



# People and Communities

## Developing people, supporting communities

Having engaged employees is critical to the success of our Company. We are committed to providing an inclusive and safe place to work for the talented people in our globally and culturally diverse organization. Our commitment also extends to all of the communities in which we operate.



## In People and Communities, our priorities are:

### People values

As a business, we strive to create an inclusive workplace where everyone has a real sense of belonging and can be their authentic self at work every day. We are committed to managing our business in accordance with our values, which recognize that good social citizenship and mutual respect are essential to creating and maintaining a sustainable future.

### People strategy

At Smurfit Westrock, we are motivated by a shared desire to create a better future across all our activities and functions in all of our locations. We believe that when our employees thrive, so does our Company. We aim to provide our employees with opportunities to grow and develop their careers.

### Health, safety, and wellbeing

Safety is a core value at Smurfit Westrock. Our safety approach is focused on our people and is grounded in self-empowerment and accountability. We also aim to support the physical and psychological wellbeing of our employees.

### Communities

At Smurfit Westrock, we support the local communities across the 40 countries in which we operate. We are proud to invest in our communities and give back through volunteering our time, effort, and expertise, as well as through financial contributions.





## People and Communities

### Key Principles

Employees who find meaning at work are happier, more productive, and more engaged. We aim to create meaningful work with a broader purpose, while ensuring the health, safety and wellbeing of our people at work. At Smurfit Westrock, being a part of our local communities is a big part of our company culture.

Formed by the combination of two companies with shared sustainability ambitions, Smurfit Westrock strives to be a responsible employer to approximately 100,000 employees across 40 countries and 677 operating sites.

Smurfit Westrock's HR strategy is based on the four pillars of: People Development and Talent Management; Employee Experience and Internal Communications; Inclusion and Belonging; and Reward and Recognition. These pillars were established by building on the legacies of both companies' HR strategies and are supported by our HR Foundations, which enable us to bring this strategy to life. These foundations include our focus on health, safety, and wellbeing; our commitments to employee relations; and the evolution of our HR information systems. We are proud members of the local communities where we are located, supporting projects through the efforts of our people at our local sites, directly through the Company or via the Smurfit Westrock Foundation ('the Foundation').

In 2024, we focused on building the foundations of the HR strategy and managing the transition of two legacy companies to one values-led company culture for this new, global leader in paper-based packaging. We assessed the legacy companies' best practices to form a unified foundation for the culture at Smurfit Westrock.

We approach being a responsible employer through four core areas: human rights, such as inclusion and belonging in the workplace; working conditions; health, safety and wellbeing; and community involvement. This approach involves creating opportunities for work that is productive and delivers a fair income; security in the workplace and social protection for families; better opportunities for personal development and social integration; allows the freedom for people to express their concerns; empowers them to organize and participate in the decisions that affect their lives; and ensures equal opportunity for all. As outlined on page 20 we have progressed our double materiality assessment based on the current CSRD and ESRS text. The relevant ESRS topics within People and Communities are outlined on the next page.

The Company progressed an ESRS aligned double materiality assessment during 2024 (see pages 20-21 of this report). The following (ESRS-aligned) social topics were identified as material to the Company:

ESRS topic	ESRS Subtopic(s)	Why is this material?	Timeframe	IRO
<b>S1 Responsible Employer</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Equal treatment for all</li> <li>• Working conditions</li> </ul>	It is important for us to maintain an inclusive work environment, with an engaged workforce, to attract and retain talent, and to take care of sustainable succession planning. All this leads to a company culture where our employees have long, successful careers.	Short term Medium Term Long Term	Impact Risk
<b>S1/S2 Health and Safety</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Working conditions</li> </ul>	We prioritize the safety and health of our employees, recognizing that as a company operating with machinery and the mechanical nature of our operations has inherent safety risks.	Short term Medium term Long term	Impact Risk Opportunity
<b>S2 Working Conditions in the Value Chain</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Working conditions</li> <li>• Other work-related rights</li> </ul>	At Smurfit Westrock, we support the rights of all workers at our own operations, as well as those in our supply chain.	Short term Medium term Long term	Impact Risk
<b>S3 Community Involvement</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communities' economic, social, and cultural rights</li> <li>• Rights of indigenous peoples</li> </ul>	We value our good collaboration with our communities. Our continued success depends on our ability to maximize our positive contributions to our communities and to avoid negative impacts on communities.	Short term Medium term Long term	Impact Risk



## Social Citizenship and Respect (S2)

Inclusion and adherence to human rights are a core part of being a responsible employer. We focus on creating a safe and inclusive culture with equal opportunities for all. We recognize that a failure to respect human rights and operate in an ethical manner puts the Company at risk of suffering reputational damage and other penalties.

## Transparency and accountability are key areas of being a good corporate citizen.

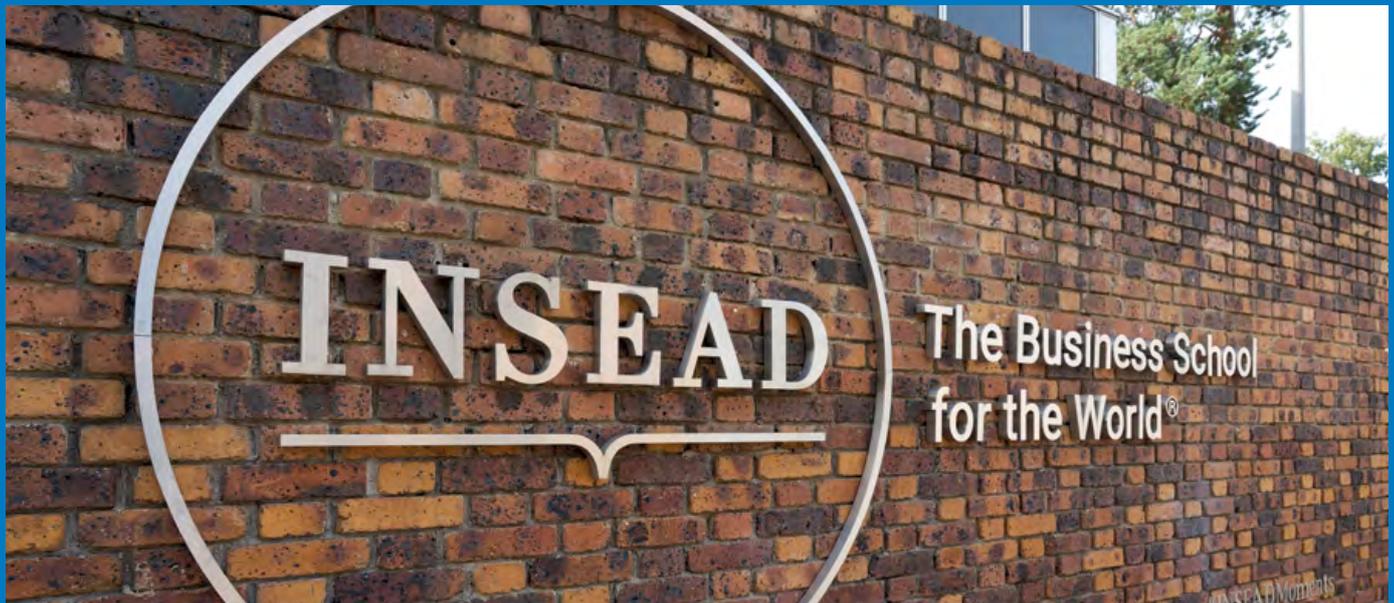
Smurfit Westrock developed a Code of Conduct policy that describes its rules and principles and is based on compliance with the law, ethical behavior (including its Speak Up policies), and a commitment to quality and service. The new Code was developed using the legacy companies' Codes and referencing best practice and regulatory requirements. The Code applies to the Board of Directors, officers, and Company employees worldwide.

As outlined in the Code, our approach to social citizenship is focused on managing relationships with fellow employees, business partners and host communities in a respectful and socially responsible manner. The Code is supported by our Social Citizenship and Respect policy and relevant legacy policies.

Transparency and accountability are key areas of being a good corporate citizen. During 2023, through a third-party expert, Smurfit Kappa conducted a human rights assessment, focusing on a review of its policies and reporting. A similar assessment was carried out for WestRock in 2024. Both of these assessments will support the development of Smurfit Westrock's human rights practices. They will also support the Company's preparation for the EU Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Directive ('CSDDD'). The assessment proposed both the development of new policies and the refining of existing policies with best-practice frameworks where gaps were identified.

## Attracting and Retaining Best Talent (S1)

One of the important areas of focus for Smurfit Westrock is attracting and retaining the talent we need for succession planning and leadership continuity. Risk of failing to attract and retain talent may lead to higher production costs and increased recruitment and training costs.



## Discovering Open Leadership

How our leaders steer through times of change is a critical factor in how our people experience our Company culture. Since 2015, the Open Leadership capability model and the Open Leadership @ INSEAD program invited more than 400 of Smurfit Kappa's leaders to reflect on their own leadership style, how they show up as leaders, and how that impacts performance.

Given the success of the program at Smurfit Kappa, it is being continued with Smurfit Westrock. To introduce WestRock colleagues to the model and to help them experience Open Leadership as a way of working, we collaborated with INSEAD Business School to develop

the program Discovering Open Leadership. The two-day program is an invitation for leaders to explore what makes them good at what they do.

The program is also an opportunity for this group to hear from the President & Group CEO and other members of the senior leadership team about their views on leadership and why it matters. So far, 75 leaders in North America have attended the program, and feedback from participants has been positive. One participant said, "I feel more aligned to our approach to leadership. I feel more connected with Smurfit Westrock leadership, and I am especially excited about this journey."

Our focus on physical and mental health and wellbeing, work-life balance, and competitive rewards and recognition, as well as overall employee satisfaction, has a positive impact on our employees and also on attracting and retaining talent.

Today's workforce expects choice, purpose, agility, and flexibility. Smurfit Westrock, like many other organizations, has adapted well to employee expectations as we continue to focus on sourcing and developing talent through re-skilling, upskilling, recruitment, and engagement. We are focused on attracting the right people for our organization and are investing in retaining and motivating our teams.

Our talent agenda ensures we have the right people in the right places and at the right stages of development to fill key positions as they arise. We aim to attract talented people and help all our employees grow their careers and deliver on their potential. Developing the organization's

talent is vital to our success, it supports high performance and safeguards the values supporting our organization.

To attract the best talent available, we aim to improve our recruitment processes, while also introducing a more flexible approach to working arrangements, where possible, to provide a better work-life balance.

We believe that local hires are imperative to our success, so our succession planning has been designed to take this into account.

We have continued to build on our fair and competitive rewards and recognition philosophy to attract and retain our key talent, and to motivate employees at every level of the organization to achieve the Company's strategic objectives.

Read more on pages 72-79 of this report.

## Health and Safety Culture (S1/2)

The safety and wellbeing of our teams across the world is at the core of how Smurfit Westrock operates. It is one of our values, and we strive to ensure that every day, each of our employees returns home safely to their families.

We believe that operating safely is non-negotiable, no task is so important that it cannot be done safely. This is how we want our employees, contractors, and subcontractors to approach their jobs each and every day.

Striving to have a culture with health and safety as a core value across our operations helps us to create positive impacts in our employees' wellbeing, especially in jurisdictions where safety regulations for workplaces are less strict than those of Smurfit Westrock. Safety guidelines and proactive management are needed since many employees work in shifts operating large machinery with complex logistics, which can increase risk to employee health. Additionally, a lack of good health and safety management practices can lead to increased financial risk for the Company.

Our health and safety culture is founded on authenticity, empowerment, and accountability, with our attention focused on our Safety for Life 'six high-risk areas': contact with machinery; energy isolation; people & vehicles; materials & chemical handling; working at heights and subcontractor/contractor management.

Read more on pages 80-81 of this report.

## Good Corporate Citizen (S3)

We are deeply committed to our communities and collaborating with them. We encourage our local teams to connect with their communities through social and environmental initiatives. We create positive socio-economic impacts in the communities where we operate by creating jobs, developing our people, investing in infrastructure, and supporting local businesses. Being a good corporate citizen can help develop trust with communities, foster open dialogue, and create goodwill amongst all local stakeholders, while also having a positive impact on the Company's reputation.



## Being a good corporate citizen can help develop trust with communities, foster open dialogue, and create goodwill amongst all local stakeholders.

In addition to the direct involvement of our operations in their local communities, Smurfit Westrock also provides 100% of the funding to the Foundation, a registered charity in Ireland, which focuses on delivering a positive impact on the lives of the underprivileged in the communities where we operate globally.

Building on the legacy of Smurfit Kappa, Smurfit Westrock published its first Open Community booklet presenting some of the projects we have supported in our communities during the year. This booklet can be found at [www.smurfitwestrock.com](http://www.smurfitwestrock.com).

We operate in regions where it is important to recognize the rights of Indigenous peoples.

Read more on pages 82-87 of this report.





## People values

We want our employees to have a positive work experience with the Company. We recognize that good social citizenship, shown in our interactions with employees, business partners, and host communities, is essential to creating a sustainable future.

Smurfit Westrock fosters meritocracy and respect in a safe and open work environment. The following principles and conditions are maintained in every country in which we have a presence in keeping with the application of principles from: the UN Global Compact and Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, the Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work developed by the International Labor Organization (ILO), and the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises.

The Company monitors its compliance with the UN Global Compact (see page 148 of this report). Our policy is to select the best person for a position, hiring locally where possible, which means that, by far, a greater proportion of senior operational positions across the organization are held by local managers.

Smurfit Westrock unites approximately 100,000 people around the world. The majority of our workforce are permanent employees directly employed by the Company.

We are a truly diverse organization, spread across 677 sites in 40 countries, with 27 different business languages, and spanning four generations. The great majority of our employees are operationally focused, operating machinery and working regular shift work within complex logistic frameworks.

## Respect

We treat one another with respect, demonstrated through our interactions with employees, business partners, and host communities. By building a safe and inclusive work environment that empowers and inspires our global workforce, our people will be able to thrive and grow our Company. We work to provide the conditions where they feel valued and respected. We are committed to fostering a safe, respectful and inclusive workplace where everyone has a real sense of belonging and can be their authentic selves at work every day. Our people priorities, which are designed to help us develop a successful and

sustainable business, includes a focus on employee engagement, people development and social support to our communities. Smurfit Westrock strives to provide a working environment that is safe, respects individuality, is non-discriminatory, appoints and promotes people on suitability, rewards fairly, encourages personal and professional development, and has effective mechanisms of communication in place. In short, we value the contribution all of our employees make to our business.

## No discrimination

We do not tolerate unlawful discrimination or any illegal labor practices in our business and employment. The types of characteristics protected by law vary across our global locations, and may include but are not limited to, age, color, disability, gender, gender identity or expression, national origin, social background, political views, pregnancy, race, religion, and sexual orientation. As outlined in the Code, our approach to social citizenship is focused on managing relationships with fellow employees, business partners and host communities in a respectful and socially responsible manner.

## Working fairly

Smurfit Westrock will not employ, in any capacity, any individual who has not reached the mandated school-leaving age and the minimum age set for employment in any country in which we operate. Smurfit Westrock strictly prohibits the use of all forms of forced labor, including prison labor, indentured labor, bonded labor, military labor, modern forms of slavery, and any form of human trafficking.

We do not tolerate forced labor or physical abuse within the Company or externally from our suppliers, contractors, subcontractors, and others with whom we do business.

Smurfit Westrock is subject to the provisions of the UK Modern Slavery Act.

Furthermore, we have implemented Company-wide self-assessments in each of our FSC-certified sites with reference to the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work. The assessments are completed by the local operations themselves and audited as part of the FSC CoC audits.

## Compliant acquisition practices

Our acquisition process includes due diligence of certain policies and practices of the acquisition target. Additionally, we examine the target's compliance with applicable laws. Our due diligence findings are considered as part of the acquisition.

## Freedom of association and collective representation

We support our employees' right to join trade unions and for representatives to negotiate on their behalf. If freedom of association and collective bargaining are restricted, or employees do not want trade union membership, we work with them to establish mutually acceptable means of representation. Under our policies, employee representatives do not suffer any disadvantage or discrimination because of their role.

In many countries, Smurfit Westrock conducts formal employee consultations with local trade unions or works councils. Formal employee consultations include topics on working conditions, such as health and safety, minimum notice periods, training opportunities, and benefits not included in basic employment agreements.

## Rights of Indigenous peoples

Smurfit Westrock operates within the framework of the law and with respect to the constitution and the UN declaration of the Rights of Indigenous People, including the Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC). We maintain our commitment to contribute positively to the communities where we operate and to support the development of all these communities, including the indigenous communities, through our forestry activity and social initiatives. The Company also abides by the ILO Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention 169, which recognizes their human rights and aspirations to exercise control over their way of life, pursue economic development, and maintain and develop their identities, within the framework of the countries where they live.

## Ensuring ethical behavior

Certain managers and all market-facing employees in the business are required to formally confirm adherence to the Company's Competition Law Policy. In addition, these employees must complete an e-learning module about competition law compliance. The Legal team also runs a number of other seminars and ad-hoc presentations to support education and adherence to the Company Competition law Policy.

The Smurfit Westrock Code sets the principles for all our employees. Our Speak Up service guarantees a confidential process without fear of retaliation or reprisal for raising issues or matters that align with the three underlying principles of the Code: compliance with the law, ethical behavior, and a commitment to quality and service.

To ensure every employee understands their responsibilities and expected conduct as responsible corporate citizens, we offer an online e-learning program to support the Code of Conduct and Speak Up service. Every Smurfit Westrock location has the Code of Conduct accessible for anyone working on our premises or visiting our sites. We offer multiple avenues to our

stakeholders to confidentially express their concerns. The most important of these are: direct access to the line manager or HR partner, mail boxes where employees can leave their messages onsite, and the Speak Up service. The Speak Up service, provided by an independent third party company, allows all stakeholders to easily and confidentially report any issue or instance of wrongdoing with the service available 24/7/365, guaranteeing user confidentiality and/or anonymity, as well as the assurance of non-retaliation. Contact information for the Speak Up service is posted at each site and offers phone, in writing or online as options to raise an issue. Our objective is to ensure that at every site, each of our employees is aware of our Code of Conduct and Speak Up service in order to encourage transparency and to promote a transparent and trustworthy workplace. Cases reported through the Speak Up service are hosted on a fully secured and GDPR-compliant platform. Each case that is reported through the service is automatically assigned and dispatched by the system to local HR based on the location of the reporter. Every case reported is carefully processed and analyzed against a set of basic criteria that help us determine if corrective action is required to mitigate further risks.



## UNITED KINGDOM

## A low cost, high impact solution to improve safety at a corrugated plant

In 2024, Smurfit Kappa focused on hand safety as part of its World Safety Day activities. Building on this, the team at the Belfast plant in Northern Ireland came up with an idea to implement improved safety guarding solutions and laser scanners.

The folding gluing equipment now has a barrier between gluing lines with an interlocked gate that prevents access to the area. The machinery is equipped with fixed distance guards, and there is an 85cm wide scanner area where a laser scanner limits access to the equipment with a crawl speed mode (20 m/min).

The solution is user-friendly and low cost. This safety technology can be repeated at other plants to provide a wider positive impact. Folder gluer operators at the Belfast plant have embraced the new solution.

## COLOMBIA

## SAFOLI: A fun and engaging management-led strategy designed to strengthen health and safety culture

The Central Cluster team observed that safety performance at our Barbosa and Medellín corrugated plants could be improved. The Health and Safety team conducted research revealing the the inconsistent following of basic safety practices was causing potentially inappropriate decision making, increasing the risk of accidents. As a result, new and creative ideas were needed to raise health and safety awareness, reinforce the safety culture, and return to fundamental safety practices.

To make improvements, the cluster's Health and Safety team created the SAFOLI project, a six-week training experience centered on a fun narrative: the search for a lost gem. The engaging program connects all Company employees to safety, from senior management to the shop floor, establishing it as a prerequisite for any task or activity and supporting safe decision-making. The project focuses on awareness, collaborative care, and the application of basic health and safety tools within the facilities.

Thus far, the program has been implemented in a number of plants within the cluster and is achieving significant improvements. Along with the standardization of conditions, this has helped most of these plants achieve a TRIR of zero, with all reporting improved safety performance. SAFOLI is currently being extended to all plants in the Central Cluster.



## People strategy

People are critical to the success of Smurfit Westrock, and we strongly believe that everyone has talent and needs to find the right place in the organization where they can reach their full potential and be part of the Company's success.

Our HR strategy is built on developing our people to grow our business. Our strategy's focus is to attract, retain, and reward talent, and also unlock people's talent and potential. The strategy is specifically focused on:

1. understanding the organizational needs;
2. identifying the people priorities required to realize our business ambitions;
3. providing a road map to ensure we have succession plans in place to fill leadership gaps and provide the necessary talent to drive forward successfully, with people at the right career level and development stage and in the right place; and
4. ensuring HR services and capabilities are in place for the current and future needs of the business.

Our people strategy has four key pillars:

- Employee Experience and Internal Communications;
- Inclusion and Belonging;
- People Development and Talent Management; and
- Rewards and Recognition.

These pillars are supported by the HR Foundations of our HR strategy (see infographic on page 77). This includes health, safety and wellbeing, employee relations, and HR Information Systems, as we continue our commitment to professionalize and digitize our HR processes across the organization.

We focus on delivering our strategy to support the health and wellbeing of our people, the reliability of our information, the integrity of our organization, and to help ensure we communicate with all our colleagues in a consistent and timely manner. These provide us with an approach and way of working, behind which our goal is to have the entire HR organization aligned.

## Our HR Strategy

			
<p><b>People Development and Talent Management</b></p>	<p><b>Employee Experience and Internal Communications</b></p>	<p><b>Inclusion &amp; Belonging</b></p>	<p><b>Rewards and Recognition</b></p>
<p><b>Our Ambition:</b> To help our people grow their careers and deliver on their potential, so we can realize our ambition for them and the organization.</p>	<p><b>Our Ambition:</b> To create a continuous two-way dialogue, to ensure our people understand our strategy and the role they play in its delivery, while inspiring our colleagues to perform at their best every day.</p>	<p><b>Our Ambition:</b> To create an inclusive workplace where EveryOne will genuinely belong, be respected, valued and can do their best work.</p>	<p><b>Our Ambition:</b> To attract, retain and recognize our employees through competitive work practices. Making sure that people are not just appropriately rewarded from a monetary perspective, but also see their achievements recognized and valued.</p>
<p>HR Information Systems</p>		<p>Health, Safety and Wellbeing</p>	<p>Employee Relations</p>

### People Development and Talent Management

Further supporting and developing the culture and practice of talent management in the organization is core to our success, and we recognize that this is what will drive future high performance and the continuation of the values and culture which support our organization. Additionally, focusing on talent by having the right succession plans in place will help us continue to fill key operational and strategic positions. This will help us deliver the right people with the right skill set for various roles as they arise.

Both the Smurfit Kappa and WestRock talent management approaches have delivered many leaders for the organization. In the Smurfit Westrock senior leadership group (direct reports of the President and Group CEO's direct reports), 50% of leaders have more than 20 years of service. Some of those leaders joined the organization straight out of university and have built their careers through a mix of internal and external learning and development programs, as well as real-life and on-the-job training. In the first few months post-merger, our commitment to developing and engaging our leaders was shown as we brought 75 WestRock leaders together to attend a two-day Discovering Open Leadership program in the U.S., which was facilitated by INSEAD and was attended by our CEO and other senior leaders (see page 69). During 2025, 78 more are attending this two day program, with 84 leaders starting the full Open Leadership program.

We believe it is part of our role to ensure that no matter who joins our organization, at whatever stage in their career, our learning and development programs will equip employees with skills and experiences that will be relevant long into the future. This focus on training is supported by ongoing performance and career conversations and 360-degree feedback for our senior teams. These are all aimed at supporting their work and personal lives, both within and outside of Smurfit Westrock.

### Employee Experience and Internal Communications

We want to stay connected to our people to ensure they feel safe, supported, and part of a strong global Smurfit Westrock community. We also want to ensure all communications are delivered effectively, at every level of our organization, while providing the opportunity for open, two-way dialogue and employee feedback.

How an employee feels about their time and experience at Smurfit Westrock is extremely important to our organization. We believe it affects our success and drives our ability to attract, retain, and motivate our people, while ensuring their careers at Smurfit Westrock are enjoyable and successful.

We are a diverse team in the context of background and life experience, but also in terms of longevity of service. We are proud that many employees choose to stay with us for most, and sometimes all, of their careers.

Our ambition is to ensure our people understand our strategy and the role they play in its delivery, and to inspire them to perform at their best every day. It is our belief that the people who commit to the organization, along with everyone who joins us on their career journey, deserve a working life full of moments that matter, from the day they are hired, to the time they leave the organization.

## Inclusion and Belonging

Our ambition is to create an inclusive workplace where each one of us feels included, supported and respected in our daily work.

Embracing and valuing differences is a core component of 'EveryOne', our Inclusion and Belonging program. We foster an inclusive culture where all employees can thrive and contribute to our success.

In 2024, the Company was focused on the integration of the two legacy companies. We introduced the EveryOne approach to a portion of the Company and are preparing for a refreshed launch in May. Our Inclusion and Belonging strategy has included refreshing the messaging and branding of EveryOne, harmonizing our communities and Employee Resource Groups, preparing for the MyVoice employee engagement survey, and launching and sharing our strategy and plans during the upcoming management conferences in 2025. Our ongoing efforts have been focused on education, engagement, and retention.

We are continuing to work with various business teams to design specific learning paths to ensure inclusion for everyone. In 2025, all our program participants have completed learning paths and were a part of facilitated sessions on inclusion and belonging topics.

During 2024, the WestRock Employee Resource Groups continued delivering programs focused on engagement, development, and retention with significant participation and benefits for our employees. Highlights include events such as 'Let's Talk Stress Management', 'The Art of Effective Communication', 'Walking for Mental Health', and 'Breast Cancer Awareness'.

## Rewards and Recognition

Our ambition is to attract, retain and recognize our employees through competitive working practices and making sure that people are not just appropriately rewarded from a monetary perspective, but also recognized for their achievements and valued in the workplace. Our Compensation Policy requires that we pay above minimum wage in all our 40 countries, offering employee rewards that consider living wage metrics and benchmarks.

There are many ways in which we communicate to our employees that we respect and value them. For example, we have competitive wage structures aligned with market standards, multiple career advancement opportunities, a commitment to global mobility, and thorough communication of rewards packages, as well as a policy of openly thanking our colleagues for going above and beyond what is expected.

During 2024, we continued to challenge ourselves to ensure the compensation benefits we offer at every level of our organization, in terms of our rewards and recognition packages, are fair, competitive, and compare favorably within the market.

It is also critical that our rewards and recognition programs are aligned so our people can see a clear link between their compensation package and their performance, particularly when they perform above and beyond what is expected. In setting our rewards packages, Smurfit Westrock takes into consideration the employee's performance and external benchmark data for their role at companies of similar size and scope, while also driving internal equity within the Company.

We continued to digitize our rewards and recognition processes and we will now implement one Human Resources information system (HRIS) for all of our approximately 100,000 employees. This will assist in harmonizing all our processes, including our compensation process.

We continue to fulfill the statutory gender pay reporting obligations across all the markets where we operate, and we anticipate further changes with the recent passage of the EU Pay Transparency Directive.

Under UK legislation, employers with more than 250 employees are required to publish key metrics on their gender pay gap.

The Irish Gender Pay Gap Reporting guidelines came into effect on May 31, 2022, and they applied to all Irish companies with over 250 employees. Please note that Smurfit Kappa merged with WestRock on July 5, 2024, and each entity subject to mandatory gender pay gap reporting reported separately for 2024. Our full Gender Pay Gap Reports for 2024 can be found on our legacy websites: [smurfitkappa.com](https://smurfitkappa.com) and [westrock.com](https://westrock.com).

The Company is also focused on ensuring that positive employee and trade/labor union relations are maintained to the highest of standards, to deliver fair and sustainable collective labor agreements. We have continued to build on our fair and competitive rewards and recognition philosophy to attract and retain our key talent, and to motivate employees at every level of the organization to achieve the Company's strategic objectives.

The objectives of our rewards policy are to:

1. create a framework to enable the Company to attract and retain talented employees;
2. motivate employees at every level of the organization to achieve the Company's strategic objectives;
3. provide competitive rewards and benefits that are clearly linked to performance; and
4. digitize our key processes.

### Fair Pay, Compensation and Benefits

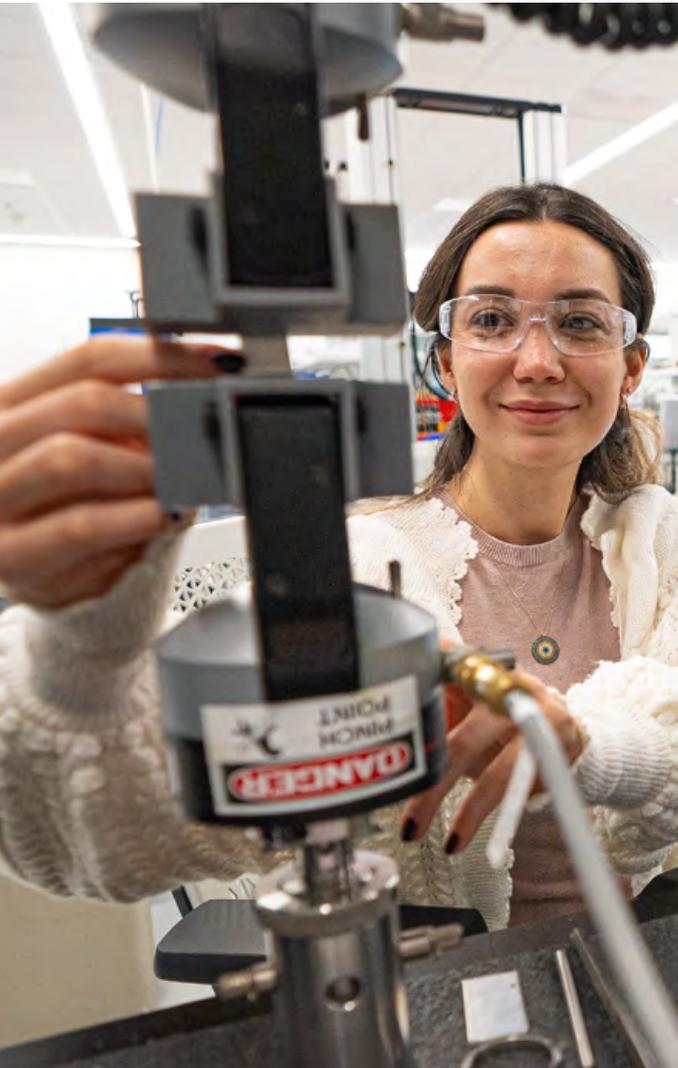
We provide competitive rates of pay to deliver fair compensation benefits across all our locations. We apply the 'same job, same pay' principle and do not gender-discriminate on salary, benefits, or any other consideration.

Smurfit Westrock provides a range of employee benefits, such as parental leave within local legislations and, depending on our countries, pensions and life insurance, which form an integral part of the compensation packages.

In all of our countries, we offer similar basic benefits to our employees, full-time, temporary, and part-time. The benefits depend on local social security systems and legislative requirements, which vary between countries.

**Our ambition is to make sure people are not just appropriately rewarded, but also recognized for their achievements and valued in the workplace.**





## Health, safety and wellbeing

Having products produced in a safe and healthy environment is important to all our stakeholders, especially our employees, their families, and the communities where we operate. Therefore, we strive to conduct our business with health, safety and wellbeing being part of our culture, and fostering a sense of care, where our coworkers look after themselves and each other. Our vision is to ensure that every day, every Smurfit Westrock employee returns home safely. This vision for health and safety also extends to contractors, sub-contractors, and other visitors to our sites.

## Our global Health and Safety Policy

In 2024, we published the Smurfit Westrock Global Health and Safety policy. We know that doing the right things in the right way, with integrity and respect, is necessary to engage our employees and create a successful business based on trust. We have a structured approach to health and safety, through which we endeavour to continually improve our safety performance.

It is our policy to:

- promote a supportive culture focusing on openness, involvement, and dignity in the workplace; we are all responsible for each other's health, safety and wellbeing;
- provide constructive feedback to success and setbacks in equal measure; we care for our employees and expect them to care for each other, by speaking up when noticing anything they feel is unsafe or that would harm anyone's health or wellbeing;
- review workplace incidents so there is consistent reporting, investigation, and, where appropriate, identification of improvement opportunities that strengthen our health and safety management systems and wellbeing to avoid any recurrence in incidents;
- comply with all applicable legal requirements and implement good health, safety and wellbeing practices by effective deployment of our health and safety management systems;
- ensure that all line managers foster a work environment where every member of the workforce, including contractors, understands their role in health, safety and wellbeing, and delivers on their individual responsibilities;
- ensure that all operational managers take responsibility for health and safety implementation, communication, and compliance;
- ensure that our employees, contractors, and subcontractors are trained to work safely;
- have processes in place to identify health and safety hazards so that risks are assessed and minimized to prevent injuries and health problems among our employees, contractors, subcontractors, partners and visitors.

Our Global Health and Safety Policy is available at [smurfitwestrock.com](https://www.smurfitwestrock.com).

## Safety for Life

Our approach to achieving the health, safety and wellbeing vision stated in our Global Health and Safety Policy is to embed a safety-first approach deep in the Company culture to deliver on our desire to eliminate all fatalities and serious incidents from our operations. We believe that strong health and safety is about individual and collective choices, responsibility, and actions. Our Safety for Life initiative aims to achieve this safety-first approach by building an emotional link between the choices we make at work and how they affect the choices we are able to make in our personal lives. Similarly, we also support the choice of a healthy lifestyle since that also impacts our employees' wellbeing at work and at home.

The wellbeing of our employees is integral to the way we approach health and safety, and our Employee Assistance Program ('EAP') is designed to support mental health as an important part of overall wellbeing. The EAP supports the management of stress, anxiety, and depression, as well as providing support with physical, social, and financial topics that are a part of mental wellbeing. The EAP is available to all Smurfit Westrock employees.

## Health and safety processes

Smurfit Westrock has health and safety management systems that are built on the guiding principles outlined in our Global Health and Safety Policy, but tailored to the specific needs and requirements of our regional businesses. Our health and safety management systems in each region include policies, standards, procedures, and other tools to help our sites effectively manage critical safety areas, including but not limited to, Energy Isolation; Materials & Chemical handling; People & Vehicles; Working at Heights; Subcontractor/Contractor Management; and Contact with Machines. These health and safety management systems are owned and managed by countries or clusters and span all our operations from production sites to offices.

Local health and safety teams drive our adherence to applicable health and safety laws and regulations and to Company health and safety policies. We promote effective governance and compliance by conducting regular audits to assess conformance with Company health and safety standards and legal obligations.

We have Health and Safety Committees at site, regional and Executive Committee levels.

Smurfit Westrock strives to operate as a health and safety learning organization, particularly when it comes to injury and illness prevention. We have processes in place across the Company to share information about safety incidents, as well as best practices for hazard mitigation and injury/illness prevention. All employees, contractors, subcontractors and visitors are encouraged to report any

incidents, including safety concerns, first aid cases, and near misses, so that we learn from our mistakes and repeat incidents are avoided. Our employees, contractors and subcontractors also have the authority to stop work if they perceive a situation as being unsafe.

We provide our employees with extensive health and safety training. Smurfit Westrock also provides safety training programs for all site-based levels of management, and we are investing in programs specifically designed to strengthen the safety and health capabilities of our frontline leaders. New employees participate in extensive safety onboarding and training and receive refresher training throughout their tenure. Our contractors and subcontractors, as well as visitors, get an induction to site safety measures prior to or upon entering a Smurfit Westrock facility.

In 2024, we worked towards bringing the two companies' health, safety, and wellbeing policies and programs together and published a Global Health and Safety policy for the Company.

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

## Mebane plant wins prestigious safety award

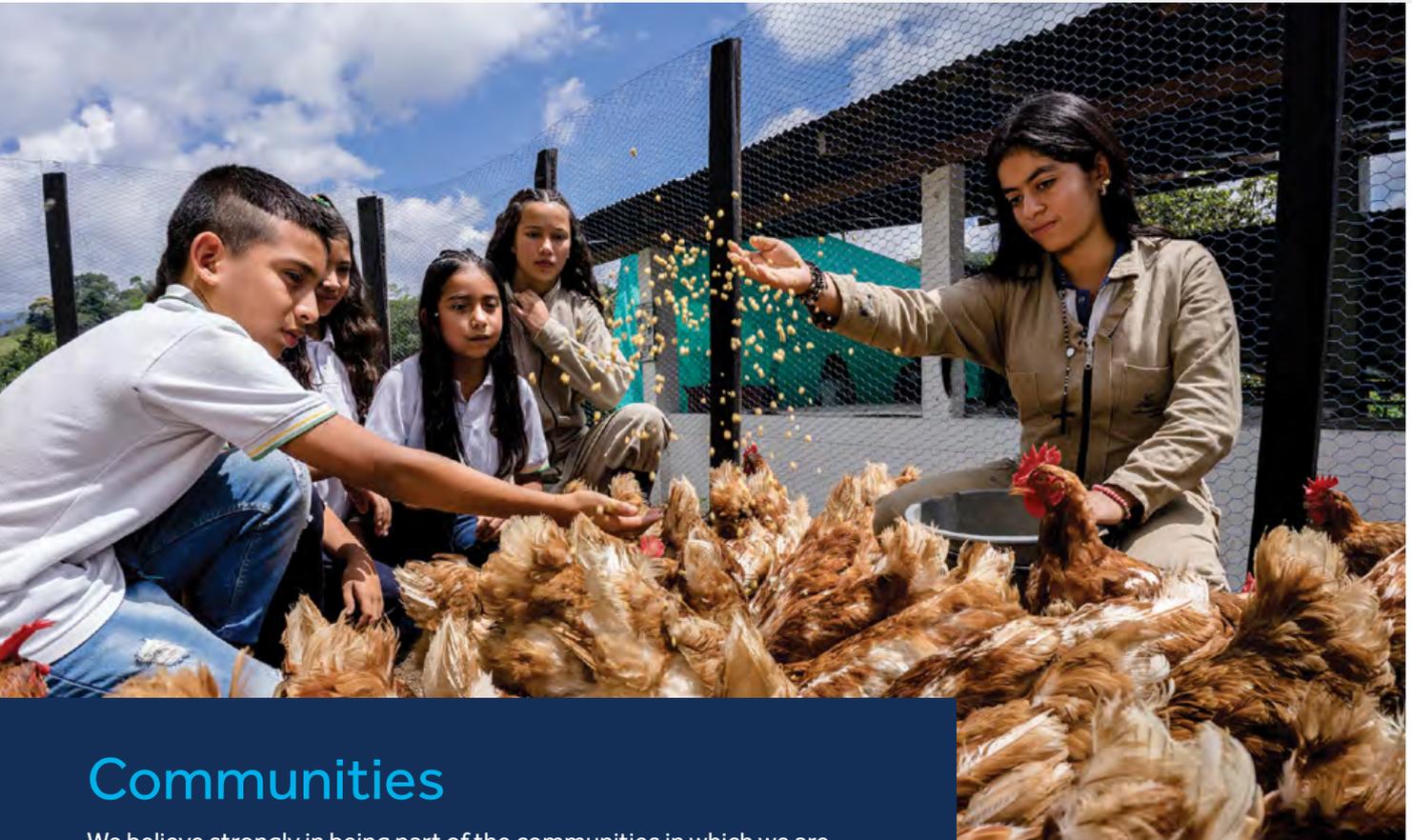


In July 2024, The North Carolina Department of Labor (under OSHA) presented our converting plant in Mebane with a Gold Award for their outstanding safety record.

This is the first time the Mebane team has achieved this prestigious award.

The team in Mebane earned the honor by logging no Recordable Injury cases, no Lost Time cases, and no Restricted Duty cases (what's referred to as the DART rate) during the 2023 calendar year—a difficult feat. These accomplishments were thanks in part to Mebane's safety-first culture and their safety mission, which is: Safety is at the core of this plant's culture, and we provide it every day through excellence by example.

To qualify for an annual safety award, a site must have no fatalities during the calendar year and maintain an incidence rate at least 50% below the average for its particular industry group.



## Communities

We believe strongly in being part of the communities in which we are privileged to operate. We actively support projects that help build a sustainable future for our local communities.

We remain deeply committed to our local communities and have always strongly believed in being part of, collaborating with, and giving back to the communities where we operate. We are proud of our many colleagues across the world who continue to donate their time, effort, and expertise to making a positive and lasting impact.

Through our operations, we actively support projects that help build a sustainable future in the communities where we live and work. We engage with and support local economies and livelihoods by creating opportunities directly and indirectly for employment, investing in infrastructure, and contributing to community activities through our Open Community initiatives.

### Involved in communities

We believe community involvement builds trust and serves as a link to the issues important to us. Where relevant, we take part in local community engagement projects and impact assessments. Our local operations play a role in education and in supporting vulnerable groups in their community. Examples of these can be found throughout the People Section of this report and in the 'Our Open Community' booklet available at [smurfitwestrock.com](https://www.smurfitwestrock.com).

The majority of our sites have performed an environmental impact assessment, which is typically part of the local operational permit process. Each site has an official community grievance process. The main reasons for community complaints are typically noise and odor from our operations.

Smurfit Westrock participates widely in local projects, some of which focus on circularity also. Some examples of these are:

- delivering district heating from our paper mill to the residents of Piteå, Sweden, with a similar project under development in Nettingsdorf, Austria;
- supplying electricity to the community in Hodge, U.S.;
- supporting municipal water treatment systems with our effluent, which has nutrients that help treat waste water in Hodge, U.S., Nettingsdorf, Austria and Nervi6n, Spain;
- treating municipal waste water in Morava, Czech Republic;
- maintaining rural road structures in our Colombian forestry operations;
- increasing awareness for recycling through our partnership with the Atlanta Hawks NBA team, U.S.; and
- collecting city-recovered paper in Malaga, Spain.

U.S.

## NBA Atlanta Hawks and Rock the Rim



Smurfit Westrock is proud to be the sustainability partner of the Atlanta Hawks NBA team. We support the team’s commitment to make their home court, State Farm Arena, a zero-waste facility, diverting a minimum of 90% of all waste from landfill. Our recycling facility in Tucker, Georgia plays a role by accepting the corrugated material from the arena.

Our partnership spans the Metro Atlanta area through the ‘Rock the Rim’ campaign in which a tree is planted for every slam dunk made by a Hawks player. During the 2023-2024 season, the Hawks tallied 445 dunks, meaning that many trees will get planted in the area.

In December 2024, Smurfit Westrock colleagues, the Atlanta Hawks, and Trees Atlanta cooperated to plant trees at CHaRM (Center for Hard to Recycle Materials) DeKalb County. The trees will provide shade cover at their new donation center.

BULGARIA

## Inspiring creativity among the young in Lukovit

A special surprise was waiting for young residents and visitors at the Traditional Lukovit Fair this year, thanks to some of our enthusiastic colleagues. Much to the children’s delight, a ‘Handy Hands’ booth had been set up where they could let their imagination and creativity run free through the use of specially designed cardboard gifts, including houses, figurines, and puzzles! The children and their parents were supported by colleagues from the Smurfit Westrock design team as they enjoyed coloring, assembling their new creations, and learning more about the versatility and durability of corrugated board.





## CHINA

## The Journey of a Tree

We realize the importance of instilling a passion and respect for the environment in young people. As the decision-makers of the future, they will be responsible for the protection of our natural resources and habitats.

In Shanghai and Guangzhou, 30 Smurfit Westrock volunteers reached out to their local community to help educate young people through the outreach program 'The Journey of a Tree'. After receiving specific training, our volunteers spent time in local pre-schools and kindergartens teaching children about the life cycle of trees and the benefits of sustainability.

The sessions were a huge success. Our colleagues have been invited back to speak to more children, raising awareness among the young and building key relationships in the community.

## CANADA

## Brightening a hospital stay

At McMaster Children's Hospital in Ontario, children from infancy to age 17 receive expert care for a wide range of illnesses including cancer, digestive diseases, and mental health diagnoses. Smurfit Westrock colleagues in nearby Guelph came together to help and bring joy to children facing medical challenges.

Since 2018, the team has been creating corrugated crafts and creative projects for the children, often themed around annual holidays to help them feel included in the celebrations. Gifts have included 3D animals, chess boards, and even a full-sized snack booth for a movie night!

A particularly meaningful gift has been a specially designed memory box for children to store personal items like photos and letters, which can help them cope in harder moments.

The Guelph volunteers deliver the items to the children regularly and spend quality time with staff and patients. Their initiative has touched the lives of 500 young people and has brought a welcome distraction when they need it most.



# Our Open Community progress in 2024

The Foundation and Open Community initiatives cover all aspects of our involvement with our communities worldwide. In 2024, through our Foundation and Open Community activities, the legacy companies and Smurfit Westrock together, donated \$8.8 million to support local communities. Additionally, in 2024, 12,426 of our colleagues participated in 180 initiatives across 29 countries. Over 1 million people benefited from this year's initiatives across a wide spectrum of our communities, including families and children. We are proud of all our community activities and believe these are a demonstration, of both our culture, and our purpose: to create, protect, and care.

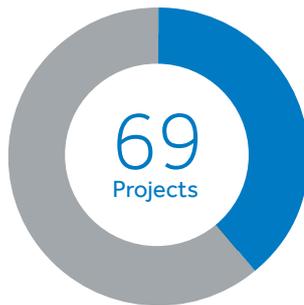


## Project Categories

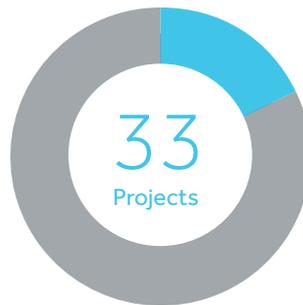
Our Open Communities initiatives cover all aspects of our involvement with our communities around the world. We have captured our community initiatives under four pillars.



Empowering communities



Encouraging wellbeing



Inspiring our future



Protecting our planet



**110**  
Basic care  
projects  
2012-2024



**63**  
Health and  
nutrition  
projects  
2012-2024



**132**  
Education  
projects  
2012-2024



**305**  
projects across  
**31**  
countries  
2012-2024



**\$18**  
million  
donated  
2012-2024

## The Smurfit Westrock Foundation

The Company provides 100% of the funding for the Smurfit Westrock Foundation (formerly Smurfit Kappa Foundation), a registered charity in Ireland (RCN 20078270), which focuses on delivering a positive impact on the lives of underprivileged people in the communities where we operate across the globe. Since being formed in 2012, the Foundation has supported a total of 305 projects with a social investment of over \$18 million in 31 countries.

In 2024, the Foundation alone contributed to over 50 projects across 20 countries, donating over \$3 million to charitable causes dedicated to addressing the issues of inequality within our communities. The Foundation's efforts remained focused on improving health and education for underprivileged people, with a continued emphasis on fostering the inclusion of everyone in society. Furthermore, in response to natural disasters in areas where Smurfit Westrock operates, we donated over \$400,000 to support humanitarian relief efforts.

Throughout the year, we remained dedicated to the Foundation's purpose of financially supporting sustainable projects that positively impact the lives of underprivileged people in health, nutrition, education, and basic care, thereby helping to reduce existing inequalities.

### Delivering on the UN SDGs

Using the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals as a guide, we focused on delivering impact for six SDGs: No Poverty, Zero Hunger, Good Health and Wellbeing, Quality Education, Gender Equality, and Reduced Inequalities. In 2024, The Smurfit Westrock Foundation supported:





## UNITED STATES

### Community spirit: after Hurricanes Helene and Milton

Over two weeks in late 2024, Hurricanes Helene and Milton caused significant devastation across several states in the U.S., including Florida, Georgia, Tennessee, Virginia, and North and South Carolina. Many of our communities and colleagues in these regions were impacted.

Through our Smurfit Westrock Foundation, we provided disaster relief grants, focusing on delivering immediate relief and supporting long-term recovery initiatives. The Foundation donated to local organizations working on the ground to provide emergency supplies, including food, water, and medical aid to those affected by the hurricanes, ensuring that the most vulnerable received the help they needed.

The Foundation supported Team Rubicon's Response Fund with a donation of \$50,000. Team Rubicon's veteran-led volunteers devise action plans and lead teams to assist first responders with recovery efforts, helping families return to healthy, liveable homes by clearing roadways, removing debris, and setting a new foundation for a stronger community.

The Foundation also donated \$50,000 to the North Carolina Community Foundation ('NCCF') Disaster Relief Fund. The NCCF provides grants to nonprofit and charitable organizations to address long-term recovery and resilience, meeting unmet needs to build stronger and more prepared communities.



Adding their support, colleagues from 16 Smurfit Westrock North America facilities donated much-needed supplies such as, food, water, diapers and hygiene products, and also coordinated deliveries to the hardest hit communities. In addition, our Employee Relief Fund, made possible by donations from our colleagues, provided grants to 120 impacted employees to help with immediate expenses, such as temporary housing and insurance deductibles.

By focusing on both short-term aid and long-term recovery, we supported the communities affected by Hurricanes Helene and Milton to rebuild, recover, and repair their lives, creating hope for brighter days ahead.

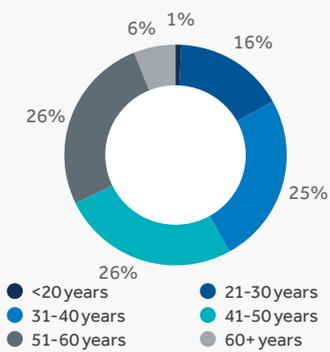
# Progress in 2024: Smurfit Kappa

Due to the mid-year combination, consolidated data is not available for Smurfit Westrock to report. In this section, the data reported is for the full calendar year, 2024, and for Smurfit Kappa sites only. Please note: all comparisons are for full calendar years and legacy policies and practices remain in place while we develop new Smurfit Westrock policies.

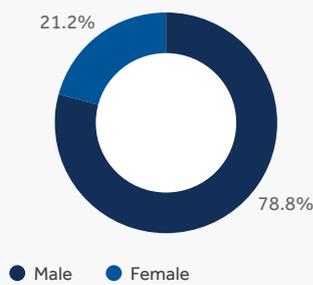
## People values and strategy

Workforce indicators for Smurfit Kappa in 2024 are presented in this section.

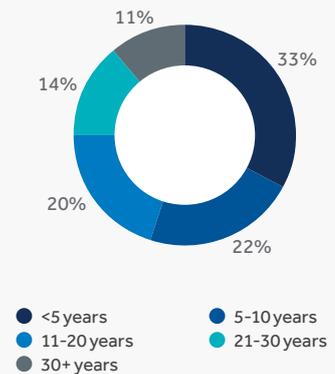
Employee by Age Group (%)



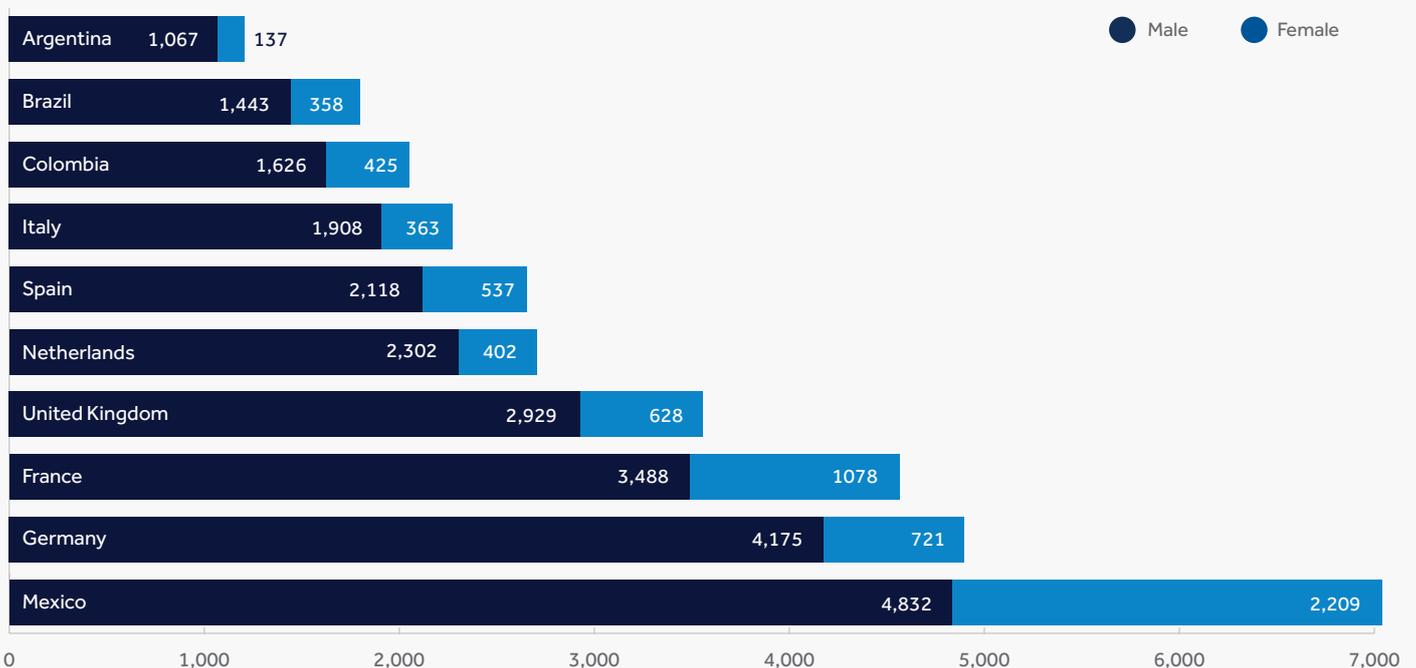
Total Employees by Gender (%)



Length of Service (%)



Total Employees by Gender (top 10 countries)



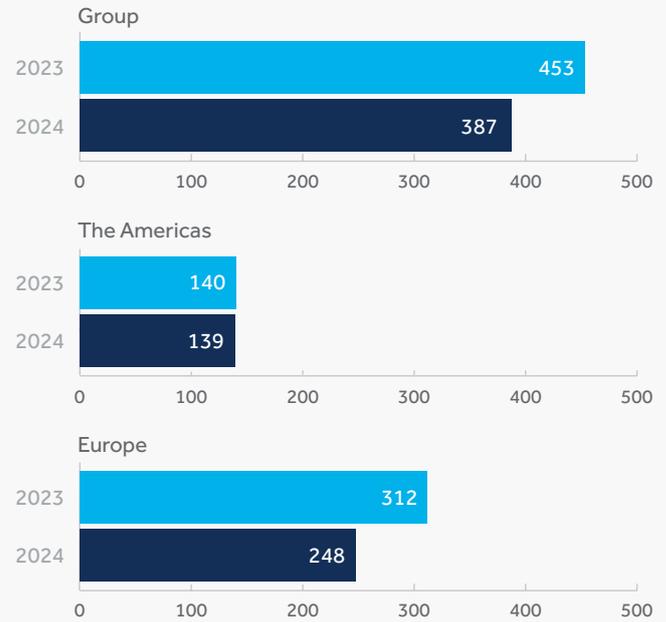
## Health, safety and wellbeing

In 2024, Smurfit Kappa’s total recordable injury rate ('TRIR') decreased by 13.2% from 2023, bringing the TRIR to 0.46 (2023: 0.53) and demonstrating the achievements in safety over that period. Regrettably, there were three fatalities in 2024, all of which were among the subcontractor group. In the Paper Division, Europe, a welder fatally fell into a stock chest. In the Forestry Division Colombia, a worker was struck by lightning. In Barranquilla Corrugated, an entrapment occurred involving the lifting table of a counter ejector. Following these fatalities, preventive measures were implemented.

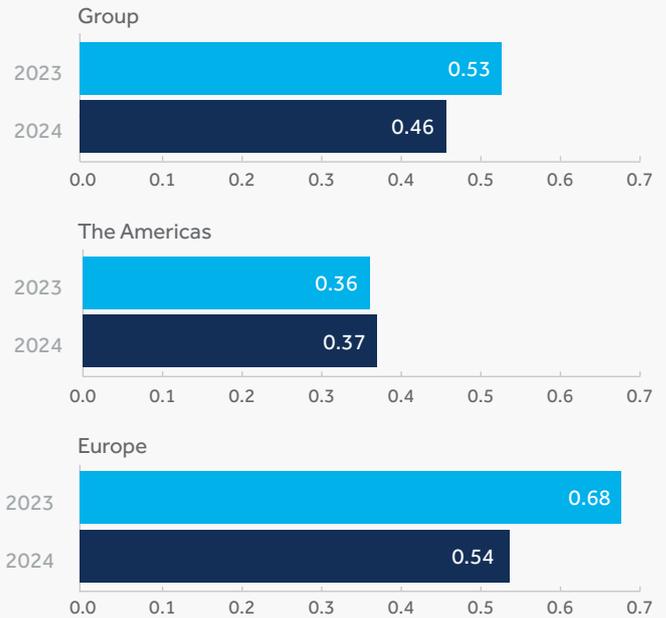
In 2024, Smurfit Kappa continued to deliver against its key health, safety, and wellbeing areas in its mills and plants across the world. During 2024, Smurfit Kappa executed the following activities as part of its Annual Safety Improvement Plans to continue to drive awareness and keep attention on this key topic:

- On World Safety Day (April 28th), it launched a hand safety campaign focused on contact with moving machinery, a high-risk area. 86% of irreversible injuries in the past two years were machinery-related, 97% affecting hands. To focus on changing personal behavior, the campaign followed the theme: Safety is a choice—don't be left thinking, 'If only...'
- Smurfit Kappa continued with its Safety for Leaders program.
- Smurfit Kappa further developed its health and safety processes with a particular focus on its Energy & Machinery Isolation Policy, under the theme 'Lock Out, Tag Out, Try Out.'
- The Smurfit Kappa Excellence in Safety Award, where the best performing sites are rewarded, continued during the year. In 2024, the sites were Mengibar Paper Mill in Europe and Coronel Suarez Mill, Argentina; Pirapetinga Complex, Brazil; Bogota Corrugated, Central Cluster; Guanajuato Corrugated plant, Mexico; and Houston Sheet Plant in the U.S.

### Total Recordable Injuries



### TRIR



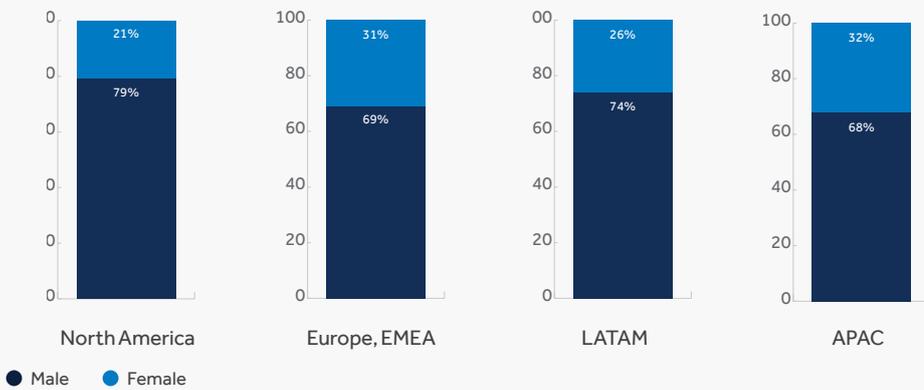
# Progress in 2024: WestRock

Due to the mid-year combination, consolidated data is not available for Smurfit Westrock to report. In this section, the data reported is for the full calendar year, 2024, and for WestRock sites only. Please note: all comparisons are for Fiscal Year ('FY') 2019 versus Calendar Year ('CY') 2024 unless otherwise stated. Fiscal year data for prior comparative periods is presented based on legacy WestRock's fiscal year period from October 1 - September 30. Legacy policies and practices remain in place while we develop new Smurfit Westrock policies.

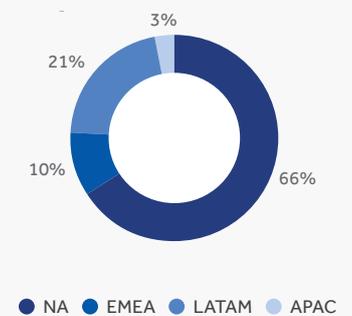
## People values and strategy

Workforce indicators for WestRock in 2024 are presented in this section.

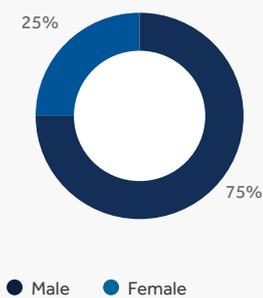
Employees by Gender by Region (All Employees)



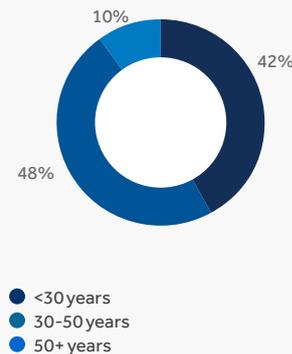
Employees by Region



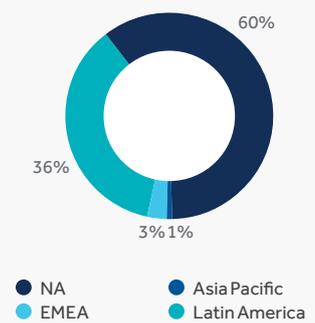
New Hires: Gender



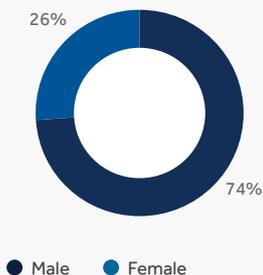
New Hires: Age Group



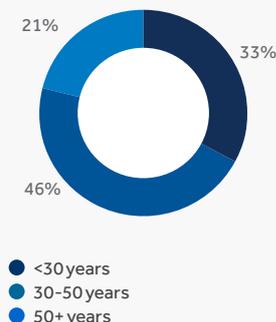
New Hires: Region



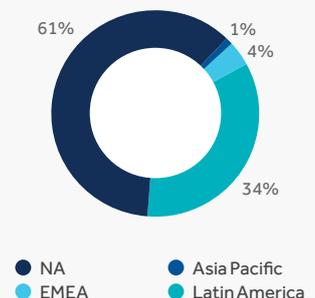
Employee Turnover: Gender



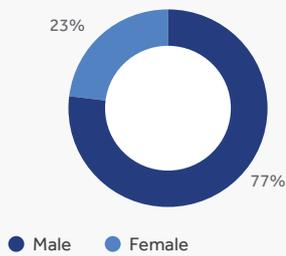
Employee Turnover: Age Group



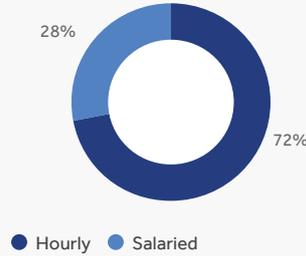
Employee Turnover: Region



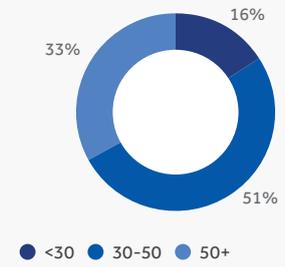
**Employees by Gender (Global, All Employees)**



**Employees by Salaried and Hourly**



**Employees by Age Groups**



### Health, Safety and Wellbeing

In 2024, WestRock improved its OSHA recordable incident rate by approximately 20.2% against a 2019 baseline, performing better than the industry benchmark. Regrettably, during the year there were two employee fatalities. WestRock also had 15 serious injuries, or 'life changing events' ('LCEs'), the majority of which involved hand injuries. In 2024, WestRock engaged its hourly workforce, frontline leaders, and managers in operational learning events to evaluate these incidents thoroughly and understand their root causes, and it shared the outcomes from these sessions to improve the safety of its operations globally.

Most of WestRock's manufacturing facilities in North America did not have any days lost to injuries in 2024, and many sites had noteworthy accomplishments in the safety area.

- Over 150 North American manufacturing sites reported no life-changing events or recordable injuries in 2024.
- Won numerous safety awards for innovation and performance, including:
  - more than 70 recognitions from the Fibre Box Association, including 27 'Perfect Plant' awards to its corrugated converting plants with no recordable injuries;
  - 41 'Safety Excellence' awards to sites that achieved zero lost time injuries; and
  - a Gold Award for safety from the North Carolina Department of Labor achieved by the Mebane, North Carolina folding carton plant for an outstanding safety record with no recordable cases, no lost time cases and no restricted duty cases.
- WestRock also hosted Human and Organizational Performance training and operational learning events across facilities in the U.S., Canada and Mexico to proactively tackle workplace safety risks.

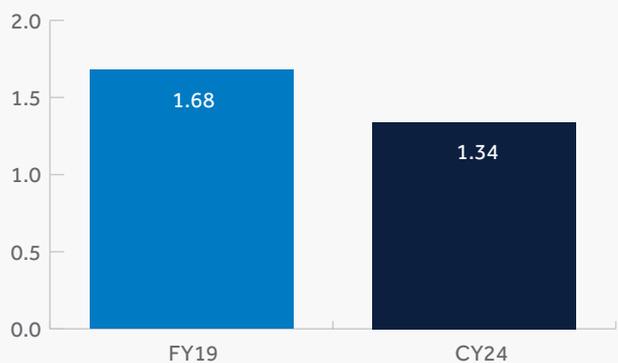
**Lost Workday Rate\***

Number of Days/100 Employees



**OSHA Recordable Incident Rate\***

Recordable Injuries/100 Employees



\* FY19 baseline does not include Grupo Gondi (Mexico) acquisition in December 2022.

**LCEs**

