

# World Forum The Hague

## Sustainability Report 2023



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## Foreword

The year 2023 was a challenging one for World Forum, recovering not as fast as we hoped from the Covid period.. Despite these challenges, we successfully navigated these turbulent waters, demonstrating resilience and adaptability. A key strategic decision was made to adopt English as our official working language, facilitating better communication and integration among our increasingly diverse international workforce.

This year also saw a significant strengthening of our commitment to sustainability and corporate social responsibility. We appointed a dedicated CSR officer to spearhead our initiatives, ensuring a focused and structured approach to our environmental and social goals. One of our major undertakings was the commencement of CO2 emissions calculations in collaboration with our parent company GL events. This initiative allows us to monitor and manage our environmental impact more effectively, ensuring that we are on track to meet our sustainability targets.

In our pursuit of creating an inclusive environment, we proudly partnered with the Hidden Disabilities Sunflower initiative. This program helps individuals with non-visible disabilities, such as autism, chronic pain, or learning difficulties, by allowing them to wear a discreet sunflower symbol. This enables our staff and the public to recognize when someone might need extra assistance or patience, fostering a more understanding and supportive community within our venue.

We also forged a partnership with the Saffier Nebo Elderly Home, emphasizing our commitment to local community value. Together, we are working on projects that support both the elderly and individuals with hidden disabilities, aligning with our broader goal of creating a positive societal impact.

Even though we were already making a very significant progress in energy efficiency guided by the GL venues network, we undertook new local initiatives to further reduce our energy consumption. Our continuous efforts in this area underscore our dedication to environmental stewardship and our role as a responsible business leader.

Moreover, we made significant progress in workplace safety, achieving a 10% reduction in incidents compared to 2022. This improvement, from 13 incidents in 2022 to 10 in 2023, highlights our commitment to providing a safe and secure environment for all our employees and visitors.

In conclusion, 2023 was a year of overcoming obstacles, embracing change, and advancing our sustainability journey. We are proud of the strides we have made and remain committed to fostering an inclusive, responsible, and forward-thinking organization. We look forward to building on these achievements in the years to come.

Sincerely,

Michiel Middendorf  
General Manager World Forum The Hague



## 1. Organization

### **The company**

World Forum is a full-service convention centre located in The Hague, the city of peace and justice.

World Forum was officially opened in 1969 and was originally known as Het Nederlands Congresgebouw (Dutch Conference Building). The opening ceremony was attended by dignitaries including His Royal Highness Prince Bernhard of the Netherlands. The building was designed by architect Jacobus Johannes Pieter Oud in the style of Dutch functionalism, which was ultramodern in the 1960s.

Het Nederlandse Congresgebouw became extremely well-known internationally as the venue for the North Sea Jazz Festival from 1976 through 2005. Artists such as Miles Davis, Dizzy Gillespie, Lionel Hampton and Candy Dulfer performed at the venue. Other leading world figures including Neil Armstrong, Kofi Annan, Bill Gates, Hillary Clinton and Barack Obama also spoke at large top-level international conferences held at World Forum.

### *GL events*

GL events Since 2009, GL events, a French company, has been responsible for commercial operations at World Forum. With offices and locations on five continents and in more than 20 countries, GL events is a key player in the international conference and event industry. GL events manages a network of 57 locations in Europe, South America, Asia and South Africa. This is a unique and varied range of event locations such as conference centres, exhibition centres, reception areas and multifunctional rooms.

### *City The Hague*

The City of The Hague once again became owner of the World Forum building in July 2013. Major investments have since then been made in several areas including technical systems and a new exhibition space. World Forum is consequently ready for the future and, together with the City of The Hague, is focusing on attracting major international conferences.

**Vision: World Forum The Hague guarantees a successful implementation of international high quality secured events with a personal touch.**

World Forum comes with endless possibilities and fifty years of experience in organising events. In doing so, World Forum always proceeds from four focus areas: Safety & Security, Sustainability, Education, Vitality and Service. World Forum is a pioneer in the field of Safety & Security, heavily invests to make the building and its events sustainable, focuses on the vitality of employees and visitors, exceeds expectations with the experience that is created and does everything possible to transfer knowledge and invest in educational projects at all times.

**1. Safety & Security**

World Forum The Hague is a forerunner when it comes to Safety & Security with over 10 years of experience in this field. At World Forum The Hague, we know that the guests, the organisation and the team must be safe and feel safe at all times. Safety requirements are reviewed and adjusted for each event.

**2. Sustainability**

World Forum The Hague is very committed to sustainability. Its sustainability policy is divided into five programmes known as *Think Green*, *Think People*, *Think Local*, *Think Ethic* and *Think Safe*. Within these programmes, goals are set annually by the CRS officer and various initiatives are developed. For example, World Forum is a member of the UN Global Compact and MVO Nederland and we hold several certificates.

**3. Education**

At World Forum The Hague, education is paramount. We are a knowledge institute and invest in educational projects and development. Michiel Middendorf, General Manager, is committed to various courses by giving guest lectures. In addition, World Forum offers internship programmes at all departments. The growth of students, but also of our own team, is key to World Forum.

**4. Vitality**

World Forum invests in the vitality of its team and guests during and after events. This is reflected in all departments and processes of the company, which is tested by ISO 20121 and The Golden Greenkey, among others. World Forum offers various vital activities and menus to keep guests energised throughout the day. Various activities are also organised throughout the year for the World Forum team, with vitality being the starting point.

**Service**

World Forum exceeds expectations and works daily on an optimal 'experience' for the guests. As a guest of World Forum The Hague, an event can be attended with peace of mind. Everything is tailored to visitors' specific wishes and requirements.

## The organisational structure

GL events, a French company, is responsible for commercially operating World Forum.

GL events' mission is to support companies, foundations and event organisers in every step of the process, from defining their event strategies to field implementation eventually.

GL events has offices and locations in five continents and more than 20 countries. It is a key player within the international conference and event industry. World Forum is one of more than 50 conference venues managed by GL events. World Forum's daily operations are the responsibility of the General Manager. He will update the Managing Director and Venue Management at GL events' headquarters in Lyon.



### *Employees*

In 2023, World Forum The Hague's workforce consisted of an average of 51,78 FTE. The male-female ratio among these employees is 40% male and 60% female.

In 2023, a total of 10 trainees were actively placed with all World Forum departments throughout the year.

### *Organisational chart*

World Forum The Hague's organisational chart for 2023 can be found in Appendix 1 of this report (page 43).

## **The market**

World Forum focuses on the international congress market, which is divided into the following clients: Associations, Institutional and Corporate. In addition, World Forum has the largest theatre room in the Netherlands (2,161 seats), where various cultural performances take place during the off-peak season.

### *Associations*

By association we mean a national or international society of people with the same interest or discipline. The characteristics of association conferences are that they are mainly recurrent events, requested a long time ahead and which are hardly organised again within a short period of time within the same country. Association conferences rotate between different countries. The organisation of this type of conferences is mostly in the hands of a group of initiators that form a "local organising committee" (l.o.c.). This local counterpart invites the international association to hold the conference in their home country. The association market consists of the following customers: labour unions, associations, federations, clubs, and political parties.

### *Institutional*

The institutional market refers to meetings on national, European, or international level. The ministerial conferences taking place at the World Forum are mainly organised by the Dutch ministries destined for both international and national ministries. Ministries gather to exchange ministerial subjects, to their points of views or meet. Those attending these meetings can be of national or international origin. The institutional market includes local and regional authorities, ministries, NGOs (Non- Governmental Organisations), universities, civil services, and governments.

### *Corporate*

The corporate market is made up of national and international industries, as well as national event companies. Corporate meetings are (inter)national meetings with a business goal (meetings, product launching, relation events, training, incentives, etc). World Forum focuses mainly on companies from the UK. The corporate market mainly consists of businesses, event agencies and trade fair organisers.

### *Culture & Entertainment*

World Forum's cultural relations are major national impresarios and producers. They bring national and international artists, musicals, and other cultural performances of top quality to the World Forum Theatre.

## **Stakeholders**

World Forum has the following stakeholders: clients, vendors and partners, local stakeholders, industry associations, NGOs, the GL events group, employees, competitors, visitors and local residents. Regular consultations are held with various stakeholders, and they are updated on developments taking place at World Forum. The sustainability report is distributed via the digital newsletter and can also be downloaded from World Forum's website ([www.worldforum.nl](http://www.worldforum.nl)).

### *Ensuring quality*

World Forum has high standards for quality and hospitality. In 2019, World Forum was ISO-9001 and ISO-20121 certified. ISO 9001 is an internationally recognised standard in the field of quality management and provides guidelines that a good quality management system must meet. NEN-EN-ISO-9001 helps World Forum manage and improve business processes.

One of the processes that World Forum follows closely is the internal and external evaluation process. Great value is attached to the opinions and suggestions of clients attending a conference or event. Based on this, quality can be maintained and improved where necessary.

### *Compliance*

World Forum has a Compliance Manager who maintains an overview to ensure that the organisation operates in accordance with the applicable laws and regulations. This includes anti-bribery and anti-corruption measures. For example, the entire purchasing process is monitored, the two-eyes principle applies for checking invoices and a notification is automatically received when a new bank account is created, and gifts are registered.



## **Sustainability Policy - ISO 20121**

Since 2019, World Forum has been ISO 20121 certified. ISO 20121 has been developed for the event industry and is intended to prioritise sustainability when organising events. The standard is based on the location, culture and demographics of an event.

World Forum pursues the following sustainable policy:

- Respecting our clients, employees, and environment
- Being an open company, inside and outside in order to remain vigilant and proactive in a dynamic and changing industry. Involving our employees in the company's projects, working in partnerships and co-building with our stakeholders. Communicating every objective and change often with all the shareholders.
- Participating in the dynamism of the event industry in terms of sustainability standards.
- Making our practices clear and understandable, in order to be ethic and performant with our customers, in compliance with legal and regulatory requirements.
- Constantly challenging ourselves to have better and more sustainable practices to make sure that we continuously improve ourselves as a company.

World Forum is managed by GL events Group, a major player in the world events industry, that has been committed to sustainability for ten years through five programmes: Think Green, Think People, Think Local, Think Safe and Think Ethic. In accordance with its vision and as a declination of GL events group's corporate programs, World Forum commits to develop and implement a specific sustainability policy in order to meet stakeholders' expectations on our major sustainability issues with the following objectives:

		Target
Think Green	<b>WASTE</b>	Improving the waste separation process to reduce waste compared to 2022
	<b>ENERGY</b>	Reducing the energy consumption by 25% compared to 2022
	<b>FOOD &amp; BEVERAGES</b>	Enthuse the staff to eat less meat
Think People	<b>WELL-BEING AND VITALITY</b>	Make the team more vital
Think Local	<b>CREATING LOCAL VALUES</b>	Create 1 new local initiative, possibly together with other (local) partners
Think Ethic	<b>INCLUSIVITY</b>	Include 1 staff member in the team with a labor market disadvantage
Think Safe	<b>SAFETY</b>	Reduce the incidents in World Forum compared to 2022 by 10%

Within these programmes, World Forum also contributes to achieving the following Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) drafted by the United Nations:

- SDG 3: Good health and wellbeing
- SDG 4: Inclusive and quality education
- SDG 7: Affordable and sustainable energy
- SDG 8: Decent work and economic growth
- SDG 16: Peace, security and strong public services

World Forum aims to continue to develop these five programmes and their Sustainable Development Goals in the years to come.

World Forum is also an organisation affiliated with the UN Global Compact. With this, World Forum is implementing the 10 principles, as propagated by the United Nations, in everyday business operations. Ten principles involving the pillars of human rights, labour, environment and anti-corruption:

- 1<sup>st</sup> principle:* companies must support and respect the protection of internationally proclaimed human rights
- 2<sup>nd</sup> principle:* make sure they are not complicit in human rights abuses
- 3<sup>rd</sup> principle:* companies must uphold the freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective negotiation
- 4<sup>th</sup> principle:* the elimination of all forms of forced and compulsory labour
- 5<sup>th</sup> principle:* the effective abolition of child labour
- 6<sup>th</sup> principle:* the elimination of discrimination in the employment and occupation market
- 7<sup>th</sup> principle:* companies should support a precautionary approach to environmental challenges
- 8<sup>th</sup> principle:* take initiatives to promote greater environmental responsibility
- 9<sup>th</sup> principle:* encourage the development and diffusion of environmentally friendly technologies
- 10<sup>th</sup> principle:* companies must fight corruption in all its forms, including extortion and bribery.

### *Green Recovery Business Statement*

Over 200 companies have signed the Green Recovery Statement. With it, the Dutch business community is advocating sustainable economic recovery after the corona crisis.

The Green Recovery Statement was called into existence on the initiative of the Dutch Sustainable Growth Coalition (DSGC), in association with VNO-NCW, Global Compact Nederland, MVO Nederland and the Nederlandse Vereniging van Banken. Several major names within the business community have signed the initiative, including Philips, KLM, Shell, AholdDelhaize, Heineken, ABN Amro, ING, FrieslandCampina, DSM, Rabobank and Unilever.

World Forum too has put its signature to the Green Recovery Business Statement, emphasising the extent to which sustainability matters when it comes to recovering from COVID-19.

The main elements of the Green Recovery Statement are the following:

1. Making the EU Green Deal the cornerstone of EU recovery plans.
2. Making sure any investments following from the COVID-19 recovery plan, take the economy to the next level in realising the SDGs and targets stated in the Paris Agreement.
3. Offering long-term certainty and certainty when it comes to the Dutch Climate Agreement and measurable commitments.

## **Certifications**

World Forum The Hague holds the following certifications, both in the field of sustainability and within the conference industry in general.

### **Green Key**

World Forum The Hague has held the Golden Green Key for years. Green Key is a well-known international quality mark for sustainable companies in the recreation and leisure sector. This certificate proves that World Forum invests best efforts to minimise the impact of its company on nature and the environment. Green Key companies go beyond ordinary legislation and regulations requirements.

### **YOIN**

YOIN excellent meeting places is the reliable quality label for conference and event locations. YOIN excellent meeting places advises, supports and assesses locations independently on quality, expertise, reliability, innovation and service. The criteria on which the audit is based meet e.g. the Building Decree, regulations and legislation and procurement criteria of governments and corporates. World Forum has the CERTIFIED standard of this quality label.

### **ISO 9001**

Since 2019, World Forum The Hague has held the ISO 9001 certificate. ISO 9001 is an internationally acknowledged standard in the field of quality management and provides guidelines that a good quality management system must meet. NEN-EN-ISO-9001 helps control and improve the organisation's business processes.

### **ISO 20121**

World Forum The Hague has been ISO 20121 certified since 2019. ISO 20121 was developed for the event industry and aims to help make sustainability a priority when organising events. The standard is for both event companies and companies that organise events. The standard takes into account the location, culture and demographics of the event.

### **Accessibility and Events Certificate**

World Forum The Hague has the accessibility and events certificate. During the research in the field of accessibility, the wheelchair-accessible base, the environment, the layout of the rooms, communication and safety for people with a long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairment were explored.

## **Memberships & Partners**

World Forum is a member of several national and international organisations in the field of sustainability. In these networks, World Forum is a participant in the exchange of knowledge and experience on corporate social responsibility, not only within its own MICE market, but also on a wider scale.

In addition to memberships in the field of sustainability, World Forum is also member of a few (inter)national trade organisations. Its contacts are maintained, World Forum remains informed about developments in the market and significantly contributes to the promotion of The Hague and the Netherlands. This chapter covers World Forum's main national and international memberships and partners.

### *UN Global Compact*

The World Forum was the first conference location in the Netherlands to sign the United Nations Global Compact. For World Forum and its partners, respecting human rights, safe working conditions and environmentally conscious business operations is paramount. Commitment to the UN Global Compact is an extra incentive for World Forum to continue to contribute to a responsible business climate in the future.

Global Compact Network Netherlands aims to mobilise a local initiative of sustainable companies and stakeholders with the aim of improving the lives of future generations. Guided by the Ten Principles and the 17 SDGs, UN Global Compact supports organisations in understanding what corporate responsibility means in a global and local context and provides guidance on how to convert sustainability commitments into measures.

### *MVO Netherlands*

MVO Nederland is an initiative of entrepreneurs in today's economy. It is a network of partners that innovate and implement together to achieve the new economy. The new economy is a future-proof economy. Only in that economy entrepreneurs are able to continue to do business. That is why achieving this is the goal of CSR Netherlands. The new economy is climate-neutral, circular, inclusive and with fair chains. With MVO Netherlands, entrepreneurs take a share in the new economy, making their company future-proof. MVO Netherlands supports entrepreneurs by enabling innovation through unexpected collaborations. And by promoting the interests of governments and financiers to create the right conditions, in the Netherlands and Europe.

### *The Hague Climate Fund*

The Hague Climate Fund is an initiative of the municipality of The Hague to help the city achieve its goals in the field of sustainability and climate change. The fund focuses on financing projects aimed at reducing CO2 emissions, promoting energy conservation and increasing the use of renewable energy sources. The Hague Climate Fund works closely with local companies, organisations and citizens to transform the city into a sustainable and climate-proof municipality.



#### *International Congress & Convention Association (ICCA)*

ICCA is the organisation for the international association meetings industry. With over 1.100 member organisations and companies in 100 countries, ICCA has a worldwide network of meeting professionals, specialists in every aspect of hosting and organising congresses and conventions. ICCA offers its members unique opportunities in the fields of acquisition and customer management.

#### *CLC-VECTA*

CLC-VECTA is the knowledge and inspiration platform for and about the Live communication industry. CLC-VECTA is an umbrella trade association getting all groups, entrepreneurs and business activities in the industry together. They make a global distinction between locations, organisers and suppliers of trade fairs, conferences and (business) events. The CLC-VECTA network is a strong network of more than 250 members who are ready to invest in collaboration, research and exchange of knowledge.

#### *HBAA*

HBAA is the trade association for companies with activities in the field of hotel bookings, apartments and venues. HBAs (Hotel Booking Agencies) are companies that specialise in the procurement of accommodation, conferences and event facilities and services for their customers in the United Kingdom and internationally. HBAA is the association that provides support to these companies and the hotels and venues with which they work.

#### *Meeting Professionals International (MPI)*

MPI Netherlands is the Dutch department of Meeting Professionals International. With a community of more than 60,000 meeting professionals including about 14,000 active members, MPI is the world's largest and most active trade association for the meeting & event industry. MPI Netherlands has three pillars: Knowledge, Community, Industry Voice, all three contributing to the progress of the professional field and everyone who is actively involved in it.

#### *International Association of Congress Centres (AIPC)*

The International Association of Convention Centres, AIPC, is the industry association for professional event venues worldwide. AIPC stimulates professionalism in event management and offers education, research and network programmes for this.

#### *NBTC*

As the national destination management organisation of and for the Netherlands, the Netherlands Bureau for Tourism & Conventions (NBTC) provides a national vision on tourism based on relevant knowledge and insights. Based on this vision, they inspire, connect and facilitate cities, regions, entrepreneurs and other stakeholders in and around the Netherlands.

#### *Municipality of The Hague*

The Municipality of The Hague is once again the owner of the building World Forum since July 2013. Because of this there have been many investments in different installations and new expo space. The Municipality is also a collaborator on different events.

### *The Hague & Partners*

The Hague & Partners is the official marketing organisation for promoting leisure activities, conferences and business developments in The Hague. It consists of three entities: The Hague Marketing Bureau, The Hague Convention Bureau and The Hague Business Agency. As a professional non-profit organisation, they aim to strengthen the economy of The Hague and promote employment.

### *The Hague Venues*

The Hague Venues consists of various conference locations in The Hague, joining forces towards the common goal of being able to serve organisers even more efficiently. From mutual knowledge exchange to the possibility to submit one application at the same time and actively refer. The core values of professionalism, quality and a high degree of hospitality are key to every location of The Hague Venues.

### *Dutch Venue Association*

More than fifty independent, leading, professional Dutch event locations have been working together since April 2017 under the name Dutch Venue Association. The Dutch Venue Association is a network association where event location managements share networks and knowledge. In addition, DVA represents the interests of members in both internal and external matters. The association performs benchmarks, collaborates in the field of purchasing and strives for a uniform working method (delivery conditions, certification locations).

### *Association for Event Managers*

As a professional organisation, the Association for Event Managers provides permanent education for event managers working at corporate companies, (semi-)government and non-profit institutions. Due to the constant exchange of knowledge, expertise and experience, the Society has developed into the most important knowledge centre for business events in the Netherlands since its foundation in 2002.

### *JINC*

JINC is a national organisation that prepares pre-vocational secondary education students for their choice of study and the business community through flash internships and coaching programmes through collaborations with schools and companies. JINC operates in 15 regions and is supported by more than 500 business partners. They reach more than 65,000 children a year.

### *Hidden Disabilities Sunflower*

The Hidden Disability Sunflower is a Dutch initiative to broaden the inclusivity within World Forum. With this simple tool people can voluntarily share that they have a disability or condition that may not be immediately apparent- and that they might need a helping hand, understanding, or more time in our venue during an event.



## SDG 7: Affordable and sustainable energy

## 2. Think Green

One of the three programmes within World Forum's sustainability policy is called Think Green. It includes all environmental topics at the company. World Forum aims to ensure that its business operations have positive environmental impact. One in which conferences are hosted as sustainably as possible and conference organisers are encouraged to share this approach.

In 2023, World Forum set the following objectives for this programme, Think Green, in three different areas:

Waste

- Improving the waste separation process to reduce waste compared to 2022

Energy

- Reducing energy consumption by 25% compared to 2022

F&B

- Enthuse the staff to eat less meat

Sustainable Development Goals that World Forum focuses on have also been connected with the programmes. Within the Think Green programme, that is SDG 7: Affordable and sustainable energy.

In this chapter, the objective, initiatives and results are discussed for each component. Various initiatives in these areas are highlighted as well.

## **Waste**

### *Target*

Improving the waste separation process to reduce waste compared to 2022

### *Action*

The following action was drafted in 2023 improve the separation process to reduce waste in World Forum:

- Check current rules and regulations.
- Create a protocol for the waste process
- Inform the entire organization.

### *Result*

World Forum has successfully improved the waste separation process, resulting in a reduction of general waste, glass waste, and paper waste compared to 2022. However, there has been an increase in organic waste, which can be attributed to the implementation of a stricter waste separation process. Overall, these efforts have contributed to a significant decrease in waste output compared to the previous year.

It should be noted that not the entire company has been involved in these efforts yet, and the protocol for the waste process has only been revised verbally with the involved employees, not in writing. Overall, these initiatives have led to a decrease in waste output compared to the previous year.

## **Energy**

### *Target*

Reducing the energy consumption by 25% compared to 2022.

The target is to push down World Forum's energy consumption levels compared to last year. This includes the amount of electricity, district heating and water used. Consumption is measured in relation to the annual turnover. Every year, various measures are designed, to help push down energy consumption levels.

### *Action*

The following action was drafted in 2023 to push down energy consumption levels at World Forum:

- Using the climate control system for each separate room.
- During the following periods the lighting and heating in World Forum will be off: week 10, 14, 15, 28, 29, 30, 31 and 49 of 2023.



### *Result*

Due to the scarcity of energy sources and the impact of energy consumption on the climate, there was no way back to fully focus on energy saving. World Forum has made significant progress towards the goal of reducing energy consumption by 25% compared to 2022 as set by GL events. While World Forum was not able to achieve this target completely, it was due to the venue already having a strong track record in energy efficiency in previous years. World Forum came to 23% energy consumption reduction compared to 2022.

To work towards this goal, all lights in the venue (excluding the theatre room) have been replaced with LED lights. By 2024, all lights in the theatre room will also be converted to LED lighting, bringing the venue to 100% LED lighting usage.

By efficiently using the climate control system per room at World Forum and scheduling multiple shut-down periods, World Forum was able to push down energy consumption levels by no less than 22.7%. These shut-down periods were scheduled when there were no events going on, so that staff could work from home as much as possible.

GL events have set the goal for 2024 to reduce energy consumption levels by 50% compared to 2019.

## **Food & Beverage**

### *Target*

Entuse the staff to eat less meat.

### *Action*

The following action was drafted in 2023 entuse the staff of World Forum to reduce their meat intake:

- Vegan Holy Moly blended lunch.

### *Result*

We've successfully encouraged our staff to eat less meat by introducing a monthly vegan lunch for all employees. During these lunches, chefs demonstrate various plant-based products and share recipes, inspiring everyone to explore and enjoy vegan cuisine.

## **Initiatives – Energy**

Below are some of the initiatives to help reduce energy consumption levels at World Forum as well as The Hague.

### *Solar panels*

In partnership with the Municipality of The Hague, the civic initiative Coöperatie Zon op World Forum ('World Forum Solar Energy Cooperative') installed 252 solar panels on the roof of the World Forum building. This 51-member cooperative was given access to our roof at the symbolic rate of €1 for the purpose of installing solar panels. Local residents with and without their own rooftops are welcome to join this programme by purchasing one or more solar panels. This is part of a project organised by the cooperative and the Municipality to make The Hague more sustainable. The Hague currently boasts more solar panels than any other city in the Netherlands, on account of the relatively large number of private homes that have installed such panels.

### *Fresh Air Zone*

World Forum has a "Fresh Air Zone". This was achieved in cooperation with various parties: the Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations, the Delfland Water Board, the World Forum and the Municipality of The Hague. This project is part of the municipality's sustainability policy. The aim of the green canopy is to contribute to a better environment and prevent flooding. It is just one aspect of World Forum's entire sustainability programme. The municipality is very proud of this project, because it supports the goal of a climate-neutral city and is also an inspiring example for other, similar conversions.

Not only does the development of the green canopy play a climate-neutral role, but it also helps enhance the vitality of congress participants. This newly developed zone offers them the opportunity to step into a sustainable and green environment, with an impressive view over the international zone. This gives them renewed energy and improves their focus.

### *Energy-efficient lighting*

World Forum is enhancing its sustainability efforts by transitioning to energy-efficient lighting, specifically LED lights, across the entire venue. This initiative aligns with our commitment to reducing our environmental impact and promoting energy conservation. Furthermore, by 2024, we aim to complete the transition to LED lighting in the theatre room, further advancing our sustainability goals. Additionally, we have implemented a smart system where we can program the lights and climate system per room, further enhancing our energy efficiency practices.

## ***Initiatives – CO<sub>2</sub> emissions***

### *The Hague Climate Fund*

In 2023 parts of the CO<sub>2</sub> emissions at World Forum The Hague will be offset through the The Hague Climate Fund. Through this organisation, World Forum invests in sustainable energy and projects by offsetting CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. The Climate Fund has various local climate projects in its portfolio.

World Forum The Hague seeks to limit the organisation's CO<sub>2</sub> emissions as much as possible. The aim is to offset CO<sub>2</sub> emissions that the World Forum still has as an organization from 2024 onwards in local projects. This will be done in collaboration with the Climate Fund.

## ***Initiatives – F&B***

Below are a number of initiatives in the field of food and beverages within the World Forum with regard to sustainability.

### *Van der Linde*

We recognize the significant impact of food and beverage choices have on the environment and are committed to implementing sustainable practices throughout our operations. We are proud to partner with our caterer Van der Linde. Van der Linde offers beside meat & fish options, completely vegetarian and vegan menus and make a conscious effort to source locally produced, seasonal and organic ingredients wherever possible. Leftover food that can be consumed following the HACCP rules is donated to the local Salvation Army.

### *Water taps by Dunea*

World Forum and Dunea have entered into a partnership. World Forum's visitors are welcome to tap free and unlimited water from five water taps. The taps give every visitor access to drinking water gained in the Hollandse Duinen National Park, the dune area between Katwijk and Monster. Having those water taps means World Forum is no longer serving nor selling (flat) bottled water. It is how World Forum and Dunea contribute to the reduction of plastic waste. In total, those five taps have been installed across World Forum. Dunea supplies the water from the taps and performs annual maintenance too.

#### *Coffee supplier: Peeze*

The coffee supplier of World Forum is called Peeze. Peeze is an Arnhem-based roastery with grand ambitions when it comes to making the coffee industry a fairer industry. Not only do they provide coffee with an excellent taste, but also the kind of coffee serving farmers and the environment alike. Coffee served at World Forum has been especially selected with beans coming from Honduras, Peru, Mexico and Nicaragua. These beans are grown organically, they are Fairtrade-certified and climate neutral across the chain. CO<sub>2</sub> emission levels are pushed down to a minimum and the remainder is compensated with a cookstove project at the source; on the coffee plantations.

#### *F&B Standards*

World Forum holds its products to the highest standards when it comes to sustainability. F&B sustainability is also a major aspect of the Green Key Gold, ISO9001 and ISO20121 labels World Forum proudly holds.

Below are some of the minimum standards when ordering F&B at World Forum:

- Our coffee and tea for the attendees is certified organic and fair-trade.
- World Forum promotes the use of tap water.
- World Forum has a zero-plastic policy when it comes to front-of-house products.
- World Forum works with ratios and specialised menus in order to minimise food waste.
- World Forum uses mainly stone crockery; if disposables are used they are fully biodegradable.
- World Forum avoids the use of mono-packaged goods.
- All fish products used are sustainably sourced and carry the MSC quality label.
- At least 50% of the food items served is organic, locally produced or seasonal.
- All waste is separated by plastic, paper, organic, glass, metal, coffee and other waste and 90% is recycled.
- Non-perishable goods are repurposed as much as possible.
- Palm oil use is minimalised in all products.
- All lactose products are organic.
- World Forum has full vegan menus and day packages.



SDG 3:  
Good health and wellbeing

SDG 4:  
Quality education



### 3. Think People

World Forum's second sustainability programme is called Think People. World Forum sets out to provide employees with a professional and safe working environment in which they can grow and derive job satisfaction by helping clients to achieve their goals. World Forum is committed to securing a sound future for children and young people.

The Think People programme is based on three main columns onto which various targets are attached. These are:

1. Well-Being & Vitality: making sure World Forum's employees become more vital.

Under the Think People programme, World Forum focuses on the Sustainable Development Goal SDG3: Good Health and Wellbeing and SDG 4: Quality education.

This chapter explains the objective, associated initiatives and the final results per section. In addition, a number of initiatives are highlighted for each point which the World Forum developed or contributed to last year.

## **Well-Being & Vitality**

### *Targets*

- Vitalising World Forum's staff members.

### *Steps*

To reach this target we came up with the following steps:

- Organising healthy activities for staff members.

### *Results*

In 2023, a total of seven activities have been organized to increase vitality within the team. This contributes to SDG3: Good health and well-being. See below for an overview:

- Kickbox workshop – January 2023
- Football match – May 2023
- Park walk – July 2023
- Volleyball tournament – July 2023
- Vitality workshop Hartkantoor – August 2023
- Padel training – October 2023
- Stress-free week – November 2023

The various activities are organised by the vitality team at World Forum. The content of the activities are all different to touch on several aspects of vitality, both mental and physical ones.

## **Initiatives – Well-being & vitality**

Below are a number of initiatives addressing Wellbeing & Vitality at World Forum The Hague.

### *Vitality programme*

World Forum aims to make vitality a central and important part during conferences. Nowadays, people are consciously concerned with health. World Forum therefore facilitates the continuation and improvement of a healthy lifestyle with this vitality programme. Power walking, yoga and running are among the offerings. The food & beverage range has also been adapted accordingly, making visitors feel better in shape during congresses, storing more information and not going home completely exhausted.

### *Food & Beverage – Richard de Leth*

The Food & Beverage department of World Forum is fully focused on vitality. A vital experience is offered to visitors together with various partners. A unique vitality strategy has been developed. It consists of menus specially composed by Richard de Leth, a specialist in health management and a “changemaker” when it comes to vitality and health. World Forum went on a journey of discovery with Richard de Leth to research participants’ vital needs during conferences. The vital menus provide the right energy at the right times during an event. They are based on fresh and local seasonal products with a modest addition of poultry and fish. In combination with the various activities, the participants and visitors to your event will experience a constant vital feeling. The lifestyle that is often led at home can therefore be effortlessly continued at a high level during an event.

### *Dietary requirements*

World Forum ensures that any dietary requirement can be catered to. All our items are labelled with the necessary allergy information, and we have dedicated buffets for people with dietary requirements. Our menus are designed to offer almost everyone different options.

## **Initiatives – Education**

Below are a number of initiatives that World Forum supports in the field of education. World Forum is the institute for students to be educated and to subsequently enter the (congress) market. Various learning places are offered to young talented minds. In addition, the World Forum's staff members have extensive opportunities to further develop their talents through training and coaching programs.

### *JINC*

JINC believes every child is talented. The same goes for more than 600,000 Dutch children who grow up in an area with high unemployment levels and a lack of role models. That's why JINC is working towards a society where your future isn't determined by your background. In which each and every child is given opportunities. More than 270 companies and institutions, including Hilton The Hague, the Fire Brigade and Nationale-Nederlanden are partners and participants in JINC's projects.

In the unique JINC projects, young people aged 8 to 16 develop the skills they need to make it on their own. The JINC learning line is a programme of seven consecutive projects. JINC believes this structural approach has more impact than a one-off intervention. Young people learn how to apply for a job, are introduced to various professions and discover, together with a coach, which jobs are right for them. JINC gives young people the self-confidence and the skills they need for a better start on the job market. It gives them a chance to grow.

For World Forum, the partnership with JINC is a concrete expression of social commitment: an investment in the talent development of young people with fewer opportunities. World Forum ensures that young people in The Hague are given the chance to discover and develop their talents. To give an example, World Forum's employees enable young people to experience what it means to organise an event. Or they train young people to apply for a job or talk about their future choices.

World Forum also joined the JINC Baas van Morgen initiative. The idea behind this initiative is that children growing up in areas of socio-economic deprivation have a taste of occupational success. During JINC Baas van Morgen, they are allowed to sit in the chair of a CEO, director or politician for a day. They join meetings, have lunch with the Boss of Today and conduct research into a specific issue.

### *Education and Training*

World Forum offers an annual collective budget for education and training programmes. All employees are invited to draft a personal development plan each year. We then look at all personal development plans and determine what kind of training is needed and who can participate in which programmes. A supervisor with end responsibility may ask an employee to take a training and/or coaching programme deemed necessary for the proper performance of the employee's tasks and responsibilities. The supervisor and the employee will then make individual plans about the employee's participation.

## **Initiatives - Social responsibility**

### *War Child*

World Forum has been an official Business Friend of War Child for years. The decision to become a Business Friend of War Child was based on the fact that its vision, values and focus areas dovetail with those of World Forum. It also corresponds perfectly with the positioning of both World Forum and The Hague as an International City of Peace and Justice. War Child's mission is to help as many children as possible in areas of conflict to deal with their war experiences through protection from violence, psychosocial support and education and to ensure they can work together to build a peaceful future in a safe environment. Because children do not belong in wars. Ever. Together with ambassadors, contributors, companies, governmental agencies and volunteers, War Child has been helping children in areas where there is war or where war has been waged for many years. War Child does everything it can to keep the organisation's costs as low as possible. This enables it to allocate as much funding as possible to its aid initiatives.

### *Stichting Vier het Leven (Celebrate Life Foundation)*

The foundation called Stichting Vier het Leven organises cultural activities for the elderly, where everything is taken care of to ensure carefree enjoyment. Volunteers pick up the elderly (65+) at home and together they go to a theatre performance, the film, a concert or to a museum. World Forum is one of the theatres with which Stichting Vier het Leven has been collaborating. Every year, several performances from the World Forum Theatre programme are included in the offer of Stichting Vier het Leven.





## SDG 8: Decent work & economic growth

## 4. Think Local

The third programme within World Forum's sustainability policy is called Think Local. World Forum seeks to positively influence and stimulate employment in The Hague region.

### *Target*

Create 1 new local initiative, possibly together with other (local) partners.

### *Action*

In order to achieve this goal, World Forum wants to create at least one local initiative, alternatively together with other local partners.

### *Results*

Where possible, World Forum The Hague has the ambition to collaborate with local companies. Both in the catering area, but also for facilities or marketing and communication activities. This directly stimulates the local economy.

The 2023 target was to create one local initiatives together with other (local) partners. World Forum has reached this target by creating two new local initiatives.

World Forum achieved its goal of creating a new local initiative by partnering with the Hidden Disabilities Sunflower and the Saffier Nebo Elderly Home. The Hidden Disabilities Sunflower is an initiative designed to discreetly indicate that someone has a non-visible disability, such as autism, chronic pain, or a learning disability. By wearing the sunflower symbol, individuals can receive additional understanding and assistance in public spaces and services.

Together with the Saffier Nebo Elderly Home, World Forum started a volunteer partnership where employees of World Forum can volunteer 8 hours per month during official office hours.

Together, these organizations are working to enhance local community value through inclusive and supportive projects tailored to the needs of individuals with hidden disabilities and the elderly.

## **Initiatives – Think Local**

A number of initiatives within the Think Local and the SDG Fair Work and Economic Growth programmes to which World Forum contributes, are described below.

### *Clean Taxi Transport*

Four taxi companies and various organisations that frequently use taxi services have agreed to make taxi rides in The Hague cleaner. The taxi companies are providing rides in electric taxis. When ordering a cab, customers specify that they want an electric car. The taxi companies are purchasing larger numbers of electric vehicles to be able to provide these services. World Forum is one of the Hague-based organisations to have signed this letter of intent, supporting the objective of purifying the air in The Hague.

### *Employers' service point*

The Employer Service Point is an initiative of the Municipality of The Hague. The Municipality feels responsible for people who want to find jobs but who require assistance and support in finding paid employment. They seek to work with people who share this sense of responsibility. World Forum is one of the companies involved in this initiative.

### *Den Haag Werkt (The Hague at Work)*

World Forum teamed up with Den Haag Werkt (previously known as the Haeghe Groep) since a couple of years. Den Haag Werkt is about connecting companies and governments in The Hague and people with a distance to the job market. They identify what employees are capable of and support them with the knowledge and infrastructure required, to help them carry out productive and meaningful work. This helps them develop their talents and improve their competitive skills. As a result, they take on the same position as anyone else in the society of The Hague. Den Haag Werkt also helps companies and governments in the region with social entrepreneurship by supporting them with the experience and expertise they have in this area.

Den Haag Werkt is responsible for the gardening on the grounds of World Forum. *Self-study places*

During the COVID-19 pandemic, World Forum facilitated temporary self-study places. Due to the corona measures, the number of study places available for students in The Hague was insufficient. For example, schools and libraries were closed. The Municipality of The Hague has therefore set up study places at two locations. By offering good study places, World Forum contributed to education in The Hague. This was part of the Social Economic Recovery Plan of the Municipality of The Hague.

### *Alliance Accessible The Hague*

The Accessible The Hague Alliance was established in 2021. World Forum has joined this alliance, which is dedicated to providing a city for everyone. A city where everyone feels welcome. A city in which everyone can participate equally.

For about one in four people, daily activities require more effort than average. This can be due to a physical, sensory or intellectual disability. Or due to a temporary limitation, like after an accident or surgery. Anyone can experience a disability. This is why everyone benefits from a city that is easily accessible. To Alliantie Accessible The Hague, accessibility is a social responsibility. The members of the alliance are actively working on accessibility. Within their own organisation, by sharing their experience and by helping others.

#### *NL Doet (NL in Action)*

Every year, the Orange Fund, together with thousands of social organisations in the country, organizes an initiative called NL Doet. It is the largest volunteer campaign in the Netherlands. NL Doet puts volunteer work in the spotlights and invites everyone to make a difference and matter for a day! Volunteers are the beating heart of many social initiatives. With NL Doet, the Orange Fund therefore demonstrates the extent to which active citizens matter to society. As an organisation, World Forum participates annually in NL Doet by helping a group of employees with an activity or initiative in The Hague.

#### *"De Haagse Hoed Challenge" (The Hague's Hat Challenge)*

De Haagse Hoed Challenge is a 24-hour cycling tour through the city of The Hague. The proceeds from this bicycle tour are dedicated to ground-breaking research at the Erasmus MC Cancer Institute. World Forum contributes to this initiative in The Hague by being available as a resting location for the participating riders.

#### *Sintvoorieder1*

Sintvoorieder1 is an organisation based in The Hague dedicated to children from families that are experiencing financial difficulties. It makes sure these children too receive presents during holidays such as Sinterklaas. Every year, Sintvoorieder1 manages to collect and distribute thousands of presents to children in and around The Hague. The organisation joins hands with various partners including schools, companies and other organisations to help as many children as possible. Thanks to the efforts of volunteers and donors, Sintvoorieder1 is able to realise these great initiatives.

#### *Hidden Dissabilities Sunflower*

Hidden Disabilities Sunflower initiative is a simple tool for people to voluntarily share that they have a disability or condition that may not be immediately apparent – and that they may need a helping hand, understanding, or more time in our venue during an event. The people that want to share that they have a hidden disability are recognizable by the sunflower logo that they wear on their clothes.



## 5. Think Ethic

The fourth programme within World Forum's sustainability policy is called Think Ethic.

Within the Think Ethic programme, the following target was set for 2023 to hire one employee with a distance to the labour market.

### *Action*

The actions drafted for this include finding a suitable partner, selecting one or two internal employees for guidance and signing the contract with the new employee with a distance to the labour market.

### *Results*

In 2023, we were only able to complete the first action of the action plan. World Forum addressed Social Capital for a collaboration to hire an employee. Social Capital connects employees with an occupational disability to employers in the hospitality industry. World Forum has not yet been able to find internal staff for guidance. This project will be continued in 2024.

### **Initiatives – Ethics**

A number of points which the Think Ethic programme covers are discussed below.

### **Compliance**

World Forum The Hague has a Compliance Manager whose job is to monitor the overview to ensure the organisation meets the prevailing laws and regulations. Anti-bribery and anti-corruption are also part of this. For example, the entire purchasing process is monitored, the two-eyed principle applies to checking invoices and a notification is automatically received when a new bank account is created and donations are registered.



## SDG 16: Peace, justice and strong institutions

## 6. Think Safe

The fifth programme within World Forum's sustainability policy is called Think Safe. World Forum is committed to offering staff members a professional and safe working environment.

### *Targets*

Within the Think Safe programme, multiple targets have been set to contribute to a safer working environment:

- Reduce the incidents in World Forum compared to 2022 by 10%.

### *Steps*

The steps set up for the 2023 targets in terms of Think Safe are the following:

- Prevention venue walks
- Root cause analysis document per incident

### *Results*

We achieved our goal of reducing incidents at the World Forum by 10%. In 2023, there were 10 incidents, compared to 13 in 2022, marking a significant improvement in safety and incident management. Since late of 2022, the incident reporting and analysis procedure has been refined. The Safety & Security Manager is responsible for following up all reports in the daily reports (duty and security).

This procedure consists not only of registering an incident, but also of following it up. This consists of a Root Cause Analysis and reporting on measures to the Operations, Safety & Security Manager. These measures made sure that World Forum achieved their target for 2023.



## **Initiatives – Safety**

Below are a number of specific safety issues at World Forum.

### *Risk analysis*

A risk analysis is drawn up for each event at World Forum to identify any risks and, if necessary, to limit or prevent them. On the basis of a low, medium or high-risk indication, it is determined which measures will be taken. These risk analyses are divided into a number of core topics, making those risks clearly distinguishable.

### *Prevention team*

World Forum has a prevention team that supervises safe and healthy working conditions in and around World Forum. Workplace inspections are conducted, advisory reports are written and information is given to employees.

### *Digital security systems*

World Forum works with various digital security systems such as a CCTV programme that gives World Forum insight, access to control systems to identify who is in the building and understand digital documentation by security that accounts for which goods enter and exit.

## 7. About this report

This sustainability report is the 15<sup>th</sup> edition about World Forum's CSR policy. It covers all initiatives and developments in the CSR field at World Forum in 2023. We also discuss some of our ambitions for the coming years.

World Forum issues an annual sustainability report to keep stakeholders informed about developments within the organisation's three sustainability programs: Think Green, Think People, Think Local, Think Ethic and Think Safe.

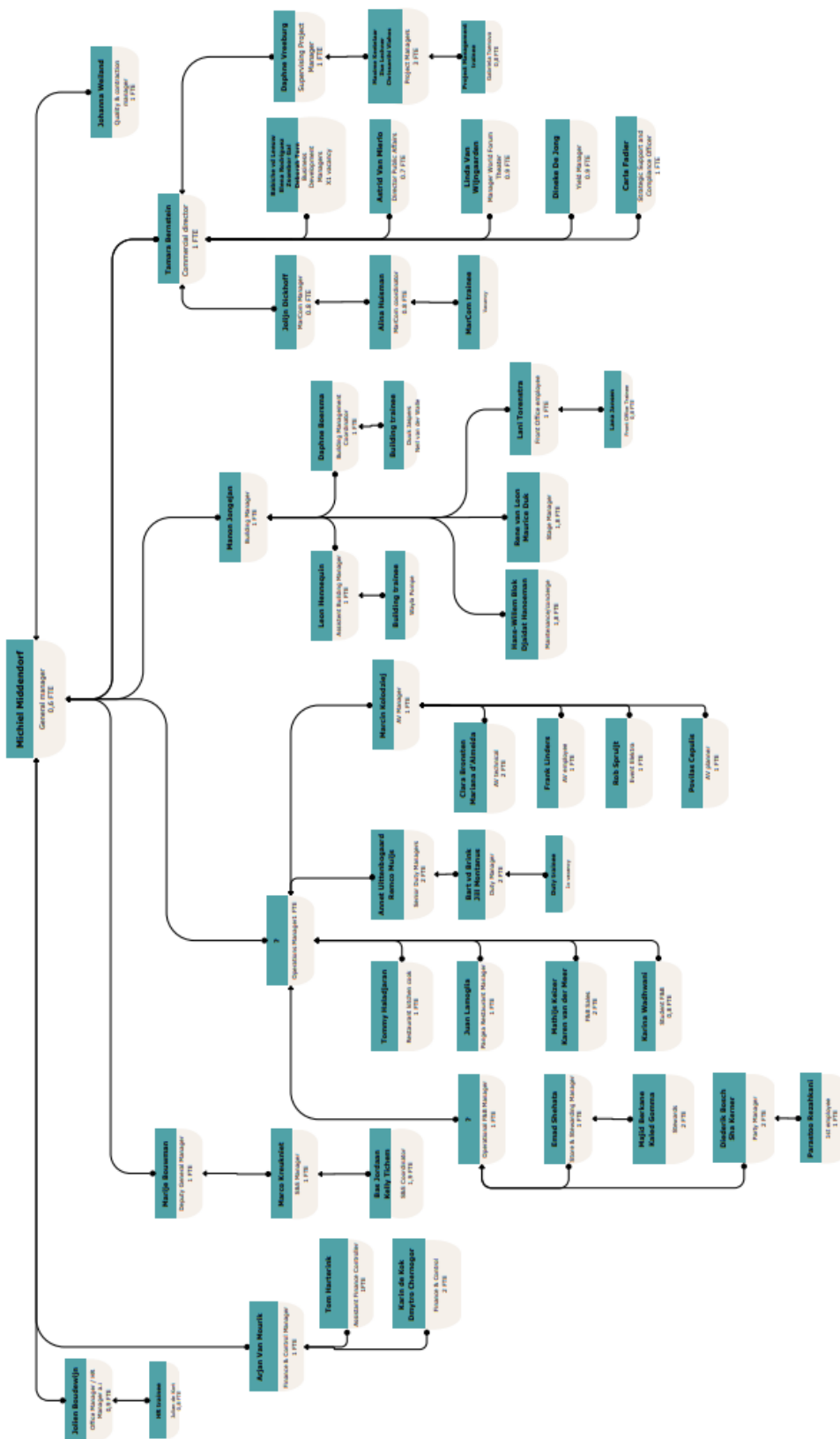
## 8. GRI Table

The GRI table is based on the guidelines for sustainability reporting issued by the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI). GRI is a network-based organisation that has pioneered the development of the world's most widely used sustainability reporting framework and is committed to its continuous improvement and application worldwide.

World Forum feels that the B-level of the G3-guidelines of the GRI apply to this report. World Forum has no special CSR department, however a CSR officer will be appointed in 2023. It will be a challenge to improve our reporting level in coming years. Please find an overview of the main indicators in the table below.

	G3-indicator	Location	Page
<b>Management, obligations and involvement</b>			
4.1	The organisation's management structure	Structure	6
4.2	Indicate whether the chairman of the highest administrative body also has a managerial task	Structure	6
4.3	Independence of Board of Management	Structure	6
4.4	Shareholder feedback mechanism	Not applicable	
4.12	Externally developed economic, environmental, and social charters, principles or other initiatives to which the organisation subscribes or endorses	Memberships	13 – 15
4.13	Associated memberships	Memberships	13 – 15
4.14	List of stakeholders	Stakeholders	8
4.15	Stakeholder identification	Stakeholders	8
4.16	Approach of the involvement of interested parties, among which its frequency	Stakeholders	8
4.17	Key topics and concerns that have been raised through stakeholder engagement, and how the organisation has responded to those key topics and concerns, e.g. through its reporting.	Stakeholders	8
<b>Economic performance indicators</b>			
EC 1	Direct economic values	Financial report	

EC 4	Significant financial assistance received from government	Not applicable	
<b>Environmental performance indicators</b>			
EN 3	Direct primary energy consumption	Think Green – Energy	16 – 22
EN 4	Indirect energy consumption by primary source	Think Green – Energy	16 – 22
EN 5	Energy saved due to savings and efficiency improvements	Think Green – Energy	16 – 22
EN 6	Initiatives for the benefit of energy-efficiency or sustainable energy based products and services, as well as decrease of the indirect energy consumption and the reduction realised so far	Think Green – Energy	16 – 22
EN 7	Initiatives for reducing the indirect energy consumption and reduction realised so far	Think Green – Energy	16 – 22
<b>Social performance indicators</b>			
LA 1	Total number of employees according to type of work, labour contract	Structure	6
LA 6	Percentage of the total number of employees represented in formal joint health and safety (ARBO) committees of employers and employees who contribute to the control and advice about health and safety (ARBO) programmes	not applicable	
LA 7	Injury, occupational disability, dropout days and absenteeism numbers and the number of work-related deaths per region	Think People – Wellbeing & Vitality	23 – 29
LA 10	Training per employee	Think People – Education and training	29
SO 1	Child labour	Think People - Social responsibility	28 – 29
PR 5	Impact on communities	Stakeholders	8





# World Forum The Hague

