wastewater requirements. Indirect water consumption is caused by the production of goods or services of all kinds, at EQS primarily in data centres or purchased IT services. This share is

GRI 303-1
GRI 303-2
SASB TC-SI-130a.2



much higher than direct water consumption. To gain an impression and also improve this consumption in the medium term, we requested key figures on water consumption and water use efficiency from the operators of the data centres again in autumn 2023. The aim is also to reduce indirect consumption in the medium term.

Water consumption is currently at a normal level for a service company. One measure in this area, for example, is the use of a rainwater basin at our development site in India. There, the rainwater is used for cleaning the car park and watering plants. In addition, there is a sewage treatment plant for the wastewater at this site.

GRI 2-25

In addition to the above-mentioned climate risk analysis, we reviewed the categorisation of EQS locations according to the World Resources Institute with regard to potential water stress in 2023 once again. London, Berlin and Kochi are categorised as locations with "high Water Stress" and Barcelona and Madrid as "extremely high Water Stress" locations.

■ Climate risk analysis, page 87

🔗 World Resource Institute Aqueduct Water Risk Atlas

As an example, we show the water consumption of our main site in Munich below. Measured by the number of employees, Munich is our largest location; moreover, the exact water consumption data for several years is available there. The water consumption for 2023 was not yet available at the time of going to press due to the typical delay in the service charge settlement. The significant decrease in water consumption from 2019 to 2021 can be explained by the fact that our employees worked more remotely due to COVID-19.

GRI 303-3
GRI 303-5

Water consumption (GRI 303-5)

<i>in m³</i>	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018
Munich location consumption	463.76	350.29	311.39	742.61	744.31

Waste

We do not yet collect detailed waste data. However, we are exploring the possibilities of collecting and analysing more precise data for our locations and developing measures to gradually reduce waste. Among other things, we want to develop a uniform, company-wide concept for this, which, if possible, should go beyond the respective local requirements. Waste is separated at all locations and disposed of in accordance with the applicable regulations.

GRI 306-3

To minimise waste, we use reusable toner cartridges for laser printing at our main location in Munich. We give the empty toner cartridges to Diakonie, which refills and resells them.

In the interests of the circular economy, we generally ensure that IT devices are used for as long as possible. When purchasing company phones, we opt for refurbished used devices. We give technical devices or office furniture that is no longer needed to other locations, employees or schools. We strictly adhere to all information security and data protection regulations here. In the reporting year, these measures were extended to further German locations as well as the subsidiary in India.

At our main location in Munich, we provide our employees with reusable containers for food and drinks in order to reduce packaging material. We want to do the same in other locations.





Supply chain

UNGC 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10

We are aware of our responsibility along the entire value chain and actively include the supply chain in our sustainability strategy. In terms of responsible corporate governance, a long-standing cooperation based on partnership with our suppliers and service providers is important for us.

Legal requirements such as the German law on corporate due diligence to prevent human rights violations in supply chains (Supply Chain Due Diligence Act – LkSG) have increased customer and investor interest in purchasing practices. The increasing significance of the topic was also reflected in the number of enquiries about our supply chain in the reporting year. The topics included environmental protection in the supply chain and dealing with human rights.

To better reflect the issue of sustainability in our procurement system and to centralise and standardise purchasing processes, we introduced a web-based procurement system in 2022. This allows us to use the procurement volume or other order characteristics as criteria for measures. The procurement system has been used in all German locations for orders over EUR 5,000 since September 2023.

■ Cooperation in the supply chain, page 98

Responsibilities for the supply chain issue with regard to the environmental aspect lie with Purchasing and the Corporate Sustainability team. The Legal & Compliance and Purchasing departments are responsible for human rights and compliance issues.

Purchasing is part of the Finance division of the Executive Board. In addition, the respective persons responsible in the subsidiaries can make their own arrangements after consultation with the Purchasing department to ensure the best possible conditions for EQS. The relevant details are set out in a purchasing guideline. It also specifies the locations that deviate from the guideline and can handle their purchasing after consultation independently, but in a standardised manner. When purchasing products and services, we select our suppliers and service providers according to the highest current international standards in terms of human rights, environmental regulations and labour protection provisions, for example. Where this is not possible, we base our decisions on current legislation and the local conditions at the respective location as a minimum, whereby we do not deliberately award contracts in countries with lower standards.

GRI 2-23
GRI 308-2
GRI 414-2

The process initiated in 2022 to standardise and better adapt to local needs continued in the reporting year. We standardised the ordering processes in Germany and intend to extend this to the locations in Spain and Switzerland in 2024, and then to other locations in Europe.

Business Partner Code of Conduct

To raise awareness of sustainable thinking and action among all business partners and suppliers, we commit them to our Business Partner Code of Conduct. Training on the contents of the Business Partner Code of Conduct for our business partners is planned.

The Business Partner Code of Conduct was updated again in 2023. The importance of the issue of sustainability, with a focus on environmental impact and the correct use of resources for the supply chain, was once again clearly emphasised. These changes further demonstrate our commitment to the proper disposal and recycling of waste in accordance with international and local laws and regulations. By agreeing to our Business Partner Code of Conduct, our business partners also commit to taking responsibility for the future and contributing to sustainable development.

GRI 2-23

↪ EQS Business Partner Code of Conduct

Our business partners are expected to use all resources efficiently and responsibly, at a minimum complying with legal requirements. Specifically, in the Business Partner Code of Conduct we require minimisation of environmental impact, continuous improvement of environmental protection and the application of an appropriate environmental management system.

UNGC 7, 8, 9
GRI 308-2

Since the end of 2022, we have been carrying out an assessment with new suppliers depending on the order volume and the products or services. Before the collaboration begins, they receive a special questionnaire from us on the topic of sustainability.

GRI 308-1
GRI 414-1

The Business Partner Code of Conduct also describes the social standards that we expect our business partners to comply with. Suppliers, vendors and other third parties must be treated fairly and transparently at all times and in accordance with applicable laws. This includes equal opportunities and a non-discriminatory working environment.

GRI 2-25
GRI 2-27

■ Observance of and respect for human rights, page 45

Other standards in the Business Partner Code of Conduct relate to the health and safety of business partners' employees and the strict rejection of child, forced or compulsory labour and other practices that violate human rights.

GRI 408-1
GRI 409-1

■ Values and principles, page 37

With the Business Partner Code of Conduct, our business partners also recognise the right to freedom of association of employees and the right to membership of employee organisations and trade unions.

GRI 407-1

When it comes to raw materials, we expect our business partners to closely monitor their supply chains and reject the use of raw materials that are directly or indirectly linked to human rights violations.

Cooperation in the supply chain

Our suppliers mainly work in the software development, IT and marketing fields. We also make use of selective external consulting services.

GRI 2-6

We have initiated measures to make the purchasing processes more uniform, taking greater account of sustainability aspects. All specifications are adapted to the legal and other framework conditions at our locations and are regularly reviewed and updated. The purchasing guideline was revised in the reporting year. The focus here was on regional procurement. Another important aspect was the awarding of contracts to suppliers that promote diversity, equality and inclusion.

The Purchasing department in collaboration with the Corporate Sustainability team has defined criteria such as order volume, product category, company size or location for the selection of new suppliers. The supplier then receives a sustainability questionnaire, which we use to determine whether they have (environmental) certifications such as

GRI 2-23
GRI 308-1
GRI 414-1

ISO 14001 or ISO 50001, participate in projects and ratings such as CDP and EcoVadis, comply with social standards, publish a sustainability report and are participants of the UN Global Compact. The process depends on the product or service of the respective business partner.

This approach is intended to enable a more targeted collaboration with our suppliers and service providers, also with regard to sustainability. In 2024, we want to review our current key suppliers using this questionnaire.

The review of current suppliers is carried out in the form of an on-site audit, by telephone or by document review. Where personal data is processed, compliance with the guidelines on information security and data protection is also checked regularly.

In October 2023, we wrote again to the operators of the data centres that we primarily use to gain a better insight into their sustainability strategy and measures to reduce CO₂ and save water. We found that, compared to the previous year, the data centres have made further progress in terms of sustainability and its implementation within the company. Nevertheless, requests for customer-specific values continue to be a challenge for the providers, and both the scope and the quality of the answers vary greatly in some cases.

■ Emissions, page 91

■ Water, page 93

In the coming years, a risk assessment of the most relevant services or products purchased by us is planned. Aspects such as impact on the supply chain, probability of occurrence and potential damage should be included in the analysis to obtain an assessment of the potential risk in relation to social aspects, environment and human rights as well as possible courses of action to limit the risk.

To improve supplier management with regard to human rights issues, we intend to carry out supplier reviews and audits in future. In a first stage, we introduced the Third Parties module internally in 2023. This shows where risks exist in relation to suppliers. As expected, there are some fundamental risks associated with human rights issues in India, but these do not actually materialise due to the active management of these risks on the ground. A more detailed evaluation of the findings of the Third Parties module and defining measures are planned for 2024.

■ Observance of and respect for human rights, page 45

■ Sustainability strategy and goals, page 31



SASB TC-SI-130a.3

GRI 2-25

Report profile

In this report, EQS Group AG documents its sustainability activities and provides an overview of its values and goals.

For the Sustainability Report, we have applied the current GRI-Standards (update 2021), mapped the European Sustainability Reporting Standards (ESRS) and included both in a joint content index. In this way, we aim to cover the diverse requirements in the best possible way, prepare for their future fulfilment and transparently inform our stakeholders about key areas of action, measures, targets and key figures.

GRI 1

■ Content index, page 102

With the voluntary disclosure in accordance with the industry standard “Software and IT Services” of the Sustainability Accounting Standards Board (SASB), EQS Group AG also aims to meet the increasing requirements of investors and other stakeholders. We intend to continuously develop SASB reporting in the coming years.

■ SASB – Software and IT Services, page 119

The consolidated financial statements include EQS Group AG and its subsidiaries.

GRI 2-2

↳ Scope of consolidation, Annual Report 2023, page 102

In the reporting period, Business Keeper GmbH was merged with EQS Group AG with effect from 1 April 2023.

GRI 2-4

↳ Scope of consolidation, Annual report 2023, page 102

■ Company, page 8

The reporting period for both the financial reporting and the sustainability report is 1 January 2023 to 31 December 2023. The sustainability report is published annually. This report was published on 02 May 2024.

GRI 2-3

Contact person for queries relating to the report:

Stephanie Gouze

CSR Manager

sustainability@eqs.com

Procedure for data collection

Unless otherwise described, we define our three largest locations, Munich, Berlin and Kochi, as important operating sites. In total, almost 80 per cent of our employees work here.

GRI 2-6
GRI 2-7

The key figures in the chapter Corporate culture and employees are taken from the personnel system used by EQS.

All information in the Sustainability Report 2023 was reviewed by the Executive Board, critically assessed by the Supervisory Board and approved by both. With the exception of CO₂e emissions, sustainability reporting is not subject to external review. The calculation of EQS Group AG's climate-relevant direct and indirect CO₂e emissions for 2023 was audited and certified by TÜV Rheinland.

GRI 2-5
GRI 2-14

↪ TÜV Certificate Calculation of CO₂e emissions (German)

Content index

The following overview helps with navigating our sustainability report.
Shown are:

GRI 1

- GRI standards,
- UN Global Compact Principles and
- References to the UN Global Compact Communication on Progress questionnaire.

In preparation for the introduction of the EU standards on sustainability reporting, we also provide the European Sustainability Reporting Standards (ESRS, in blue font).

In another table we present an allocation of the SASB requirements.

■ SASB – Software and IT Services, page 119

GRI 2: General Disclosures GRI 2021

GRI-Disclosure

Omission, Page

1. The organization and its reporting practices	
GRI 2-1 Organizational details	p. 8, p. 58
GRI 2-2 Entities included in the organization's sustainability reporting	p. 100
GRI 2-3 Reporting period, frequency and contact point	p. 100
GRI 2-4 Restatements of information	p. 9, p. 26, p. 100
GRI 2-5 External assurance <i>UN Global Compact Communication on Progress: G13</i>	p. 29, p. 87, p. 90, p. 101
2. Activities and workers	
GRI 2-6 Activities, value chain and other business relationships	p. 9, p. 30, p. 33, p. 34, p. 57, p. 58, p. 61, p. 63, p. 98, p. 101
GRI 2-7 Employees	p. 71, p. 72, p. 73, p. 101
GRI 2-8 Workers who are not employees	p. 73
3. Governance	
GRI 2-9 Governance structure and composition <i>UN Global Compact Principle: 6</i> <i>UN Global Compact Communication on Progress: G5, G11</i>	p. 13
GRI 2-10 Nomination and selection of the highest governance body	p. 13
GRI 2-11 Chair of the highest governance body	p. 13

GRI-Disclosure	Omission, Page
GRI 2-12 Role of the highest governance body in overseeing the management of impacts <i>UN Global Compact Principles: 1, 7, 10</i> <i>UN Global Compact Communication on Progress: G1, G7</i>	p. 14, p. 40, p. 43, p. 46, p. 70, p. 87
GRI 2-13 Delegation of responsibility for managing impacts <i>UN Global Compact Principles: 1, 7, 10</i> <i>UN Global Compact Communication on Progress: G4, G5</i>	p. 14, p. 40, p. 41, p. 42, p. 46, p. 70, p. 87
GRI 2-14 Role of the highest governance body in sustainability reporting <i>UN Global Compact Principles: 1, 7</i> <i>UN Global Compact Communication on Progress: G1</i>	p. 14, p.101
GRI 2-15 Conflicts of interest	p. 13
GRI 2-16 Communication of critical concerns	p. 14, p. 41, p. 42, p. 43
GRI 2-17 Collective knowledge of the highest governance body	p. 13
GRI 2-18 Evaluation of the performance of the highest governance body	p. 13, p. 80
GRI 2-19 Remuneration policies <i>UN Global Compact Principles: 1, 7, 10</i> <i>UN Global Compact Communication on Progress: G10</i>	p. 13, p. 32
GRI 2-20 Process to determine remuneration	p. 13
GRI 2-21 Annual total compensation ratio	Not applicable We regard fair pay as an important instrument for employee satisfaction. Remuneration is based on the labour market.
4. Strategy, policies and practices	
GRI 2-22 Statement on sustainable development strategy <i>UN Global Compact Principles: 1, 7</i> <i>UN Global Compact Communication on Progress: G1</i>	p. 4

GRI-Disclosure	Omission, Page
GRI 2-23 Policy commitments <i>UN Global Compact Principles: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10</i> <i>UN Global Compact Communication on Progress: E1.1, G2, G3, G7, G7.1, HR2, HR2.1, L1.1</i>	p. 16, p. 18, p. 28, p. 31, p. 32, p. 33, p. 37, p. 38, p. 39, p. 40, p. 47, p. 69, p. 83, p. 87, p. 97, p. 98
GRI 2-24 Embedding policy commitments	p. 18, p. 37, p. 39
GRI 2-25 Processes to remediate negative impacts	p. 31, p. 32, p. 33, p. 34, p. 35, p. 43, p. 45, p. 48, p. 50, p. 60, p. 87, p. 88, p. 89, p. 93, p. 94, p. 98, p. 99
GRI 2-26 Mechanisms for seeking advice and raising concerns <i>UN Global Compact Principles: 1, 3, 10</i> <i>UN Global Compact Communication on Progress: G8</i>	p. 43, p. 47
GRI 2-27 Compliance with laws and regulations	p. 37, p. 41, p. 42, p. 47, p. 88, p. 98
GRI 2-28 Membership associations	p. 25
5. Stakeholder engagement	
GRI 2-29 Approach to stakeholder engagement	p. 16, p. 18, p. 19, p. 20, p. 21, p. 22, p. 24, p. 87
GRI 2-30 Collective bargaining agreements <i>UN Global Compact Principle: 3</i> <i>UN Global Compact Communication on Progress: L1.2</i>	p. 81

GRI 3: Material Topics GRI 2021

GRI-Disclosure	Omission, Page
GRI 3-1 Process to determine material topics <i>UN Global Compact Communication on Progress: G7, G7.1, HR1, HR3, L2</i>	p. 20, p. 26, p. 27, p. 28
GRI 3-2 List of material topics <i>UN Global Compact Communication on Progress: HR1</i>	p. 20, p.27, p. 86
GRI 3-3 Management of material topics <i>UN Global Compact Communication on Progress: HR2, HR3, HR4, HR5, HR6, HR7, HR8, G7, G9</i>	p. 28

Topic Specific Standards

GRI-Standard ESRS-Standard	GRI-Disclosure ESRS-Disclosure IFRS Sustainability Disclosure Standards	Omission, Page
GRI 201 Economic Performance (2016)		
ESRS 2 General disclosures ESRS E1 Climate change <i>UN Global Compact Communication on Progress:</i> E2, E3, E4, E4.1, E4.2, E5, E8	GRI 201-1 Direct economic value generated and distributed	p. 11
	GRI 201-2 Financial implications and other risks and opportunities due to climate change ESRS 2 SBM-3 – Material impacts, risks and opportunities and their interaction with strategy and business model ESRS E1 Climate change ESRS E1 E1-3 – Actions and resources in relation to climate change policies ESRS E1 E1-9 – Anticipated financial effects from material physical and transition risks and potential climate-related opportunities	p. 30
	GRI 201-3 Defined benefit plan obligations and other retirement plans	p. 81
	GRI 201-4 Financial assistance received from government	In the reporting year, EQS Group AG did not receive any grants in accordance with GRI 201-4.
GRI 202 Market Presence (2016)		
ESRS S1 Own workforce	GRI 202-1 Ratios of standard entry level wage by gender compared to local minimum wage ESRS S1 S1-10 – Adequate wages	Information not available/incomplete Data are not collected
	GRI 202-2 Proportion of senior management hired from the local community	Information not available/incomplete Data are not collected

GRI-Standard ESRS-Standard	GRI-Disclosure ESRS-Disclosure IFRS Sustainability Disclosure Standards	Omission, Page
GRI 203 Indirect Economic Impacts(2016)		
ESRS S1 Own workforce ESRS S2 Workers in the value chain ESRS S3 Affected communities	GRI 203-1 Infrastructure investments and services supported	Not applicable We are actively involved at our locations worldwide and support the social commitment of our employees. Our business activities do not have any significant indirect economic impact. No significant infrastructure investments are required for our activities.
	GRI 203-2 Significant indirect economic impacts ESRS S1 S1-4 – Taking action on material impacts on own workforce, and approaches to mitigating material risks and pursuing material opportunities related to own workforce, and effectiveness of those actions ESRS S2 S2-4 – Taking action on material impacts on value chain workers, and approaches to managing material risks and pursuing material opportunities related to value chain workers, and effectiveness of those action ESRS S3 S3-4 – Taking action on material impacts on affected communities, and approaches to managing material risks and pursuing material opportunities related to affected communities, and effectiveness of those actions	
GRI 204 Procurement Practices(2016)		
	GRI 204-1 Proportion of spending on local suppliers	Information not available/incomplete Data are not collected
GRI 205 Anti-corruption (2016), <i>Material Topic</i>		
ESRS G1 Business conduct <i>UN Global Compact Principle: 10</i> <i>UN Global Compact Communication on Progress: AC1, AC2, AC3, AC3.1, AC4, AC5, AC6, AC7, AC8, G6</i>	GRI 205-1 Operations assessed for risks related to corruption ESRS G1 G1-3 – Prevention and detection of corruption and bribery	p. 44
	GRI 205-2 Communication and training about anti-corruption policies and procedures ESRS G1 G1-3 – Prevention and detection of corruption and bribery	p. 42, p. 44
	GRI 205-3 Confirmed incidents of corruption and actions taken ESRS G1 G1-4 – Confirmed incidents of corruption or bribery	p. 43, p. 44
GRI 206 Anti-competitive Behavior (2016), <i>Material Topic</i>		
	GRI 206-1 Legal actions for anti-competitive behavior, anti-trust, and monopoly practices	p. 44

GRI 207 Tax(2019)		
	GRI 207-1 Approach to tax	p. 11
	GRI 207-2 Tax governance, control, and risk management	p. 12
	GRI 207-3 Stakeholder engagement and management of concerns related to tax	Not applicable We pursue a risk-averse tax strategy and ensure that the company's assets are protected during operational implementation. We also maintain a transparent dialogue with the tax authorities.
	GRI 207-4 Country-by-country reporting	Not applicable We pursue a risk-averse tax strategy and ensure that the company's assets are protected during operational implementation. We also maintain a transparent dialogue with the tax authorities.
GRI 301 Materials(2016)		
ESRS E5 Resource use and circular economy	GRI 301-1 Materials used by weight or volume ESRS E5 E5-4 – Resource inflows	Not applicable As a non-manufacturing company, we do not consider GRI 301 to be relevant.
	GRI 301-2 Recycled input materials used ESRS E5 E5-4 – Resource inflows	
	GRI 301-3 Reclaimed products and their packaging materials	

GRI 302 Energy (2016), <i>Material Topic</i>		
ESRS E1 Climate change <i>UN Global Compact Principles: 7, 8, 9</i> <i>UN Global Compact Communication on Progress: E1, E2, E3, E4, E4.1, E4.2, E5, E9</i>	GRI 302-1 Energy consumption within the organization ESRS E1 E1-5 – Energy consumption and mix	p. 90
	GRI 302-2 Energy consumption outside of the organization	Information not available/incomplete Due to the lack of reference data for some important upstream categories (e.g. capital goods), the figure cannot be fully reported. We only report the energy consumption within our organization. We intend to examine alternative estimates in order to include them in further reporting periods.
	GRI 302-3 Energy intensity ESRS E1 E1-5 – Energy consumption and mix	p. 91
	GRI 302-4 Reduction of energy consumption	p. 89, p. 92
	GRI 302-5 Reductions in energy requirements of products and services	p. 64
GRI 303 Water and Effluents (2018), <i>Material Topic</i>		
ESRS 2 General disclosures ESRS E2 Pollution ESRS E3 Water and marine resources <i>UN Global Compact Principles: 7, 8</i> <i>UN Global Compact Communication on Progress: E1, E2, E3, E4, E4.1, E4.2, E5, E11</i>	GRI 303-1 Interactions with water as a shared resource ESRS 2 SBM-3 – Material impacts, risks and opportunities and their interaction with strategy and business model ESRS 2 MDR-T – Tracking effectiveness of policies and actions through targets ESRS E3 Water and marine resources ESRS E3 E3-2 – Actions and resources related to water and marine resources”	p. 93
	GRI 303-2 Management of water discharge related impacts ESRS E2 E2-3 – Targets related to pollution	p. 93
	GRI 303-3 Water withdrawal	p. 94
	GRI 303-4 Water discharge	Not applicable Water discharged to the sewage system fulfils the usual waste water requirements.
	GRI 303-5 Water consumption ESRS E3 E3-4 – Water consumption	p. 94

GRI 304 Biodiversity (2016)		
ESRS E4 Biodiversity and ecosystems <i>UN Global Compact Principles: 7, 8</i> <i>UN Global Compact Communication on Progress: E1, E2, E3, E4, E4.1, E4.2, E5</i>	GRI 304-1 Operational sites owned, leased, managed in, or adjacent to, protected areas and areas of high biodiversity value outside protected areas ESRS E4 Biodiversity and ecosystems ESRS E4 E4-5 – Impact metrics related to biodiversity and ecosystems change	Not applicable As a non-manufacturing company, EQS Group AG has no immediate need to take action.
	GRI 304-2 Significant impacts of activities, products and services on biodiversity ESRS E4 E4-5 – Impact metrics related to biodiversity and ecosystems change	Not applicable
	GRI 304-3 Habitats protected or restored ESRS E4 E4-3 – Actions and resources related to biodiversity and ecosystems ESRS E4 E4-4 – Targets related to biodiversity and ecosystems	Not applicable
	GRI 304-4 IUCN Red List species and national conservation list species with habitats in areas affected by operations ESRS E4 E4-5 – Impact metrics related to biodiversity and ecosystems change	Not applicable
GRI 305 Emissions (2016), <i>Material Topic</i>		
ESRS E1 Climate change ESRS E2 Pollution <i>UN Global Compact Principles: 7, 8, 9</i> <i>UN Global Compact Communication on Progress: E1, E2, E3, E4, E4.1, E4.2, E5, E6, E6.1</i>	GRI 305-1 Direct (Scope 1) GHG emissions ESRS E1 E1-4 – Targets related to climate change mitigation and adaptation ESRS E1 E1-6 – Gross Scopes 1, 2, 3 and Total GHG emissions <i>IFRS S2 29</i>	p. 91
	GRI 305-2 Energy indirect (Scope 2) GHG emissions ESRS E1 E1-4 – Targets related to climate change mitigation and adaptation ESRS E1 E1-6 – Gross Scopes 1, 2, 3 and Total GHG emissions <i>IFRS S2 29</i>	p. 91
	GRI 305-3 Other indirect (Scope 3) GHG emissions ESRS E1 E1-4 – Targets related to climate change mitigation and adaptation ESRS E1 E1-6 – Gross Scopes 1, 2, 3 and Total GHG emissions <i>IFRS S2 29</i>	p. 91, p. 92, p. 93

GRI-Standard ESRS-Standard	GRI-Disclosure ESRS-Disclosure IFRS Sustainability Disclosure Standards	Omission, Page
	GRI 305-4 GHG emissions intensity ESRS E1 E1-6 – Gross Scopes 1, 2, 3 and Total GHG emissions	p. 92
	GRI 305-5 Reduction of GHG emissions ESRS E1 E1-3 – Actions and resources in relation to climate change policies ESRS E1 E1-4 – Targets related to climate change mitigation and adaptation ESRS E1 E1-7 – GHG removals and GHG mitigation projects financed through carbon credits <i>IFRS S2 33</i>	p. 88, p. 89, p. 92
	GRI 305-6 Emissions of ozone-depleting substances(ODS)	In 2023, we emitted 74 g of CFC-11 equivalent. They originate from the air conditioning systems supplied with R22 in Belgrade and Kochi. Calculation for each appliance: CFC-11 equivalent (tonnes) = gas consumption of the unit (kg) x annual operational emissions(% of capacity/year) x proportion of capacity use by EQS (% of area used by EQS) x activity level of the unit (% of time in use) x ozone depletion potential x annual proportion x 10E-6
	GRI 305-7 Nitrogen oxides (NOx), sulfur oxides (SOx), and other significant air emissions ESRS E2 E2-4 – Pollution of air, water and soil	Not applicable The calculation of the mentioned gases was not carried out due to the nature of our business

GRI 306 Waste (2020), <i>Material Topic</i>		
ESRS 2 General disclosures ESRS E5 Resource use and circular economy <i>UN Global Compact Principles: 7, 8</i> <i>UN Global Compact Communication on Progress: E1, E2, E3, E4, E4.1, E4.2, E5, E6</i>	GRI 306-1 Waste generation and significant waste-related impacts ESRS 2 SBM-3 – Material impacts, risks and opportunities and their interaction with strategy and business model ESRS E5 E5-4 – Resource inflows	Not applicable We do not consider GRI 306-1 and GRI 306-2 to be relevant. Our business activities mainly generate waste from normal office activities, which is recycled or disposed of in an environmentally friendly manner via certified waste disposal providers.
	GRI 306-2 Management of significant waste-related impacts ESRS E5 E5-2 – Actions and resources related to resource use and circular economy ESRS E5 E5-5 – Resource outflows	
	GRI 306-3 Waste generated ESRS E5 E5-5 – Resource outflows	p. 94
	GRI 306-4 Waste diverted from disposal ESRS E5 E5-5 – Resource outflows	Not applicable We do not consider GRI 306-1 and GRI 306-2 to be relevant. Our business activities mainly generate waste from normal office activities, which is recycled or disposed of in an environmentally friendly manner via certified waste disposal providers.
	GRI 306-5 Waste directed to disposal ESRS E5 E5-5 – Resource outflows	
GRI 308 Supplier Environmental Assessment (2016), <i>Material Topic</i>		
ESRS 2 General disclosures ESRS G1 Business conduct	GRI 308-1 New suppliers that were screened using environmental criteria ESRS G1 G1-2 – Management of relationships with suppliers	p. 98
	GRI 308-2 Negative environmental impacts in the supply chain and actions taken ESRS 2 SBM-3 – Material impacts, risks and opportunities and their interaction with strategy and business model	p. 97
GRI 401 Employment (2016)		
ESRS S1 Own workforce	GRI 401-1 New employee hires and employee turnover ESRS S1 S1-6 – Characteristics of the undertaking's employees	p. 74, p. 82
	GRI 401-2 Benefits provided to full-time employees that are not provided to temporary or parttime employees ESRS S1 S1-11 – Social protection	p. 74
	GRI 401-3 Parental leave ESRS S1 S1-15 – Work-life balance metrics	p. 75

GRI 402 Labor/Management Relations (2016)		
	GRI 402-1 Minimum notice periods regarding operational changes	p. 75
GRI 403 Occupational Health and Safety (2018), <i>Material Topic</i>		
ESRS S1 Own workforce ESRS S2 Workers in the value chain <i>UN Global Compact Communication on Progress:</i> L1, L2, L3, L4, L5, L9, L10, L11, L12	GRI 403-1 Occupational health and safety management system ESRS S1 S1-1 – Policies related to own workforce	Not applicable
	GRI 403-2 Hazard identification, risk assessment, and incident investigation ESRS S1 S1-3 – Processes to remediate negative impacts and channels for own workers to raise concerns	p. 77
	GRI 403-3 Occupational health services	p. 77, p. 78
	GRI 403-4 Worker participation, consultation, and communication on occupational health and safety	p. 74, p. 77
	GRI 403-5 Worker training on occupational health and safety	p. 74, p. 77
	GRI 403-6 Promotion of worker health	p. 74, p. 77, p. 78
	GRI 403-7 Prevention and mitigation of occupational health and safety impacts directly linked by business relationships ESRS S2 S2-4 – Taking action on material impacts on value chain workers, and approaches to managing material risks and pursuing material opportunities related to value chain workers, and effectiveness of those action	p. 77
	GRI 403-8 Workers covered by an occupational health and safety management system ESRS S1 S1-14 – Health and safety metrics	Not applicable
	GRI 403-9 Work-related injuries ESRS S1 S1-4 – Taking action on material impacts on own workforce, and approaches to mitigating material risks and pursuing material opportunities related to own workforce, and effectiveness of those actions ESRS S1 S1-14 – Health and safety metrics	p. 78
	GRI 403-10 Work-related ill health ESRS S1 S1-4 – Taking action on material impacts on own workforce, and approaches to mitigating material risks and pursuing material opportunities related to own workforce, and effectiveness of those actions ESRS S1 S1-14 – Health and safety metrics	p. 78

GRI 404 Training and Education (2016), <i>Material Topic</i>		
ESRS S1 Own workforce	GRI 404-1 Average hours of training per year per employee ESRS S1 S1-13 – Training and skills development metrics	Information not available/incomplete In the reporting year we changed our online training provider, which is why complete data is not available. Data will be published in the Sustainability Report 2024. p. 79
	GRI 404-2 Programs for upgrading employee skills and transition assistance programs ESRS S1 S1-1 – Policies related to own workforce	p. 44, p. 45, p. 48, p. 56, p. 74, p. 76, p. 79, p. 80, p. 82
	GRI 404-3 Percentage of employees receiving regular performance and career development reviews ESRS S1 S1-13 – Training and skills development metrics	Regular performance reviews are held with all employees. p. 80
GRI 405 Diversity and Equal Opportunity (2016), <i>Material Topic</i>		
ESRS 2 Workers in the value chain ESRS S1 Own workforce <i>UN Global Compact Principles: 1, 2, 6</i> <i>UN Global Compact Communication on Progress: G11, L7, L8</i>	GRI 405-1 Diversity of governance bodies and employees ESRS 2 GOV-1 – The role of the administrative, supervisory and management bodies ESRS S1 S1-6 – Characteristics of the undertaking's employees ESRS S1 S1-9 – Diversity metrics ESRS S1 S1-12– Persons with disabilities	p. 13, p. 73, p. 81, p. 83
	GRI 405-2 Ratio of basic salary and remuneration of women to men ESRS S1 S1-16 – Compensation metrics (pay gap and total compensation)	p. 81
GRI 406 Non-discrimination (2016), <i>Material Topic</i>		
ESRS S1 Own workforce <i>UN Global Compact Principles: 1, 2, 6</i> <i>UN Global Compact Communication on Progress: L1, L2, L3, L4, L5, L11, L12</i>	GRI 406-1 Incidents of discrimination and corrective actions taken ESRS S1 S1-17 – Incidents, complaints and severe human rights impacts	p. 83
GRI 407 Freedom of Association and Collective Bargaining (2016)		
<i>UN Global Compact Principle: 3</i> <i>UN Global Compact Communication on Progress: L1, L2, L3, L4, L5, L11, L12</i>	GRI 407-1 Operations and suppliers in which the right to freedom of association and collective bargaining may be at risk	p. 45, p. 69, p. 98

GRI-Standard ESRS-Standard	GRI-Disclosure ESRS-Disclosure IFRS Sustainability Disclosure Standards	Omission, Page
GRI 408 Child Labor (2016), <i>Material Topic</i>		
ESRS S1 Own workforce ESRS S2 Workers in the value chain <i>UN Global Compact Principles: 1, 2, 5</i> <i>UN Global Compact Communication on Progress: L1, L2, L3, L4, L5, L11, L12</i>	GRI 408-1 Operations and suppliers at significant risk for incidents of child labor ESRS S1 – Own workforce ESRS S1 S1-1 – Policies related to own workforce ESRS S2 – Workers in the value chain ESRS S2 S2-1 – Policies related to value chain workers	p. 45, p. 98
GRI 409 Forced or Compulsory Labor (2016), <i>Material Topic</i>		
ESRS S1 Own workforce ESRS S2 Workers in the value chain <i>UN Global Compact Principles: 1, 2, 4</i> <i>UN Global Compact Communication on Progress: L1, L2, L3, L4, L5, L11, L12</i>	GRI 409-1 Operations and suppliers at significant risk for incidents of forced or compulsory labor ESRS S1 – Own workforce ESRS S1 S1-1 – Policies related to own workforce ESRS S2 – Workers in the value chain ESRS S2 S2-1 – Policies related to value chain workers	p. 45, p. 98
GRI 410 Security Practices (2016)		
	GRI 410-1 Security personnel trained in human rights policies or procedures	Not applicable Due to the nature of our business activities, we do not consider this aspect to be relevant.
GRI 411 Rights of Indigenous Peoples (2016), <i>Material Topic</i>		
ESRS S3 Affected communities	GRI 411-1 Incidents of violations involving rights of indigenous peoples ESRS S3 S3-1 – Policies related to affected communities ESRS S3 S3-4 – Taking action on material impacts on affected communities, and approaches to managing material risks and pursuing material opportunities related to affected communities, and effectiveness of those actions"	no cases
Observance of and respect for human rights*, <i>Material Topic</i>		
<i>UN Global Compact Principles: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5</i>	Against the background of taking a more comprehensive view of reporting obligations on the topic of human rights, topic standard 412: Human Rights Assessment was integrated into the Universal Standards as part of the GRI Updates GRI 2021 and deleted. EQS Group AG has defined compliance with and respect for human rights as a material topic. We refer here to the subchapter Observance of and respect for human rights, page 45	

* formerly GRI 412: Human Rights Assessment

GRI 413 Local Communities (2016)		
ESRS 2 General disclosures ESRS S3 Affected communities	GRI 413-1 Operations with local community engagement, impact assessments, and development programs ESRS S3 S3-2 – Processes for engaging with affected communities about impacts ESRS S3 S3-3 – Processes to remediate negative impacts and channels for affected communities to raise concerns ESRS S3 S3-4 – Taking action on material impacts on affected communities, and approaches to managing material risks and pursuing material opportunities related to affected communities, and effectiveness of those actions”	p. 84
	GRI 413-2 Operations with significant actual and potential negative impacts on local communities ESRS 2 SBM-3 – Material impacts, risks and opportunities and their interaction with strategy and business model ESRS S3 – Affected communities	p. 12
GRI 414 Supplier Social Assessment (2016), <i>Material Topic</i>		
ESRS 2 General disclosures ESRS G1 Business conduct UN Global Compact Principle: 2	GRI 414-1 New suppliers that were screened using social criteria ESRS G1 G1-2 – Management of relationships with suppliers	p. 98
	GRI 414-2 Negative social impacts in the supply chain and actions taken ESRS 2 SBM-3 – Material impacts, risks and opportunities and their interaction with strategy and business model	p. 45, p. 97
GRI 415 Public Policy (2016)		
ESRS G1 Business conduct	GRI 415-1 Political contributions ESRS G1 G1-5 – Political influence and lobbying activities	p. 24
GRI 416 Customer Health and Safety (2016), <i>Material Topic</i>		
ESRS S4 Consumers and end-users	GRI 416-1 Assessment of the health and safety impacts of product and service categories	Not applicable Due to the nature of our business activities, we do not consider this aspect material for us.
	GRI 416-2 Incidents of non-compliance concerning the health and safety impacts of products and services ESRS S4 S4-4 – Taking action on material impacts on consumers and end-users, and approaches to managing material risks and pursuing material opportunities related to consumers and end-users, and effectiveness of those actions	

GRI-Standard ESRS-Standard	GRI-Disclosure ESRS-Disclosure IFRS Sustainability Disclosure Standards	Omission, Page
GRI 417 Marketing and Labeling (2016), <i>Material Topic</i>		
ESRS S4 Consumers and end-users	GRI 417-1 Requirements for product and service information and labeling	p. 68
	GRI 417-2 Incidents of non-compliance concerning product and service information and labeling ESRS S4 S4-4 – Taking action on material impacts on consumers and end-users, and approaches to managing material risks and pursuing material opportunities related to consumers and end-users, and effectiveness of those actions	p. 68
	GRI 417-3 Incidents of non-compliance concerning marketing communications ESRS S4 S4-4 – Taking action on material impacts on consumers and end-users, and approaches to managing material risks and pursuing material opportunities related to consumers and end-users, and effectiveness of those actions	p. 68
GRI 418 Customer Privacy (2016), <i>Material Topic</i>		
ESRS S4 Consumers and end-users	GRI 418-1 Substantiated complaints concerning breaches of customer privacy and losses of customer data ESRS S4 S4-3 – Processes to remediate negative impacts and channels for consumers and end-users to raise concerns ESRS S4 S4-4 – Taking action on material impacts on consumers and end-users, and approaches to managing material risks and pursuing material opportunities related to consumers and end-users, and effectiveness of those actions	p. 50, p. 51

SASB – Software and IT Services

SASB-Topic and -Code | GRI-Reference

SASB Accounting Metric

Omission, Page

Environmental Footprint of Hardware Infrastructure

TC-SI-130a.1 <i>GRI 302: Energy (2016)</i>	(1) Total energy consumed	p. 90
	(2) Percentage grid electricity	
	(3) Percentage renewable	
TC-SI-130a.2 <i>GRI 303: Water and Effluents (2018)</i>	(1) Total water withdrawn	p. 93
	(2) Total water consumed, percentage of each in regions with High or Extremely High Base-line Water Stress	
TC-SI-130a.3	Discussion of the integration of environmental considerations into strategic planning for data center needs	p. 89, p. 99

Data Privacy & Freedom of Expression

TC-SI-220a.1 <i>GRI 417: Marketing and Labeling (2016)</i> <i>GRI 418: Customer Privacy (2016)</i>	Description of policies and practices relating to behavioral advertising and user privacy	EQS does not engage in behavioural advertising. p. 49, p. 50
TC-SI-220a.2	Number of users whose information is used for secondary purposes	EQS does not use user data for secondary purposes. p. 49
TC-SI-220a.3	Total amount of monetary losses as a result of legal proceedings associated with user privacy	Legal proceedings related to the protection of user data did not take place. p. 50
TC-SI-220a.4	(1) Number of law enforcement requests for user information	No data was requested from law enforcement agencies. In 2023, eight enquiries from affected users were finalised and no complaints were subsequently received. p. 50, p. 51
	(2) Number of users whose information was requested	
	(3) Percentage resulting in disclosure	

SASB-Topic and -Code GRI-Reference	SASB Accounting Metric	Omission, Page
TC-SI-220a.5	List of countries where core products or services are subject to government-required monitoring, blocking, content filtering, or censoring	There is no monitoring, blocking, content filtering or censorship due to regulatory, judicial or law enforcement requests or requirements. p. 51
Data Security		
TC-SI-230a.1 <i>GRI 418: Customer Privacy (2016)</i>	(1) Number of data breaches	In 2023, eight enquiries from affected users were finalised and no complaints were subsequently received. p. 50,
	(2) Percentage involving personally identifiable information (PII)	
	(3) Number of users affected	
TC-SI-230a.2	Description of approach to identifying and addressing data security risks, including use of third-party cybersecurity standards	p. 47, p. 51, p. 53
Recruiting & Managing a Global, Diverse & Skilled Workforce		
TC-SI-330a.1 <i>GRI 2-7: Employees</i> <i>GRI 401: Employment (2016)</i>	Percentage of employees that are	p. 72, p. 81
	(1) foreign nationals and	
	(2) located offshore	
TC-SI-330a.2	Employee engagement as a percentage	p. 76
TC-SI-330a.3	Percentage of gender and racial/ethnic group representation for	p. 71
	(1) Management	
	(2) technical staff	
	(3) all other employees	
Intellectual Property Protection & Competitive Behavior		
TC-SI-520a.1 <i>GRI 206: Anti-competitive Behavior (2016)</i>	Total amount of monetary losses as a result of legal proceedings associated with anticompetitive behavior regulations	There were no legal proceedings related to anti-competitive behaviour. p. 44

Managing Systemic Risks from Technology Disruptions

TC-SI-550a.1

GRI 206: Anti-competitive Behavior (2016)

Number of

(1) Performance issues and

(2) Service disruptions

(3) Total customer downtime

No data available

TC-SI-550a.2

Description of business continuity risks related to disruptions of operations

No data available
p. 66

UN Global Compact

Principles		Our commitment and measures	Page
Principle 1	Avoid complicity in human rights violation	Human rights issues are an integral part of the EQS Group Code of Conduct and the Business Partner Code of Conduct. We respect the values and guidelines of various organisations, such as the core labour standards of the International Labour Organization (ILO) or the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises and strive to apply them in our daily business.	p. 28, p. 45, p. 81, p. 83, p. 96
Principle 2	Avoid complicity in human rights violations		p. 45, p. 81, p. 83, p. 96
Principle 3	Uphold the freedom of association		p. 45, p. 69, p. 96
Principle 4	The elimination of all forms of forced labour	We expressly distance ourselves from child labour, forced labour or compulsory labour and expect the same from our business partners.	p. 45, p. 96
Principle 5	The abolition of child labour		p. 45, p. 96
Principle 6	The elimination of discrimination	EQS Group is committed to the principles of diversity and equal opportunities. We do not tolerate discrimination against people on the basis of origin, skin colour, religion, gender identity, sexual orientation or disability under any circumstances.	p. 45, p. 81, p. 83, p. 96
Principle 7	Preventative environmental protection	We want to make a positive contribution to environmental protection and therefore continuously and systematically improve our existing resource-saving and sustainable measures. Environmental protection aspects are firmly anchored in our Codes of Conduct.	p. 28, p. 89, p. 93, p. 96, p. 97
Principle 8	Initiatives for a greater sense of responsibility for the environment		p. 89, p. 93, p. 96, p. 97
Principle 9	Development and distribution of environmentally friendly technologies		p. 89, p. 93, p. 96, p. 97
Principle 10	Measures against corruption	With our products and services, we are helping to combat abuses such as corruption. The EQS Group Code of Conduct is based, among other things, on the United Nations Convention against Corruption. Our internal anti-corruption guidelines are the subject of regular training for our employees.	p. 41, p. 44, p. 96

Imprint

EQS Group AG
Karlstraße 47
80333 Munich
Germany

Phone: +49 (0) 89 444 430-000
Fax: +49 (0) 89 444 430-049
Email: contact@eqs.com

Executive Board:

Achim Weick, founder and CEO
Christian Pfleger, COO
André Silvério Marques, CFO
Marcus Sultzer, CRO

Copyright:

© 2024 EQS Group AG. All rights reserved.

Consultancy and concept design:

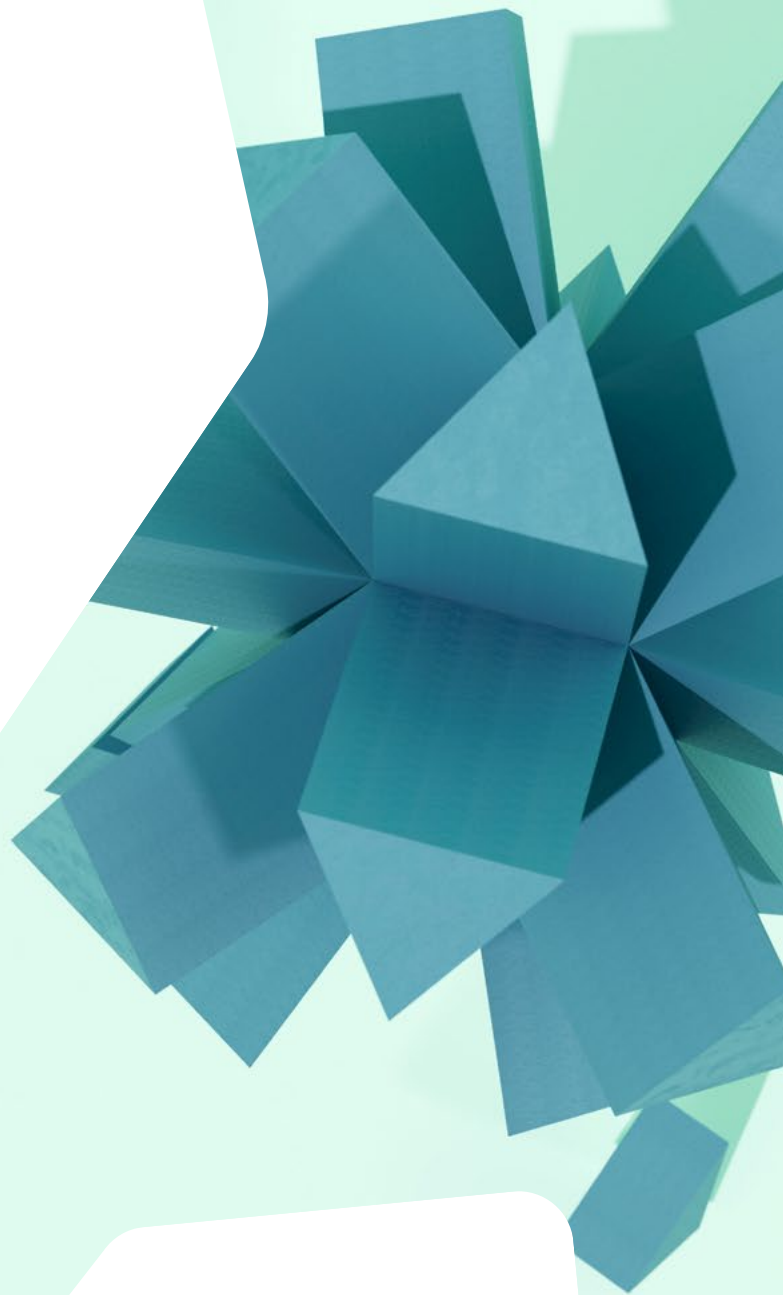
SLau Konzepte & Kommunikation

Concept & design, editorial and realisation:

EQS Group AG

Image material:

© EQS Group AG. All rights reserved.



CREATING TRUSTED
COMPANIES »