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**ABOUT US** 

Our owner Christine De Dijcker and chair of the Board Bart De Smet reflect on the past two years, including the achievements and challenges that came our way, followed by their vision on a sustainable future.

# How would you describe sustainability in the context of ECS and where can ECS make a difference?

At ECS, sustainability is central to our operations and identity. We are committed to reducing CO2 emissions through intermodal transport and supply chain efficiency, including consolidation and double stacking. This commitment to CO<sub>2</sub> reduction and efficiency is vital to our sector.

Sustainability also means fostering a culture where employees can develop their talents, feel respected, and work in a team-oriented environment. Ensuring a stimulating workplace and providing attractive working conditions are key priorities.

As a proud family-owned company, we are committed to nurturing lasting, trust-based relationships with our customers and suppliers.

We view sustainability not as a challenge, but as a shared responsibility—and a natural extension of our values.

# What were the most notable achievements in sustainability over the past years?

In recent years, ECS has made notable advancements in sustainability. Environmentally, we've reduced our carbon footprint by shifting millions of kilometres from road to rail and investing in automation and intermodal corridors. Socially, ECS has enhanced the workplace environment and employee wellbeing through a Culture Committee, well-being and CSR initiatives. Governance improvements include strengthening our Board with specialized committees and expertise. Despite challenges like the post-COVID energy crisis, geopolitical tensions, and inflation, ECS has adapted to ensure exceptional service and growth opportunities. These achievements highlight our commitment to balancing CO<sub>2</sub> reduction, social responsibility, and governance excellence.



Bart De Smet, Chair of the Board

"In a year marked by challenges such as the post-COVID energy crisis, geopolitical tensions, and inflation, it is remarkable how the company and its employees have managed to absorb these changes positively." "Our sustainability strategy can only succeed through partnerships with our customers and suppliers, as we all must take part in this journey"

# What challenges has ECS faced and how have you dealt with them?

ECS faces challenges in sustainability, especially with the shift to rail transport. Cost and competition in road transport often push companies to choose cheaper options. Rail transport limitations, like reliability and flexibility, are worsened by market conditions prioritizing cost over sustainability.

External factors such as rising tolls, driver shortages, and potential  $CO_2$  taxes add to the complexity. Despite these obstacles, ECS remains committed to increasing rail transport and continuously adapts to changing regulations, inflation, and customer behaviour.

# How does the commitment to sustainable development concretely translate into the activities and strategic decisions of ECS?

At ECS, sustainability is integrated into our strategy and operations. We are shifting transport from road to rail, with new routes to the Czech Republic and Germany, as part of our continental expansion. ESG principles guide all our initiatives, ensuring sustainable growth. Despite challenges like cost and competition, we remain committed to sustainable transport solutions and adapting to regulatory and market changes.

# What are your goals and ambitions for the coming years?

Our future goals focus on sustainable growth and adapting to evolving employee expectations. Strategically, we plan to expand our intermodal transport capabilities, emphasizing rail. Approximately fifty percent of our land transport was via rail, already showcasing our commitment to sustainable transport. Our goal is to scale and improve rail efficiency, driven by toll costs, CO<sub>2</sub> taxes, and driver shortages.

While road transport remains crucial for flexibility and cost-effectiveness, our long-term strategy prioritizes rail for long distances and road for shorter routes. This approach supports our sustainability goals and differentiates us from traditional road transporters.

We aim to enhance our personnel policy by nurturing talent, promoting internal mobility, and providing challenging roles for professional development.

# How do you see the evolution of regulations and trends in sustainability, and how are you preparing for them?

ECS prioritizes sustainability driven by genuine commitment rather than just regulatory compliance. Our core mission, creating sustainable reliable logistics, is rooted in sustainability. Although regulatory frameworks like CSRD can be complex, they should not hinder innovation. Our pragmatic approach maintains simplicity and common sense in sustainability practices, motivating and facilitating meaningful actions.

# What personally motivates you to further strengthen the sustainability approach?

My commitment to sustainability is driven by a genuine belief in its importance for future generations. This concern is a powerful motivator for our sustainability efforts.

We recognize that costs influence behaviour, and governments can guide actions through penalties for unsustainable practices. Internally, we foster a mindset that prioritizes sustainability. When choosing between rail and road transport, we aim to choose rail whenever possible.

Our true motivation for sustainability comes from believing in its value and necessity. ESG principles are deeply embedded in our DNA, driving genuine and lasting change. This conviction ensures our efforts are truly sustainable and impactful.

# What role does the family identity play in your vision and decisions?

At ECS, our family identity is central to our vision and decisions.

As a family-owned business, we prioritize long-term growth over short-term gains, aligning with the family's enduring vision. This allows us to invest in the company's future rather than focusing solely on immediate performance targets.

The family's involvement in governance is crucial, maintaining a balanced relationship between shareholders, family members, operational management, and the Board of directors. The active participation of the third generation underscores the family's ongoing commitment to ECS.

For over 40 years, the family's dedication to sustainability and multimodality has been a cornerstone of our strategy. This enduring support strengthens our mission and guides our future decisions, ensuring we remain true to our values and continue to grow responsibly.

# What core message would you like to convey to the readers of this report?

ECS is committed to leading in energy-efficient and environmentally friendly goods transportation and logistics.

Our ESG principles are integral to our operations and identity. While our sustainability journey is ongoing, we make significant strides each year.

ECS want to continue to collaborate with stakeholders to advance sustainability initiatives, emphasizing partnership and collective effort to achieve substantial and lasting change.

With our 2025 sustainability report, we invite you to join us on our journey, showcasing our ambitions and achievements in sustainability. We extend our heartfelt thanks to all our employees and stakeholders for their steadfast support and continuous efforts in helping us create sustainable and reliable logistics.

"As a family-owned business, we prioritize long-term growth, aligning with the family's enduring vision. This allows us to invest in the company's future."



Christine De Dijcker, Owner

# 2023 - 2024 HIGHLIGHTS



On 11 September 2023, ECS launched its first company train to the Czech Republic. Two weekly roundtrips now carry containers between Zeebrugge and Lovosice, efficiently linking raw materials and finished goods.



We have obtained a Trusted Trader recognition, enabling faster and more efficient customs processes for veterinary goods headed to the UK, strengthening border flow and operational reliability.



ECS added 1.032 new solar panels, raising our renewable energy capacity to 569,8 kW, now covering 14% of energy use at our Belgian sites and cutting carbon emissions.



**ABOUT US** 

ECS has invested in 235 new huckepack trailers, enabling rail transport of full trailers. This supports our shift to greener logistics and improves transport flexibility.



In late 2023, we earned ISO14001 for environmental management. By 2024, our ISO9001 scope now covers all business units, aligning quality and sustainability goals companywide.



The Brugge Award aims to honour and promote entrepreneurs in Bruges. ECS was voted company of the year in 2024. An amazing recognition, where we want to thank all our employees. Because TOGETHER we excel.



We have expanded our logistics footprint with an 82.000-pallet highbay warehouse in Zeebrugge. ECS now manages 220.000 rail-connected pallet spaces across Belgium and France.



Our finance team received the 2023 Future Proof Award, recognizing their adaptability, innovation, and contribution to ECS' resilience in a changing financial landscape.



We're enhancing cybersecurity to support modern logistics, preparing for ISO27001 and adapting to new regulations like NIS2 and CRA, ensuring a secure digital foundation.

**ABOUT US** 



ECS is piloting HVO, a renewable diesel fuel that significantly reduces  $CO_2$  emissions. Several Italian partners have already transitioned fully, advancing our green goals for our first and last mileage transport.



We have launched a new route linking Zeebrugge and Crailsheim, running 3 times a week and removing over 11.000 trucks from the road, saving up to 2.600 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> annually.



ECS was honoured with the Baanbrekers Award this year, celebrating our new rail links to Lovosice and Crailsheim, and our continued leadership in sustainable logistics





# **A FAMILY BUSINESS**

### The roots of ECS were already set in 1947

In 1947, Omer De Dijcker registered the first license plate for Vervoer Omer De Dijcker. His two sons, Maurice and Gustaaf De Dijcker, founded De Dijcker NV in 1963 in Vlierzele. Gustaaf established his own transport company, DD Trans, in 1985 in Zeebrugge. This company was specifically created for transporting the large 'wall stones' of the port of Zeebrugge. Gustaaf embarked on this journey with his daughter Christine, who had just graduated.

From that moment on, they continued to build the family business together, and DD Trans eventually evolved into ECS as it is known today. The family, along with the ECS fleet and activities, grew steadily, always guided by a clear vision and strong growth ambition. Today, the third generation is involved, continuing to write the growth story of ECS. With entrepreneurial roots stretching back more than 75 years, this evolution reflects our commitment to maintaining our family values while meeting the changing demands of the industry.



**'47** 

# **TIMELINE**

1995 DD Trans, acquiring part of ECS. Focusing on Europe, the UK and Ireland



2008 Growing ECS' intermodal solutions, whilst covering more of the southern European market



2017 ECS acquires 2XL



2021 Second highbay arising at Zeebrugge



2023 Sven Pieters is appointed as the new CEO by the Board of directors



2003 Temperature controlled solutions are offered



2016 The first highbay at 2XL became operational



2018 Extending our one-stop-shop supply chain solutions with new warehouse in Dourges



2022 ECS rearranges its shareholding structure

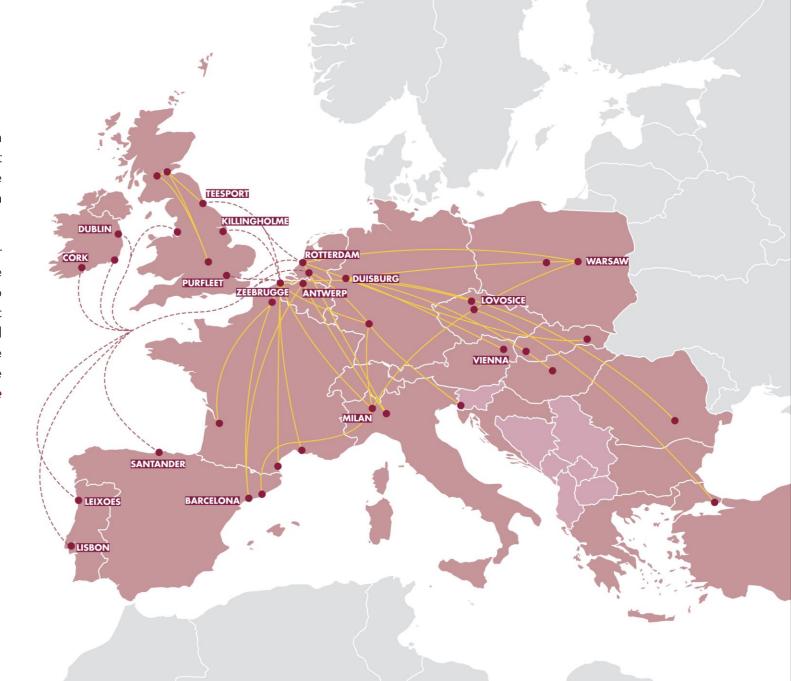
# **ABOUT ECS**

ECS is a leading provider of integrated supply chain logistics and intermodal transport solutions. Our family-owned company with headquarters in Zeebrugge, spreads its activities over more than 29 European countries, specializing in transport and logistics between the UK, Ireland, and the European mainland.

We combine a strategic intermodal network, cost-effective supply chain solutions and professional customs clearance services, to provide the most sustainable and reliable logistics.

ECS aims to drive a sustainable and efficient transition of the transportation of goods in every possible way.

As a company we consider it our responsibility to make a long-term contribution to society, to economic wellbeing, and social cohesion, in accordance with the environment. We call it "creating sustainable & reliable logistics".



# **VISION & MISSION**

We connect Europe in a sustainable way with efficient transport and logistics that keeps our society running smoothly. We think long-term, considering our environment, society, and our people. We build sustainable relationships with customers, employees, and their families, thereby connecting people with each other.

### Our vision:

To be a European Leader in Integrated Supply Chain & Intermodal solutions.

We aim to set the standard in providing seamless, efficient, and sustainable logistics solutions across Europe, leveraging our expertise and innovative approaches to meet the evolving needs of our clients and the industry.

### Our mission:

Creating Sustainable Reliable Logistics.

We create connections through our strategic network of consolidation warehouses and an extensive intermodal system. By leveraging a multimodal approach and performant delivery - utilizing ships and rail for long distances and road for the last mile - we ensure both sustainability and reliability in our logistics solutions. We are a reliable logistics partner and, together with our customers, we are reaching towards a sustainable future.

**Our Family Values:** TOGETHER

Our Culture: Connect - Challenge - Care

As an organization, we navigate through changes and challenges. The strength and core of our success lie in our corporate culture. A culture that unites us, guides us, and helps us achieve our common goals. With a shared vision, clear strategy, and strong leadership values, we stay on the right course together.

Our Culture: Connect - Challenge - Care, defines how we collaborate, engage in dialogue, and grow together. These values are not just words; they are principles we internalize. Our culture is the invisible force that promotes our growth and cohesion, enabling us to make a difference for ourselves, our customers, and our partners.

Together, we connect Europe, by connecting with people and businesses, setting up long term partnerships with our stakeholders. We challenge ourselves to grow both personally and professionally, creating impact in an ever-evolving industry. We care for each other and our stakeholders, as together, we are one logistics family.



### **OUR VISION**

To be a European Leader in Integrated Supply Chain & Intermodal Solutions.



### **OUR MISSION**

Creating Sustainable Reliable Logistics



Connect - Challenge - Care

# **OUR STRATEGY**

At the heart of our 2030 strategy, "ECSellerate," lies our ambition to accelerate sustainable growth through three fundamental pillars: growth, excellence, and people. This integrated approach is designed to support our mission of creating sustainable and reliable logistics, and our vision of becoming a European leader in integrated supply chain and intermodal solutions.

### Growth

We are committed to expanding our European intermodal network and enhancing our strategic consolidation warehouses. By extending our product and service offerings, we aim to meet the evolving needs of our customers and stay ahead in the competitive logistics landscape.

### Excellence

We are embedding best practices across all operations to ensure efficiency, reliability, sustainability and increased customer satisfaction. This includes leveraging advanced technologies and innovative solutions to optimize our processes, support data-driven decision making and deliver increased value to our stakeholders.

### People

Our strategy is supported by strong teams, organizational structure and a culture that emphasizes Connect, Challenge, and Care. Together, these pillars and our culture form the backbone of "ECSellerate," guiding us towards a sustainable and prosperous future.



## **SERVICES**



### **Full loads transport**

### Reliable transport solutions by road, rail, and short sea

ECS offers full load transport solutions by road, rail and sea. With a modern fleet and an extensive network in European strategic hubs, we are committed to provide cost-efficient, reliable & sustainable multimodal transport solutions.



### **Temperature controlled transport**

### Fleet of reefer containers and fridge trailers

With one of Europe's largest fleet of 45' reefer containers and fridge trailers, ECS delivers reliable and efficient refrigerated transport solutions. Combining energy-saving technology, gps-tracking and remote temperature control, our customers benefit reliable chilled transport solutions.



### **Customs services**

### We ensure your goods to cross any border flawlessly

For customers who wish to outsource the care of their customs formalities, ECS handles the complete administration related to customs exports and imports to the UK. With more than 650.000 declarations per year, customs declarations are a standard part of our supply chain offering.



### **Supply chain logistics**

## Tailormade and cost-efficient one-stop-shop supply chain solutions

As experts in logistics, we provide one-stop shop solutions to optimize our customers' end-to-end supply chain. Analysing the complete flow of their goods, we develop a supply chain tailored to their needs, from transportation in Europe, to warehousing and delivery in the UK and Ireland. Using automatic skimming robots, we transform pallets to have the maximum filling level on the continent while meeting every retail requirement and any other standards regarding pallet height. In addition, we also offer repackaging, restacking and other supply chain services, enabling producers to focus on an optimal production process.



# **OUR OPERATIONS**

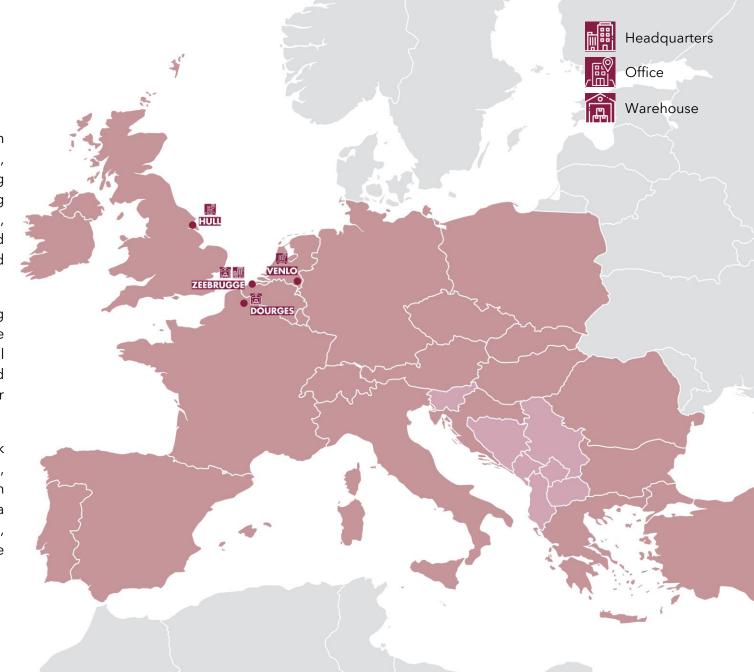
**ECS** developed has network extensive intermodal transportation and strategic hubs within Europe and the UK. This network is supported by our 4 operating centers located in Belgium, The Netherlands, France & the United Kingdom as well as our local sales representatives in France, Ireland, Italy, Germany and Poland.

Our strategic consolidation hubs are designed to help customers achieve sustainability and cost efficiency. Our warehousing network includes ambient and temperaturecontrolled warehouse faciin Belgium, lities, located United France and the This Kingdom. ensuring proximity and flexibility to our

key markets. We specialize in transportation across Europe, the UK and Ireland, serving various sectors including retail, chemicals, electronics, machinery, household and medical, furniture, and packaging.

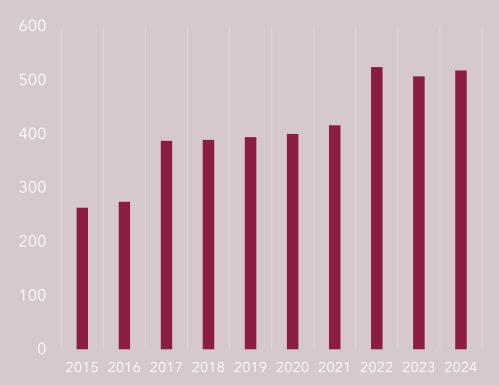
We focus optimizing on consolidation to minimize environmental impact as well as providing rail connected warehouses supporting our modal shift.

intermodal network stretches throughout Europe, covering over 29 European countries. By promoting a modal shift from road to rail, we aim to significantly reduce greenhouse gas emissions.



# **KEY FIGURES 2024**

### **TURNOVER IN MIO €**





**691**Employees in 8 countries



29 European countries



195.000

tons CO<sub>2</sub> reduction by making the modal shift



73 Million Kilometers of rail transport



12.000

8.150 dry ambient
3.100 reefers & trailers



109 Million Kilometers

of ship transport





213.000



160.000m<sup>2</sup>

Warehouse storage





# **TOWARDS OUR SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGY 2030** IN A CHALLENGING ENVIRONMENT...

Our operations inevitably impact the environment and the communities in which we operate. To build a sustainable future, we must go beyond minimizing our own footprint. We must drive change across our entire value chain. Guided by our mission to Create Sustainable Reliable Logistics, we've identified seven key challenges.

### Reducing dependance on fossil fuels

Transport currently accounts for a quarter of the EU's greenhouse gas emissions - a number that continues to rise. The European Green Deal aims for a 90% reduction in transport-related greenhouse gas emissions by 2050. Decarbonizing road, rail, air and waterborne transport is essential. This requires investment in sustainable fuels, clean technologies and fleet renewal.

### **Accelerating environmental commitment**

Transport is a major source of air pollution and noise. A comprehensive approach is required to address urban congestion, air quality, and environmental degradation.

### **Expanding access to alternative transport modes**

Meeting climate targets calls for a shift towards more sustainable transport modes like rail. This transition depends on expanding and optimizing the capacity of these networks and the available technologies.

### **Internalizing environmental costs**

To align prices with environmental impact, transport will increasingly fall under emissions trading schemes. This polluter pays-approach encourages cleaner fuels, ends fossil fuel subsidies and supports re-investment in green technologies.

### Rising freight costs and fuel prices

Freight costs and fuel prices continue to climb. Boosting efficiency across the transport system is vital. Smart technologies - such as automated mobility, real-time route optimization and traffic prediction - can cut emissions while improving performance.

### Ensuring the highest standards of safety and security

Road incidents occur every day, impacting lives, disrupting operations and driving-up costs. Enhancing road safety and people safety through better infrastructure, education, and regulation is critical.

### **Capacity and labor shortages**

Congestion at ports and on roads, combined with an aging workforce-especially truck drivers-creates bottlenecks. With 42% of drivers expected to retire within a decade, proactive workforce planning and automation are key.

effectively address these challenges, it is crucial that we establish a resilient strategy that supports a sustainable future.

# SUSTAINABILITY CONTEXT IN THE EU

### TRANSPORT AND EU GREEN DEAL

**OUR SUSTAINABILITY ROADMAP** 

Transport plays a vital role in the European economy, contributing around 5% to EU GDP and employing over 10 million people. It is essential for the functioning of businesses and global supply chains. However, the sector also generates significant community costs including greenhouse gas emissions, air pollution, noise, road accidents, and congestion.

Transport currently accounts for approximately 25% of the EU's total greenhouse gas emissions, and these emissions have been rising. To

achieve the goal of becoming the first climateneutral continent by 2050, the EU must drastically transform its transport systems. A key objective is to cut transport-related emissions by 90% by 2050.

To this end, the European Commission launched the Fit for 55 package - a set of proposals to align climate, energy, transport, and taxation policies with the target of reducing net emissions by at least 55% by 2030, compared to 1990 levels.

In the transport sector, the EU Green Deal and Fit for 55 package aim to extend the Emissions Trading System to road transport, accelerating the shift to cleaner vehicles. They promote rail freight and low-emission logistics, with standard methods for tracking freight emissions. Additionally, there is a focus on investing in public transport and smart urban mobility solutions to reduce congestion and pollution. By 2035, petrol and diesel vehicles will be phased out, with all new cars required to be zero-emission.

Together, these measures aim to create a cleaner, smarter, and more sustainable transport system that supports economic growth while helping to meet Europe's climate goals.

### THE **CORPORATE SUSTAINABILITY** REPORTING DIRECTIVE (CSRD) AND **OMNIBUS PROPOSAL: IMPLICATIONS**

Under the Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive (CSRD), transposed into Belgian law, ECS was initially expected to fall within scope from fiscal year 2025. In anticipation, we had already aligned our reporting themes with the outcomes of our double materiality assessment, following the European Sustainability Reporting Standards (ESRS).

However, the Omnibus Proposal released on 26 February 2025 introduced changes, pushing the compliance deadline to fiscal year 2027 (reporting in 2028). Based on the newly introduced 1,000-employee threshold, we are excluded from CSRD obligations.

For companies that may no longer be covered by CSRD, the new VSME standard is recommended as an alternative framework. That is why we also referred to the VSME standards where possible, next to the GRI reporting framework.

# **DOUBLE MATERIALITY ASSESSMENT**

To align with upcoming legislation such as the Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive (CSRD), and to translate identified impacts, risks, and opportunities (IROs) into actionable insights for ECS and its strategy, we conducted a structured double materiality assessment. This process was carried out in five key phases:

PHASE 1

**Identify scope &** value chain

PHASE 2

**Identify** stakeholders PHASE 3

**Identify ESG** topics and IRO's PHASE 4

**Evaluate** impact, risks & **Opportunities** 

PHASE 5

**Validation & Documentation** 

### Defining the scope and value chain

We identified the full scope of assessment, covering ECS's value chain including upstream and downstream activities, business partnerships, and internal operations. Based on a clear scope and value chain all necessary impacts, risks and opportunities can be correctly mapped.

### Stakeholder identification and engagement

We identified key stakeholders developed and communication matrix quide short- and long-term engagement. This helped us determine which stakeholders to involve in the materiality assessment and define the appropriate approach each group.

### **Identification of relevant ESG** topics

We compiled a long list of relevant Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) topics, each linked to potential Risks, Impacts, and Opportunities (IROs).

### **Evaluation of Impact, Risks,** and Opportunities (IROs)

The identified ESG topics and their associated IROs were evaluated in terms of their significance from both an materiality impact and financial materiality perspective.

### Validation and reporting readiness

The resulting material topics and IROs were validated through internal review processes. In parallel, we initiated the setup of a reporting structure to support compliance with ongoing **CSRD** and to integrate material topics into our sustainability strategy.



ABOUT US

### Defining our most material impacts, risks and opportunities

A longlist of potential ESG topics was developed through several key activities. First, desk research was conducted using established sustainability frameworks such as the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI), the European Sustainability Reporting Standards (ESRS), and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

In addition, internal documentation was reviewed, including strategic plans, enterprise risk assessments, environmental analyses, and CSR risk reports. Input from both external stakeholders and internal ESG experts was also gathered to ensure a comprehensive perspective.

The identified topics were then mapped to ECS's existing sustainability goals, enabling the identification of priorities across four categories: Environment, Social, Governance, and Business-Specific topics.

To further validate and refine the longlist, interviews and surveys were conducted with internal and external stakeholders, including customers, suppliers, and members of the Board. Based on the feedback received, topics were consolidated where appropriate, renamed to align with ESRS terminology, and organized into a validated shortlist for further assessment.

### **Evaluate impacts, risks and opportunities**

For each ESG topic on the validated shortlist, ECS defined the related positive and negative impacts, as well as potential risks and opportunities. These impacts were then localized across the value chain, identifying whether they occur upstream, downstream, or within ECS's own operations.

To assess impact materiality, internal subject matter experts evaluated each ESG topic based on four criteria: scale, scope, irremediability, and likelihood of impact. These scores were combined into a total impact materiality score, with a maximum of 9 points. ESG topics that received a score of 6 or higher were considered material from an impact perspective.

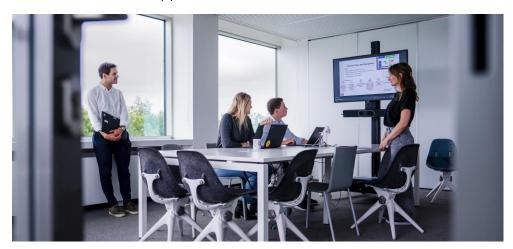
The Audit & Risk Committee evaluated the financial materiality of each ESG topic using ECS's existing Enterprise Risk Management (ERM) system. Each topic was scored by multiplying the severity and likelihood of associated financial risks, resulting in a maximum possible score of 25. Topics with a score of 11 or higher were considered financially material. In cases where multiple risks were associated with a single topic, the highest individual risk score was used.

### **Validation & Documentation**

The final list of material topics was reviewed and formally validated by the Executive Committee and the Board of Directors during separate meetings.

The validated material topics were clustered into environmental topics, social topics, governance topics and business specific topics.

Our approach was reviewed by our revisor as this was our first time executing this double materiliaty exercise. In the upcoming year we will work further on the incorporation of the IRO's into our existing ERM framework and continuously improve our double materiality approach based on input from our auditor and stakeholders. This double materiality exercise will be reviewed and validated on yearly basis in line with our stakeholder approach.



### **MATERIAL TOPICS**

### **ENVIRONMENTAL**

Climate Change Sustainable Partnerships **Intermodal Transport Services** Energy management

### SOCIAL

Training, growth & development Health, wellbeing & safety Working conditions Product/ Food Safety

### **BUSINESS SPECIFIC**

Value chain security Digital safety & data security Innovative transport & logistics solutions

### **GOVERNANCE**

Corporate governance Ethical business conduct Sustainable procurement Compliance & risk management

# STAKEHOLDER APPROACH

**OUR SUSTAINABILITY ROADMAP** 

Our organisation seeks to ensure meaningful engagement with our stakeholders and collect their input on their ESG views and expectations. This supporting our strategy and goals with our stakeholders' visions promoting transparency and collaboration. In 2024 we reviewed our stakeholder approach aligned with our double materiality assessment. Within this approach, we requested stakeholder feedback to validate our material longlist and provide input on ESG impacts, risks and opportunities. Our stakeholder approach identified key stakeholders and defined our engagement strategy:

### **Stakeholder identification**

We initially defined five main stakeholder groups: Suppliers, Customers, Employees, Banks & Investors, and the Community. Internal representatives were appointed to support each group: Operational management, Sales directors, HR Director and Financial management.

Separate brainstorming sessions were held to refine these groups and assess current communication flows. As a result, we mapped 16 stakeholder groups in total.

### Stakeholder classification

This classification formed the basis for our stakeholder prioritization and was validated by the executive committee in the Sustainability Steering Committee (2024). This classification is yearly reviewed and evaluated.

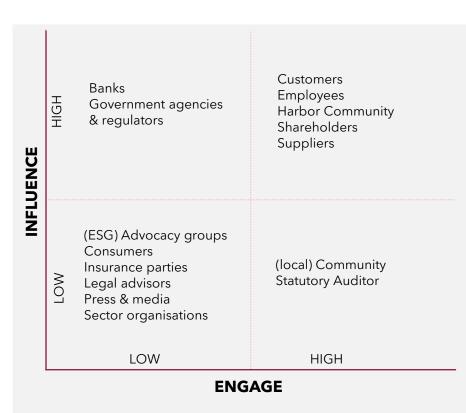
Each stakeholder group was assessed based on:

- Engage (low-high): Willingness to engage
- Influence (low-high): Influence on ECS and its strategy

Based on this assessment our stakeholders are classified into four categories enabling us to tailor our approach towards our stakeholders.

### **Stakeholder communication**

Based on the classification, we developed a tailored short- and long-term engagement plan. In the short term, we prioritized high-influence and highly engaged stakeholders, such as co-create customers, key suppliers, and ECS leadership. For those stakeholder groups we setup one-on-one or group meetings to collect their views and expectations related to ESG topics.





### Stakeholder

Suppliers

Customers

**Employees** 

Board & ExCom

(local) Communities

Banks

Government agencies & regulatory authority

Other

### **Engagement Channels**

Regular supplier meetings, two-yearly (ESG) questionnaires, supplier code of conduct, in depth ESG meetings

Regular customer meetings, two-yearly customer satisfaction survey, in depth ESG meetings, market research

Regular employee meetings, monthly business updates (intranet), two-yearly employee engagement survey, employee code of conduct, yearly performance review, ESG questionnaire to be implemented

Regular Board and executive committee meetings, in depth ESG meetings and questionnaires

Website (incl. raising concerns), involvement in materiality exercise to be implemented

Regular meetings, ESG questionnaire to be implemented

Events, meetings

Website (incl. raising concerns)

Within ECS we value long term partnerships throughout our value chain, essential for driving positive change in society and the environment. Collaborative efforts with our direct partners create ripple effects enhancing sustainability in our whole value chain.

### **Service Suppliers**

Our upstream value chain is comprised of a diverse network of carefully selected suppliers located mainly in Europe. They provide essential services and products that ensure the smooth operation of our business. Transport, warehousing, and repair services are crucial for our main while financial. operations, and offer consultancy services additional support.

### Suppliers of finished goods

Our upstream value chain also identifies suppliers providing finished goods such as the necessary machinery, equipment and office materials to maintain high quality and performance in our operations.

### **Customers**

Our downstream value chain encompasses customers across Europe. These customers specialize in various sectors, including chemical products, FMCG products, electronics and machinery, packaging, furniture and household items, as well as medical and healthcare products. This diverse customer base ensures a broad market reach containing retailers, distributors and manu-facturers.

### **Stakeholder Engagement**

We engage with all our stakeholders through different channels. In line with our double materiality approach, we executed in depth ESG interviews with some of our suppliers, customers and internally with our Board and ExCom in 2024.

In the future our stakeholder engagement will include further expansion to different stakeholder groups using questionnaires, in depth sessions and further incorporating ESG into our existing frameworks.

# **OUR SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGY**

**OUR SUSTAINABILITY ROADMAP** 

Our sustainability strategy ensures we act on those topics where we can have the biggest impact in our value chain in line with our strategic vision. During 2024, we revised our way of working aligned with the double materiality approach and material topics, instead of SDG topics that we previously identified. During our first double materiality exercise, the topics identified are in line with the five SDGs we previously focused our strategy on. We remain committed to act on climate, invest in people and operate with integrity to continuously provide increased value for our clients and stakeholders.

Our sustainability strategy sets out ambitions and targets related to the ESG domains, and provides the necessary framework for our policies, projects and actions. Our strategy is yearly revised by our executive committee based on our double materiality exercise, providing the necessary input to adjust our actions and roadmaps were necessary.

### **Supporting the Sustainable Development Goals**

Our sustainability strategy still supports the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the vision to create a world where all people can enjoy peace and prosperity, while protecting the planet. With our strategy we contribute to following SDGs:

### **ENVIRONMENT**























### **3 FOUNDATIONAL ESG PILLARS SUPPORTED BY 12 MATERIAL DRIVERS**

**ENVIRONMENT** 

We create sustainable logistics on our path to a net zero future. We set sustainability at the core of what we do, partnering with all our stakeholders.

Climate change - Energy management -Intermodal transport services - Sustainable partnerships

**SOCIAL** 

We create a healthy, safe and stimulating work environment for all our employees. Because together we excel.

Training, growth & development - Health, wellbeing & safety - Working Conditions -Product & food safety

**GOVERNANCE** 

We operate with integrity and maintain strong governance to build business resiliency and ensure long term sustainable growth.

Corporate governane - Ethical business conduct - Compliance & Risk management -Sustainable procurement



# **ENVIRONMENT**

We create sustainable logistics on our path to a net zero future. We set sustainability at the core of what we do, partnering with all our stakeholders.





# **OUR 2030 AMBITIONS**

**Our Commitment** 

We create sustainable logistics on our path to a net zero future

**Our Material Topics** 

- Climate Change
- Energy Management
- Intermodal Transport Services
- Sustainable partnerships

**Our Targets** 

- 42% reduction in scope 1 + 2 emissions
- 25% reduction in scope 3 road emissions per tonne.km
- 46% reduction in scope 3 shipping emissions per tonne.nm
- 100% green energy procurement



# **ENVIRONMENTAL POLICIES**

At ECS, we are committed to ensuring sustainable development and minimizing the environmental impact of our operations and services. Our different policies are centralized in our code of conduct, supplier code of conduct and QESH policy. Related to our environmental commitment we believe we can have the biggest impact on greenhouse gas emissions reductions and energy consumption.

### **Key Environmental Topics for ECS**

### **Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reductions**

We focus on reducing our CO2 emissions through investments in green energy and a sustainable fleet. Our targets for reducing scope 1, 2, and 3 emissions are science-based and aim for significant reductions by 2030.

### **Energy Consumption**

We aim to produce and use renewable energy as much as possible. Investments in solar panels, sensors and led-lights in our warehouses and offices help reduce energy consumption and improve energy efficiency.

### **Other Environmental Topics**

While our primary focus is on greenhouse gas emissions and energy consumption, we also address other important environmental aspects.

### **Local Pollution**

We strive to enhance our intermodal network reducing congestion and pollution on the road. We are looking into zero-emission vehicles and alternative fuels reducing impact on local pollution.

### **Materials and Waste**

We minimize waste by using the least possible materials, sorting waste correctly, and recycling. We encourage our employees to minimize their waste and sort correctly.

### **Biodiversity**

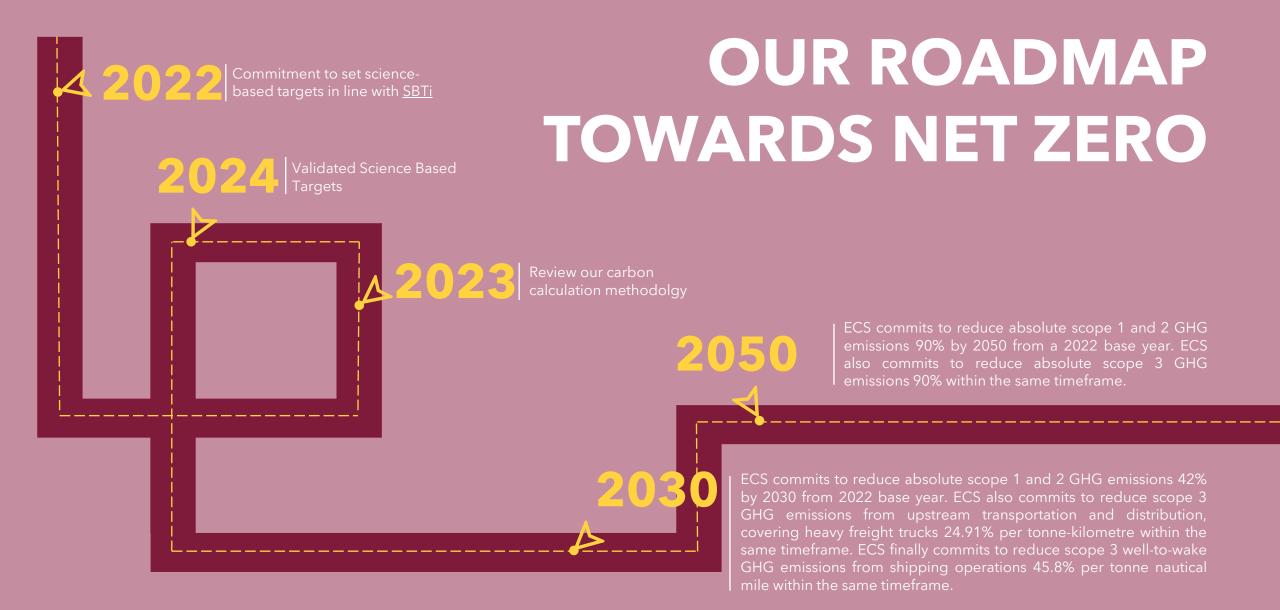
We respect legally designated protected areas and minimize our impact for sites near or in biodiversitysensitive areas.

### **Water Security**

In Belgium, we use rainwater as much as possible in our buildings to avoid wasting water, acknowledging the potential for water scarcity.

We remind everyone of the importance of respecting the environment and the impact we can have on it. Compliance with relevant environmental legislation is always a priority.

ECS commits to contributing to the sustainable development of society and the protection of the environment by providing sustainable and reliable logistic solutions.



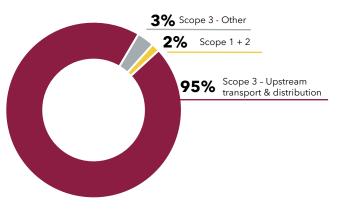


# **GREENHOUSE GAS INVENTORY**

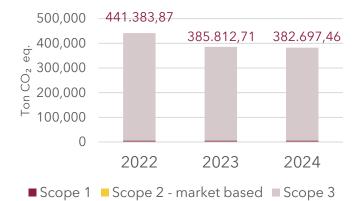
We report our emissions in accordance with the greenhouse gas protocol (GHG protocol). Within the GHG protocol, three types of emissions are recognized which are generated by different sources. In 2023 our emission calculation was revised in line with the GHG protocol supporting our sciense based target setting which was validated by the end of 2024.

The largest impact we can attribute our emissions to are our indirect transport & logistics emissions. The execution of our services is mainly supported by our subcontractors (road, sea and rail operators), containing more then 95% of our total scope 1,2 and 3 emissions. The various greenhouse gases included in our calculation are  $CO_2$ , CH4, N2O, HFCs, PFCs, SF6 expressed in tons of  $CO_2$  equivalent (Ton  $CO_2$  eq.) with as base year 2022. In line with our science-based target commitment our base year was adjusted from 2019 to 2022. The scope for our emissions includes ECS Logistics Group BV with all its underlying entities, which has been changed from previously ECS corporate NV. The conversion factors used are the ones from DEFRA (UK Government conversion factors for company reporting) incl. the GWP factors (Global Warming Potential) applicable for the related year. For our scope 2 emissions, emission factors from the AIB and DEFRA UK are used. Where we use monetary calculation approach, OpenLCA software is used. ECS reports emissions on an operational control basis. No recalculation of our current base year was needed.

### Scope 1-2-3 GHG Inventory



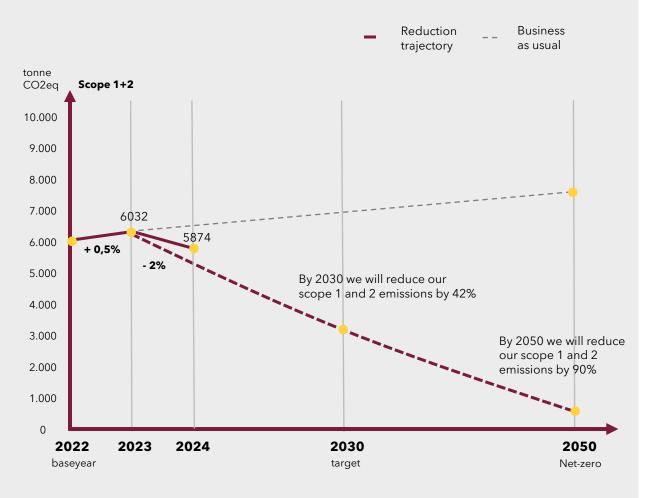
### **ABSOLUTE EMISSIONS**



The decrease in scope 1  $\rm CO_2$  emissions is caused by our temperature-controlled fugitive emissions that were reduced due to newer equipment and increase efficiency in our maintenance. The increase of our scope 2 market-based emissions is caused by a small increase in our electricity consumption and a change in energy mix of our suppliers. The absolute reduction in our Scope 3 emissions is primarily driven by lower tonne-kilometers and reduced emissions from capital goods, resulting from fewer investments planned for 2024.

Our emission calculation is based on the GHG protocol, where we will validate compliance with ISO14083 and GLEC framework from 2026 onwards.

# Minimize our own impact



### Transitioning to a sustainable fleet

With the available technologies in place, we currently focus on investing in HVO100, a renewable diesel, while also exploring the possibilities of transitioning to electric vehicles for our own trucking fleet. This initiative will significantly impact our Scope 1 and 2 emissions, aligning with our commitment to reducing our carbon footprint. In 2024, we installed our own HVO tank and switched already 5% of our fleet. For our company car fleet, we are already switching to full electrical vehicles since 2020.

### **Enhancing sustainability in our operations**

In addition to transitioning to a more sustainable fleet, a portion of our emissions is attributed to the cooling requirements for our temperaturecontrolled warehousing and fleet. The cooling liquids traditionally used in these systems often have a high global warming potential. We try to mitigate this impact by installing solar panels on our cooltrailers, switching to less polluting cooling liquid for our temperature controlled fleet and adopted our first CO2 cooling installation for our warehouse operations in 2024.

### **Energy efficiency & renewable energy**

In relation to our Scope 2 emissions, we have initiated several projects aimed at enhancing our energy efficiency and increasing our use of renewable energy. In 2024, we launched an energy monitoring project to identify the largest electricity consumers within our operations. Based on the insights gained, we will define further actions to reduce unnecessary energy consumption. In addition to improving our energy efficiency, we are also investing in renewable energy, particularly solar panels, at our sites. In 2024, additional solar panels were installed at our LBL site.



### **Embrace the modal shift**

As a company, our primary ambition is to facilitate a modal shift from road to rail and shipping solutions. In this transition, we aim to encourage and support our customers in embracing these sustainable transport options. This shift not only contributes to the reduction of emissions but also helps minimize potential road injuries and congestion. Over the past years, we have expanded our existing intermodal network and introduced new additions to further enhance our capabilities.

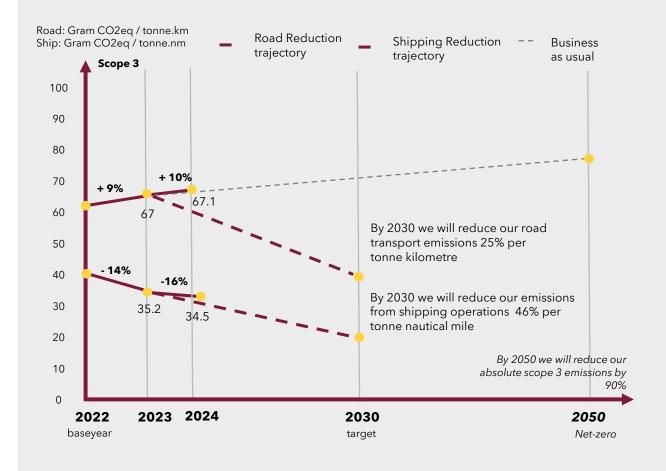
### **Green first & last mile**

We are committed to transitioning to more sustainable options not only for our own fleet but also for our road subcontractors. Towards 2030, we are exploring the possibilities of switching our first and last mile logistics to alternative fuels such as HVO or electric solutions, depending on the region and its specific challenges. Currently, 5% of our subcontractor fleet is supported by alternative fuels, primarily HVO100. We are working closely with our suppliers to explore various options to provide green first and last mile solutions.

### **Maximize operational efficiency**

Our third focus is on maximizing our operational efficiency. When planning our routes we try to minimize empty mileage on the road. Additionally, in our intermodal division we transport full truckloads to optimize unit utilization. Our supply chain division consolidates shipments in super mega trailers, optimizing both the content and weight of the units by stacking heavy and light pallets together. These operational efficiencies support our carbon reduction goals and help limit the number of units on the road.

# Minimize our impact in the value chain





## Making a difference together

To achieve our ambitions and reach our net zero targets, we recognize the importance of collaboration. Internally we share best practices, latest updates and tips and tricks to increase awareness and accelerate our actions. We join forces by setting up interdivisional project teams to accomplish our reduction initiatives.

We also work closely with our suppliers and customers to create opportunities, despite facing financial, technological, and market challenges. We believe that transitioning together is a crucial step towards a sustainable future.

## **Financing the transition**

To accomplish our goals and transition to a net zero future, investments are needed in zero- and low-emission technology, installation of the needed infrastructure and energy efficiencies. We are dependent on the availability of scalable zero-emission technologies, alternative fuels and charging infrastructure including network support. This next to the affordability of these technologies, provides many challenges.

In our yearly budget review and long-term investment plan, specific sustainability budget is foreseen to execute specific actions and projects. This will be reviewed further during 2025 to be able to allocate the necessary resources to support our transition plan.

# **ENERGY EFFICIENCY & RENEWABLE ENERGY**

Within ECS, we commit to enhancing energy efficiency and expanding renewable energy use to combat climate change.

#### **Actions 2024**

For our temperature controlled cooling warehouse, our installations supported R134a refrigerants, which have a rather high global warming potential. Two of our cooling installations were replaced with a CO<sub>2</sub> cooling system in 2021 and 2024. With a global warming potential of 1 compared to 1300, we can significantly reduce our greenhouse gas emissions and protect our ozone layer. Next to the emission reduction, CO<sub>2</sub> systems are more efficient as well as safer due to more stable properties. Last year we have upgraded and renewed part of our headquarters offices including focus on efficient heating and cooling by installation of heat pumps and switching to LED lights were not yet available. These initiatives are part of our broader strategy to reduce the carbon footprint in our own operations.

#### **Energy consumption**

Compared to 2023, we see a small increase in our energy consumption. This mainly due to the installation of our new highbay and impact of a colder winter in our ambient warehouses. Our consumption data is based on the actual consumption conform the invoices from our energy provider. Detailed energy and fuel consumption data can be found in chapter 5 - sustainability data.



Our consumption of own renewable energy compared to our total energy consumption was 14% for 2024. This supported by solar panels on three of our Belgian sites, where during 2024 extra solar panels were installed. For the upcoming years we have possibilities to expand this for our Belgian sites and will set up feasability studies for our sites in France and the Netherlands.



Our energy contracts for all our sites are energy contracts based on the available energy mix of our supplier. As we are aware that extra action needed to be taken, beginning of 2025, the switch was made to green energy contracts for all our Belgian sites. We aim to have 100% green energy procurement by 2030, by making the switch to green energy contracts.



Since a few years we are making the shift to lithium-ion forklifts in case of replacement or growth. Currently 13.4 % of our fleet uses lithium-ion batteries which provides higher efficiency, longer battery lifespan and improved reliability and worker experience. As the forklifts can operate longer without recharching and have lower energy loss, our energy efficiency improves and our energy consumption reduces.

# **MODAL SHIFT**

We embrace the modal shift and provide seamless intermodal connectivity across Europe and the UK through our extensive intermodal network.

At ECS, we believe that we can have the biggest impact on reducing carbon emissions by accelerating the modal shift and supporting our customers in making the modal shift. We believe that this approach is the most sustainable one, and we continue to support this vision.

The impact of the modal shift on climate change is profound. By reducing the number of trucks on the road, it lowers emissions of CO2 and other pollutants, which are significant contributors to global warming. This transition also helps mitigate other environmental and operational issues such as noise pollution, road congestion and habitat disruption caused by extensive road networks. By transitioning from road to more sustainable modes such as rail and short sea shipping, economic, environmental, and social benefits can be obtained that align with the EU's climate objectives.

We are continuously investing in expanding our current routes and creating new ones to provide an optimized intermodal network for our customers. With the continuous evolution of our intermodal network, we aim to provide the flexibility and efficiency necessary to support our customers' logistic journeys.

Milion rail

During 2024, we transported our units for 73 million kilometers by rail. We aim for 100 million kilometer by rail transport by 2030. This by continuously investing in expanding our existing rail network as well as providing new rail destinations to further enhance the modal shift. This means that approximately 50% of our full road and rail kilometers are executed by the train.

New intermodal

In the last two years we expanded our existing intermodal network with both new rail departures and new rail connections. As seen in our highlights, new connections were made to Crailsheim and Lovosice further expanding our rail network into eastern Europe. With our intermodal actions we provide even more flexibility and possibilities towards our customers.





ABOUT US

Our colleague Rob, head of our rail department, shares some inside perspective on the impact, challenges and experiences related to expanding our intermodal network, specifically our new Crailsheim route, and the collaboration needed to accomplish this modal shift together.

### Can you describe your experience with setting up these new rail connections?

We have gained significant insights into the complexities of operating trains. The process involves coordination among numerous stakeholders, including companies, countries, and governments. Ensuring alignment among all parties is essential for the successful operation of a single train. Through close collaboration with our customers, suppliers and internal stakeholders, including numerous physical meetings and calls, we were able to implement this new train route together.

## What were the challenges you encountered?

We encountered several challenges, including finding the optimal schedule to ensure the best possible transit time and assisting our customer in adopting a terminal mindset, which was a new concept for them. Overcoming these challenges allowed us to establish a robust schedule with sufficient buffer time, which is vital for maintaining high-quality train operations. Additionally, we implemented a unique changeover system, enabling us to exchange a full train at the customer's premises. This approach added significant stability and flexibility for the customer.

## What is the impact you can achieve by making this modal shift?

With this single train, we remove more than 11,000 trucks from the road each year, shifting approximately 9 million kilometers of transportation from road to rail annually. This initiative supports our vision of achieving 100 million rail kilometers by 2030.

## What are the emerging trends in rail logistics that we should be aware of?

Emerging trends in rail logistics include the EU's creation of TEN-T corridors, which designate key railway corridors for goods transportation across Europe. The EU is actively coordinating and funding these corridors to resolve bottlenecks, future-proof the infrastructure, and set standards for 750-meter trains. To support this vision, significant investments and infrastructure works are planned by the governments, addressing the outdated rail network and COVID-19-related backlogs. These disruptions will lead to network congestion and inconsistent service quality in the coming years. Despite these challenges, intermodal transport is expected to grow, offering the lowest CO<sub>2</sub> emissions with the capability to handle large volumes.



# **SUSTAINABLE PARTNERSHIPS**

We strive for long-term partnerships with our suppliers and customers, working together towards digitalization and decarbonization of the sector.

At ECS, we believe that the most sustainable way forward is by working closely with our customers and suppliers to create future-proof partnerships. The environmental, social, and legislative challenges we face now and, in the future, further reinforce this approach.

In recent years, we have successfully established new intermodal connections, such as our company trains to Crailsheim and Lovosice, thanks to close collaborations with our suppliers and customers. Furthermore, we work closely with all our road, rail and ship suppliers navigating upcoming challenges. For example, the introduction of emission taxes necessitates joint investments in sustainable solutions. Some of our road hauliers have fully switched to alternative fuels or are starting their electrical journey, supported by ECS. Mobilizing the entire supply chain is essential to achieve mutual efficiencies, reduce our environmental impact, and create a positive impact in our value chain.

In general, we want to setup long term relationships with our transport suppliers, which go through an intensive onboarding process before starting new relationships. End 2024, we reviewed our QESH onboarding questionnaire placing more focus on environmental and social aspects, supporting us to take the next steps towards our suppliers and together with our suppliers.

# **INTERVIEW**

Our colleagues Cédric and Dieter, who have worked on various partnerships projects, provide their feedback on sustainable partnerships.

#### Can you describe your understanding of sustainable partnerships?

A sustainable collaboration means a partnership that contributes positively to all stakeholders. This includes maintaining a mutual relationship in a healthy and constructive way, while everyone benefits from emission reductions, social and community enhancement, increased efficiencies, innovative solutions, and improved long-term collaboration.

#### Why do you believe sustainable partnerships are important for businesses today?

We are active in the transport and logistics sector, which operates with rather limited margins in a challenging market where prices are always under pressure. Therefore, we believe that long-term partnerships offer more mutual benefits and opportunities to develop sustainable solutions together. For example, setting up a new rail connection is a long-term effort. Without the certainty of having a contract for more than one year, there is no time or space to implement such sustainable solutions.

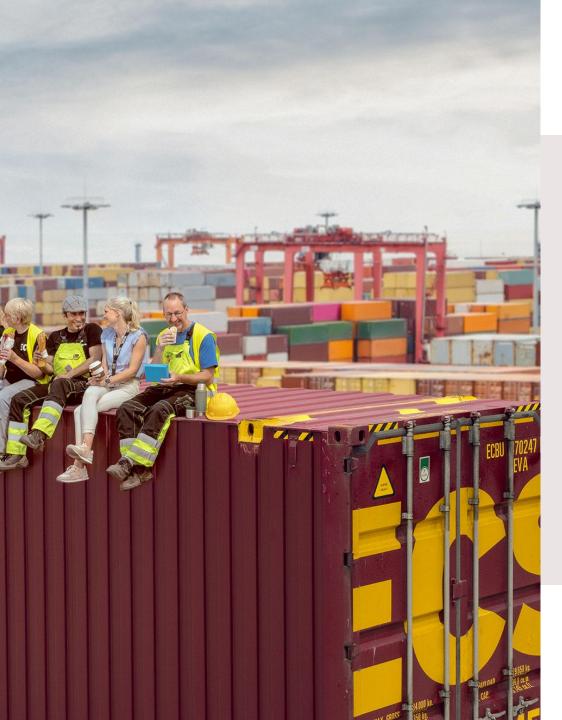
# Can you provide an example of a successful environmental initiative that resulted from a partnership?

Through various meetings with one of our customers, we were able to thoroughly map out their flows and discovered that their raw material transport and supply of finished products were executed by road transport. By closely working together with our customer and suppliers, we were able to set up a new train connection from Zeebrugge to Lovosice to support these inbound and outbound flows. This partnership resulted in taking 4400 loads off the road, supporting the modal shift and our mutual emission reduction journey.

# SOCIAL

We create a healthy, safe and stimulating work environment for all our employees. Because together we excel.





# **OUR 2030 AMBITIONS**

Our Employee Commitment

Together we excel in making ECS a best place to work

Our Customer Commitment

Our Material Topics

We facilitate the highest standards of product and food safety into our service offerings ensuring enhanced customer satisfaction and continuous improvement.

- Health, safety & wellbeing
- Training, growth & development
- Working conditions
- Product & Food Safety

**Our Targets** 

- People engagement score above 80%
- Absenteeism rate below 4%
- Severity rate and frequency rate below industry benchmark
- 100% employees with yearly review
- 100% employees two-yearly trained in code of conduct
- 100% recertification of all our standards

44

# **EMPLOYEE STATISTICS**

OUR SUSTAINABILITY ROADMAP

691

Employees across 8 countries

**50** 

Employees working part time

84 %

Of employees say they can take time off from work when needed



**37** 

Different nationalities

30 %

Of our employees are female

91 %

Of employees agree that people at ECS are treated fairly regardless of gender



Of our Directors are male

100

New employees hired

84 %

Of employees say ECS is a great place to work





# **EMPLOYEE POLICIES**

At ECS, our employee policies are outlined in our code of conduct, where respect for people is at the top of our priority list. We are committed to good, healthy, safe, and secure working conditions. Committed to fostering growth and development and to always respecting labour and human rights. Our code of conduct applies to all ECS employees and is trained during onboarding and with relevant updates.

## Health, safety & wellbeing policies

#### **Commitment to Safety & Wellbeing**

We strive for an injury-free and illness-free workplace by providing a safe, secure, and healthy work environment. We follow applicable health and safety laws and regulations to minimize the risk of accidents, injuries, and exposure to health risks. All employees are expected to comply with health, safety, and security policies, procedures, and instructions.

#### **Encouraging Improvement**

We encourage employees to be creative and look for ways to improve workplace safety and security. This is stimulated by rewarding teams with a safety award.

### **Training, growth & development policies**

## **Continuous Learning**

We offer continuous learning and development opportunities through our Talent Academy, which includes various specialized academies.

### **Training Methods**

Training is provided through in-person workshops, online courses, webinars, classroom training, and hands-on practice. Employees can subscribe to training sessions, track their progress, and request external training through our talent platform.

#### **Career Development**

Employees can discuss their career ambitions with supervisors and explore personal development opportunities. We support growth both vertically and horizontally within the company, using tools like the Individual Development Plan (IDP).

## **Commitment to Skills and Training**

ECS commits to providing all employees with the skills and training required for their function and encourages personal development to maximize growth and competencies.

By investing in the training, growth, and development of our employees, ECS aims to build a skilled, motivated, efficient, and innovative workforce that drives our continuous success.



# **EMPLOYEE POLICIES**

**OUR SUSTAINABILITY ROADMAP** 



#### **Working conditions Policies**

### **Respecting Labour and Human Rights**

We support and respect internationally proclaimed human rights and ensure non-complicity in human rights abuses. We adhere to the United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights and the OECD guidelines for multinational enterprises.

## **Promoting Diversity and Equality**

We value diversity and prohibit discrimination or harassment based on gender, race, sexual orientation, age, nationality, marital or family status, pregnancy, disability, union membership, ethnicity, religious beliefs, or any other protected status.

#### **Freedom of Association**

We recognize and respect the rights of employees to form or join trade unions and engage in collective bargaining without intimidation or harassment.

## **No Forced or Compulsory Labour**

We do not tolerate modern slavery, forced or compulsory labour, or human trafficking. Employment at ECS is freely chosen

## **Safe Working Conditions**

We provide safe and qualitative equipment and infrastructure, ensure fair compensation, and adhere to local legislation regarding working hours and overtime.

#### **Prohibition of Child Labour**

We do not accept child labour and ensure that young workers are not employed in hazardous conditions.

Employees are expected to treat colleagues with respect, honesty, and fairness, and to support efforts to maintain a safe, healthy, and productive working environment. Discrimination, harassment, or abuse will not be tolerated.

Employees are expected to be vigilant and report any deficiencies in logistics operations, threats to health or safety, harm to the quality of services, product safety and security, reputation, or financial interests of ECS.

# FROM INSIGHT TO IMPACT: STRENGTHENING OUR WORKPLACE

At ECS, fostering a positive and supportive work environment has always been a core value. In 2022, we officially launched our journey to become a certified Great Place to Work - a milestone marked by the successful completion of our first employee survey and the proud achievement of this respected quality label.

This process provided us with invaluable insights into the experiences, motivations, and expectations of our employees. It highlighted both the strengths we can build on and the areas where focused improvement is needed - reinforcing our ongoing commitment to employee engagement and organizational excellence.

These insights became the foundation for a series of targeted initiatives and workshops designed to drive continuous improvement. The initiatives are categorized into four key areas for growth: Leadership, Communication and Connection, Wellbeing.

Together, these actions reflect our belief that an engaging, connecting and positive workplace is essential to sustainable success.

Looking ahead, our ambition is to participate in the Best Place to Work audit. To prepare for this next milestone, we will begin internal preparations. These will include a new round of roadshows and employee surveys, ensuring that our progress continues to be shaped by the voices of our people.

#### **EMBEDDED IN OUR CULTURE COMMITTEE**

Our ambition to become a Best Place to Work is actively supported by the Culture Committee, established in 2024.

The Culture Committee operates as the connector between the shareholders and the company, consisting of a diverse and inclusive group of family members, Board, management and employees.

The Culture Committee has the aim to promote and anchor the family objectives, mission and values in the culture of ECS. The Culture Committee serves as a sounding Board for ongoing initiatives, offering feedback, advice, and concrete proposals aligned with our four key pillars: Connection, Leadership, Communication, and Wellbeing.

Meeting four times a year, the committee plays an important role in shaping and strengthening our internal culture. It reports directly to the Remuneration & Nomination Committee, ensuring that cultural development remains a strategic priority at the highest level of the organization.

This structure reinforces our belief that a strong, inclusive culture is essential to achieving our goal of becoming an exceptional place to work.

Together, we believe that an engaging, connecting and positive workplace is essential to sustainable success

# **HEALTH, SAFETY & WELLBEING**

We believe that the health, safety, and wellbeing of our employees are the driving forces behind our success. By investing in our employees to help them be their best selves, we ensure a resilient and motivated workforce ready to tackle any challenge

## Health & Safety: a foundation for excellence

Our ambition to become a Best Place to Work is underpinned by a strong commitment to an injury- and illness-free workplace. In 2024, we launched a dedicated campaign to raise internal awareness around health and safety. This included employee interviews, surveys, and the development of a targeted action plan to improve our current practices. Based on employee input, we identified monthly focus topics and launched the "TalkToCare" campaign to communicate and promote these themes. In parallel, we reviewed our health and safety risk analyses and internal traffic plans to ensure a safer working environment. In 2025, we continue to build on this momentum with the THOR campaign—Think First, Observe Calmly, Report to Responsible—which emphasizes safe practices in our daily warehouse operations and encourages proactive safety behavior.

Our ambition to become a Best Place to Work is underpinned by a strong commitment to an injury- and illness-free workplace.



Our ambition to make ECS a best place to work is followed up through our people engagement survey. We aim for an employee engagement score of 80% by 2030. This focused on our building blocks connection, communication, self-leadership, safety, and wellbeing supporting our ECS Culture Connect, Challenge and Care. Our last survey in 2022 resulted in an engagement rate of 72%.



Monitoring absenteeism rates provides valuable insights into the overall well-being of our workforce. With our commitment to an illness free workplace, the absenteeism rate can indicate underlying health and safety issues within the workplace. This KPI supports in identifying trends so we can address potential problems proactively. Our ambition towards 2030 is to have an overall absenteeism rate (short term) of 4%, where in 2024 our short term absenteeism rate was 3.5%.



As a company we are committed to an injury free workplace. Our targets related to safety are comparing our frequency rate and our severity rate to the industries benchmark. In 2024, our severity rate was 0,32 which compared to the industry benchmark of 0,37 shows less severe incidents. This supports our continuous efforts in the health and safety of our employees through dedicated safety programs.

# **INTERVIEW** SAFETY WITHIN MY JOB

Our colleague Mehmet shares his perspective on the impact he has on safety within our warehouse operations.

#### Mehmet, what does safety mean in your role and team?

Safety is of great importance to me during loading and unloading and is essential for good cooperation. I always ask the driver for the keys so that they cannot drive away while we are still working. I also place a wheel chock to prevent the unit from moving forward. I always wear a seatbelt and regularly review the procedures with my team members during blue zone meetings.



# OUR APPROACH TO A SAFE WORK ENVIRONMENT

### **Health & safety management system**

Within ECS we have implemented a health and safety management system in line with applicable national laws and regulations. This is incorporated and in line with our ISO9001 including the necessary QESH objectives and follow up. Our two divisions and supporting services are in scope for our management systems. Prevention audits are executed monthly by our internal prevention department or foreman to ensure compliance with laws and regulations as well as identifying potential hazards and risks.

## Hazards & risk analysis

Our approach to hazard and risk assessment is designed to proactively identify and mitigate potential risks, safeguarding the well-being of all employees.

We have implemented an overarching health and risk assessment framework that serves as the foundation for our safety protocols. This encompasses a thorough framework evaluation of our entire operational environment, identifying general hazards and assessing their potential impact on health and safety.

In addition to the overall assessment, we conduct specific risk assessments tailored to various health and safety topics in line with regulations.

Our commitment to health and safety is reflected in our proactive approach to risk management. The insights gained from our assessments enable us to take necessary preventive actions, ensuring that potential hazards are mitigated before they can impact our people.

These risk assessments are reviewed regularly by our prevention department and updated to incorporate emerging hazards and risks in line with our operations.

#### **Health & safety training**

Through preventive actions, safety trainings and communications, we strive to create the ideal work environment and protect our colleagues in the best possible way. This includes QESH training, yearly evacuation drills and first aid trainings, to equip employees with the necessary knowledge and skills to maintain high safety standards.



#### Stakeholder consultation

Within ECS, we have a health & safety committee (CPBW) which convenes 10 times a year in line with national regulation. These elected representatives play an active role in shaping our health and safety policies. They provide input on ECS's approach, review ongoing safety initiatives and receive updates on incidents, near misses and preventive measures.

All our employees have access to health insurance, sporting facilities and trainings, family events and our own day-care. The CPBW also serves as a forum to propose and discuss additional measures or initiatives that further enhance the safety and wellbeing of our people. In case of operational changes, the CPBW, OR and employees are informed in timely manner depending on the type of change.

We strive to create the ideal work environment and protect our colleagues in the best possible way.



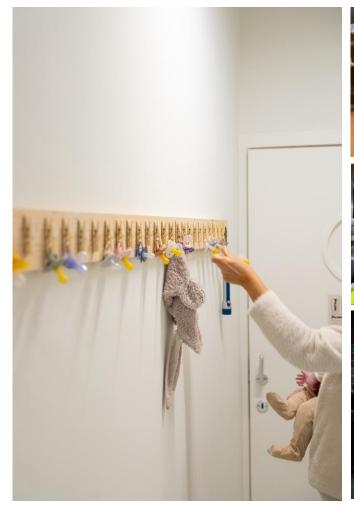
# **WELLBEING: A STRATEGIC PRIORITY**

Our wellbeing policy is designed to foster a culture where employees feel at home, supported, and empowered to lead healthy, fulfilling lives-both at work and beyond.

We offer a wide range of initiatives, including:

- Own in-house daycare: As part of our commitment to employee wellbeing, ECS offers an on-site daycare facility, De Havenheldjes, exclusively for the children of ECS employees. The day care center provides care and offers a safe, nurturing environment just steps away from the workplace. We believe that providing accessible, high-quality care contributes significantly to the peace of mind and overall wellbeing of our employees.
- Sports and fitness opportunities: on-site or participating in external events
- After-work events and celebrations, such as Family Day, all personnel parties, and seasonal gatherings (Winter and Summer Drinks)
- Healthy food options, including fresh fruit year-round and warm soup during the winter months
- Lunch & Learn sessions to encourage connection and knowledge sharing
- Thoughtful gestures for life's important moments-births, anniversaries, retirements, illnesses, and holidays like Easter, Sinterklaas, and Christmas

These initiatives reflect our belief that wellbeing is not just a benefit, but a vital part of a sustainable and people-centered workplace.











# TRAINING, GROWTH & DEVELOPMENT

Investing in the training, growth, and development of our employees is essential for staying competitive and innovative. By empowering our teams with the skills and knowledge they need, we ensure a dynamic and talented workforce ready for growth.

Becoming a Great Place To Work is also supporting our people in becoming their best selves. Therefore, we invested in a new talent platform, offering the tools to enable growth and skill development. In 2024, this platform was rolled out in different stages focusing first on performance management and target setting, followed by the introduction of an online training library and training calendar.

Last year, we launched the Lunch & Learn concept to enhance interpersonal connections and increase knowledge about the various departments within ECS. In this monthly session, one specific department highlights their day-to-day responsibilities and core tasks in a comprehensive way. This has proven to be a successful way of learning about and getting to know each other.

This year, our corporate culture Connect, Challenge, Care was developed. These are as well three leadership values with which we identify in how we collaborate, engage in dialogue and grow together. The 3C model provides the tools, insights, and inspiration to develop yourself as a leader, but equally as a person, in line with the ECS culture. It is about self-leadership and growth. Everyone in the organization can put the 3C's into practice.

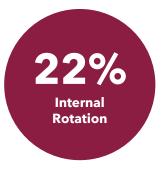


**OUR SUSTAINABILITY PERFORMANCE & AMBITIONS** 

In 2024, our employees received an average of 13 hours of training. Our ambition is to reach 40 hours per employee by 2030. The new talent platform puts us on the right track to achieve this ambitious target, as it makes training registrations much more efficient and effectively informs all employees about available training opportunities.



Currently all our employees conducted their year-end performance review (YEPR) in the new talent module. This realizes our ambition of 100% employees evaluated on yearly basis by 2030. Since the new talent platform, we adjusted the format and questioning of the YEPR's, putting more emphasis on self-reflection and ownership of the employee. For the upcoming YEPR round in 2025-2026, our goal is to integrate the Connect, Challenge, Care (self-)leadership model into the evaluation process. This ensures that every individual in the organization is assessed and held accountable to the same leadership principles.



One way of keeping our people motivated and engaged is by offering opportunities for internal rotation. At ECS, every team member can apply for any open position, ensuring that we collaboratively find the best fit for everyone. In 2024, 22% of our positions were filled through internal rotation. We want to increase our internal rotation and provide our people with the necessary support to do so.

# INTERVIEW ONBOARDING & TRAINING EXPERIENCE

Meet Rinesa, our HR & Sustainability intern. In this interview she talks about her onboarding experience at ECS. We want to thank Rinesa specifically for her support in this year's sustainability report.

## How did you experience your welcome at ECS?

I was welcomed excellently upon my arrival. From the very first moment, I felt welcomed and appreciated. I received a comprehensive presentation about the company, in which the mission, vision, and core values were clearly explained. Additionally, I was given detailed explanations about various procedures and workflows, which provided me with a good understanding of how everything operates here.

## Did you feel at home quickly?

The team welcomed me with open arms. Naturally, it's always a bit challenging to open up immediately, but I managed to do so quickly thanks to the support and friendliness of the team. Their warm reception and willingness to help, made me feel comfortable and at ease. The positive atmosphere and the team's encouragement played a significant role in making me feel at home swiftly.

## Which trainings did you receive to get to know your job and ECS?

I received various training sessions, and the team was always open to all my questions, providing explanations whenever I needed them. I appreciate that there are so many training opportunities available and that everyone can participate, even if it might not be directly related to their specific role. This approach allows everyone to continuously develop their skills across different areas. The supportive environment and the emphasis on learning and growth make it easier to integrate and feel confident in my role.

# OUR COMMITMENT TO TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT

### **Training Programs**

ECS's new talent platform includes different training academies, , offering courses on different topics to improve the skill sets of our employees. Some academies are available to all employees; some are department specific. Step by step, dedicated learning spocs per department take up the responsibility to gather training needs within their department and translate these into training courses.

In the Logistics Academy focus was put on reviewing and retraining our procedures in line with the implementation of our ISO9001 for our supply chain department. In the IT Tools & practices Academy, extra training on excel basic and advanced as well as specific training on teams and SharePoint were set up. Additional trainings for soft skills and personal development are offered such as stress management, connecting and respectful communication, project management and time management.

In 2025, we will prioritize our (self-) leadership academy, focusing on empowering everyone within our connect, challenge, and care culture. Specifically, we will achieve this through practical dilemma workshops, where employees face operational dilemmas within their teams.



# **WORKING CONDITIONS**

**OUR SUSTAINABILITY ROADMAP** 

We are committed to providing excellent working conditions, work-life balance and ensuring equal and fair remuneration for all employees. This dedication fosters a motivated and loyal workforce, driving our collective success and growth.

In general, we want to entrust our employees with a warm, stable, and welcoming workplace. We asked our colleagues Aline and Dominique, who are working at ECS for 30 and 25 years, for feedback on their employment experience.

## What makes ECS, according to you, an attractive employer?

As a locally established, family-owned company, ECS ensures a solid financial foundation and growth plan, with a long-term focus, providing employer stability. Additionally, ECS offers job security due to the sectors we operate in and our services across Europe.

## Why do you think employees enjoy working for ECS?

Employees enjoy working at ECS thanks to the stability, job security and growth opportunities offered. They appreciate the fair compensation and approach, as well as the international environment in which ECS operates. The absence of repetitive work and the opportunity to rotate internally between departments and business units makes working at ECS diverse, challenging, and fun. In general, there is never a dull day at ECS.

## What keeps you enthusiastic about working for ECS after all these years?

Working at ECS always provides new challenges that we can tackle together with our great colleagues across our different offices.

18% **Trained in code** of conduct

Within ECS, we want to provide a culture where everyone feels valued and respected, and where we support each other to bring out the best in ourselves. To this end, we have a code of conduct in place that reflects our commitment to integrity, respect and responsibility in everything we do. Currently, during onboarding, everyone is trained in our code of conduct through an e-learning module. In 2024, 18% of our employees were trained in our code of conduct, were in 2023 all our office employees were trained. Our goal is to achieve 100% two-yearly employee training in our code of conduct by 2030. We will start by reviewing our code of conduct and e-learning, and by creating additional awareness.



# **PRODUCT & FOOD SAFETY**

Our services are built on a strong foundation of quality, environmental responsibility, safety and health, anchored through our management systems. We facilitate the highest standards of product and food safety into our service offerings ensuring enhanced customer satisfaction and continuous improvement.

To support our customers in upholding product and food safety measures, we utilize relevant management systems and IT software tools to ensure traceability throughout the entire value chain. In 2024, we placed extra focus on real-time track and trace of our cooled fleet, which we are further improving in the upcoming years. Additionally, we obtained the trusted trader certification, ensuring food-safe border crossings to the UK for several products. All our actions are supported by a food safety mindset and culture integrated into our daily operations. In 2025 we are further reinforcing this mindset by extending our HACCP training and food safety awareness throughout our company. We believe that by fostering a positive food safety culture, we can better protect consumer health, ensure regulatory compliance, and enhance overall customer satisfaction.















In 2024, we expanded our ISO9001 certification, including our supply chain division, which previously only was BRC certified. This expansion supports our vision to provide qualitative services towards our customers and enhanced customer satisfaction. Besides ISO9001, we are as well ISO14001 certified and are looking into setting up ISO27001 certification by 2026. All our certifications were 100% recertified in 2024, which is already aligned with our ambition towards 2030. With these management systems we want to set up strong foundations for creating sustainable and reliable services.



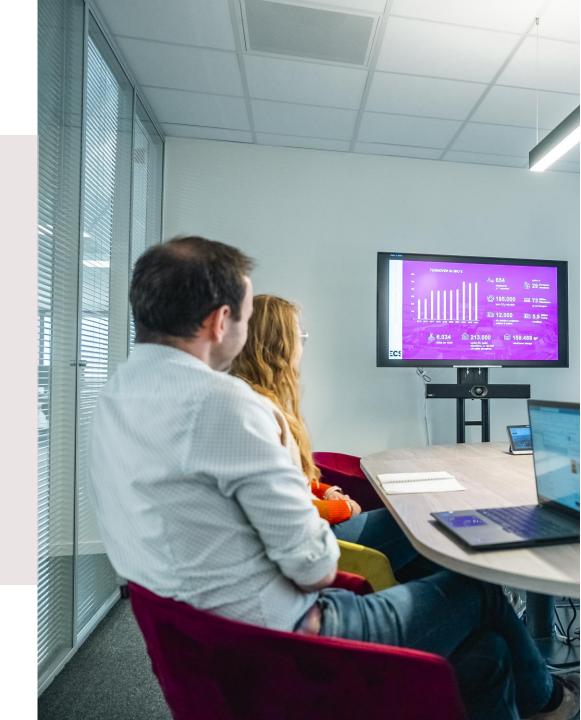
To ensure product and food safety in our supply chain, we conduct regular internal audits and QESH site tours, which include (food) safety parameters. In 2024, our quality team executed 79 site tours across our warehouse sites. Based on the input from these site tours and audits, we implement actions and continuously improve our services.



It is important that we keep our customers satisfied by providing the necessary services in line with their requirements. During our bi-annual client satisfaction survey, we receive feedback on our customers' general satisfaction as well as areas for improvement. In 2023, our respondents indicated that they were; on average, 81% satisfied with the services delivered by ECS. We are currently conducting our survey for 2025, where we aim to improve this satisfaction score.

# GOVERNANCE

We operate with integrity and maintain strong governance to build business resiliency and ensure long term sustainable growth.





# **OUR 2030 AMBITIONS**

**Our Commitment** 

Foster a culture of transparency, accountability, and integrity within our value chain

**Our Material Topics** 

- Ethical business conduct
- Sustainable procurement
- Corporate governance
- Compliance & risk management

**Our Targets** 

- All our own sites undergoing social audit
- 100% suppliers who have signed our supplier code of conduct or have a code of conduct in line with ECS
- 100% high risk suppliers covered by a sustainability assessment

# **ETHICAL BUSINESS CONDUCT**

By upholding the highest ethical standards and ensuring responsible practices, we aim to build trust and create lasting value for all our stakeholders.

We aim to uphold the highest ethical standards throughout our entire value chain. Internally, this is supported by our code of conduct, which was reviewed in 2023 and is currently under review again to align with upcoming legislation. The 2023 review included an accompanying elearning module that all office employees were required to complete. Our blue-collar workers were informed through blue zone meetings. Since then, all new employees must complete our e-learning module on the code of conduct during onboarding. In line with the update of our code of conduct, our e-learning module is also being reviewed and adjusted. These adjustments and additional communication efforts, including raising concerns posters, aim to increase awareness among our employees.

## **Reporting Concerns**

At ECS, we are committed to maintaining an open and accountable environment that builds trust and respect towards all our stakeholders. Suspected violations or breaches of the Code of Conduct, or other policies, must be reported promptly. Concerns can be reported to a manager, head of department, CHRO, ECS Person of Trust, or anonymously via our website (Raise a concern | ECS).

#### **Protection Against Retaliation**

ECS prohibits retaliation against anyone who raises concerns, reports violations, assists colleagues, or participates in investigations.

## **Monitoring Compliance**

Each suspected violation is investigated confidentially. Suggested measures are clearly justified and may include various actions such as rectification or dismissal. Employees can request written proof of actions taken in the form of a 'certificate of action under federal anti-discrimination laws. Our goal is to address issues and deal with concerns appropriately as soon as they arise.

O Ethics & human rights incidents Within ECS, we have various channels for raising concerns. We support an open and transparent culture, where we hope our employees feel comfortable discussing any issues directly with their supervisors. If they feel uncomfortable doing so, they have the option to report any misconduct via our website or to our designated persons of trust. In 2024, zero ethics or human rights incidents were reported. We aim to foster an open and transparent culture, free from any ethics or human rights violations.

Site with social audit

To monitor our approach to business ethics and continuously improve our way of working, we have started with bi-annual social audits next to our internal engagement survey. Within these SMETA 4-pilar audits, four domains are audited, including labor standards, health & safety, business ethics, and environment. In 2023, our headquarters were audited, were we aim to audit all our owned sites by 2030. With these social audit, we want to enhance transparency, assure compliance with national and international regulations and identify potential risks related to these different domains.

# **OUR CODE OF CONDUCT**

Our corporate mission "Creating Sustainable Reliable" Logistics not only drives our business activities but also represents the essence of how we act on Corporate Social Responsibility matters. We avoid engaging in illegal and unethical practices, guided by our Code of Conduct and Supplier Code of Conduct. We aim to create an environment based on respect, by establishing a culture of integrity where we take responsibility for people, planet and long-term success.

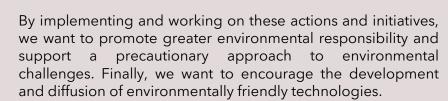
# **RESPECT FOR PEOPLE**



ECS aims to create a workplace where people can feel safe in any way and are treated fairly. They can speak out freely and be themselves. Only that way people can reach their full potential.



# **RESPECT FOR THE ENVIRONMENT**





# **RESPECT FOR BUSINESS**

Unfair competitive or dishonest techniques can damage our reputation and is inconsistent with our mission of Creating Sustainable Reliable Logistics. Using illegal or unethical means to obtain competitive advantage is prohibited. Honesty and trust are central to integrity.



# **RESPECT FOR RELATIONS**

Our success depends on building successful, productive and long-lasting relationships. Our relationships should be based on integrity, ethical behavior and mutual trust. Business decisions should be free from any conflict of interest with customers, suppliers or our surrounding community



# **RESPECTFUL COMMUNICATION**

We treat others the way we like to be treated. Therefore, at ECS we communicate open and transparently towards employees, the company and competitors with respect for privacy and intellectual property



Consult our Code of Conduct



# **SUSTAINABLE PROCUREMENT**

By prioritizing environmentally and ethically responsible procurement, we aim to create a positive impact and ensure long-term sustainable growth

In today's rapidly evolving global economy, the transport and logistics sector plays a pivotal role in ensuring the smooth movement of goods and services. However, our sector also faces significant challenges related to environmental impact, social responsibility, and governance practices throughout our supply chain. Sustainable procurement, which integrates ESG criteria into purchasing decisions, has emerged as a crucial strategy to address these challenges.

Sustainable procurement practices can help mitigate environmental impacts such as greenhouse gas emissions, by selecting suppliers that support our environmental targets. As we mainly rely on suppliers and subcontractors for our transport services, it is as essential to enforce ethical standards ensuring that our suppliers uphold human rights, provide safe working conditions, and engage in fair trade practices. By integrating ESG criteria into our procurement decisions, we can contribute to a more sustainable future, driving long term succes and business resilience in an increasingly competitive market.

### **Supplier code of conduct**

Our ESG requirements are taken up into our supplier code of conduct, which is currently integrated in our general terms and conditions towards our suppliers. Our code of conduct is based on respect and integrates the United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights.

In 2023 we updated our code of conduct for road suppliers in line with updated social legislation. Currently all our road suppliers have signed our code of conduct and general conditions. This year we are working on creating one separate code of conduct for all our suppliers including expanding measures on social and environmental aspects. Extra actions are being defined towards creating more awareness and support towards our suppliers related to sustainability topics for the upcoming years.

## **Supplier onboarding procedure**

Before onboarding a new supplier, our suppliers go through an intensive screening process. Next to in depth screening, specifically for our road suppliers, whom we consider the subcontractor group with the highest risk in terms of sustainability and compliance, a QESH questionnaire is foreseen. This questionnaire was extended in 2024 with extra questions related to social and environmental aspects. Based on this input we want to understand the steps our suppliers are already taking and which actions can be setup together, to further enhance a positive impact in our value chain.

### **Raising concerns**

All our stakeholders including our suppliers, can raise supply chain concerns (anonymously) through our website if needed.



As mentioned, our road suppliers are seen as our critical suppliers, were a bi-annual QESH questionnaire is used to evaluate our suppliers. Currently 34 % of our road suppliers have filled in our 2024-2025 questionnaire, were we aim for 100% by 2030. We are looking towards new ways in the future to further enhance our approach towards our suppliers, as we are aware of the ESG impact of transport and logistics in the value chain.

# We highly value

**Respect for labour and human rights**: We want to assure that we support and respect the protection of internationally proclaimed human rights and ensure our non-complicity in any human rights abuses. ECS commits to fulfil its responsibilities by applying the United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights.

**Compliance with laws & regulations:** ECS follows the laws and regulations of each country in which it operates and takes compliance issues seriously. No significant incidents of non-compliance have been identified.

**Fair business practices**: ECS commits to act professionally, fairly and with integrity in all our business dealings and relationships, wherever we operate.

Conducting all of our business in an honest, ethical and transparent manner. We take a zero-tolerance approach to bribery and corruption. We abide by anti-corruption laws in every country we operate and implement and enforce effective systems to counter bribery.

**Avoiding conflict of interest:** avoiding conflicts of interest in all of our business decisions is essential to our values of Integrity and Trust. Any transaction or relationship that could be expected to give rise to a conflict of interest must be immediately reported.

All these aspects are taken up in our (supplier) code of conduct, which is validated and approved by our ExCom and Board. This is yearly reviewed and updated if necessary.





# **CORPORATE GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE**

As a family company ECS is fully committed to excellence and we aim to uphold the highest standards of corporate governance. The ECS corporate governance charter and family charter are based on the Belgian Code of Corporate Governance for non-listed companies. As a family company, ECS is fully owned by the family De Dijcker, where the family has emphasized a professional governance structure including preparation for the transition to the third generation.

# **BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

The Board of directors is ECS highest decision-making governance body and plays a crucial role in navigating complexities and ensuring sustainable growth and long-term success in line with the family vision. The Board (from 29/06/2025 onwards) consists of nine directors, assembling diversity, expertise, competences and experience for our business.

#### 1 non-executive shareholder director

Christine De Dijcker (2nd generation family member)

#### 6 non-executive external directors

Bart De Smet (Chair of the Board since 2022, Board member since 2021) Patrick Maselis (Board member since 2020) Dirk Lannoo (Board member since 2022) Inge Boets (Board member since 2023) Kurt Pierloot (Board member since 30/06/2025) Ann Caluwaerts (Board member since 30/06/2025)

## 3 executive family members

Cédric Lanckriet (3rd generation, Board member since 30/06/2025) Alizée Lanckriet (3rd generation, observer since 2024) Toon Geusens (3rd generation, observer since 2024)

#### **CEO ECS**

Richard de Haas (Board member since 2025, CEO from 10/2025)



Cédric Lanckriet - Richard de Haas - Christine De Dijcker - Inge Boets - Bart De Smet - Patrick Maselis - Ann Caluwaerts - Dirk Lannoo - Kurt Pierloot

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# **ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

The Board of Directors meets six times per year. They play a pivotal role in guiding and overseeing the business through:

**OUR SUSTAINABILITY ROADMAP** 

**STRATEGY** 

Providing direction on the development and execution of the group's strategic vision.

Supervising the group's strategy to ensure the achievement of short- and long-term objectives.

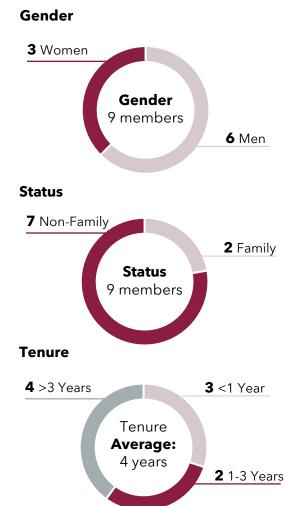
Implementing risk management practices and ensuring regulatory compliance.

**LEADERSHIP** 

Appointing, evaluating, and supporting the Executive Committee and other top management roles.



Monitoring and reviewing company progress to uphold transparency, accountability, and sustainable growth.





# **ADVISORY COMMITTEES**

## **Finance & Audit Committee**

The Finance and Audit Committee assists and advices the Board of Directors in validating the financial integrity and internal control mechanisms in place ensuring our company's financial health and business resilience. Their responsibilities include:

- · Monitoring and accuracy in our financial reporting
- Assessment of potential investments and finance structure
- Effective risk management and internal control frameworks
- Compliance with regulatory requirements, internal policies and procedures

The finance & audit committee consist of 3 members:

- One non-executive shareholder director.
- One non-executive external director (chair)
- One executive family member

# Remuneration and Nomination Committee

Within the Remuneration and Nomination Committee the main tasks consist of assisting the Board in appointing and evaluating the Board, the Executive Committee and operational family members within ECS.

The Remuneration and Nomination Committee also supports in remuneration proposals for Board members, the Executive Committee and operational family members.

In general, the committee makes sure that the appointment, remuneration and approval are executed objectively and professionally in line with the ECS corporate governance charter.

The Renumeration and Nomination Committee consist of 4 members:

- One non-executive shareholder director
- Two non-executive external directors
- One executive family member

## **Business Committee** (from July 2025)

The business committee follows all key strategic projects within the group, validates and decides on acquisitions and divestments. The committee validates the proposal for the yearly budgets per business unit and activity, supervises the realization of the budget approved by the Board of directors and supervises the implementation of the five-year financial plan (P&L, financial ratios, action plans). The business committee also discusses pre and post calculations of investments, validates the yearly capex budget in approval by the Board of directors. A quarterly update on the business (volumes, costs, commercials, organization, P&L, capex, financial ratios) is recurringly discussed.

The business committee consists of 5 members.

- Two non-executive external directors
- Two executive shareholder director
- One executive family member (observer)

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# REMUNERATION POLICY

**OUR SUSTAINABILITY ROADMAP** 

The remuneration packages provided for the Board of Directors, the CEO and ExCom are market compliant and tailored to the responsibilities of their role. They are yearly evaluated by the Remuneration and Nomination committee, which checks periodically the market compliance.

Our non-executive external Board members and family members receive a fixed remuneration for their contribution per committee meeting.

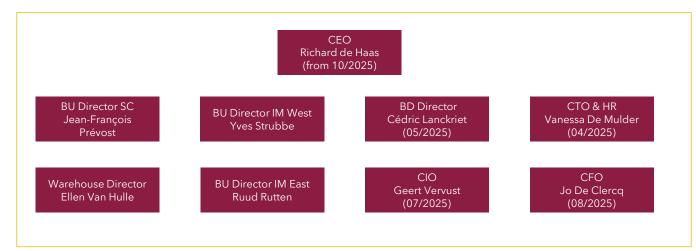
All non-executive external Board members receive the same amount, except for the chair, whose remuneration is twice that of the other external Board members

The remuneration package of the CEO and other Executive Committee members consists of following components:

- A fixed remuneration
- A variable annual bonus
- A long-term incentive bonus

# **EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

In June 2023, our Chief Executive officer (CEO) Sven Pieters was appointed by the Board of Directors. He replaced Philippe Mathieu. We are currently in CEO transition, where our new CEO Richard de Haas started from October 2025 onwards. Our CEO has the final operational authority and responsibility for ECS and oversees daily operations together with the executive committee (ExCom). The Executive Committee reports directly to the CEO, whose members are approved by the Board of Directors. The Executive Committee prepares the long-term strategy for approval by the Board, decides on the action plans, executes the strategy and supports and monitors our supply chain and intermodal business unit to achieve ECS's ambitions and goals. The Executive Committee meets four times per year.



# **RISK MANAGEMENT**

To support our long-term (sustainability) strategy in an uncertain and volatile market, the importance of understanding the potential economic, social and environmental effects on our business are crucial. Our annual strategic risk review assists us in assessing existing and emerging risks, allowing the executive committee to prioritize the necessary short, mid & long-term actions in line with our strategic objectives.

An extended enterprise risk management exercise was executed in 2024 updating our enterprise risk universe based on eight different categories including ESG related topics. Within these different categories, our executive committee identified those risks with the highest residual impact on our company.

Within our eight categories, we identify financial, legal, technology, and geopolitical risks. In addition to these, we have established specific ESG risk categories related to talent and workforce, as well as environmental and ethical concerns.

Strategic planning and adaptive measures are essential to navigate these challenges. Specific projects and actions are linked to the risks, discussed in ExCom meetings and reviewed on yearly basis. By proactively managing these risks, ECS can increase business resiliency and drive growth and efficiency.



# **SUSTAINABIILITY GOVERNANCE**

Sustainability is anchored in our strategy and is an integral part of our business. With our revised sustainability strategy 2030, we want to work towards common goals and ambitions in line with our overall strategy. Our sustainability vision is driven by our Sustainability Steerco empowering our green future.

## **Sustainability Steerco**

In the sustainability steerco, members of the Executive Committee take part to set and follow up on the Sustainability Ambitions defined towards 2030. Through these steerco's priorities and actions are defined needed to drive our sustainable future. The CEO is chair of the Sustainability Steerco, which is held twice a year.

## **Sustainability Team**

The Executive Committee is supported by the sustainability coordinator to coordinate and monitor the sustainability strategy, as well as sustainability experts who provide ESG input and focus on implementing the strategy. The sustainability coordinator is also responsible for communicating the sustainability strategy and its process to all stakeholders, where quarterly updates are provided internally through intranet and yearly an external sustainability report will be available from this year onwards.

The sustainability coordinator is endorsed and supported by the ExCom and Board of Directors which receive ESG updates in the sustainability steerco or Board sessions. The Board is informed of the outcome of the double materiality exercise, including the organizations ESG impacts, the sustainability strategy and roadmap. In these sessions they provide feedback and final approval. Furthermore, they receive up to date knowledge on various ESG topics and legislation.

For the execution and follow up of specific ESG projects, separate project groups are setup including sustainability experts and cross divisional team members. The overall status and results are further evaluated in the sustainability steerco.

## **Sustainability recognitions**

We conduct a bi-annual Ecovadis assessment, which provides us with an Ecovadis label. In 2024, our medal was adjusted from platinum to silver, due to changes in the Ecovadis scoring methodology. Starting this year, we will transition to an annual Ecovadis assessment with the goal of improving our score to at least gold by 2030.

We update our sedex questionnaire annually and conduct a SMETA 4-pilar audit at our headquarter bi-annually. With the proposed corrective actions, we strive to continuously improve our working conditions, ethics, and environmental approach.

Supporting our sustainability strategy, we have implemented ISO 14001 certification to advance our environmental journey. This certification also helps embed environmental awareness within our company and services.









OUR SUSTAINABILITY ROADMAP

# **EMPLOYEES**

	Unit	2024	2023	2022
Total of Employees	Headcount	691	699	656
<b>Employees, by country</b>	Headcount			
Belgium		560	569	521
France		42	43	45
The Netherlands		61	61	63
United Kingdom		23	21	22
Ireland		1	2	2
Italy		2	2	2
Poland		1	0	0
Germany		1	1	1
Employees, by gender	Headcount			
Male		482	489	461
Female		209	210	195
Employees, by employment type, by gender	Headcount			
Permanent		669	673	627
Male		464	466	436
Female		205	207	191
Temporary		22	26	29
Male		18	23	25
Female		4	3	4

	Unit	2024	2023	2022
<b>Employees, by employment</b>				
type, by country	Headcount			
Permanent		669	673	627
Belgium		539	543	494
France		41	43	45
The Netherlands		61	61	61
United Kingdom		23	21	22
Other		5	5	5
Temporary		22	26	29
Belgium		21	26	25
France		1	0	0
Other		0	0	4
<b>Employees, parttime and</b>				
fulltime, by gender	Headcount			
Full-time employees		641	642	628
Male		470	472	463
Female		174	170	165
Part-time employees		50	57	45
Male		12	17	11
Female		38	40	34

# **EMPLOYEES**

	Unit	2024	2023	2022
Employees, parttime and fulltime, by country	Headcount			
Full-time employees		641	642	628
Belgium		528	531	509
France		42	43	44
The Netherlands		44	43	48
Other		27	25	27
Part-time employees		50	57	45
Belgium		32	38	29
France		0	0	1
The Netherlands		17	18	15
Other		1	1	0
Employees, left during				
reporting period	Headcount			
By gender		96	65	86
Male		71	55	57
Female		25	10	29
By age group		96	65	86
0-20		1	1	1
21-30		24	17	31
31-40		29	23	28
41-50		24	12	16
51-60		13	10	7
60+		5	2	3

	Unit	2024	2023	2022
By Region		96	65	86
Belgium		85	56	70
France		2	1	2
The Netherlands		7	5	12
Other		2	3	2
Employees, hired during reporting period	Headcount			
By gender		100	101	57
Male		75	69	39
Female		25	32	18
By age group		100	101	57
0-20		3	5	0
21-30		30	43	30
31-40		45	22	15
41-50		12	18	10
51-60		10	13	2
60+		0	0	0
By Region		100	101	57
Belgium		89	90	37
France		1	1	6
The Netherlands		7	8	10
Other		3	2	4

The data is provided in headcount based on the end of the reporting period (31/12/2024).

# **SUSTAINABILITY DATA**

OUR SUSTAINABILITY ROADMAP

# **EMPLOYEES**

	Unit	2024	2023	2022
<b>Employee Turnover</b>	%			
By gender		13.89%	9.30%	13.11%
Male		10.27%	7.87%	8.69%
Female		3.62%	1.43%	4.42%
By age group		13.89%	9.30%	13.11%
0-20		0.14%	0.14%	0.15%
21-30		3.47%	2.43%	4.73%
31-40		4.20%	3.29%	4.27%
41-50		3.47%	1.72%	2.44%
51-60		1.88%	1.43%	1.07%
60+		0.72%	0.29%	0.46%
By Region		13.89%	9.30%	13.11%
Belgium		12.30%	8.01%	10.67%
France		0.29%	0.14%	0.30%
The Netherlands		1.01%	0.72%	1.83%
Other		0.29%	0.43%	0.30%

## **ENVIRONMENTAL AMBITIONS**

	Unit	Target 2030	2024	2023	2022
Climate Change		-			
GHG Targets					
Scope 1+2 Absolute Reduction	tCO <sub>2</sub> eq.	3.480,76	5.873,82	6.032,26	6.001,31
	%	- 42 %	- 2%	0,5%	BaseYear
	gCO <sub>2</sub> eq/tk				
Scope 3 Road Intensity Reduction	m	45,98	67,09	66,98	61,23
	%	- 24,91%	10%	9%	BaseYear
Scope 3 Ship Intensity Reduction	gCO <sub>2</sub> eq/tn m	22,24	34,51	35,29	40,99
Scope of Ship linerisity reduction	%	- 45,8%	-16%	-14%	BaseYear
GHG Emissions			382.697,46	385.812,71	441.383,87
Scope 1	tCO₂eq.		5.565,46	5.744,29	5.672,5
Scope 2 - location based	tCO <sub>2</sub> eq.		816,69	840,78	803,88
Scope 2 - market based	tCO <sub>2</sub> eq.		308,35	287,97	328,8
Scope 3	tCO₂eq.		376.823,64	379.780,45	435.382,57
Category 1			4.092,28	4.071,16	6.480,71
Category 2			5.539,93	13.072,73	14.418,10
Category 3			1.382,31	1.370,87	1.213,99
Category 4			364.714,06	360.097,22	412.376,55
Category 5			49,97	13,80	24,06

The data is provided in headcount based on the end of the reporting period (31/12/2024).

# **ENVIRONMENTAL AMBITIONS**

	Unit	Target 2030	2024	2023	2022
Climate Change					
GHG Emissions					
Category 6			12,14	18,88	13,09
Category 7			995,87	1.028,28	804,60
Category 8			-	-	-
Category 9			-	-	-
Category 10			-	-	-
Category 11			-	-	-
Category 12			-	-	-
Category 13			37.09	107,52	51,46
Category 14			-	-	-
Category 15			-	-	-
Biogenic Emissions			339,89	-	-
GHG Intensity	tCO <sub>2</sub> eq./€		0,0036	0,0028	0,0041
<b>Energy Management</b>					
Green energy procurement	%	100%	0%	0%	0%
Energy Consumption	MWh		7.079	7.848	7.050
Energy Intensity	MWh /€		0,00007	0,00005	0,00007

	Unit	Target 2030	2024	2023	2022
Energy Consumption	MWh		7.079	7.848	7.050
Total fossil energy consumption	MWh		6.226	6.974	6.329
Fuel consumption from coal and coal products			0	0	0
Fuel consumption from crude oil and petroleum products			0	929	0
Fuel consumption from natural gas			1.140	837	1.071
Fuel consumption from other fossil sources			0	0	0
Consumption of purchased or acquired electricity, heat, steam, and cooling from fossil sources			5.086	5.208	5.258
Share of fossil sources in total energy consumption	%		88%	89%	90%
Total renewable energy consumption	MWh		853	874	720
Fuel consumption for renewable sources			0	0	0
Consumption of purchased or acquired electricity, heat, steam and cooling from renewable sources			0	0	0
Consumption of self-generated non-fuel renewable energy			853	874	720
Share of renewable sources in total energy consumption	%		14%	14%	12%

OUR SUSTAINABILITY ROADMAP

# **ENVIRONMENTAL AMBITIONS**

	Unit	Target 2030	2024	2023	2022
Water	m³				
Total water consumption			8.176	8.415	9.952
Water withdrawal			8.176	8.415	9.952
At sites located in areas of high water stress			6.510	5.696	8.230
Water discharges			0	0	0
Water recycled and reused			0	0	0

Resource Use, circular economy and waste	We do not operate	in a sector using sig	gnificant mat	erial flows
Total waste generatad	Tonne	760,0	578,4	1.065,5
Non-Hazardous waste		758,7	574,6	1.061,8
Diverted to recycle or reuse		43,1	4,2	4,3
Directed to disposal		714,6	570,4	1057,5
Hazardous Waste		2,3	3,8	3,7
Diverted to recycle or reuse		0	0	0
Directed to disposal		2,3	3,8	2,7
Total waste diverted to recycling or reuse		43,1	4,2	4,3
Radioactive		0	0	0

	Unit	Target 2030	2024	2023	2022
Biodiversity					
Biodiversity sensitive area					
Number of sites in a biodiversity sensitive area	#		5	No data	No data
Number of sites near a biodiversity sensitive area	#		4	No data	No data
Land Use					
Total use of land	ha		160	No data	No data
Total sealed area	ha		160	No data	No data
Total nature-oriented area on-site	ha		0	No data	No data
Total nature-oriented area off-site	ha		0	No data	No data
Pollution		required by law empetent authori		onal regulation	ons to

# SOCIAL AMBITIONS

	Unit	Target 2030	2024	2023	2022
Health, Safety & Wellbeing					
People engagement score	%	80%	-	-	72%
Absenteeism Rate (short term)	%	4%	3,5%	3,4%	3,1%
Severity Rate	Rate	0,37	0,32	0,27	-
Frequency Rate	Rate	14,03	20	38	-
Work-related accidents	Number		23	33	-
Work-related accidents	Rate		5,23	6,69	-
Fatalities as a result of work-related injuries	Rate		-	-	-
Fatalities as a result of work-related injuries and ill health	Number		-	-	-
Rate of recordable work-related injuries	Number		-	-	-
Employees covered by health & safety management systems	%		100%	-	-
Training, Growth & Development					
Employees with yearly performance review	%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Training Hours	Hours		8.723	12.098	6.450
Average training hours / employee	Hours / Employee		12,6	17,3	9,8
Male			12,8	15,2	9,2
Female			12,3	22,3	11,2

	Unit	Target 2030	2024	2023	2022
Working Conditions					
Employees trained in code	%	100%	18%	28%	41%
of conduct	/0	100%	1070	20 /0	41/0
Employees covered by collective bargaining agreements	%		100%	100%	100%
Employees paid below the applicable adequate wage benchmark	%		0%	0%	0%
Employees entitled to take parental leave	headcount		691	699	656
Male			482	489	461
Female			209	210	195
Total number of employees that took parental leave			41	30	33
Male			28	18	18
Female			13	12	15
Total number of employees that returned to work in the reporting period after parental leave			41	30	33
Male			28	18	18
Female			13	12	15
Return to work rate			100%	100%	100%
Retention rate employees that too parental leave	k		100%	100%	100%
Gender Pay Gap			-13.65%	-3.74%	-3.33%
Product & Food Safety					
Recertification of all our standards	%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Customer Satisfaction	%		-	81%	-

OUR SUSTAINABILITY ROADMAP

## **GOVERNANCE AMBITIONS**

	Unit	Target 2030	2024	2023	2022
<b>Ethical Business Conduct</b>					
Own sites with social audit	#	ALL	-	1	-
Incidents of corruption	#		0	0	0
Severe negative human rights incidents	#		0	0	0
Conviction and fines for corruption and bribery	#		0	0	0
Sustainable Procurement					
Suppliers signed our supplier code of conduct	%	100%	100%	100%	100%
High risk suppliers covered by sustainability assessment	%	100%	34%	93%	93%
Corporate Governance					
Board members	Headcount		8	9	7
Male			5	6	6
Female			3	3	1
Gender diversity ratio Board	%		38%	25%	14%
ExCom members	Headcount		10	12	11
Male			7	9	8
Female			3	3	3
Gender diversity ratio ExCom	%		30%	25%	27%

# FINANCE DATA

	Unit	2024	2023	2022
Size of balance sheet	K€	€ 422.183	€ 427.392	€ 426.689
Turnover	K€	€ 517.577	€ 506.538	€ 524.377
Net Revenues	K€	€ 108.890	€ 135.736	€ 107.726
Revenues from certain sectors	K€			
Controversial weapons	K€	NA	NA	NA
Cultivation and production of tobacco	K€	NA	NA	NA
Chemicals production	K€	NA	NA	NA
Fossil fuel (transport)	K€	€ 810	No data	No data
Excluded from EU Paris-aligned benchmarks	K€	NA	NA	NA

CORPORATE GOVERNANCE

# **VSME - GRI CONTENT INDEX**

## VSME: COMPREHENSIVE - GRI 2: GENERAL DISCLOSURES 2021

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B2 - 26 C2 - 49	2-24	Embedding policy commitments	32,45,46,58,59,68
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	2-26	Mechanisms for seeking advice and raising concerns	58-61
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	2-29	Approach to stakeholder engagement	26,27
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ECS has reported in accordance with the voluntary VSME standards, Option B and C, including the basic module and comprehensive module.

ECS has also reported the information cited in the VSME - GRI content index for the period 1 January 2022 to 31 December 2024 with reference to the GRI standards (GRI 1: Foundation 2021) and was not externally validated.

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# MATERIAL TOPICS: SOCIAL

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	305-3	Other indirect (Scope 3) GHG emissions	34,72-73
	305-4	GHG emissions intensity	34,72-73
	305-5	Reduction of GHG emissions	30-37
	305-6	Emissions of ozone-depleting substances (ODS)	NA
	305-7	Nitrogen oxides (NOx), sulfur oxides (SOx), and other significant air emissions	34,72-73
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# IDENTIFICATION OF MATERIAL TOPICS

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# **ABOUT THIS REPORT**

This sustainability report is intended for stakeholders and others who are interested in the sustainability approach and results of ECS Logistics Group BV (including all its underlying subsidiaries), referred to as "ECS". The company's registered head office is located at Baron de Maerelaan 155, 8380 Zeebrugge, Belgium with NACE code 64.210.

In this report, the term 'sustainability data' refers to the consolidated numbers on the level of the holding ECS Logistics Group BV, including the activities of its subsidiaries except were specifically stated otherwise. There are no significant changes in location, operations or suppliers. The legal entities ECS European Containers BV & ECS European Containers Ltd became branches of ECS European Containers NV. During 2023, a new CEO has been appointed.

ECS has reported in accordance with the voluntary VSME standards, Option B and C, including the basic module and comprehensive module. ECS has also reported the information cited in the GRI content index for the period 1 January 2022 to 31 December 2024 with reference to the GRI standards and was not externally validated.

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It is our intention to publish reports annually and update our material ambitions and KPI's on a yearly basis. Previous versions of our sustainability reports can be found on our website: <a href="https://www.ecs.be/en/csr-as-a-strategy">https://www.ecs.be/en/csr-as-a-strategy</a>

This report has been drafted based on the ESG expertise and guidance of our consultant, sliding doors. If you have suggestions, comments or questions about this report and its content, please let us know. E-mail: sustainability@ecs.be

## **Consolidated Approach**

ECS Logistics Group includes the operational holding company ECS Corporate NV, along with all entities consolidated in our financial annual report. Collectively, these are referred to as the 'ECS group' or simply 'ECS'.



# **COLOFON**

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A great thank you to all the people who contributed to this report!