

Strategy & Performance



Message from the Chairman and the CEO

Yves Kerstens
CEO

Jürgen Tinggren
Chairman

Dear Shareholder,
Dear Reader,

For 2023, we are pleased to report another good year of commercial, operational, and financial results. Despite the many and varied global challenges, we have made good progress developing our strategic growth platforms, increasing underlying EBIT margins, and further integrating innovation and sustainability across our businesses.

Building our presence in the growing markets of energy transition, lifting and mooring, and construction decarbonization, remains a high priority. Our investments in innovation, manufacturing capacity and strategic partnerships are driving our transformation to become a more resilient, higher growth, and higher margin business.

We continue to integrate sustainability fully into our strategy, both in terms of our new product and market focus, as well as improving our own operations and processes. We have made good progress on GHG emission reductions in 2023 and are on track to reach our SBTi-validated targets. In terms of circularity, we are setting the industry standards for recycled steel content used in tire reinforcement products.

From a financial perspective, we delivered sales of € 4.3 billion in 2023, managing well the reversal of raw material cost inflation, lower volumes, and the normalization of energy surcharges. Underlying EBIT margin improved to 9.0% and reached € 388 million. The improved resilience is a result of better pricing discipline, cost efficiencies and improved business mix. Our continued focus on working capital and cash flow, resulted in a net debt to underlying EBITDA ratio of 0.5x at year-end 2023, reinforcing our strong financial position.

Based on the good results, we are pleased to announce that the Board of Directors will propose to the Annual General Meeting of Shareholders in May 2024 a gross dividend of € 1.80 per share, representing an increase of 9% versus the previous year.

Moving forward, Bekaert has a clear strategy to continue its transformation and further enhance Bekaert's increasingly attractive financial profile. Aligned with this strategy, the group has raised its medium-term targets to achieve more than 5% annual sales growth, underlying EBIT margin exceeding 10%, and the percentage of sales from sustainable solutions reaching 65%. Commercially 2024 has started well and management expects further progress in the year towards these targets.

We continue to be very grateful to our customers, business partners, and shareholders for their continued trust and support and we would like to thank all our employees for their contribution, energy, and better together spirit.



Yves Kerstens
Chief Executive Officer
GRI 2-22



Jürgen Tinggren
Chairman of the Board of Directors

Bekaert at a glance



About us

Who we are

Bekaert's ambition is to be the leading partner for shaping the way we live and move, and to always do this in a way that is safe, smart, and sustainable. As a global market and technology leader in material science of steel wire transformation and coating technologies, Bekaert also applies its expertise to create new solutions with innovative materials and services for markets related to the energy transition, new mobility, advanced lifting and mooring, and the decarbonization of the construction industry.

Founded in 1880, with its headquarters in Belgium, Bekaert (Euronext Brussels, BEKB) is a global company whose 24 000 employees worldwide together helped generate € 5.3 billion in combined* revenue in 2023.

Information about our subsidiaries, joint ventures and associates is available in Part II: Statements - note 7.8 of the Financial Statements.

GRI 2-1, GRI 2-2, GRI 2-4, GRI 2-6

Note: In this report, all sales and income statement items for 2023 exclude any contribution from the disposed Steel Wire Solutions businesses in Chile and Peru. In line with IFRS 5, the 2022 comparative data have been restated on the same basis enabling a like-for-like comparison between 2022 and 2023 numbers. The same approach has been applied for the non-financial data.

* Consolidated revenue (excluding joint ventures) reached € 4.3 billion and employment in consolidated entities totaled ~21 000.

What we do

Transforming steel wire and applying proprietary coating technologies form our core business. Depending on our customers' requirements, we draw wire in different diameters and strengths, even as thin as ultrafine fibers of one micron. We group the wires into cords, ropes and strands, weave or knit them into fabric, or process them into an end product. The coatings we apply enhance properties such as reduced friction, improved corrosion resistance, or increased adhesion with other materials.

We also pioneer with innovations beyond steel into new materials, new markets, services, and solutions. These exciting new applications and technologies will in particular help us achieve our ambitions in promising growth markets.

GRI 2-1

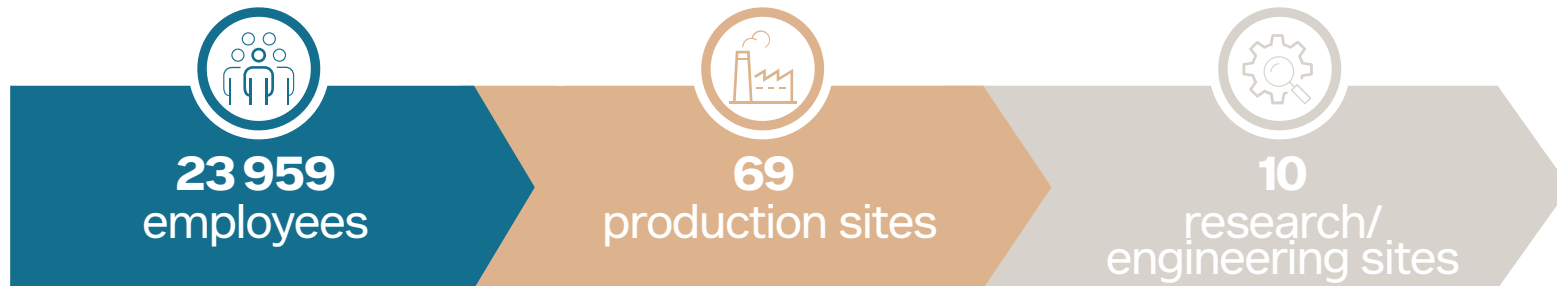
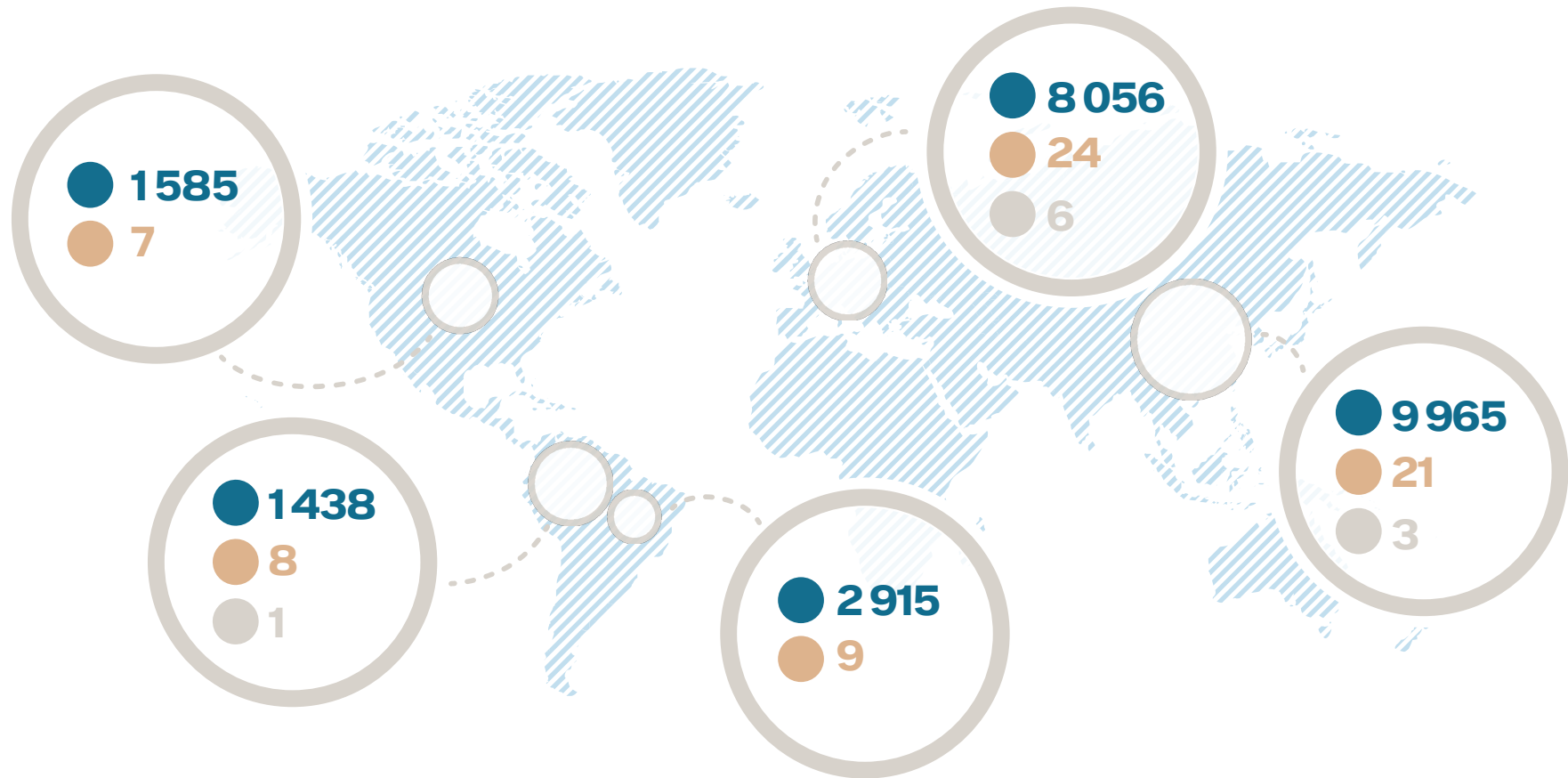
How we work

From making a positive impact with sustainable solutions and practices, to building a diverse and inclusive future, Bekaert is determined to improve life and create value for all stakeholders. We are convinced that the integrity, trust, agility, and boldness that bring our employees worldwide together as one team create the fundamentals of successful partnerships wherever we do business.

Bekaert delivers on its sustainability strategy by developing and offering sustainable solutions, using materials and energy responsibly, conducting the highest business ethics standards, enhancing health and safety at the workplace, and engaging employees and business partners throughout the supply chain, always 'better together'.

GRI 2-1

Global scale and achievements



Subsidiaries: 21 044 employees - 60 production sites - 10 research and engineering sites
 Joint ventures in Latin America: 2 915 employees - 9 production sites
 Combined: 23 959 employees - 69 production sites - 10 research and engineering sites



Strong financial performance in 2023

Consolidated sales
€4.3 billion

EBITu
€388 million

9.0%
margin

FINANCIAL
AUTONOMY

53%

EPS
€4.75



Combined sales¹
€5.3 billion

EBITDAu
€561 million

130%
margin

NET DEBT /
EBITDAu

<0.5x

DIVIDEND
€1.80
per share



Acceleration of the innovation agenda

2 100+

patents and patent rights
30 first filings in 2023



2 000+

registered trademarks



€73 million
gross investments in R&D



84%

of production plants
digitalized



Sustainable supply chain management

Bekaert works with 14 500 suppliers and serves 13 500 customers in 130 countries from 69¹ manufacturing plants worldwide.

100%

of critical suppliers
commit to Supplier
code of conduct

NPS score 63

Promoted by customers worldwide



A safe, diverse, and inclusive working environment for everybody

96%

Retention rate



24 000

employees¹ from 74 nationalities



Safety enhancement
actions to improve
performance



Gender equality on the Board
**28% of managers and salaried
professionals are female**



Committed to circularity, environment-friendly innovations and operations, and the Science-Based Targets initiative

Lower emissions - higher share of sustainable products and solutions - setting the industry standard for recycled steel content

41%

Electricity use
from renewable
sources¹



-15%

Scope 1&2 GHG
emissions²

42%

of revenue from sustainable
solutions (EU Taxonomy
alignment share)



Caring for people and society

€620 000



funding of disaster relief and
social & environmental
support programs in 2023

80+



support programs
worldwide

¹ Including joint ventures
² versus base year 2019

**Creating value for
our stakeholders**



Our strategy



Our shared ambition is to **be the leading partner for shaping the way we live and move - safe, smart, sustainable**. We want to be the partner of choice for our customers by addressing the critical challenges and opportunities they face and by responding to society's emerging aspirations, conscious of our role and responsibilities. Our pioneering spirit enables us to explore, develop, and drive innovations that make a positive difference in people's lives. All of this is reflected in our purpose: **establishing the new possible**.

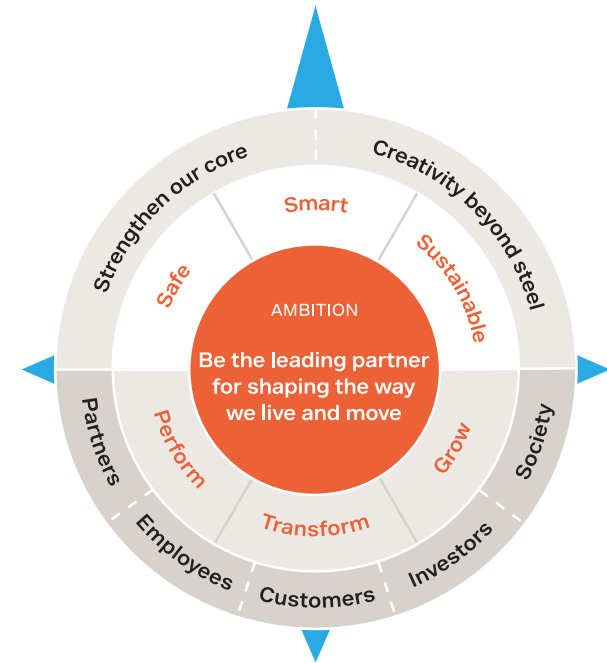
We use the analogy of a compass as our guide to stay on course and move forward toward our goals. Bekaert's Compass is double-sided as it guides us in both our strategy and our culture.

The **strategy compass** aligns toward our purpose and ambition to make a positive difference for our stakeholders. It contains the facets of our strategy to create successful outcomes. We want to strengthen our core and at the same time we unleash our creativity beyond steel to grow into new materials, new markets, services, and solutions. A set of measurable key performance indicators has been defined for each of the goals we have set ourselves. They are aimed toward higher performance in customer experience, portfolio optimization through innovation and sustainable solutions, digital technologies, and financial delivery to generate shareholder returns.

The **culture compass** guides us to be an employer of choice for our current and future team members and to become the leading partner for our stakeholders. It is focused on building a high-performance organization and culture, with inspired and engaged people who deliver results and unlock the full potential of our company. Our values bring us together as one global team: 'better together' with integrity, trust, agility, and boldness. They are the foundation of our culture and way of working.

Strategy Compass

PURPOSE
Establishing
the new possible



Culture Compass

EMPLOYER VALUE
PROPOSITION
Dare to go beyond



Bekaert's choices

Where to play

We have made clear choices about where to play. We have identified our priorities in the large and growing end-markets of tire reinforcement, energy transition, advanced lifting and mooring, and construction decarbonization.

We have a strong presence in those markets, both with established and advancing technologies. With this foundation, we can grow from the core and focus on the sustainability trends in those markets:



- Changing requirements from electrification and circularity create growth perspectives in tire reinforcement and steel wire solutions;
- Decarbonization, electrification, and the production, storage, and distribution of renewable energy sources drive the growth in the energy transition market;
- Advanced mooring and lifting applications are set to grow in target markets supporting decarbonization and urbanization trends;
- And the fast-growing construction and infrastructure market increasingly prioritizes construction decarbonization and innovation.

GRI 2-22

Our chosen markets

Prioritizing large and growing end markets



€7bn¹

Tire Reinforcement

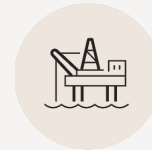
Growth driven by population and economic activity, accelerated by changing requirements from electrification and circularity



€7bn¹

Energy Transition

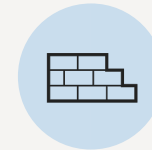
Significant growth from trends of decarbonization, electrification, and needs for renewable energy



€5bn¹

Advanced Lifting and Mooring

Strong growth outlook in targeted end markets supported by decarbonization and urbanization



€2bn¹

Construction Decarbonization

Fast growing construction market benefitting from sustainability, government infrastructure spending and innovation

¹ Estimated addressable market by 2028



Positioned for growth in sustainable markets globally

Bekaert takes a leading role in driving the technology shifts arising from the megatrends. We are expanding our scale and capabilities to seize opportunities in markets with promising growth prospects. More information about Currento® for green hydrogen production, Dramix® fibers for low-carbon concrete, ultra-tensile steel cord for EV tires, Ampact™ for EV engine stators, integrated mooring systems for floating offshore wind turbines, and other solutions, are described in the Chapter 'Our performance in 2023 - Knowledge'.

Next to our sectoral focus and on top of the geographies where we have established strong positions, we are expanding our presence in regions with significant growth prospects, such as the US, the Middle East, Southeast Asia, and India. This will enable us to maintain our leading market positions globally.

In 2023 Bekaert celebrated the 25th anniversary of its operations in India and held a groundbreaking ceremony at the start of a new phase in its tire cord expansion program.



Solid economic growth in UAE, Saudi Arabia, and other countries in the region, creates growth prospects for our business. In 2023 we recorded sales growth for Armofo® thermoplastic pipe reinforcement and Dramix® steel fibers for concrete flooring. Additional opportunities are being explored. Our 'Establishing the New Possible' event in Dubai served as the pinnacle of Bekaert's executive visit to the Middle East, and our participation to COP28 shed more light on the energy transition investments in the region and on decarbonization trends globally.



At the same time we are constantly reviewing our current portfolio and footprint for competitiveness and future opportunities. As part of our transformative portfolio review, Bekaert has divested, in 2023, the steel wire solutions activities in Chile and Peru, to reduce the company's exposure to more cyclical and commoditized markets. The Bekaert stake has been sold to the local partners, who co-owned the business from the start. In addition, we have closed the small steel wire solutions entity in Pune (India) and the rubber reinforcement plant in Chongqing (China) and we are phasing out manufacturing in the lower-margin steel wire business facility in Karawang (Indonesia).

How to win

We have determined how to win in the chosen priority markets. Backed by our global scale of operations and technology leadership, we are further developing and extending our differentiated offering of products, solutions, and brands.

Bekaert's key technologies in materials transformation, coating, and testing create opportunities for sustainability-driven innovation and growth.

42% of Bekaert's 2023 consolidated revenue is generated from sales related to sustainable solutions. Our goal is to further increase this share to 50% by 2026 and to 65% by 2030. More information is included in Part II - Environmental Statements: EU Taxonomy, 'aligned turnover'.

GRI 2-22

Anchoring our leadership in floating offshore wind

Bekaert's mooring solutions are used in 12 floating offshore wind demonstrator projects across the globe. This illustrates our strong position in a market that is set to grow significantly. We extend our offering through innovation - in-house and through acquisitions and partnerships - and provide fully integrated mooring solutions, anchoring the turbine installations from the seabed to the floater.

Bekaert synthetic MoorLine rope equipped with Applied Fiber termination sockets, TFI Marine SeaSpring, and Flintstone connectors and tensioners: a reliable and effective total mooring solution.



The capabilities we develop



Bekaert's strategic choices start from a deep understanding of the customer needs and market trends, so that we focus on the right priorities and develop the vital capabilities to be the partner of choice for our customers worldwide.

These capabilities include customer-centric product and service innovations, seamless account management, operational and commercial excellence, and customer proximity in a robust global supply chain.

Our go-to-market strategies aim to create and build strong global technology brands that differentiate and enhance Bekaert's brand and reputation, further underpinning our ambition and purpose.

To accelerate our innovation and leverage the benefits of collaboration between technology leaders, we are building key positions in specific business ecosystems. Active participation in technology-driven consortia and investments in venture capital funds have further enhanced our presence and capabilities and we have also established several new business partnerships in 2023.

This 'go-to-partner' approach expands our capabilities, creates synergies, and builds our brand strength.

We have developed a large scale of operations. True to our pioneering spirit, we leverage this strength to support our growth platforms around the world.

GRI 2-22

Bekaert brand design wins prestigious award

End of 2023 the new Bekaert brand design won the Red Dot Design award, exactly one year after the launch. 'Bold New Bekaert' unites our heritage with a new boldness in visual identity and communication style. We are proud of our brand and of this award.



reddot winner 2023
brand design



We deliver on our commitments

Bekaert has been consistently improving its performance over the past years, and there is more to achieve. We have committed to ambitious targets and are building a high-performance organization to deliver on them.

These targets are reflected in Business Unit-specific actions and objectives and we constantly monitor our progress on these commitments.

Our track record of performance is clear in the results achieved in 2023. We delivered strong profitability and cash conversion and maintained a robust financial position with a very strong balance sheet. This enables us to invest for growth, commit to increased shareholder returns, and create value for all stakeholders.

We have also made progress on our sustainability targets and continue to implement systems and measures that enhance our performance on each of the environmental, social, and governance targets we have set.

Building key positions in business ecosystems

Bekaert connects a wide area of expertise in **green hydrogen** technologies through participation in industry consortia, collaboration with research institutes, and investing in business partnerships with technology leaders. The most recent partnerships include an investment in Ionmvr Innovations, a leader in advanced proton and anion exchange membranes, and a strategic cooperation agreement with Toshiba Energy Systems and Solutions Corporation. This partnership will couple Toshiba's iridium-saving MEA (Membrane Electrode Assemblies) technology with Bekaert's leading expertise in PTL (Porous Transport Layers) for electrolyzers.



Construction decarbonization is another growth area with vast opportunities. Our Dramix® steel fibers make us a reference partner in the sector. We engage with end-users, co-create innovations with industry leaders, invest in ventures, and set the construction and infrastructure standards for the future. More information on recent investments and partnerships is included in the Chapter 'Our performance in 2023 - Knowledge'.

Our 2023 delivery summarized in a [celebration movie](#)



Four Business Units



Rubber Reinforcement (RR)

Bekaert's RR business develops, manufactures, and supplies steel cord and bead wire solutions for the tire sector.

The business unit serves all top 30 and other tire customers, backed by a global presence of manufacturing plants in EMEA, US, India, Southeast Asia, China, and Brazil.

Value drivers and strategic focus

- Market leadership through innovation
 - Strong market share in the global tire cord market
 - Joint development programs and long-term supply agreements
- Solutions provider to new mobility and sustainability transformation
 - Safer, lighter, and sustainable materials
 - Increased recycled steel content
- Selective growth and mix optimization
 - Agility and resilience to changing market dynamics with selective growth in target regions
 - Mix and footprint optimization in China
- Resilience and efficiency
 - Drive cash generation and margin performance
 - Cost focus and pricing discipline

BU performance FY2023¹

€ 1.88 billion in consolidated sales • € 2.07 billion in combined sales²
9.6% EBITu margin • 14.0% EBITDAu margin • 17.0% ROCEu

GRI 2-6

Steel Wire Solutions (SWS)

Bekaert's SWS business unit develops, manufactures, and supplies a broad range of steel wire products and solutions for customers in sectors including energy & utilities, mining, construction, agriculture, automotive, and medical and consumer goods. The business unit has a global presence with manufacturing plants in EMEA, US, Latin America, and Asia, and a sales and distribution network worldwide.

Value drivers and strategic focus

- Transformational portfolio management
 - Focus on target industries including energy & utilities, e-mobility, and medical solutions to drive margin expansion
 - Move beyond commodity markets by divesting from lower performing, cyclical business areas
- Enhance margin improvement and cash conversion
 - Strong pricing discipline supported by AI
 - Operational excellence and asset-light operations
 - Footprint optimization
- Accelerate innovation
 - Double the sales from innovations
 - Scale up incubation projects

BU performance FY2023¹

€ 1.17 billion in consolidated sales • € 2.01 billion in combined sales²
7.5% EBITu margin • 10.2% EBITDAu margin • 21.8% ROCEu

¹ Detailed segment reports are included in Part II (Financial Statements - 4.1 Key data by segment) of this report. All margin indicators relate to underlying (u) consolidated results.

² Combined sales are sales of fully consolidated companies plus 100% of sales of joint ventures and associates after intercompany elimination. For RR and SWS, this mainly adds the JVs in Brazil.

Specialty Businesses (SB)

The business unit Specialty Businesses comprises several sub-segments that have a high-end portfolio of advanced technologies, lightweight solutions, and environmentally friendly applications in common.

The sub-segment Building Products is focused on the decarbonization of construction markets and develops and manufactures sustainable products that reinforce concrete, masonry, plaster, and asphalt. The sub-segments hose and belt reinforcement, fiber technologies, heating technologies, ultra-fine wire, and hydrogen, serve markets related to the energy transition.

Value drivers and strategic focus

- Growth in construction decarbonization with Dramix® steel fibers, Synmix® synthetic fibers, and SigmaSlab™ for concrete reinforcement and a wide range of other products and services, all enabling:
 - Safe installation conditions
 - Reduction of CO₂ emissions due to less steel and less concrete
 - Lower total cost of ownership by using less materials, labor, and time
 - Higher asset durability
- Growth and innovation in energy transition with a product and service offering for the production, transmission and distribution, and end use of green energy solutions
 - Currento® porous transport layers for hydrogen electrolysis
 - Low and zero-emission gas burners and heat exchangers
 - Hose reinforcement for wind blade pitching, ammonia bunkering and hydrogen fueling
 - Ultra-fine wire for solar photovoltaic wafer production
 - Green molecule filtration

BU performance FY2023¹

€ 677 million in consolidated sales

16.2% EBITu margin • 19.6% EBITDAu margin • 32.5% ROCEu

GRI 2-6

Bridon-Bekaert Ropes Group (BBRG)



BBRG is committed to be the leading innovator and supplier of the best performing ropes and advanced cords (A-Cords) for its customers worldwide. BBRG-ropes has a leading position in a very wide range of sectors, including surface and underground mining, offshore and onshore energy, crane & industrial, fishing & marine, and structures. The A-Cords business of BBRG develops and supplies fine steel cords for elevator and timing belts used in construction and equipment markets respectively, window regulator and heating cords for the automotive sector, and Armofo® thermoplastic tapes for light-weight flexible pipes in energy markets.

Value drivers and strategic focus

- Advanced lifting solutions for the elevator industry with elevator hoisting cord, belt and Flexisteel®
- Advanced digital services based on superior VisionTek optical measurement technology for predictive critical rope performance
- Decarbonization of the energy mix:
 - Lifting ropes and slings for offshore wind
 - Steel and synthetic mooring ropes for floating offshore wind (FOW)
 - FOW innovative mooring solutions with TFI SeaSpring and Flintstone connectors and tensioners
 - Significant CO₂ emission reduction with Armofo® reinforced flexible pipes as an alternative to steel pipes
 - Re-engineering Armofo® for hydrogen and hydrogen derivatives
- Successful turnaround driven by footprint and business-mix optimization

BU performance FY2023¹

€ 589 million in consolidated sales

12.3% EBITu margin • 17.4% EBITDAu margin • 14.5% ROCEu

Our leadership



Board of Directors

The main tasks of the Board of Directors are to determine the Group's strategy and general policy, and to monitor Bekaert's operations. This includes the Group's sustainability strategy and progress monitoring. The Board of Directors is the company's prime decision-making body except for matters reserved by law or by the articles of association to the General Meeting of Shareholders. The Board of Directors currently consists of ten members. Their professional profiles cover different areas of expertise, such as law, business, industrial operations, finance & investment banking, HR, consultancy, ESG, innovation and compliance.

All information about the Board of Directors (nomination & selection, committees, remuneration) is available in Part II: Corporate Governance Statements of this report.

[GRI 2-9](#), [GRI 2-10](#), [GRI 2-11](#), [GRI 2-12](#), [GRI 2-15](#), [GRI 2-16](#), [GRI 2-17](#), [GRI 2-18](#), [GRI 2-19](#), [GRI 2-20](#)

Count Paul Buysse, Chairman of the Board from 2000 till 2014 and Honorary Chairman since 2014, passed away on 30 December 2023. We are grateful for his unwavering commitment to the company during his 14 years of chairmanship.

Composition of the Board of Directors

Jürgen Tinggren, Chairman ¹
Yves Kerstens, CEO
Henriette Fenger Ellekrog ¹
Christophe Jacobs van Merlen
Maxime Parmentier
Eriikka Söderström ¹
Caroline Storme
Emilie van de Walle de Ghelcke
Henri Jean Velge
Mei Ye ¹

¹*Independent Directors*

Changes in 2023

Yves Kerstens, Chief Executive Officer of Bekaert since 1 September 2023, was coopted by the Board of Directors as Director until the Annual General Meeting of Shareholders to be held in May 2024.

Oswald Schmid, former Chief Executive Officer and Director, stepped down as CEO and Director of the Board on 31 August 2023.

Gregory Dalle stepped down as Director of the Board on 31 July 2023, following his appointment as Managing Director at Citi with associated duties and obligations.

As a result of these changes, the number of Directors decreased from eleven to ten in 2023.

Jürgen Tinggren



CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD

Independent Director
Swedish, *1958

FIRST APPOINTED

May 2019

EDUCATION

Stockholm School of Economics
New York University Leonard N Stern School of Business

EXPERIENCE

Jürgen Tinggren was appointed independent Director and Chairman of the Board of Directors of Bekaert on 8 May 2019.

He started his career in 1981 as Senior Associate with Booz Allen Hamilton and joined Sika AG in 1985 to take on various managerial and executive functions of increasingly broader scope and responsibility. In 1997, Jürgen Tinggren joined the Executive Committee of Schindler Holding AG. In 2007, he was appointed Chief Executive Officer and President of the Group Executive Committee of Schindler. He became a member of the Board of Directors in 2014.

OTHER MANDATES

Member of the Board of Johnson Controls, Inc.

EXPIRATION OF BEKAERT MANDATE

Annual General Meeting of 2027

COMMITTEES

Chairman of the Nomination & Remuneration Committee

Member of the Audit, Risk & Finance Committee

Yves Kerstens



CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER MEMBER OF THE BOARD

Belgian, *1966

FIRST APPOINTED

September 2023

EDUCATION

Engineering - Industrial Management
Catholic University of Louvain
INSEAD Business School of Paris

EXPERIENCE

Yves Kerstens started his career in supply chain roles in the manufacturing industry before he moved to Ernst & Young (1996) and later Capgemini (2001) as an advisor to the trade & industry sector.

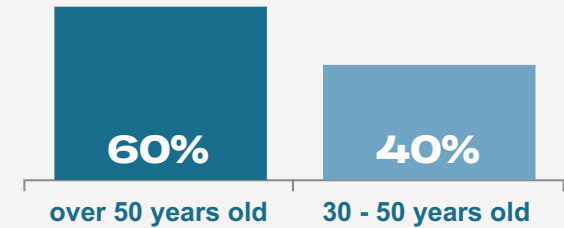
In 2005, he joined Bridgestone Corporation where he took on executive functions of increasingly broader scope and responsibility in EMEA and Asia Pacific, as well as global corporate governance roles as Vice President & Senior Officer of Bridgestone Corporation and Chairman of the global digital solutions and supply chain committee. In 2018, Yves joined Axalta Coating Systems, where he most recently held the role of Vice President Axalta and President EMEA.

Yves Kerstens joined Bekaert on 1 April 2021 as Divisional CEO Specialty Businesses and COO. He became CEO of Bekaert on 1 September 2023.

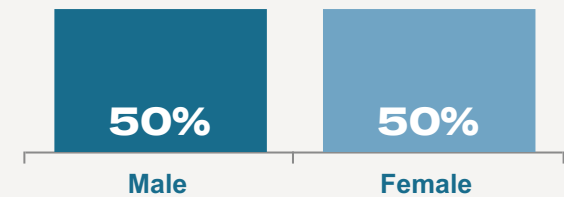
EXPIRATION OF BEKAERT MANDATE

Annual General Meeting of 2024

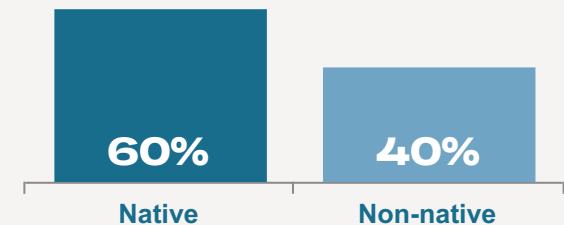
Age Diversity



Gender Diversity



Nationality Diversity



Non-native: nationality other than the country where the registered office of the Company is located, i.e. Belgium

Henriette Fenger Ellekrog



MEMBER OF THE BOARD

Independent Director
Danish, °1966

FIRST APPOINTED

May 2020

EDUCATION

Copenhagen Business School, INSEAD, London Business School, and Wharton Business School

EXPERIENCE

Henriette Fenger Ellekrog is Chief Human Resources Officer at Ørsted.

She started her career at Peptech A/S where she became Director of Administration and Personnel. Next, she took up several consultancy and management functions at Mercuri Urval A/S. Henriette Fenger Ellekrog continued her career at TDC in several executive HR roles before moving to SAS AB as Executive VP HR. More recently, she headed the HR office at Danske Bank A/S.

OTHER MANDATES

Member of several advisory boards and committees

EXPIRATION OF BEKAERT MANDATE

Annual General Meeting of 2025

COMMITTEES

Member of the Nomination & Remuneration Committee

Christophe Jacobs van Merlen



MEMBER OF THE BOARD

Belgian, °1978

FIRST APPOINTED

May 2016

EDUCATION

Free University of Brussels
Ecole Centrale Lille (Ingénieur Généraliste)

EXPERIENCE

Christophe Jacobs van Merlen is currently Managing Director at Bain Capital Europe and member of the Leadership team and member of different board, audit, operating and M&A committees. He plays a leading role in a variety of investments at Bain Capital.

He joined Bain Capital Europe, LLP (London) in 2004. Christophe Jacobs van Merlen was previously a Consultant at Bain & Company in Brussels, Amsterdam, and Boston, where he provided strategic and operational advice to private equity, business services, industrial, and financial services clients.

EXPIRATION OF BEKAERT MANDATE

Annual General Meeting of 2024

COMMITTEES

Member of the Nomination & Remuneration Committee

Maxime Parmentier



MEMBER OF THE BOARD

Belgian, °1982

FIRST APPOINTED

May 2022

EDUCATION

Catholic University of Louvain
Esade-CEMS Business School of Barcelona
Columbia University of New York

EXPERIENCE

Maxime Parmentier is founder and CEO of Birdie Care Services Ltd, a London-based health technology scale-up aimed at improving the lives and care for the elderly.

He started his career in 2008 with McKinsey & Company before joining Riaktr. In 2013, Maxime Parmentier moved to The Global Fund to fight AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria, where he took roles of increasing responsibility. Before establishing Birdie in 2017, he founded and headed Wambo, a health e-marketplace, and he worked for Kamet Ventures (AXA).

EXPIRATION OF BEKAERT MANDATE

Annual General Meeting of 2027

Eriikka Söderström



**MEMBER OF THE BOARD
CHAIR OF THE AUDIT, RISK
AND FINANCE COMMITTEE**

Independent Director
Finnish, °1968

FIRST APPOINTED

May 2020

EDUCATION

University of Vaasa

EXPERIENCE

Eriikka Söderström is an independent Director with a strong finance background having worked in many internationally operating corporations.

She started her career in Nokia where she spent 14 years in different finance roles in Nokia Networks. Her last positions there were as the interim CFO of Nokia Networks and Corporate Controller of Nokia Siemens Networks. Eriikka Söderström also worked as the CFO of Oy Nautor Ab, Vacon Plc and Kone Corporation, and was the CFO of F-Secure, a cyber security company, from 2017 until September 2021.

OTHER MANDATES

Member of the Board of Directors and Chair of the Audit Committee of Valmet, member of the Board of Directors and Chair of the Audit Committee of Kempower, member of the Board of Directors of Amadeus IT Group.

EXPIRATION OF BEKAERT MANDATE

Annual General Meeting of 2025

COMMITTEES

Chair of the Audit, Risk & Finance Committee

Caroline Storme



MEMBER OF THE BOARD
Belgian, °1977

FIRST APPOINTED

May 2019

EDUCATION

Solvay Management School, Free University of Brussels, and INSEAD France and Singapore

EXPERIENCE

Caroline Storme holds the position of R&D Finance Lead Neurology at UCB in Belgium.

She started her career with Deloitte Consulting in 2000 in Belgium. Caroline Storme worked at Bekaert as financial controller from 2004-2006 before she moved to Amtech, IGW based in Suzhou, China where she was appointed CFO. She joined UCB in 2012, first in controlling functions before heading Asian global business services, based in Shanghai, China, and since 2017 in various R&D financial functions at UCB Headquarters in Brussels, Belgium.

EXPIRATION OF BEKAERT MANDATE

Annual General Meeting of 2027

Emilie van de Walle de Ghelcke



MEMBER OF THE BOARD
Belgian, °1981

FIRST APPOINTED

May 2016

EDUCATION

Catholic University of Louvain, Free University of Brussels, and London School of Economics

EXPERIENCE

Emilie van de Walle de Ghelcke is Head of Legal at Sofina, a family-controlled investment company listed on Euronext Brussels (BEL20 and BEL ESG indices).

Before joining Sofina, Emilie was a member of the Brussels Bar since 2005. She joined the corporate and finance practice of Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer in 2009 where she advised Belgian and international clients on domestic and cross-border public and private M&A transactions, corporate governance matters, corporate restructurings, joint ventures, and financial law advisory. Emilie van de Walle de Ghelcke joined Sofina in 2016. As Head of Legal and Compliance Officer, her practice mainly covers M&A transactions, advice on corporate governance and listed company matters, group compliance and legal matters as well as external communication. She is also part of the core team leading the implementation of Sofina's ESG strategy.

EXPIRATION OF BEKAERT MANDATE

Annual General Meeting of 2024



Henri Jean Velge



MEMBER OF THE BOARD

Belgian, *1956

FIRST APPOINTED

May 2016

EDUCATION

Catholic University of Louvain and IMD

EXPERIENCE

Henri Jean Velge started his career in 1981 at Shell (The Netherlands) as well-site petroleum Engineer. He moved to Brunei in 1982 as Operations Manager and resigned from Shell in 1985 to obtain an MBA degree.

In 1987 Henri Jean Velge joined Bekaert as Executive Director of Industrias Chilenas de Alambre (Chile). In 1991 he moved to the United States and became Corporate Vice President Wire Americas in June 1994. In 2001 he was appointed Executive Vice President and became member of the Bekaert Group Executive, responsible for the global wire activities. From 2013 till mid 2014 he was responsible for all the business platforms.

OTHER MANDATES

Chairman of Stichting Administratiekantoor Bekaert, representing the interests of the reference shareholder of Bekaert.

EXPIRATION OF BEKAERT MANDATE

Annual General Meeting of 2024

COMMITTEES

Member of the Audit, Risk & Finance Committee

Mei Ye



MEMBER OF THE BOARD

Independent Director
US citizen, *1966

FIRST APPOINTED

May 2014

EDUCATION

University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
Fudan University in Shanghai

EXPERIENCE

Mei Ye is an independent Corporate Director and international business advisor, based in Shanghai. She serves on the Board of Jamieson Wellness, a Canadian public company, and of China Reinsurance Group Company. She also was a senior advisor to Eurazeo, a French investment company.

Mei served on the Board of Shenwan Hongyuan Group in China (2015 to 2021), after serving on the Board of Shenyin & Wanguo (2012 to 2014). She was a senior advisor to McKinsey & Company (2013 to 2022), and a senior expert and consultant with the firm (2003 to 2013). Mei started her career as strategy manager and analyst for various companies in the US, including E*TRADE Financial (now a subsidiary of Morgan Stanley), Gartner Group, and SPR Associates.

OTHER MANDATES

Independent Director of the Board of Jamieson Wellness Inc and of China Reinsurance Group Company. Advisor to Rhodes Trust of Oxford University and final selection committee of Global Rhodes Scholars.

EXPIRATION OF BEKAERT MANDATE

Annual General Meeting of 2024



The Bekaert Group Executive (BGE) assumes the operational responsibility for the Company's activities and acts under the supervision of the Board of Directors. The BGE is chaired by Yves Kerstens, Chief Executive Officer.

GRI 2-9, GRI 2-13

Organizational structure

The composition of the Bekaert Group Executive reflects the organizational structure with four Business Units and five Global Functional Domains. In 2023, the Business Units and Global Functions were led by the following Executives.

Business Units

- Annie Xu-Huhmann, Divisional CEO Rubber Reinforcement
- François Desné, Divisional CEO Steel Wire Solutions and Bridon-Bekaert Ropes Group
- Yves Kerstens, CEO, continued to lead the Specialty Businesses Division

The Business Units have global P&L accountability for strategy and delivery in their distinct areas, with dedicated production facilities and commercial and technology teams. This helps them develop a customer-centric approach aligned with the specific needs and dynamics of their markets.

GRI 2-13

Global Functions

- Taoufiq Boussaid, Chief Financial Officer
- Kerstin Artenberg, Chief Human Resources Officer
- Juan Carlos Alonso, Chief Strategy Officer
- Barry Snyder, Chief Operations Officer
- Gunter Van Craen, Chief Digital and Information Officer

The Functions take a role as strategic business partners, providing specific expertise and services across the Group, and ensuring the business has the right capability to deliver on short- and long-term goals.

GRI 2-13

Changes during 2023

On 1 September 2023, Yves Kerstens took the helm of the company as Chief Executive Officer, replacing Oswald Schmid who left the company on 31 August 2023.

François Desné, Divisional CEO Steel Wire Solutions, took on the additional responsibility as Divisional CEO Bridon-Bekaert Ropes Group.

On 1 July 2023, Barry Snyder joined Bekaert as Chief Operations Officer and became a member of the Bekaert Group Executive.

On 1 March 2023, Annie Xu-Huhmann joined Bekaert as Divisional CEO Rubber Reinforcement and became a member of the Bekaert Group Executive, succeeding Arnaud Lesschaeve who left the company.



Farewell reception Oswald Schmid at Bekaert Headquarters



From left to right: Taoufiq Boussaid, François Desné, Juan Carlos Alonso, Barry Snyder, Annie Xu-Huhmann, Yves Kerstens, Kerstin Artenberg, Gunter Van Craen

Yves Kerstens



CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Belgian, *1966

JOINED BEKAERT

2021

EDUCATION

Engineering - Industrial Management
Catholic University of Louvain
INSEAD Business School of Paris

EXPERIENCE

Yves Kerstens started his career in supply chain roles in the manufacturing industry before he moved to Ernst & Young (1996) and later Capgemini (2001) as an advisor to the trade & industry sector.

In 2005, he joined Bridgestone Corporation where he took on executive functions of increasingly broader scope and responsibility in EMEA and Asia Pacific, as well as global corporate governance roles as Vice President & Senior Officer of Bridgestone Corporation and Chairman of the global digital solutions and supply chain committee. In 2018, Yves joined Axalta Coating Systems, where he most recently held the role of Vice President Axalta and President EMEA.

Yves Kerstens joined Bekaert on 1 April 2021 as Divisional CEO Specialty Businesses and COO. He became CEO of Bekaert on 1 September 2023.

Taoufiq Boussaid



CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER

French and Moroccan, *1971

JOINED BEKAERT

2019

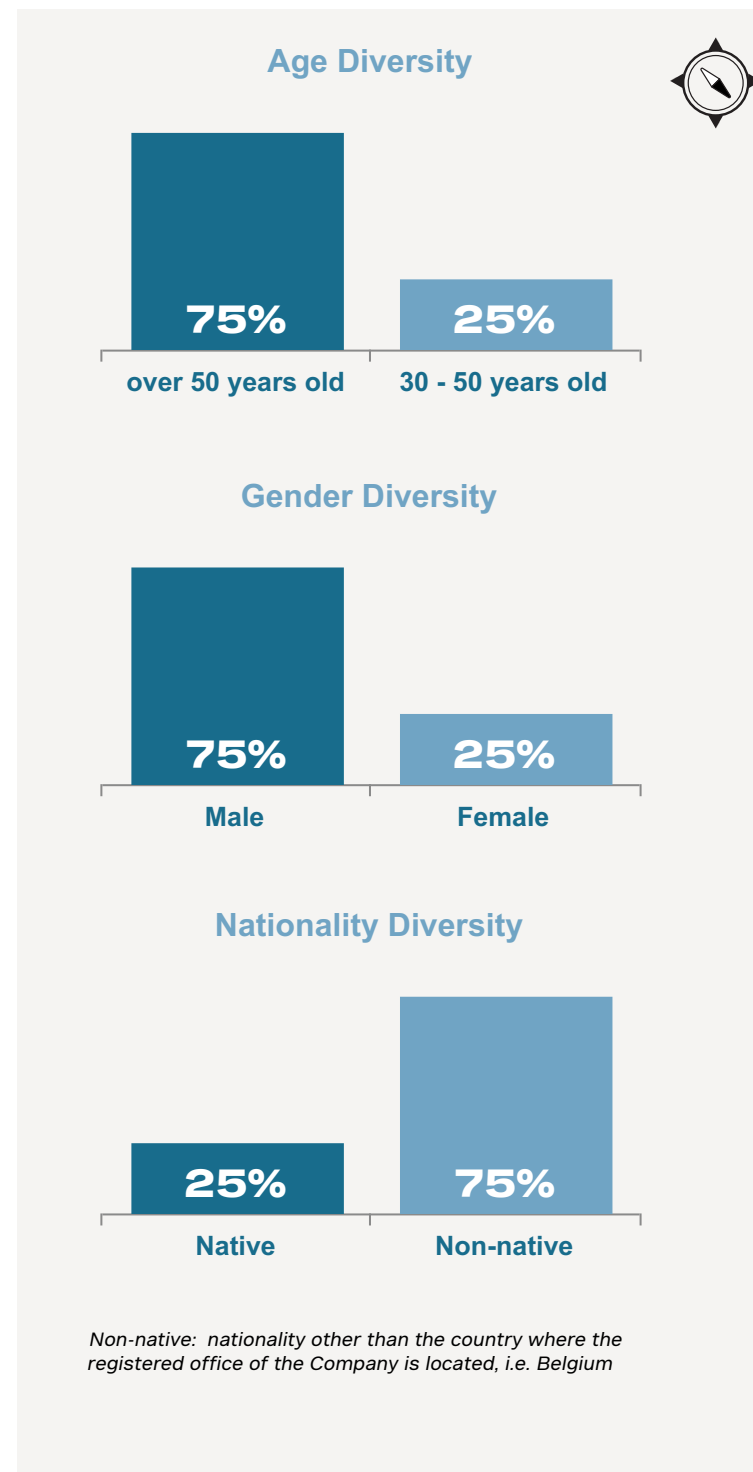
EDUCATION

Mathematics & Economics - Finance
French College of Rabat
Institut Supérieur de Gestion of Paris

EXPERIENCE

Taoufiq Boussaid started his career in international finance with an initial 10-year period as Audit Manager with Ernst & Young in France and The Coca-Cola Company in the US. From 2004 to 2007, he held several finance roles with United Technologies Corporation, first as Corporate Controller EMEA and subsequently as CFO for their Carrier Heating Systems business in Europe.

In 2007, Taoufiq joined Bombardier Transportation, where he progressively moved up through the finance organization in different geographies to his most recent position of Vice President Finance for EMEA and Asia Pacific. He has also held operational responsibilities, running the French and North African businesses of Bombardier Transportation.



Juan Carlos Alonso



CHIEF STRATEGY OFFICER

Mexican, *1974

JOINED BEKAERT

2019

EDUCATION

Engineering - MBA
Universidad Panamericana of Mexico City
Stanford Graduate School of Business

EXPERIENCE

Juan Carlos Alonso began his career in 1998 with the Boston Consulting Group. In 2006, he joined CEMEX to become Global Corporate Strategic Planning Manager, based in Spain. He moved to the Comex Group in 2010 as Vice President of Sales & Operations for the US Western Region, before joining Lhoist Group where he held various business development and strategy leadership positions with increasing responsibility and scope.

In 2017, Juan Carlos moved to the Imerys Group as Head of the Americas and development regions for the Monolithic Refractories division and, in parallel, as Global Head of Strategy, Business Development and Marketing for the High Temperature Solutions business.

Kerstin Artenberg



CHIEF HUMAN RESOURCES OFFICER

German, *1972

JOINED BEKAERT

2021

EDUCATION

East Asian Economics - Strategic HR Management
University of Duisburg-Essen
University of Applied Sciences of Zürich

EXPERIENCE

Kerstin Artenberg began her career in communication and marketing roles, holding several leadership positions at Körber AG and Daimler AG.

In 2007, Kerstin joined Borealis in Austria as External Communications Manager and soon after assumed the role of Director Communications. From 2010 onwards, she gradually expanded her responsibilities towards HR functions and in 2016, she took on the role of Vice President Human Resources & Communications. In 2020, she joined the newly established Executive Committee.

Throughout her career, Kerstin has driven cultural transformations with a focus on developing organizations which provide purpose and deep development opportunities for their employees.

François Desné



DIVISIONAL CEO STEEL WIRE SOLUTIONS AND BRIDON-BEKAERT ROPES GROUP

French, *1971

JOINED BEKAERT

2022

EDUCATION

Physics - MBA - International Studies
University of Paris VII, The Wharton School and The Lauder Institute at the University of Pennsylvania

EXPERIENCE

François Desné started his career in 1996 at RHODIA where he held management roles in quality and development. In 2003, he moved to BASF where he took on several regional and global leadership positions across Europe and Asia with increasingly broader scope and responsibility as SVP of Global Business units.

In 2016, François Desné joined Recticel as Group General Manager of Recticel Engineered Foams and member of the Recticel Group Executive Committee.

Barry Snyder



CHIEF OPERATIONS OFFICER

American, *1962

JOINED BEKAERT

2023

EDUCATION

Master of Science and PhD in Chemistry - MBA
Emory University of Atlanta
Harvard University in Cambridge
Temple University in Philadelphia

EXPERIENCE

Barry Snyder has a strong track record of global executive leadership with extensive industry experience in specialty chemicals and materials.

Barry began his career in 1990 with Rohm and Haas Company where he held roles of increasing responsibility in marketing and research, across different geographies. From 2007 to 2014 he took on technology and innovation leadership positions at Celanese Corporation and HB Fuller Company (US) and at Orion Engineered Carbons (Germany). In 2015, Barry Snyder joined Axalta Coating Systems in the US, first as Chief Technology Officer and subsequently as Chief Operations and Supply Chain Officer. He also held operational responsibilities at Axalta as Regional Leader EMEA, based in Switzerland.

Gunter Van Craen



CHIEF DIGITAL AND INFORMATION OFFICER

Belgian, *1970

JOINED BEKAERT

2020

EDUCATION

Commercial Engineering - Accountancy and Auditing -
Computer Auditing
Catholic University of Louvain
University of Antwerp

EXPERIENCE

Gunter Van Craen started his career in internal auditing at KBC. In 2003, he joined Johnson & Johnson where he took on several IT and finance management functions of increasingly broader scope and responsibility.

Initially in finance roles, Gunter moved to global IT functions and became CIO for the integration of Crucell into Janssen Pharmaceutica and subsequently global VP IT Pharma R&D. His last position before joining Bekaert was SVP IT for technology services at J&J, covering all IT related services across EMEA, Latin America and Asia.

Annie Xu-Huhmann



DIVISIONAL CEO RUBBER REINFORCEMENT

Chinese, *1975

JOINED BEKAERT

2023

EDUCATION

MBA and Business Informatics - Aeronautic Engineering
Erasmus University
Beijing University of Aeronautics and Astronautics
INSEAD

EXPERIENCE

Annie Xu-Huhmann held multiple global and regional P&L responsibilities in Europe and China, with a high-performance record of profitable growth and margin improvement.

Annie joined Bekaert from ThyssenKrupp Elevator where she held the position of CEO for China. Annie spent much of her career within the energy sector, including with General Electric, Siemens and Schneider Electric. While working at Schneider, she led the creation of "Smart Cities", combining Traffic Management, Smart Grid, Smart Home, and Water Management solutions, before moving to the role of CEO of the company's Energy Business in China. She also worked at Linde AG and SMS Group as EVP and regional CEO.

Our stakeholders



Bekaert creates value for its stakeholders by delivering on the company's strategy and objectives, both in terms of financial performance and in addressing society's environmental and social opportunities and challenges.

As a publicly listed company (Euronext Brussels, BEKB) with a global business scope and footprint, we interact with many parties who have an interest in our organization based on the outcomes of our actions. We believe this interdependency is mutually beneficial for long-term, positive progress for all.

GRI 2-26, GRI 2-29



Our partners

Bekaert supports economic development and employment through the business relations and activities with suppliers worldwide. We work together with key suppliers in new product and service development projects that help us expand our offering of sustainable and digital solutions. We require a formal commitment of our suppliers to comply with human rights and ethical business conduct standards.

Bekaert works together with business partners in joint ventures and in consolidated entities co-owned with minority shareholders. With or without partners, Bekaert adopts the same high standards in business ethics, health and safety at the workplace, and high-performance teams and culture.

Bekaert collaborates with technology partners to drive innovations in target markets. Several forms of cooperation exist: as a member of hydrogen power and new mobility consortia, through business partnerships with industry leaders and associations, by investing in companies that scale up promising new technologies, and by collaborating with research and academic institutes.

GRI 2-6, GRI 2-29

€2.9
82 bn payments to suppliers in
countries (consolidated)

85 research & innovation partnerships



Our employees

24 000 Bekaert employees work together as one global team to deliver quality products and services and step up our performance in safety, digital, sustainability, and innovation.

United through our values of integrity, trust, agility, and boldness, we work better together to grow the business, to inspire and engage, and to deliver results. These form the key enablers of our Culture Compass. More information is included in the Strategy Chapter of this report.

As a company and as individuals, we act with integrity and commit to the highest standards of ethics. We promote equal opportunity, foster diversity & inclusion, and create a caring and safe working environment across our organization.

This way, we engage our people to dare to go beyond in unlocking their full potential, have an impact on the company's performance, and in establishing the new possible.

This employer value proposition is not only relevant to our current employees: it also aims to inspire future talents to join us in our purpose and ambition.

GRI 2-7, GRI 2-23, GRI 2-29

23 959 employees globally

74 different nationalities in our workforce



Our customers

Bekaert has a wide international customer base in established and emerging markets. We serve global and local customers with a rich portfolio of value adding products and services. Our global footprint helps building a customer-centric approach and it shortens the supply chains.

Our investments in research & innovation, and in digital and sustainable solutions, lead to advanced technologies that enable our customers to meet their most stringent demands and ambitions, and hence create customer value.

Bekaert is a trusted partner in offering quality products and solutions, and demonstrates a high degree of agility in all possible circumstances.

Our higher ambition is to be the leading partner for shaping the way we live and move. Driven by the megatrends, we want to be the partner of choice to customers developing solutions in new mobility, low carbon construction, green energy, and advanced lifting and mooring. Together, we can drive and accelerate the shift toward sustainable solutions in the end markets.

GRI 2-6, GRI 2-29



Our investors

Bekaert is committed to provide clear, timely and accurate information on the company's strategy, performance, and business outlook to all of our financial stakeholders.

Those financial stakeholders include shareholders, institutional and retail investors, and equity research analysts. They have access to information about Bekaert via our website, frequent press releases, presentations and webcasts, and individual and group meetings.

In 2023, these meetings included live and virtual roadshows, investor conferences, analyst presentations, the annual General Meeting of Shareholders and the Capital Markets Day held in London in December.

Currently, six banks publish equity research reports on Bekaert.

GRI 2-29



Society



We strive to be a good corporate citizen in the communities where we operate. We promote and apply responsible and sustainable business practices in our community relations and business operations.

We do not support political institutions and adopt a neutral position in political issues. We do condemn any act of violence and aggression against people and any breach of human rights.

We are committed to minimize the environmental impact of our activities. We invest in green energy sources and other emission-saving measures to decarbonize the impact of our operations.

We stimulate the economic activity and employment in the locations where we are active. Our tax payments contribute to the development of communities worldwide.

We advocate and fund initiatives that help improve the social and environmental conditions in communities all around the world. We support community engagement initiatives and disaster relief programs that make a difference to people's lives.

GRI 2-23, GRI 2-29

More information on our stakeholders and how Bekaert creates value for them is available in the 2023 Performance chapters (Part I of this report) and in the detailed Statements (Part II).

137 countries with Bekaert customers

+65% target revenue from sustainable solutions

264 Investor Relations meetings with more than **600** contacts in 2023

€53 average target share price on 15 March 2024

€ ~620 000 community support in 2023

€ 62 million income taxes paid on 2023 result

Double materiality



Bekaert conducts materiality assessments in line with reporting regulations and considers the voice of stakeholders, crucial to identify and understand the topics that matter most to them.

The double materiality process is a formal process aimed at identifying and assessing environmental, social and governance topics (ESG or Sustainability Topics) which matter most to a company's internal and external stakeholders and which have an impact on the environment and people or present a risk or opportunity for the business performance. Through this process, material impacts, risks and opportunities are identified (**IROs**).

In 2023, Bekaert performed a double materiality assessment, assisted by an external advisor, in line with the guidelines of the newly adopted Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive (CSRD), as well as in accordance with the European Sustainability Reporting Standards (ESRSs)¹.

The double materiality assessment takes two perspectives into account:

- Impact materiality: perspective of the (positive or negative, actual and potential) impact that Bekaert has on the environment and society.
- Financial materiality: perspective of the potential financial effects (risks and/or opportunities) on Bekaert of a sustainability topic.

Our methodology and process for materiality assessment

A tailored approach was used to perform the double materiality assessment, based on the ESRS guidelines.

GRI 3-1

The double materiality assessment was conducted following a structured 5-step approach:

In Phase 1, based on a good understanding of the business context, we defined the purpose and scope of the assessment. This included mapping Bekaert's value chain, key affected stakeholders, and the activities performed throughout the value chain. Furthermore, a stakeholder engagement approach for this double materiality exercise was defined.

The entire value chain of Bekaert (see Part I – 'Creating value for our stakeholders: our stakeholders' – and 'Our performance in 2023: Value Chain' in this report) was considered during the double materiality assessment and was delineated at the Bekaert Group level as well as in upstream and downstream processes.

In Phase 2 we identified the Sustainability Topics and their related impacts, risks, and opportunities (IROs) through stakeholder consultation and supporting documentation analysis.

Bekaert engaged with affected stakeholders, or stakeholders who can inform on the interests of affected stakeholders during the double materiality assessment process via interviews.

More than 60 internal and external stakeholders were interviewed with the assistance of our external advisor.

Internal stakeholders consisted of Bekaert professionals having business and/or subject matter expertise on specific ESG topics and who have a thorough understanding of the wider sustainability agenda at Bekaert and the link to the Bekaert strategy.

External stakeholders included suppliers, customers, financial institutions, and sector organizations, where the emphasis was put on value chain impacts, risks and opportunities, and on potential synergies to capitalize on sustainability in a collaborative manner.

During the process, internal and external documents were analyzed (policies, strategy documents, sector reports, reports from peers, customer questionnaires, supplier information, outcome of the ERM² exercise, analyst and rating reports, and investor questions).

¹ Adopted by the European Commission and the European Parliament on 31 July 2023 and expected to be adopted in Belgium by early July 2024.

² The Enterprise Risk Management (ERM) assessment 2023 is included in Part II – Statements: Corporate Governance Statements.



Bekaert assessed the materiality of all Sustainability Topics covered by the sector-agnostic ESRS³. To facilitate the IRO identification, several ESRS (sub)topics were clustered into a tailored list of Sustainability Topics relevant for Bekaert's business activities and stakeholders. The overview of the Sustainability Topics included in the double materiality exercise is presented below.

Environmental	Social	Governance
1 Climate change adaptation	8 Own workforce	13 Business ethics
2 Climate change mitigation	9 Workers in value chain and human rights	
3 Pollution	10 Local communities	
4 Hazardous substances and materials	11 Cyber and data security	
5 Water	12 Product stewardship	
6 Biodiversity		
7 Circular economy		

In Phase 3 we assessed the IROs associated with each of these 13 Sustainability Topics in detail to determine the impact and financial materiality and, subsequently, which IROs and which Sustainability Topics are considered material.

As required by ESRS, we used the following criteria:

- Impact materiality: severity (scale, scope and remediability) and likelihood
- Financial materiality: magnitude of financial effect and likelihood

The descriptions of the materiality criteria were tailored to Bekaert's business operations. Magnitude of financial effect and likelihood were aligned with Bekaert's ERM methodology.

Evaluation criteria for impact materiality

Different ranges⁴ were defined to classify the magnitude of scale (from minimal to absolute), scope (from limited to global), remediability (easy to remediate on short-term to non-remediable) and likelihood (from very low to very high, in line with ERM).

Evaluation criteria for financial materiality

Financial materiality assessment criteria were based on Bekaert's ERM methodology to align with existing business processes on risk management.

³ ESRS Application Requirement 16

⁴ These ranges were determined based on inputs from stakeholders as well as the draft implementation guidance for materiality assessment issued by the European Financial Reporting Advisory Group (EFRAG)

⁵ Reference to the corresponding ESRS disclosure requirements is included in the GRI Content Index (Part III of this report)

Several enterprise risks and enterprise opportunities therein are linked to Sustainability Topics and were considered in this double materiality assessment.

Finally, a materiality calculation approach and materiality thresholds were defined as put forward by the European Financial Reporting Advisory Group (EFRAG):

- Impact materiality: scoring from 0 to 15 (<5 minimal impact, ≥5 to <8: informative, ≥8 to <10: important, ≥10 to <12: significant, ≥12: critical). Topics scored 8 and above were considered material.
- Financial materiality; scoring ranges from 0 to 5 (<1: non-existent, ≥1 to <2: minimal, ≥2 to <3: informative, ≥3 to <4: significant and ≥4: critical). Topics scored 3 and above were considered material.

A longlist of IROs was prepared by the Bekaert core team and the external consultant, which resulted in a shortlist based on the outcome of the interviews, scoring as per the set evaluation criteria, and review and validation by the core team, the consulted subject matter experts, and the Steering Committee.

In Phase 4 we validated the double materiality outcome and discussed the next steps with the Steering Committee, the Bekaert Group Executive team (BGE), and the Board of Directors.

In Phase 5 we drafted a final double materiality assessment report.

Outcome

Overall, the double materiality process resulted in 8 material Sustainability Topics, either because of the impact materiality perspective or the financial materiality perspective, or both.

The outcome serves as a solid foundation to further fuel Bekaert's sustainability agenda and the overall strategy of the company and will be included in the 2030 Strategic Planning process, as agreed with the Bekaert Group Executive and the Board.

Below we have listed these 8 material topics⁵ and relating impacts, risks, and opportunities for Bekaert.

GRI 201-2

Environmental topics

- Climate change mitigation
 - Offering sustainable solutions to our customers
 - Decarbonizing our operations and supply chain
 - Financial impacts as a result of decarbonizing our operations and supply chain and of prevailing regulations
- Hazardous substances and materials
 - Regulations impacting the use of substances and chemicals in our production processes worldwide
 - As a result of these, bans on certain substances could arise
- Water
 - Water management in production processes with increased focus on water-stressed areas
- Circular economy
 - Co-developing sustainable solutions across the value chain
 - Waste management and use of recycled materials throughout the supply chain

Social topics

- Own workforce
 - Putting people first by creating a diverse and inclusive culture and fostering talent
 - Creating safe working conditions and a no-harm-to-anyone environment
- Workers in the value chain and human rights
 - Respect for human rights across the value chain
- Cyber and data security
 - Protecting data security and privacy

Governance topics

- Business ethics
 - Embedding ethical business practices in everything we do

The following topics were assessed as non-material as they did not reach the materiality thresholds set for impact materiality and/or financial materiality: Climate change adaptation, Pollution, Biodiversity, Local communities, and Product stewardship.

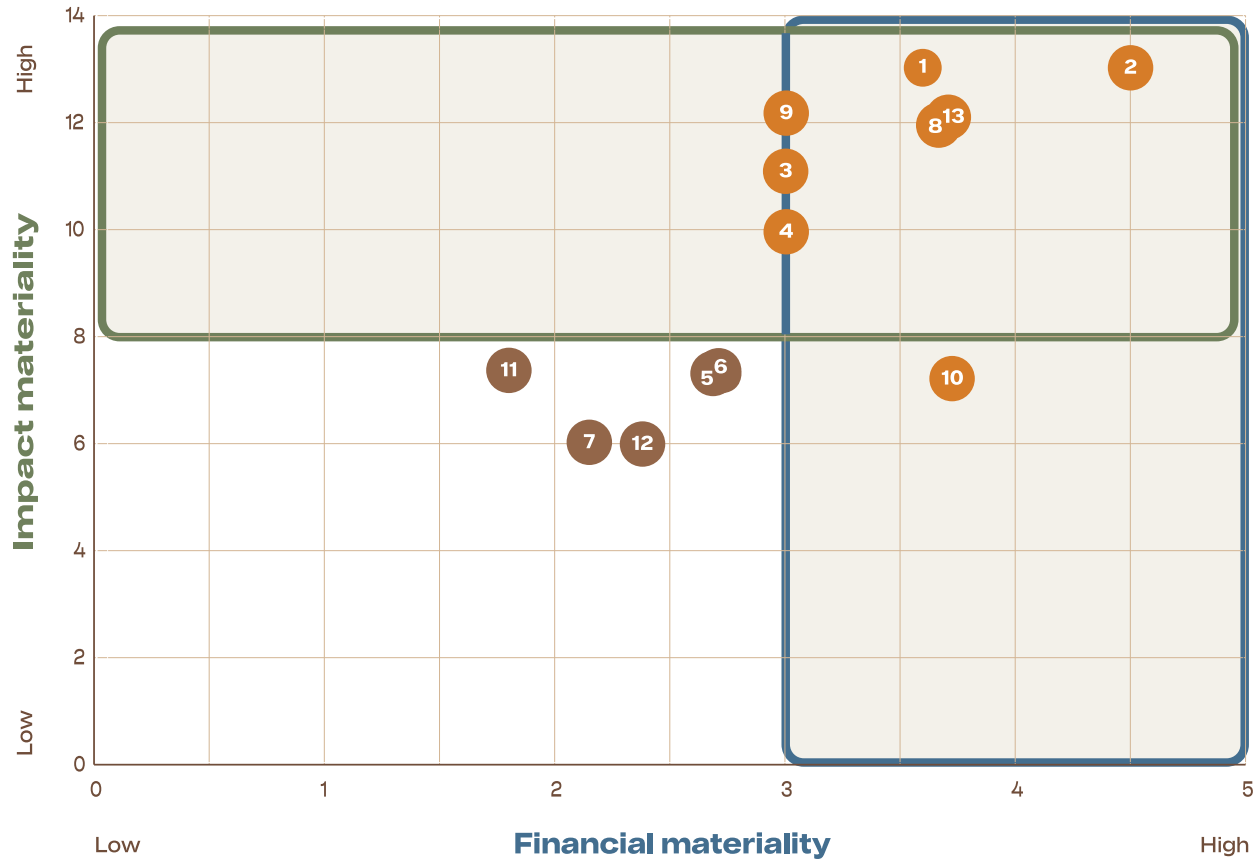
This assessment does not imply that these topics are considered irrelevant by the company.

We consider the double materiality assessment as a dynamic exercise because of an evolving business context and will review and update it when significant changes occur.



Double Materiality Assessment matrix

GRI 2-23, GRI 2-24, GRI 2-25, GRI 3-1, GRI 3-2, GRI 3-3



Environmental topics (E):

- 1 Circular economy
- 2 Climate change mitigation
- 3 Hazardous substances and materials
- 4 Water
- 5 Climate change adaption
- 6 Pollution
- 7 Biodiversity



Social topics (S):

- 8 Own workforce
- 9 Workers in the value chain and human rights
- 10 Cyber and data security
- 11 Local communities
- 12 Product stewardship



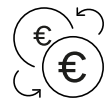
Governance topics (G):

- 13 Business ethics

Value reporting model¹



Sustainability is an integral part of the Bekaert strategy. We are committed to create value for all our stakeholders by delivering on both financial and non-financial objectives. In this report we describe how we convert, through the implementation of our strategy, the resources we invest ('inputs') into sustainable value ('outputs & impact') for our shareholders, customers, employees, communities, and other stakeholders.



The resources we invest

Strong cash generation over the past years has enabled us to free up cash for value-creating investments. In 2023 we invested € 188 million in property, plant & equipment (PP&E) and more than € 11 million in investments driving the digital transformation. Bekaert's gross research and development expenses amounted to € 73 million (before deduction of grants, tax credits, and the effect of capitalized projects).

We sourced materials and services from 14 500 suppliers and employ ~21 000 people in our consolidated entities (24 000 including joint ventures) in 43 countries in the world, including manufacturing sites in 23 countries and sales and distribution facilities in 20 more countries.

We invested in developing sustainable solutions and digital manufacturing systems and are delivering on our sustainability ambitions and targets in line with the transition to a low-carbon society. We continued to invest in health & safety and learning & development, and we extended our digital capabilities to improve data insights and customer services.



The value we create

We serve 13 500 customers in more than 130 countries in the world.

We delivered solid results in 2023. Our margins (gross profit (17.2%), EBITu (9.0%), and EBITDAu (13.0%)) all increased versus last year despite the challenging market conditions. EPS from continued operations reached € 4.75, +5.5% higher than in 2022 (€ 4.50).

Bekaert has returned more than € 400 million over the past two years under the form of share buyback programs and significant dividend increases. Based on the results of 2023, the Board of Directors proposes to distribute a dividend of € 1.80 per share (up +9% from 2022).

We added 30 first patent filings in 2023, which resulted in a portfolio of patents and patent applications of more than 2 100. 85 partnerships with academic and research institutes and business partners help accelerate our innovation efforts.

We actively implement measures to reduce our carbon footprint. GHG emissions Scope 1 and 2 reduced by -4.6% compared to 2022 and by -15.1% compared to base year 2019. GHG emissions Scope 3 from purchased wire rod

reduced by -5.1% compared to 2022 and by -3.1% compared to base year 2019 (consolidated figures). Bekaert's revenue share of sustainable solutions, 'aligned' according to EU taxonomy, increased to 42% in 2023.

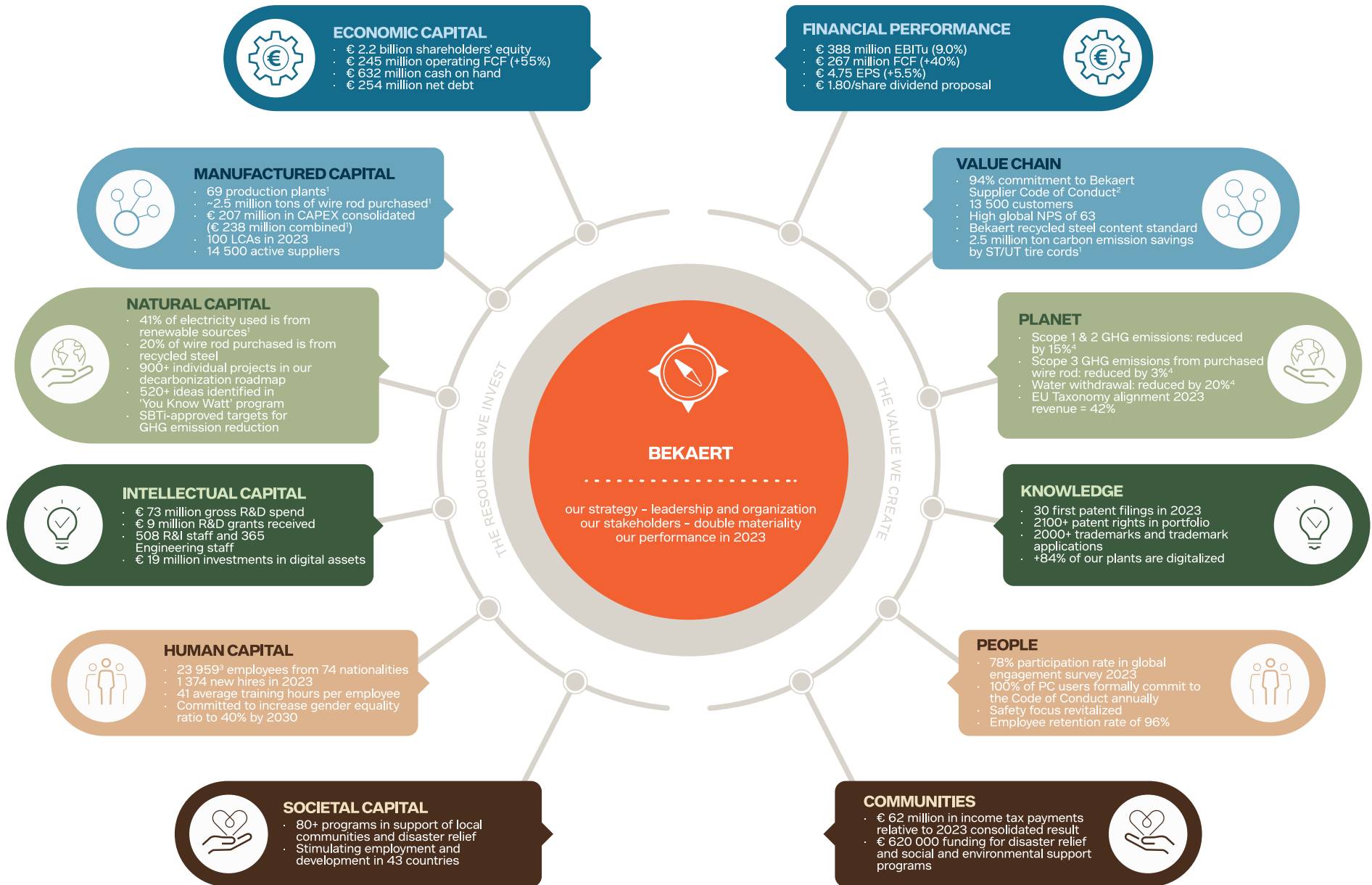
100% of steel-based scrap returns to the steel mills for recycling and we set the standard in industry with respect to high recycled steel content in reinforcement products for tires.

€ 62 million in income taxes were paid globally and our social engagement and disaster relief contributions amounted to more than € 620 000 in 2023.

After five consecutive years of great progress, our safety results weakened. More actions are being put in place to return to a high safety performance level.

All managers and salaried professionals sign off the Code of Conduct annually. Our focus on diversity & inclusion, training and development, and other employee engagement initiatives drive the strong delivery and engagement of our teams worldwide.

¹ Based on the framework 'Guidelines of Value Reporting Foundation' (now consolidated into the IFRS Foundation)



1 joint ventures included
 2 percentage relative to Bekaert supplier spend
 3 21 044 in consolidated entities + 2 915 in joint ventures = 23 959 combined
 4 versus 2019 baseline

Our performance in 2023



Financial performance



Financial highlights FY2023¹

- Consolidated sales of € 4.3 billion (-13.5%) and combined sales² of € 5.3 billion (-13.9%)
- Underlying gross profit remained stable despite lower sales (€ 745 million versus € 749 million)
- Strong operating result and margin performance, driven by ongoing business mix improvements including the contribution of higher margin growth applications
 - Underlying EBITDA³ of € 561 million (-5.1%), delivering a margin on sales of 13.0% (versus 11.8%)
 - Underlying EBIT³ of € 388 million (-5.3%), resulting in a margin of 9.0% (versus 8.2%)
- EPS from continued operations of € 4.75 (up +5.5% versus € 4.50⁴)
- Strong cash conversion, despite lower sales
 - Free Cash Flow³ (FCF) of € 267 million, up +40% compared to € 191 million in 2022, benefiting from further improved working capital management
 - Net debt of € 254 million (versus € 380 million in 2022), including proceeds of the disposal of Steel Wire Solutions businesses in Chile and Peru, resulting in net debt to EBITDAu of 0.5x
- Proposed dividend of € 1.80 per share (+9%)

GRI 2-4



¹ All comparisons made are relative to the fiscal year 2022 (restated for the disposal effect of the businesses in Chile and Peru)

² Combined sales are sales of fully consolidated companies plus 100% of sales of joint ventures and associates after intercompany elimination

³ Underlying EBIT, underlying EBITDA and FCF are defined Alternative Performance Measures (APMs). The full list of all APMs can be found at the end of Part II: Financial Statements.

⁴ Comparing 2023 EPS with 2022 EPS from continued operations in order to have a like-for-like comparison, excluding disposed businesses.



Bekaert delivers strong cash generation and improved margins

INPUTS

- € 2.2 billion shareholders' equity
- € 245 million operating FCF (+55%)
- € 632 million cash on hand
- € 254 million net debt



OUTPUTS

- € 388 million EBITu (9.0%)
- € 267 million FCF (+40%)
- € 4.75 EPS (+5.5%)
- € 1.80/share dividend proposal

Bekaert delivered a resilient financial performance in 2023, further improving profit margins (EBITu margin at 9.0%, up 80bps vs FY2022) and delivering strong cash flows (Free Cash Flow of € 267 million, up +40% year-on-year). Despite lower volumes and weaker conditions in many of its end markets, the business continues to benefit from the successful execution of Bekaert's strategy, maintaining pricing discipline, enhancing the mix of higher margin products, and driving cost efficiencies. Looking ahead, the repositioning to target new growth opportunities linked to the energy transition and decarbonization trends continues and supports the company's ambitious financial targets for 2026.

Bekaert's consolidated sales reached € 4 328 million in 2023, -13.5% lower than last year. The single biggest impact was the effect of the passed-on lower raw material costs due to a reversal of the 2022 inflation (-8.7%), which was partly offset by an improved product mix and pricing (+2.0%). Volumes had an impact of -3.7% and unfavorable currency impacts, mainly in China, US and India, reduced the top line by another -3.0%.

The sales in Bekaert's joint ventures in Brazil amounted to € 1 019 million, -16.5% lower than last year. The main impact was the combined effect of lower input costs and price mix (-13.0%) and to a lesser extent lower volumes (-4.3%). Currency effects added +0.8% to the top line. Including joint ventures, combined sales⁵ decreased by -13.9%, reaching € 5 347 million.

⁵ Combined sales are sales of fully consolidated companies plus 100% of sales of joint ventures and associates after intercompany elimination.

Financial review

All sales and income statement items exclude any contribution from the disposed Steel Wire Solutions businesses in Chile and Peru. In line with IFRS 5, the 2022 comparative data has been restated on the same basis enabling a like-for-like comparison. The 2022 balance sheet data has not been restated and also the 2022 cash flow statement was not adjusted for the disposed entities. The 2023 balance sheet no longer contains the disposed net assets.

For 2022, net debt, working capital and most ratios have been restated to provide a like-for-like comparison. Ratios that relate to equity do not fully exclude the businesses under disposal.

The underlying gross profit of the Group remained stable at € 745 million despite lower sales volumes, higher cash conversion costs and adverse foreign exchange effects. It demonstrates Bekaert's ability to offset the impact of a -13.5% decrease in sales by delivering on cost saving programs, strong pricing, and positive mix effects both from higher added value products and end markets served.

Bekaert achieved an operating result (underlying EBIT) of € 388 million (versus € 410 million last year). This resulted in an underlying EBIT margin on sales of 9.0% (versus 8.2% in 2022). The decrease in absolute amount is almost entirely due to € -20 million lower underlying other operating revenues. In 2022, these other operating revenues were positively impacted by a one-time effect of € +11.5 million for sale of land in the United Kingdom.

The year-on-year comparison of overhead expenses is influenced to some degree by the capitalization of € 7.3 million development expenses for 2023. Consistent with current accounting policies, and based on more mature R&D project and portfolio management processes, the criteria for capitalizing expenditure on development activities have now been met for certain development projects. As there is no change in accounting policies, there is no impact on 2022 numbers. In total, the underlying overhead expenses (€ 365 million) remained just below the level of last year (€ 368 million), with cost increases driven primarily by labor inflation being more than compensated by the capitalization of development expenses. As a percentage on sales, overheads were 8.4% (versus 7.3% in 2022).

The one-off items amounted to € -54 million. Restructuring one-off costs were € -45 million and these included costs for closing and restructuring in China (€ -22 million), in India and Indonesia (€ -10 million), and in Belgium and the Netherlands (€ -6 million). Other one-off costs related to loss of disposals (€ -3 million), environmental provisions (€ -3 million) and other (€ -3 million). Including one-off items, reported EBIT was € 334 million,

representing an EBIT margin on sales of 7.7% (versus € 317 million or 6.3% in 2022). Underlying EBITDA was € 561 million (13.0% margin) compared with € 591 million (11.8%) and reported EBITDA reached € 523 million, or a margin on sales of 12.1% (versus 11.3%).

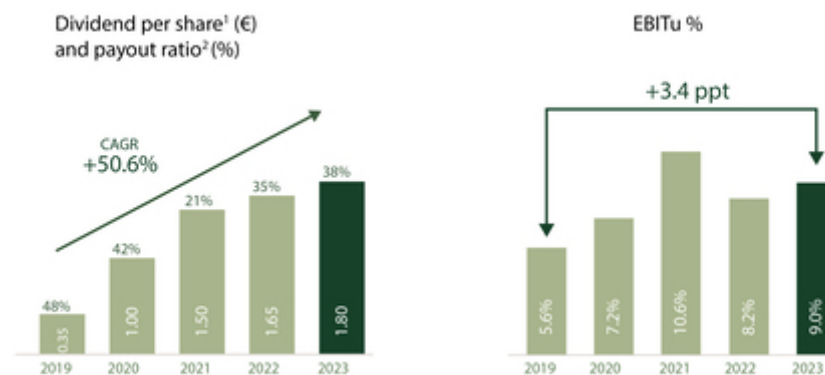


Interest income and expenses were € -27 million, down from € -30 million in 2022, because of lower gross debt and despite higher interest rates. Other financial income and expenses amounted to € -39 million (€ -10 million in 2022). The delta stemmed from negative exchange rate translation effects and increased bank charges.

Income taxes decreased further from € -74 million last year to € -62 million in 2023. The overall effective tax rate dropped from 27% to 23%. The key driver is stronger profitability in legal entities that were historically loss making, resulting in the utilization of previously unrecognized tax attributes.

The share in the result of joint ventures and associated companies was € +47 million (versus € +54 million last year). The Steel Wire Solutions joint venture in Brazil performed well with stable volumes and a stable margin percentage while the much smaller Rubber Reinforcement joint venture suffered from lower demand and higher imports.

The result for the period from continuing operations thus totaled € +253 million, compared with € +258 million in 2022. The result attributable to non-controlling interests was € -2 million. After non-controlling interests, the result for the period attributable to equity holders of Bekaert was € +255 million. Earnings per share amounted to € +4.75, up from € +4.50 last year in a like-for-like comparison based on continuing operations. Earnings per share on an underlying basis and from continued operations totaled € +5.76 versus € +6.15 last year.



¹ Dividend for 2023 will be proposed to the Annual General Meeting in May 2024

² Payout ratio is the dividend in % versus the result for the period attributable to shareholders

Balance Sheet

On 31 December 2023, equity represented 53.1% of total assets, up from 46.2% at year-end 2022. The gearing ratio (net debt to equity) was 11.7% compared to 21.8% at the close of 2022, driven by lower net debt. As these ratios relate to equity, 2022 data points still include the Steel Wire Solutions businesses in Chile and Peru.

Working capital amounted to € 641 million, down from € 676 million last year and contributing to the cash flow. Both numbers are excluding the disposed entities in Chile and Peru. The decrease was impacted by currency effects as well as organic decreases. Inventories decreased sharply as well as accounts payable. Accounts receivable declined to a lesser degree. Off balance sheet factoring decreased from € 268 million in 2022 to € 232 million in 2023. The average working capital on sales in 2023 was 15.2%, an increase from 12.0% for 2022, due to 2022 sales that were inflated by higher input costs and the exceptionally low working capital position at the start of 2022.

Cash on hand was € 632 million at the end of the period, a decrease of € -96 million compared with € 701 million⁶ at the close of 2022. Main elements were the repayment of part of the Schuldschein loans (€ -189 million), cash-out for the share buyback program (€ -113 million) and dividend payments (€ -94 million), offset by a substantial increase in Free Cash Flow and the net cash proceeds from the disposal of investments in Chile and Peru (€ +105 million)⁷.

Net debt amounted to € 254 million, another € -126 million down from € 380 million⁶ at the close of 2022 driven by good working capital and cash management. This resulted in net debt on underlying EBITDA of 0.45 versus 0.64⁶ at the end of 2022.

Cash Flow

Cash flows from operating activities amounted to € 440 million, compared with € 340 million in 2022, mainly through better working capital and lower income taxes, which more than offset the € 49 million contribution still included in the cash flow from 2022 from the now disposed entities in Chile and Peru.

The Free Cash Flow⁸ (FCF) amounted to € 267 million versus € 191 million in 2022. The improved working capital and lower income taxes added significantly to the increase in FCF, while the cash-out for investments to

support the future growth of the Group increased by € 25 million versus last year.

Cash flows attributable to investing activities amounted to € -41 million (versus € -125 million in 2022). Cash-out for investments in plant and equipment increased, but this was more than offset by the proceeds from the disposal of investments (€ +109 million, mainly related to the investments in Chile and Peru) on the other hand.

Cash flows from financing activities totaled € -482 million, compared with € -174 million last year. The biggest financing cash-out related to the repayment of part of the Schuldschein loans and other debt for more than € -250 million. Next to that, there were dividend payments (€ -94 million) and share buyback and other treasury share transactions (€ -99 million).

More details on Bekaert's 2023 financial performance are included in Part II: Financial Statements, and in the FY2023 press release that was published on 1 March 2024.

Shareholder returns

The Board of Directors is committed to maintaining a strategic capital allocation policy, balancing investment in future growth and innovation with maintaining a strong balance sheet and growing shareholder returns over time. Over the last two years Bekaert has successfully returned more than € 400 million, through share buyback programs of approximately € 240 million and a significantly increased dividend, up 50% in 2022, and a further 10% increase in 2023.

The continued successful execution of the strategic plan in recent years has strengthened Bekaert's financial performance, operational resilience and consistency, balance sheet position, cash generation potential, and the returns to shareholders.

Whilst this strategic plan remains clear and unchanged, the arrival of the new CEO, Yves Kerstens, in September 2023, has been a catalyst for the Board to review capital allocation priorities. Building on the strong foundations of business and financial improvements in recent years, the Board has concluded that it is now the right time to accelerate this plan and Bekaert's transformational agenda, to take advantage of growth opportunities. Therefore, the Board intends to prioritize investment in the business in the next 12-24 months, both organically and inorganically, and has taken the decision to pause the share buyback program.



⁶ The 2022 number is adjusted to exclude the disposed entities in Chile and Peru.

⁷ Net cash proceeds is the net from incoming cash related to the sales price (€ 132 million) and outgoing cash (bank position, € 27 million).

⁸ FCF is calculated from the Cash Flow Statement as Net Cash Flow from Operations minus Capex (Property, Plant and Equipment and Intangible Assets) minus net interest plus dividends received.

The group intends to maintain its policy of progressively growing the dividend year-on-year and therefore announced a gross dividend of € 1.80 per share (an increase of 9% year-on-year), to be proposed by the Board at the Annual General Meeting of Shareholders in May 2024.

Strategic and investment updates

Bekaert continues its strategic transformation with an increased focus on innovation and sustainability to improve our technology and market access in growing industries, as laid out in the Strategy and Knowledge - Intellectual Capital chapters.

At the Capital Markets Day in December 2023, Bekaert outlined its strategy and presented an update on what has been achieved in recent years combined with its plans and ambitious targets for the future. These included:

- Clearly defined roles for the divisions, with the core businesses of Rubber Reinforcement and Steel Wire Solutions (SWS) continuing to lead their markets with premium and more sustainable solutions and focusing on margin improvement and cash conversion, while the growth platforms delivering into energy transition, construction decarbonization and advanced lifting and mooring industries are focused on capturing growth opportunities.
- Within the core businesses, this is illustrated with actions in 2023 on footprint, cost saving programs, and mix improvements from higher adoption of stronger tensile tire cords and a higher weight of deliveries to energy and utility customers.
- In the growth platforms, there is continued growth in the adoption of steel fiber reinforced concrete and of Currento® sales for green hydrogen generation.

The Group continues to invest in the organic growth of the company:

- € 188 million in property, plant and equipment, compared to € 157 million last year, supporting future growth in the core segments and increasingly also in the growth platforms. The largest growth investments in 2023 were done in Vietnam and India for Rubber Reinforcement, in the US for energy and utility applications in BBRG and Steel Wire Solutions, and for hydrogen, building products, and advanced cords applications
- € 73 million in R&D and Innovation activities (before the capitalization of some R&D projects and before deduction of grants and other R&D incentives), up € 3 million from last year
- € 19 million in intangible investments that relate mainly to investments in digital transformation projects and to € 7 million capitalization of R&D projects.

Bekaert Capital Markets Day in London - December 2023



Consolidated financial statements

Income statement

in millions of €	2022	2023	Delta
Sales	5 004	4 328	-13.5%
EBIT	317	334	+5.5%
EBIT-underlying	410	388	-5.3%
Interests and other financial results	-39	-66	+67.1%
Income taxes	-74	-62	-16.2%
Group share joint ventures	54	47	-14.0%
Result for the period	289	253	-12.6%
attributable to equity holders of Bekaert	269	255	-5.3%
attributable to non-controlling interests	20	-2	-108.5%
EBITDA-underlying	591	561	-5.1%
Depreciation PP&E	189	178	-5.9%
Amortization and impairment	58	11	-81%

Balance sheet

in millions of €	2022	2023	Delta
Equity	2 230	2 166	-2.8%
Non-current assets	1 975	1 886	-4.5%
Capital expenditure (PP&E)	157	188	+19.6%
Balance sheet total	4 829	4 081	-15.5%
Net debt	380	254	-33.2%
Capital employed	2 133	2 115	-0.8%
Working capital	676	641	-5.2%
Employees as per 31 December	21 612	21 044	-2.6%

Ratios

	2022	2023
EBITDA on sales	11.3%	12.1%
Underlying EBITDA on sales	11.8%	13.0%
EBIT on sales	6.3%	7.7%
Underlying EBIT on sales	8.2%	9.0%
EBIT interest coverage	11.0	13.1
ROCE-underlying	19.8%	18.2%
ROE	13.4%	11.5%
Financial autonomy	46.2%	53.1%
Gearing (net debt on equity)	21.8%	11.7%
Net debt on EBITDA-underlying	0.64	0.45

Joint ventures and associates



in millions of €	2022	2023	Delta
Sales ¹	1 208	1 019	-15.6%
Operating result	172	135	-21.5%
Net result	134	115	-14.1%
Capital expenditure (PP&E)	36	31	-13.9%
Depreciation	17	21	+25.2%
Employees as per 31 December	3 365	2 915	-13.4%
Group's share net result	54	47	-13.0%
Group's share equity	222	224	+0.8%

¹ Sales joint ventures = € 1 220 million from the Brazilian joint ventures after addition of revenue from small joint ventures and elimination of intercompany transactions.

Combined key figures

in millions of €	2022	2023	Delta
Sales	6 212	5 347	-13.9%
Capital expenditure (PP&E)	193	219	+13.5%
Employees as per 31 December	24 977	23 959	-4.1%

More details on the financial results are included in Part II: Financial Statements of this report. Other marketplace related data such as direct economic value generated and distributed and financial assistance received from government are available in the Financial Statements §5.1, §5.2, §5.3, §5.4, §5.6, §6.13.

Value chain



- We believe in lasting relationships with our customers, suppliers, and other stakeholders, and are committed to delivering long-term value to all of them.
- We promote and apply responsible and sustainable business practices in all our business and community relationships, consistent with internationally accepted ethical standards.
- We comply with the regulations applicable to the responsible sourcing and handling of chemicals, lubricants, and other materials.
- We cooperate with customers and suppliers to enhance sustainability throughout the value chain.
- We develop, digitalize, and monitor manufacturing processes to ensure consistent quality and continuously enhance process and energy efficiency.





INPUTS

- 69** manufacturing plants¹
- ~2.5 million** tons of wire rod purchased¹
- € 207 million** in CAPEX consolidated (€ 238 million combined¹)
- 100** LCAs in 2023
- 14 500** active suppliers



OUTPUTS

- 94%** commitment to Bekaert Supplier Code of Conduct²
- 13 500** customers
- High global NPS of **63**
- Bekaert recycled steel content standard
- 2.5** million ton carbon emission savings by ST/UT tire cords¹

¹ joint ventures included

² percentage relative to Bekaert supplier spend

Our operations

Bekaert operates 69 production plants (including subsidiaries and joint ventures) in 23 different countries in EMEA, North America, Latin America and Asia-Pacific. In 2023, they consumed and processed 2.5 million tons of wire rod, the company's main raw material.

GRI 2-1, GRI 301-1

Total capital investment in 2023 was € 207 million, of which € 188.0 million in property, plant & equipment (PP&E), € 7.3 million in R&D projects, and € 11.4 million in investments driving the digital transformation. About € 21 million of the PP&E investments was allocated to sustainability programs that reduce energy intensity and CO₂ emissions. Bekaert also invests in operational excellence programs, as part of the group-wide Bekaert Manufacturing System, which drives standardization, process and energy efficiency, product quality, digital modeling and monitoring, and waste prevention and reduction.

Better together with our suppliers

Our Supply Chain

Steel wire rod is the main raw material used for the manufacturing of steel wire products. Bekaert purchases different grades of wire rod from steel mills from around the world and transforms them into steel wire products by using mechanical and heat treatment processes, as well as by applying unique coating technologies.

We also increasingly develop and produce products based on other metals and materials, beyond steel.

The products manufactured by Bekaert are shipped to industrial customers who then further process our materials into half or end products; or to end customers, directly or via distribution channels.

GRI 2-6

Steel wire rod represents more than half of our total purchase spend and is ordered from vendors all over the world. The purchasing function manages the supply process.

GRI 301-1



In sourcing raw materials and other supply needs, Bekaert sources locally (i.e., in the same region as where the materials are being processed) unless the sourcing options are inadequate in terms of quality, quantity or cost. In 2023, 93% of our purchases were sourced locally, a small increase on the previous year.

Bekaert purchases from different sources, in line with the product quality requirements and the sourcing options available. During 2023 we worked with around 14 500 suppliers¹ in total, 52% of whom delivered into EMEA, 8% into Latin America, 10% into North America and 32% into Asia Pacific.

GRI 2-6, GRI 204-1

Responsible sourcing of minerals

Bekaert recognizes the importance of responsible sourcing. In 2023, all suppliers covered by the Responsible Minerals Initiative (RMI) signed the Bekaert Supplier Code of Conduct (or delivered proof of following its principles), 100% signed the Bekaert Policy on Conflict Minerals, and 100% of our tin and tungsten suppliers completed a Conflict Minerals Reporting Template (CMRT), sharing details on the smelters used upstream. Based on an improved digital approach for monitoring suppliers in scope, we are currently in the process of having suppliers agree to our updated Responsible Minerals Sourcing policy and providing the latest CMRT version via our e-procurement platform.

RMI is an initiative of the Responsible Business Alliance (RBA) and the Global e-Sustainability Initiative (GeSi), which helps companies from a range of industries to address conflict mineral issues in their supply chain.

GRI 3-3

Supplier monitoring and commitment

Bekaert's procurement department continued its engagement with suppliers to enhance sustainability awareness and control in the upstream value chain. The Bekaert Supplier Code of Conduct outlines environmental, labor, and governance related requirements that suppliers must comply with. At the end of 2023, this supplier commitment represented 94% of our spend.

In 2023 the procurement department implemented an improved supplier sustainability due diligence process, to ensure that the conduct of new suppliers is aligned with our values and to monitor existing suppliers' adherence to Bekaert's Supplier Code of Conduct. Additional third-party data which considers structured and unstructured input across environmental,

social, and governance topics is used alongside already gathered data (e.g. CSR audit results and EcoVadis assessments) to assess the potential risks and to highlight where mitigation actions are required. [Bekaert collaborated with Altares Dun & Bradstreet to expand the respective analysis and monitoring scope.](#)

At the end of 2023 Bekaert signed an agreement to join SEDEX, a leading platform for supply chain sustainability data sharing, in preparation of third-party on-site supplier audits according to the SMETA² framework.



¹ Joint ventures excluded - Some suppliers deliver into multiple regions, which clarifies a total above 100%.

² SMETA (SEDEX Members Ethical Trade Audit) is the proprietary auditing framework of SEDEX (Supplier Ethical Data Exchange) and is considered a leading supply chain sustainability audit methodology.

Bekaert engages strategic suppliers, suppliers in the upper three segments of our supplier segmentation (see below), in its sustainability agenda via EcoVadis. Strategic suppliers are expected to reach an EcoVadis score above 45 based on an assessment completed within the past 3 years. 41% of our 2023 strategic supplier spend was with suppliers meeting these expectations. The platform provides visibility on the sustainability performance of our important suppliers and on the areas for improvement. EcoVadis assessments are embedded into our procurement processes. EcoVadis rating information is requested during new supplier onboarding via our digital procurement platform – eBuy. Assessment results are considered in the annual evaluation of supplier performance and assessment levels are incorporated into our Supplier Relationship Management (SRM) framework, being a key enabler for improved collaboration with potential and existing preferred suppliers and partners.

Suppliers of critical materials and services are formally evaluated on a yearly basis, and corrective action plans are put in place when the minimum required levels have not been reached. These action plans are closely monitored to keep the focus on improvement high.

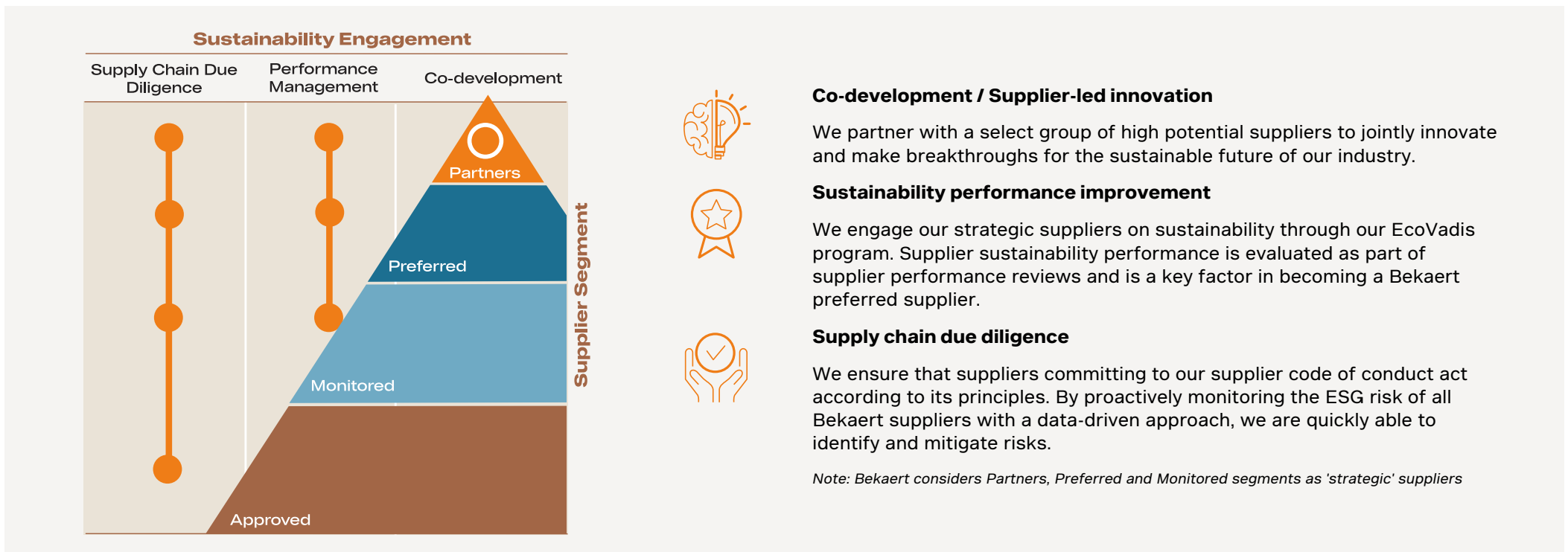


At Bekaert, we closely monitor the compliance of our activities with the EU REACH chemicals regulation, and we ask our suppliers to verify their REACH compliance regarding their supply of raw materials.

We conducted 69 supplier audits in 2023 compared with 41 in 2022. Supplier audits are scheduled and prioritized based on quality assurance, changes to or expansions of critical supplier processes, and risk of not meeting the applicable target criteria.

Concluding Key Supplier Agreements remains very important for the purchase of wire rod and other supply categories as they enable us to build effective partnerships in which sustainability, supply chain integration, and innovation are explicit building blocks.

GRI 3-3, GRI 308-1, GRI 308-2, GRI 407-1, GRI 408-1, GRI 409-1, GRI 414-1, GRI 414-2



Be the leading partner for our customers

Quality as a top priority

Quality is essential for good customer relations. Our customers have a choice, and we strive to be their best choice. We support our customers by adding value to the products and solutions we provide. It is key to meet our customers' quality expectations, both in terms of product specifications, service levels, and current and future development needs. It is the basis of creating customer value and a reflection of the Bekaert brand.

Recommended by our customers

Bekaert has conducted a Net Promotor Score (NPS) survey across all businesses and geographies in the period November 2022 (Rubber Reinforcement globally and Steel Wire Solutions Latin America) – April 2023 (all other business units and regions). The survey gauged the loyalty of customer relationships by measuring the likelihood that customers would recommend Bekaert to other companies, colleagues, or business partners. The survey tool was integrated within the Bekaert CRM platform.

The NPS survey led to a very strong score of 63, exceeding the previous global survey of 2020 (55) and significantly outperforming the average NPS of international B2B manufacturing companies (between 20 and 30). Quality and technical support were the main promotion drivers across the board. We use the outcome and full analysis to determine which strengths are valued most by our customers and in which areas we can and must further improve.



Tire reinforcement with third-party certified, high recycled steel content

In the spirit of creating a better tomorrow, [Bekaert has been setting the industry standard for tire reinforcement with high recycled content](#). Our respective portfolio offers a minimum recycled content of 50% for tire cord and 70% for bead wire, which reduces the CO₂ footprint of our product by about 50% and hence contributes to a circular economy.

As a milestone on our sustainability journey, Bekaert has obtained third-party certification for tire reinforcement with high recycled content. Such certification helps meet the rising demand of our customers and addresses a critical challenge in the industry.

Third-party certification of both Bekaert and our wire rod suppliers enables us to provide our customers with a guarantee of recycled content based on traceability and on recognized industry standards. This certification then allows customers to confidently include the recycled content of Bekaert products in the tally of recycled content in their tires. Rigorous processes at our wire rod supplier's factory and at the Bekaert steel cord plant allow Bekaert to track the composition and recycled content throughout production, storage, and transport. As a result, it can be guaranteed that the steel cord and bead wire supplied to our customers contain the declared amount of recycled steel.

Bekaert has supplied in 2023 the first batches of third-party certified tire reinforcement with high recycled content to customers. The offering is gradually made available to our customers across the globe. To support the industry in overcoming the lack of common definitions around recycled content, Bekaert has published its normative standard, thereby setting a new industry standard for tire reinforcement.



Life Cycle Assessments (LCAs) and Environmental Product Declarations (EPDs)

At Bekaert, LCA is a crucial analytical tool that we use to drive our business and sustainability strategy. We conduct LCAs for transparency, to quantify our impact and to demonstrate the sustainability of our products to our customers, using an AI driven tool for maximum scalability.

We furthermore integrate LCAs/EPDs into our business strategy discussions and decision-making processes. As a result, we engage in meaningful conversations with our customers regarding new product developments or partnerships and utilize LCAs as a compass to identify initiatives that contribute to our short- and long-term business strategy.

LCAs are also integrated into our technology & innovation process, ensuring that every new product, service, or technology that we develop, contributes to sustainability.

Our commitment to sustainability continued in 2023 as we conducted over 100 LCAs, which gave us valuable insights into the environmental impact of our products, spanning their entire lifecycle. Additionally, we received third-party verification for more than 45 LCAs, meeting the strict criteria as laid out in the EU Taxonomy.

We are also actively pursuing EPDs for our products to enhance transparency on our sustainable solutions. For instance, in 2021 we obtained an EPD for our Dramix® steel fibers for concrete reinforcement production in Petrovice (Czech Republic), demonstrating its excellent sustainability credentials. Thanks to this EPD, anyone involved in the construction industry – from architects to developers – is able to compare Dramix® with traditional concrete reinforcement solutions for numerous projects, helping them to choose the most sustainable and durable solution for the entire lifecycle of their constructions.

In addition to this, we have obtained EPDs for our road (Mesh Track® and Fortifix®) and masonry (Murfor® Compact) reinforcement solutions, as well as for steel strands for cable stayed bridges, produced in Hlohovec (Slovakia). As another crucial step toward promoting transparency, we acquired an EPD for our galvanized wires manufactured in Bohumín (Czech Republic) in 2023.

We also invest in continuous learning and development. In 2023, we hosted an internal webinar, training over 300 employees on the significance of LCAs and EPDs for value creation. The session showcased how we can harness these tools to propel Bekaert toward a more sustainable future. For us, LCAs and EPDs are not merely metrics; they serve as the guiding compass in our commitment to sustainability.

Bekaert Dramix® obtains Solar Impulse Foundation label

In early 2023 Bekaert became a partner of the Solar Impulse Foundation, a key non-profit foundation established by Bertrand Piccard, dedicated to promoting sustainable and profitable solutions. Dramix® steel fiber for low-carbon concrete reinforcement is the first Bekaert solution to receive the Solar Impulse Foundation Label.

SOLARIMPULSE
FOUNDATION

B Bekaert

OFFICIAL PARTNER



Bertrand Piccard, initiator and chairman of Solar Impulse Foundation, met with Bekaert team members to hand over the Solar Impulse Foundation Label for our Dramix® steel fibers.





At Bekaert, we believe it is our responsibility to create a better tomorrow.

- We are committed to substantially reducing our carbon footprint and our emission reduction targets have been validated by the Science Based Targets initiative (SBTi).
- We continually improve energy efficiency so that we reduce the energy that we consume in our operations.
- We increase the share of renewables in the energy that we use, wherever possible.
- We avoid the discharge of untreated effluent from our production processes.
- We work to reduce waste and to limit our water consumption, especially in water-stressed regions.
- We promote a circular economy by optimizing the amount of recycled input materials in our manufacturing processes and by recycling 100% of our steel scrap.
- We develop sustainable solutions which contribute to a cleaner environment, and which aim to reduce the environmental footprint of our products over their entire life cycle.





Our strategy and ambitions

We create value through sustainability.

In 2023 we further stepped up our activities in order to make substantial progress towards achieving our environmental ambitions and targets.

In line with the Paris Agreement to limit the global temperature rise to 1.5°C, we have set a target to reduce our Scope 1 & 2 Greenhouse Gas Emissions¹ - the majority of which comes from gas used within our factories and from the electricity we purchase - by 46.2% by 2030 (compared to 2019) and to reach Carbon Net Zero by 2050.

We have also set a target to reduce our Scope 3 emissions associated with purchased goods and services by 19.7% by 2035 (compared to 2019).

By committing to these targets, we are taking bold steps, thinking beyond tomorrow, enabling improvements through innovation, and basing our initiatives on the latest science that will help create a sustainable future in the longer term.

We are determined to improve life and create value for all our stakeholders by making a positive impact with our sustainable solutions and through sustainable operations.

With this in mind, we have established an ambitious plan that addresses the most pressing sustainability-related challenges and, at the same time, presents a wide range of opportunities, for Bekaert and for the environment.

GRI 2-22, GRI 3-3

INPUTS

41% of electricity used is from renewable sources¹

20% of wire rod purchased is from recycled steel¹

900+ individual projects in our decarbonization roadmap

520+ ideas identified so far in 'You know Watt' program

SBTI-approved targets for GHG emission reduction



OUTPUTS

Scope 1 & 2 GHG emissions: reduced by **15%**²

Scope 3 GHG emissions from purchased wire rod: reduced by **3%**²

Water withdrawal¹: reduced by **20%**²

EU Taxonomy alignment 2023 revenue = **42%**

¹ joint ventures included

² versus 2019 baseline

¹ Scope 1 (direct GHG emissions): GHG emissions from sources that are owned or controlled by an organization. (e.g. GHG emissions from fuel and gas combustion)

Scope 2 (energy related indirect GHG emissions): GHG emissions that result from the generation of purchased or acquired electricity, heating, cooling, and steam consumed by an organization

Scope 3 (other indirect GHG emissions): indirect GHG emissions not included in Scope 2 (energy related indirect) GHG emissions that occur outside of the organization, including both upstream and downstream emissions (e.g. transport)

Our tangible progress in 2023²



Decarbonization roadmap: scope 1 & 2 emissions reduced by -15.1% compared to baseline

We joined the Business Ambition for 1.5°C campaign, which is an urgent call to action from a global coalition to limit global warming, in 2022, and our ambitious science-based GHG reduction targets were subsequently independently validated by the Science Based Targets initiative (SBTi).

By signing up and committing to science-based targets, we became part of the UN Climate Champions' Race to Zero and through this we aim to make a significant impact in the fight against climate change.

We have developed a clear roadmap to achieve our decarbonization targets and can demonstrate tangible progress.

In 2023, Bekaert's consolidated scope 1 & 2 GHG emissions reduced by -4.6% compared to 2022 and by -15.1% compared to baseline year 2019, on track toward reaching our target of -46.2% by 2030 versus the baseline.

GRI 3-3

In addition, our consolidated scope 3 GHG emissions from purchased wire rod reduced by -5.1% compared to 2022 and by -3.1% compared to 2019.

Our decarbonization roadmap currently comprises more than 900 individual projects covering a range of decarbonization levers such as energy efficiency, on-site renewables, renewable energy purchase, and other solutions.

In order to move toward net zero in 2050, we will further improve our energy efficiency, use more renewable energy, optimize our production processes, and for our currently gas-fired processes, we will investigate electrification, the use of biofuels, and/or green hydrogen.

Using and investing in renewable energy sources

One of our key enablers to reduce greenhouse gas emissions is the use of renewable electricity, where available. In total, 41% of the electricity we consumed came from renewable energy sources in 2023 (including JVs). In Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Venezuela, Romania, and the US, most of Bekaert's electricity already comes from renewable energy sources.

When it comes to renewable power generation, we are focusing on solar and wind energy. As shown in the table below, we consider investment opportunities in solar and wind farms and enable our plants to source an increasing share of renewable energy. In recent years we have invested in a solar farm at our manufacturing site in Burgos, Spain, and in (v)PPAs in the US and in India, efforts which will drastically reduce the emissions of our manufacturing footprint in those countries. We have plans for additional on-site renewable energy generation and PPAs in 2024 and beyond.

GRI 3-3

Lever	Description
On-site renewable energy investments	Solar field (ground-mounted) in Burgos, Spain (16 GWh/year, installed in 2023)
	Wind turbines in Zwevegem, Belgium (13 GWh/year, installed in 2019)
	Roof-mounted solar panels in Aalter, Belgium (1 GWh/year, installed in 2020)
Power Purchase Agreements	Future solar field (ground-mounted) in Italy (11 GWh/year, projected to be installed in 2024)
	Third-party financed solar farm in several of our Jiangyin plants, China (completion in 2024)
	(V)PPAs:
	Kings Plain, US (wind farm, 125 GWh/year, from 2020)
	P1&2, India (solar farm, 54 GWh/year, from 2021)
	P3, India (solar farm, 14 GWh/year, from 2023)
	Rockhound, US (solar farm, 75 GWh/year, projected from 2025)

² More details on Bekaert's 2023 environmental performance and targets are included in Part II: Environmental Statements of this report.

On-site solar farm in Burgos, Spain

As a major milestone in our sustainability strategy, Bekaert has installed a solar farm on the grounds of its plant Industrias del Ubierna SA (Ubisa) in Burgos.

The solar farm installation is fully operational and is one of the largest facilities of its type built in Spain to date. The new solar park covers an area of 8 hectares, equivalent to 10 soccer fields, and includes 18 300 bifacial solar panels. The park has a total capacity of 12 MWp and will produce a total of 16 000 MWh/year of electricity for Bekaert's consumption. This amount is equivalent to cover 15% of the plant's electricity needs and makes Ubisa the tire reinforcement plant with the lowest CO₂ footprint globally, thanks to solar energy combined with Spain's green grid, plus our power purchase agreements and use of biomass.

Developing and installing eco-friendlier production processes in our plants worldwide

We develop and implement standard solutions and initiatives that aim to reduce energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions. The Bekaert Manufacturing System (BMS), a longstanding improvement program focused on manufacturing excellence, is centered around energy and emission reduction measures.

As outlined earlier, we are investigating different options to fully decarbonize our use of thermal energy (primarily gas) by 2050. One initiative is about exploring the possibility of electrifying our heat treatment processes. In Burgos (Spain) we are running a pilot project on a small production line.

GRI 3-3

EU Taxonomy: our aligned revenue increased from 1% in 2022 to 42% in 2023

Another domain is related to EU Taxonomy, which aims to channel capital towards sustainable activities, with the end-goal of financing sustainable growth and achieving the EU objective of becoming climate neutral by 2050.

In 2021, we mapped all the manufacturing activities, investments, and applicable expenses of the Bekaert consolidated entities and matched them with the activities described in the two environmental objectives of EU

Taxonomy, climate change mitigation and climate change adaptation, to analyze their eligibility, i.e. their potential to be environmentally sustainable.



In 2022, we assessed the alignment of these activities, i.e. their compliance with the EU Taxonomy criteria to be considered 'green' (Substantial Contribution Criteria - Do No Significant Harm - Minimum Safeguards).

Building further on the outcome of 2022, in 2023 we expanded the scope from two to all six environmental objectives of the EU Taxonomy, taking into consideration further amendments and recommendations from the European Commission. The outcome of this analysis is included in the detailed environmental statements in Part II of this report.

Contributing to a circular economy

True sustainability can only be achieved through circularity. That is why we are increasing our contribution to a circular economy across the lifecycle of our products and our value chain.

Bekaert has a validated SBTi Scope 3 target to reduce purchased goods and services emissions by 19.7% by 2035. A key focus is on the wire rod we purchase, as this represents more than 90% of the related emissions. Recycled content in wire rod is an essential contributor to reach the target. Scope 3 emissions from wire rod decreased by -5.1% compared with 2022. This was primarily due to a reduction in volume consumed, rather than by an increased share of recycled steel content. In 2023, we also doubled the share of wire rod suppliers providing direct data on the full scope of their emissions, which is helpful in better aligning our future purchasing decisions. More information on our Scope 3 emissions is available in Part II - Environmental Statements of this report.

GRI 3-3

In calculating the share of recycled steel in the wire rod we purchase, we focus on collecting granular data directly from our suppliers, supplementing where necessary with internationally renowned databases and estimated values based on the steel making technology used. Data quality is important and therefore we are working closely with our strategic suppliers and international organizations to pave the way for more standardized and certified reporting. To increase the content of recycled raw materials, we adopt techniques in our product and process design that support the use of scrap-based steel wire rod. Applying the ISO 14021 definition, the total of pre-consumer and post-consumer recycled content in wire rod was 20% in 2023. This represents a drop compared with 2022 because of supply-demand imbalances in the recycled steel market and an increase in direct, more accurate recycled content information obtained from the wire rod mills.

In line with our scope 3 roadmap, we will continue to engage our suppliers on making progress on technical trials with more sustainable materials and technologies, and a further improvement in data quality and availability. This should help accelerate material circularity and decarbonization as from 2026.

Business units are taking initiatives to increase the amount of recycled content in their products, driven by market and customer needs. A great example of this is the recently published press release for our highest revenue product group, tire reinforcement: [Bekaert delivers first batch of tire reinforcement with third-party certified recycled steel content to Bridgestone Corporation](#). More information thereon is included in the previous chapter: 'Our Performance in 2023: Value Chain'.

Zinc and copper are also key raw materials for Bekaert with around 20 000 tons and 2 500 tons purchased respectively per year. In 2023 we gathered recycled content information, based on the ISO 14021 definition, directly from suppliers for 90% of the zinc volume and almost 100% of the copper volume. The resulting total recycled content of zinc for 2023 equals 28% and 5% for copper. By analyzing the obtained data, we will identify opportunities to increase the recycled content in 2024 and beyond.

GRI 301-1, GRI 301-2

The procurement department has also been working on material sustainability topics related to packaging, focusing on reuse, recycled content, and reduction. Spools are an important type of packaging for Bekaert, as most of our products are wound on spools to be delivered to our customers. In 2023, we achieved high spool reuse with 98.4% of tire cord spools being reused. 100 % of the tire cord cardboard boxes we purchase and use in China, India, and Indonesia are made from recycled paper. Additionally, initiatives have been undertaken to reduce the amount of packaging used, with one initiative reducing cardboard layers resulting in 1.3 kg/box-saving or an annual impact of 104 tons. Similarly, a pilot has been undertaken to reduce the thickness of plastic bags by 20% and increase their recycled content by 30%.

GRI 3-3, GRI 301-2

We design for high durability, less material use, recyclability, easy disassembly, and adaptability of the products we manufacture. Our sustainable solutions ensure extended lifetime or achieve the same lifetime with less material, both of which substantially reduce the overall GHG emissions compared to the mainstream alternatives in the market. Additionally, we aim for leaner processing, not only in our own manufacturing processes but also for those of our customers. We assist our customers in increasing the processing efficiency of our products and decreasing waste generation.

We invest in waste management that prioritizes recycling over disposal. For instance, in addition to reducing our freshwater intake, we recycle and reuse water many times until it cannot be further recycled.



Additionally, we partner with local recycling companies to recycle our waste. 100% of all steel scrap is returned to the steel industry for recycling. We also support local circular economy initiatives beyond the products that we supply.

To reduce water consumption, especially but not exclusively in water-stressed areas, we focus on:

- Infrastructure-related consumption (e.g. water leakage management, control of evaporation losses, steam condensate reuse);
- Process water use (e.g. conductivity-controlled rinsing, wastewater recovery); and
- Sanitary water controls (e.g. water saving faucets in bathrooms).

KPI	2021	2022	2023
Number of water saving projects implemented*	6	22	30
Water saved (m ³ /ton end product)*	0.11	0.25	0.26

For waste, we focus on three main categories which together account for ~80% of total hazardous waste produced:

- Hydrochloric acid
- Sludge from wastewater treatment
- Lubricants

KPI	2022	2023
Number of waste reduction projects implemented*	4	12
Reduction in hazardous waste (kg/ton end product)*	2.20	3.90

* cumulative figures (2021 +) 2022 + 2023

By innovating, using materials and energy that don't cost the earth, we contribute to a low-carbon society and preserve our natural resources.

GRI 3-3, GRI 306-2

Focus on energy consumption and on prevention & risk management



Given our ambition to reduce our carbon footprint and the importance that energy consumption will play going forward, the energy intensity approach within the Bekaert Management System program has been elevated through a program called 'You Know Watt'.

You Know Watt

Recognizing the significant carbon and wider environmental footprint associated with producing our products and solutions, our global program, 'You Know Watt' aims to further reduce our energy use, water consumption, and waste generation in a structured way.

We believe in the power of learning by doing. Therefore, based on several pilot projects, we have designed and implemented a dedicated and comprehensive improvement program covering energy, water and waste, which moves from plant to plant, following a structured process at each site over a two-to-three-month period. We bring You Know Watt to local teams, evaluating findings, implementing efficiency improvements, and sharing improvement ideas and best practice across the company.

'You Know Watt' focuses on:

- Measuring energy/water consumption and waste generation
- Building awareness of the importance of energy efficiency, water conservation and waste reduction
- Identifying potential improvement opportunities
- Evaluating each opportunity
- Implementing those which are technically and economically feasible, using standard solutions where possible

As shown in the table, we have further rolled out our You Know Watt energy efficiency program across Bekaert's major manufacturing plants in 2023. So far, all plants that have completed their You Know Watt wave have identified more than 15% potential energy savings on average, based on projects with a reasonable financial payback.

GRI 3-3, GRI 306-2

KPI	2021	2022	2023
Number of manufacturing sites covered	1	6	9
Number of employees covered by awareness training	530	5 988	4 241
Number of new energy saving initiatives identified	30	418	527
Additional new identified energy savings (GWh)	25	249	190
Number of energy saving initiatives implemented	111	128	246
CO ₂ savings (kt CO ₂)	20	14	36

Furthermore, the key energy efficiency levers identified through You Know Watt are summarized in the table below.

Key energy efficiency levers	Description
Motor replacement	(1) Replacing old and inefficient motors with new high-efficiency motors (2) Rightsizing motors and drives to match the required duty and load
Heat recovery and recuperation	Recovery and reuse of waste heat from different production areas, including furnaces, molten metal baths, and compressor rooms
Process rerouting	Reducing the energy intensity of certain processes by moving from larger, slower-turning machines to latest generation lower energy consuming machines through process routing optimization
Optimized torsion on cabling and bunching machines	Upgrade of torsion disks with the latest Bekaert technology to lower the air friction in cabling and bunching machines

Prevention and risk management

Prevention is better than mitigation. Our prevention and risk management-related activities include, amongst other initiatives:

- Programs to reduce our water consumption, especially but not exclusively in water-stressed areas. Total water withdrawal in 2023 was -20.6% below the baseline year 2019 and -13.7% lower than in 2022.
- Steel scrap reduced by -15% compared to 2019 and by -1% compared to 2022.
- Protection against soil and groundwater contamination with physical primary and secondary containment as well as condition monitoring and preventative maintenance.
- At the end of 2023, based on the number of Bekaert manufacturing plants, 96% have ISO 9001 certification (quality) and 84% have ISO 14001 certification (environment), both under the umbrella of a corporate integrated management system.
- As a recognized supplier to the automotive industry, Bekaert chose to have its relevant manufacturing plants certified against IATF 16949 quality management requirements. At the end of 2023, 22 sites (+10%) were certified across our business units and were subject to a corporate audit scheme. In addition, 11 (+37%) sites are ISO 50001 certified, which demonstrates to stakeholders the ambition of Bekaert to be more energy efficient.
- We comply with the EU regulations on hazardous substances (RoHS) in products.
- In addition, a comprehensive assessment of physical climate change risks and related mitigating actions has been undertaken. More information is available in Part II: Control and ERM in the Corporate Governance Statement of this report.

GRI 2-27, GRI 3-3, GRI 303-1, GRI 303-2

Sustainable products and solutions

We offer products and solutions that embed sustainable practices across their lifecycle and our value chain, contributing to making the world more sustainable. Read all about our products and solutions that contribute to a cleaner environment in the 'Knowledge' section included hereafter.

GRI 302-5

Biodiversity



Along with the fight against climate change, the preservation of biodiversity is an important environmental challenge for the planet. At the current rate, half of all living species could disappear a century from now.

In response to this concern, we are in the process of assessing the potential impact of our operations on biodiversity. We have screened all our sites in relation to their proximity to, and their potential impact on, designated protected areas and/or areas of high biodiversity value.

Whilst the vast majority (~97%) of Bekaert sites are located in industrial zones, 2 out of the 69 production plants (including JVs) are located close to protected or high biodiversity areas, but there is no evidence of any environmental impact from Bekaert operations on these protected areas. Even though biodiversity was not considered a 'material topic' for Bekaert in the 2023 double materiality assessment, we will obviously continue to ensure adequate prevention and protection measures.

GRI 304-1

Knowledge



- Our research and innovation activities are aimed at creating value for our customers, for our business, and for all our stakeholders to prosper in the long term.
- We co-create with customers and suppliers around the globe to develop, implement, upgrade, and protect both current and future technologies.
- We listen to our customers to understand their innovation and processing needs.
- Knowing how our products function within their production processes and products is key to developing value-creating solutions.
- We accelerate our innovation agenda and upgrade the innovation pipeline. We deploy Industrial IoT in our manufacturing and modeling innovations.
- We extend the scope of our innovation activities beyond steel to grow into new materials, new markets, services, and solutions.
- We build key positions in specific business ecosystems to accelerate our innovation progress and leverage the benefits of collaboration between technology leaders.





Highlights in 2023

INPUTS

- € 73 million in gross R&D spend
- € 9 million R&D grants received
- 508 R&I staff and 356 Engineering staff
- € 19 million investments in digital assets



OUTPUTS

- 30 first patent filings in 2023
- 2100+ patent rights in portfolio
- 2000+ trademarks and trademark applications
- +84% of our plants are digitalized

Innovation is one of the key focus areas of the Bekaert business strategy. 2023 was a pivotal year for us with great progress made in the execution of the innovation pipeline and the research for new innovative solutions in key markets. The Technology and Innovation (T&I) pipeline is well aligned with the priorities Bekaert has set for its growth platforms, by expanding the product portfolio of sustainable solutions in the large and growing end-markets of construction decarbonization, energy transition, advanced lifting and mooring, and e-mobility.

In 2023, the gross R&D expenses, before deduction of grants, tax credits, and capitalized spend, amounted to € 73 million, compared to € 70 million in 2022. The increase¹ reflects our focus on portfolio development, customer-centric co-creation, as well as capability building.

To accelerate innovation, we also shifted our innovation portfolio toward a more differentiated solutions offering. We ensure a good balance with Bekaert's other transformational priorities - digital and sustainability - by prioritizing innovation projects that enable value-creating services to our customers.

In our main technology center in Deerlijk (Belgium) we established a new R&D laboratory with dedicated equipment and experts for the development and testing of new green hydrogen electrolysis technologies. We also invested in new pilot lines for designing and testing the production processes of product innovations. These investments underpin Bekaert's commitment to raise its offering of sustainable solutions.

In 2023, we further implemented the sustainability design criteria such as Life Cycle Analysis and we ran company-wide ideation campaigns with regards to circularity of existing and new products.

We also elevated the processes and standards we use to run our innovation quality system. By investing in the team's capabilities and implementing agile ways of working, we are well set for mastering our process innovations and bringing new solutions to the market quickly and successfully.

¹ Grants, tax credits, and the capitalization effect of R&D spend amounted to more than € 16 million in 2023, resulting in net research and development expenses of € 57 million in the 2023 consolidated income statement, compared to € 62 million in 2022. The consolidated income statement is included in Part II - Financial Statements of this report.



Bekaert Group Executives and Board Members visit BARDEC

Bekaert develops advanced innovative solutions addressing the needs of customers globally, all while considering the local market needs. At BARDEC, our R&D Center in Jiangyin (China), Bekaert Executives and Board Members had the opportunity to get a glimpse into the work of the R&D team who gave an update on process developments, testing services, and product innovations, such as the new range of ultra tensile (UT) steel cord products developed and launched.



Designing for a sustainable future

‘The best way to predict the future is to create it’, one of Peter Drucker’s famous quotes, inspires us to take the lead in developing sustainable products and processes that accelerate the innovation progress in e-mobility, construction decarbonization, advanced lifting and mooring, and the energy transition.

More than 85% of Bekaert’s global portfolio of R&D projects is targeting distinct sustainability benefits. We design and develop products, processes, and services that embed sustainable practices across our value chain. These include, among others, the following innovations:

- Extension of the super- (ST) and ultra-tensile (UT) tire cord range with ever thinner and stronger filaments and cord designs that allow tire

makers to produce tires with lower weight, thinner plies, and lower rolling resistance. This improves the battery life of electric vehicles and reduces the CO₂ emissions of conventional fuel vehicles by up to 5%. Based on actual data, generally accepted conversion models, and test results, the CO₂ savings attributable to Bekaert ST/UT cords amounted to at least 2.5 million tons in 2023.

- Moreover, our process innovations in rubber reinforcement create significant benefits related to circularity and the responsible use of materials in general. Examples thereof are the higher share of recycled content in the steel wire rod used for tire cord and bead wire, and TAWI®, our ternary alloy wire coating on tire cord filaments, which allows tire makers to remove cobalt from their rubber compounds.
- Ampact™, our PEEK-coated copper wire for the next generation electric engine stators, is in process of homologation.
- Currento®, Bekaert’s porous transport layers, increase the performance and durability of electrochemical devices used in hydrogen production. We continue to innovate in-house from our newly established hydrogen lab in Deerlijk (Belgium) and further expand our expertise by building a strong position in the entire hydrogen ecosystem, among which through partnerships with other leading innovators.
 - In 2023 we invested in Ionomr Innovations. Headquartered in Vancouver, Canada, Ionomr is a leader in the development and commercialization of advanced proton- and anion exchange membranes in electrolyzers for green hydrogen production. There has been extensive collaboration between us, primarily focused on the development of AEM electrolyzer components.
 - Moreover, Bekaert and Toshiba concluded a strategic agreement to commercialize a key component for proton exchange membrane (PEM) electrolyzers for green hydrogen production. The agreement will combine Bekaert’s leading expertise in the scale manufacture of Porous Transport Layers (PTL) with the Toshiba-developed Alternating Catalyst Layer System (ACLS) to create a new generation of Membrane-Electrode Assemblies (MEA). The combination of technologies will enable a significant reduction in the use of iridium in the manufacture of PEM electrolyzers by over 90%, which is a winning solution seen the scarcity and cost of this precious metal.
- Bekaert further extended the range of steel and synthetic mooring rope solutions for offshore floating windfarms and offers fully integrated solutions for mooring turbines from the seabed to the floater. The 2023 majority participation in Flintstone Technology Ltd enriched our offering with connectors and tensioners.

- Bridon-Bekaert Ropes Group supplies Armofor® thermoplastic tapes for light-weight, non-metallic pipes in energy markets. These pipes save a significant amount of CO₂ due to their anti-corrosion characteristics, which ensures a much longer durability compared with traditional carbon steel pipes, and they are much easier and faster to install. While initially developed and used as water injection pipes for oil extraction, they are being redesigned by Bekaert for use in a broader range of applications like the transportation of CO₂ and of hydrogen and hydrogen derivatives.

Scaling up engineering services, open innovation, and customer development collaboration aimed at construction decarbonization

In 2023 Bekaert established Falconix, an in-house Design Engineering office in Germany, to support customers in structural engineering applications like rafts (building foundations).

We also invested in Zacua Ventures, a venture capital organization focused on investments in the built environment at a global scale. Zacua Ventures drives value and growth for its partners and entrepreneurs by providing them access to innovative, sustainable construction technologies, insights into emerging trends, and scalability through a network of industry leaders.

An example of co-developing with customers is the partnership concluded with Holcim, a global leader in innovative and sustainable building solutions, to develop new fiber types for their ultra-high performance concrete product line.

GRI 2-6, GRI 3-3, GRI 302-5



Engineering



Bekaert's in-house engineering department takes up a leading role in equipment technology development. To do that, we further increased the collaboration with other technology departments and external partners. At the same time, we are creating an ecosystem of knowledge clusters in engineering solutions and services with the purpose to support the plants in their journey toward world class manufacturing.

Engineering has aligned its roadmaps with the overall Bekaert ambition. Significant steps have been taken to address the growth plans of Bekaert in new or fast-growing business areas. To name one, we enable the capacity expansion of the manufacturing activities that produce Currento® porous transport layers used in electrolyzer stacks for green hydrogen power. Our proximity to customers and to Bekaert production plants, combined with extensive market knowledge, allow us to investigate opportunities quickly and be ready for capacity needs driven by demand.

Bekaert Engineering intensified its focus on safety, sustainability, digitalization, and automation efforts. We make our machines more energy efficient by developing and deploying standard technical solutions, while exploring new concepts for process and equipment breakthroughs. By adding intelligence to our machines and processes, we gain more insight into the performance of our machines and increase efficiency and quality. More automation also further increases the ease of running and monitoring our operations.

Engineered for safety

Our heritage implies that several generations of equipment are being used in our manufacturing plants. The engineering and safety, health and environment teams have joined forces to upgrade old machines to the newest safety standards and make them less prone to human errors. The underlying principle is that human behavior, such as distraction for whatever reason, should not cause life-altering injuries to anyone. As such, it represents an important facet in our 'no-harm-to-anyone' safety ambition.

Intellectual property

The Intellectual Property department of Bekaert takes care of patents, utility models, designs, trademarks, domain names and trade secrets for the whole Bekaert Group, including the joint ventures in Brazil. It also advises on IP clauses in various agreements such as joint development agreements and licenses. Furthermore, it ensures intellectual property rights are respected both through enforcement of Bekaert's rights and by checks concerning third parties' rights, which leads to a strong stance in the market and secures an excellent track record with no infringement actions brought to court against Bekaert for years.

At the end of 2023, the Bekaert Group had a portfolio of more than 2 100 patents and patent applications and more than 2 000 trademarks and trademark applications. The Bekaert Group has thereby renewed its focus on innovation and taken a more holistic approach to the protection of its intellectual property regarding new product and process technology developments, including digital assets and sustainable solutions.

This has led to a significant increase of filings for intellectual property rights in 2023 with 30 new first filings for patents, utility models and designs.

GRI 2-27, GRI 3-3, GRI 418-1

Securing our digital assets

Cyber risks can affect intellectual property protection and data privacy. Therefore, information security - securing our company's and customers' data, assets, and privacy - is critical, especially with many of our team members working remotely. Our employees are our strongest link, and the most effective protection is their awareness of information security risks and cyber threats. Our Information Security Rules explain the actions we can take to defend against cybercriminals and ensure that our information remains protected.

GRI 3-3

Digital@Bekaert



We leverage data engineering excellence and intelligence platforms to optimize our work methods and create value for our customers.

Our main areas of focus are Digital@Operations, Digital@Customer, Digital@Enterprise Process, and Digital@Sustainability. Data, AI, Automation, IoT, Cloud and other enablers help us optimize our processes and ensure a secure structure for delivering value.

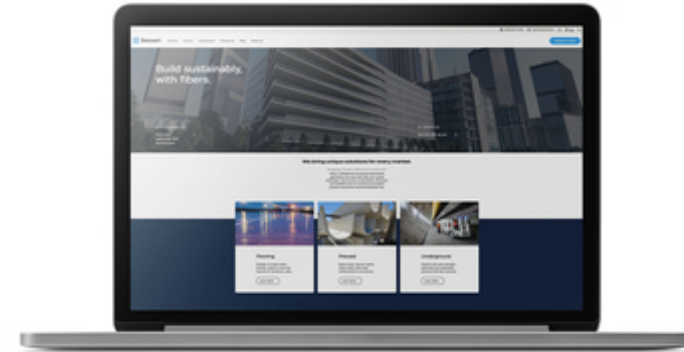
Driving productivity and efficiency

We brought digitalization to seven additional Bekaert plants in 2023 and further upgraded the functionalities across 58 digitalized plants globally. We applied advanced analytics such as AI/Machine Learning as well as Internet of Things (IoT) to develop real-time process dashboards that led to increased cost efficiency.

Bringing value to our customers

We further built on the [Dramix® Customer Engagement Platform \(CEP\)](#) in 2023, which is a new digital go-to-market channel. The site provides seamless customer experience with innovative features, easy access to tailored content and useful information that deepens the understanding about how to build safer, smarter, and in a more sustainable way.

In August 2023, BBRG New Zealand launched www.cookes.co.nz, a website that showcases our digital transformation journey, serving both B2B and B2C markets. It offers features like order tracking, invoice status, rope certification, and more. The site reflects our commitment to improving customer experience and business operations.



Cracking the code of efficiency with Generative AI

2023 would not have been complete without GenAI. We embraced this truly revolutionary technology and launched ChatBKT to our employees. This Bekaert-customized version of ChatGPT was designed to significantly boost employee productivity. It has been a game changer for our colleagues, allowing us to confidently navigate the ever-evolving digital landscape and stay ahead of the curve.



Powering sustainability with digital

Digital@Sustainability brings value to the business by unlocking sustainability data. Four of our core sustainability KPIs are now automatically tracked and measured via the Sustainability Dashboard.

In line with our ongoing commitments to Bekaert's sustainability targets, we have taken significant steps to reduce the carbon footprint of our IT operations. This includes the closure of our Data Centers and migration to the (Azure) Cloud, resulting in a reduction of CO₂ emissions from 4.2 tCO₂ to 0.015 tCO₂.

Enabling innovation with digital

Digital technologies have played a crucial role in driving innovation beyond traditional steel wire products and solutions across various domains.

We have embarked on a pilot project to explore the potential of Digital Twin technology in the Steel Fiber Reinforced Concrete (SFRC) domain. A digital twin for concrete is a virtual model that closely mimics the behavior and characteristics of a specific concrete structure or material. It is created by integrating real-time data from sensors, historical information, and simulation models.

The digital twin allows us to predict how the SFRC will perform under various conditions. By analyzing the digital twin, we can optimize the concrete mix to achieve the best balance between cost and performance. It helps ensure that the actual concrete structure meets the desired quality standards. Furthermore, with accurate predictions, we can reduce or eliminate the need for expensive and time-consuming tests (such as ITT tests).

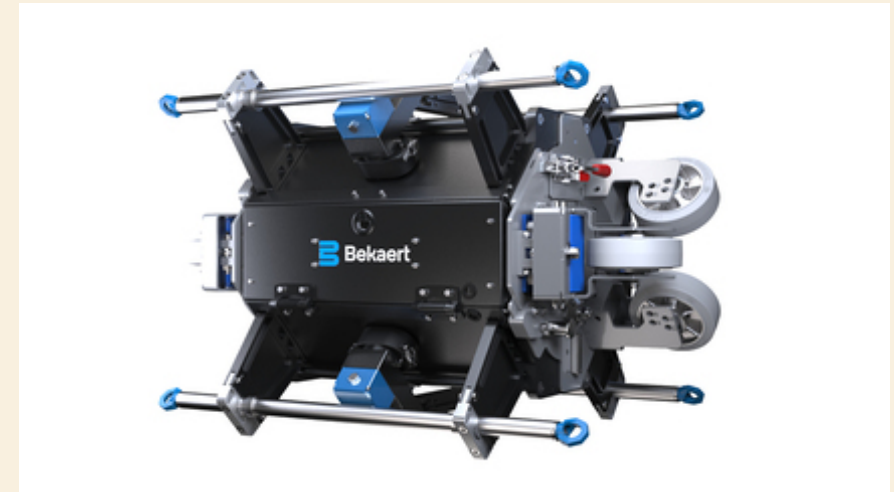
The digital twin is built using data integration from various sources, including material properties, environmental conditions, and structural design. It incorporates machine learning models trained on historical data to predict behavior.

It can be visualized through 3D models, dashboards, or other interfaces.

We know that only focusing on mapping and leveraging cutting edge technologies for our employees and customers is not enough. That is why we also put emphasis on building connection points and capabilities in our teams when it comes to digital. In 2023, we delivered 20+ webinars and workshops for our employees on digital practices. We also introduced the Wisdom of the Crowd program, that leverages technology for tapping into the collective knowledge of our employees, increasing the number of ideas and solutions around specific topics, and fueling greater innovation.

All eyes on ropes: VisionTek

Our VisionTek optical measurement technology for predictive critical rope performance attracted the interest of ABB with whom we concluded a partnership in 2023. We will jointly explore service capabilities for mine hoist systems located in ABB customer sites worldwide. There are more than 600 active production and service mine hoists within ABB's global installed base and now there is an opportunity for us to serve these customers together. The services will include innovative approaches towards safety, availability, productivity, risk reduction and sustainability. Combining the best-in-class practices for preventative maintenance will be further enhanced by the integration of inspections, audits, and spare parts inventory optimization, for the complete hoisting system. BBRG's VisionTek condition monitoring solution for ropes and ABB's digital solution suite for mine hoist monitoring and optimization, ABB Ability™ Smart Hoisting, will be combined to provide asset health and condition performance monitoring platforms and services to mine hoist operations.



Open innovation

To build a strong ecosystem that supports our innovation portfolio differentiation, we continued to tap into opportunities for cooperation with strategic customers, suppliers and academic research institutes or universities. In 2023, we invested in early-stage companies and explored the set-up of new ventures to create new attractive business models adjacent to Bekaert's current field-of-play.

With the challenges that sustainability and digital transformation bring, it is key to maintain our network in the domains of metallurgy and modeling with an extension of our UTC University Technology Center in University College Dublin, and with PhDs of Imperial College London, Zagreb University, UGent, University of Lille, University of Oxford and other universities. In 2023, we also strengthened our research partnerships in the domain of sustainable metallurgy and sustainable metal processing.

Memberships & associations

Bekaert has numerous corporate memberships, including relevant bilateral chambers of commerce and general industry associations, such as Agoria and VOKA in Belgium, Wire Association International, and cross-industry associations such as the Conference Board. Bekaert is also a member of national employer associations in all countries where Bekaert is active.

GRI 2-28

Acknowledgement

We wish to thank the Flemish government's Flanders Innovation & Entrepreneurship (VLAIO) agency, as well as the Belgian federal government. Their subsidies and incentives for R&D projects involving highly educated scientific staff and researchers in Flanders are essential for maintaining a foothold for R&D activities in Belgium.

We also want to express our sincere appreciation for the support of the Irish Research Council and I-Form, the SFI Research Centre for Advanced Manufacturing. Furthermore, we want to thank the Research & Innovation department of the European Commission for supporting innovation with project grants.

Research & innovation partnerships



Our vision is to build partnerships within our ecosystems as a key pillar for Bekaert to:

- Develop a sustainable business portfolio
- Explore and design new sustainable solutions with best-in-class science and innovation partners
- Anticipate trends and be a key player in climate change, energy transition and societal challenges
- Create value for our stakeholders

Today at Bekaert we are working with more than 85 partners including academics, research institutes, universities, engineering schools, SMEs, and large industrial players to deploy our vision. Herewith are examples of academic and research partners in various areas of technological and digital developments:

Partners

National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL), US
IMEC, Belgium
Umwelt Campus Birkenfeld, Germany
UGent, Belgium
Université Paris-Saclay, France
Deutsches Zentrum für Luft- und Raumfahrt -DLR, Stuttgart, Germany
Technical University of Denmark (DTU)

University College Dublin, Ireland
Imperial College, London
University of Lille, France
University of Maine, US
Norwegian University of Science and technology
KU Leuven, Belgium
Sintef, Norway
TNO, The Netherlands
University of Trento, Italy
University of New South Wales, Sydney, Australia
Qingdao University of Technology, China

Flanders Make

GRI 2-28

People



- 'Dare to go beyond' is our employer value proposition to current employees and future talents.
- The leadership principles - the behaviors we expect from every member of our team - guide us in achieving our ambitious goals. These principles are: grow the business - inspire and engage - deliver results.
- We believe in working together to achieve better performance. That is why 'better together' is at the heart of our Culture Compass.
- As a truly global company, we embrace diversity across all levels in the organization, which is a major source of strength for our company.
- We nurture talent through career development and life-long learning. We attach great importance to providing challenging career and personal development opportunities for our employees.
- Our global safety approach aims to create a no-harm, risk-free working environment for all our employees and for anyone working at or visiting our premises. We believe that taking care of people is fundamental to the success of the business.
- We are committed to providing equal opportunity in employment and respect the rights and dignity of each employee.
- Bekaert is firmly committed to complying with national legislations and collective labor agreements.





INPUTS

23 959¹ employees from 74 nationalities

1 374 new hires in 2023

41 average training hours per employee

Committed to increase gender equality ratio to **40%** by 2030



OUTPUTS

78% participation rate in global engagement survey 2023

100% of PC users formally commit to the Code of Conduct annually

Safety focus revitalized

Employee retention rate of **96%**

Our values

Our employees are the driving force behind our global success. The true strength of our company lies at the heart of every Bekaert employee's passion to go the extra mile in realizing our ambition, and to do that in a way that reflects our company values and the highest standards of business ethics.

Our values bring us together as one global team: better together. They are the foundation of our culture and way of working. Our values form an essential part of Bekaert's Culture Compass and guide us to 'Dare to go beyond'.

Integrity

We are authentic, honest, and respectful. We protect the planet and care for our employees and communities. We always do what is right and speak up if we see something wrong.

Trust

We believe in the ability, reliability, and strength of our colleagues, customers and partners. We build relationships with mutual understanding, openness, and respect.

Agility

We embrace change and adapt with speed, enthusiasm, and resilience. We keep it simple and effective, with the customer at the center of our decision-making.

Boldness

We are curious, creative, and courageous. We think outside of the box to establish the new possible. We empower each other to try new things, and accept that learning from failure is part of daring to go beyond. We take ownership, make decisions, and take action.

GRI 2-23

¹ 21 044 in consolidated entities + 2 915 in joint ventures = 23 959 combined

Engagement Survey 2023: Unlock Your Full Potential

We conducted a global engagement survey in 2023 to gauge employee engagement across all levels and locations of the organization. All employees were invited to complete the survey and let their voices be heard. The questions related to 4 main engagement drivers: employee engagement, experience versus expectations, inclusion, and well-being.

The 2023 survey led to a very high participation rate of 78% and overall positive results on most engagement drivers. We score high on questions around collaboration, safety, training opportunities, well-being, and inclusion. The results and comments suggest higher expectations on career goals and clarity of roles, and on the survey follow-up. We continue the dialogue to learn how employees experience working with us, where we are making progress, and where we can do better. We actively use the dashboard of the 2023 survey in identifying our improvement goals and in implementing initiatives that help our employees unlock their full potential.

Respecting human rights

Bekaert is firmly committed to complying with national legislation and collective labor agreements. Bekaert is committed to all principles and rights included in the fundamental conventions identified in the Declaration of the International Labor Organization on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work, the OECD Guidelines, and the International Bill of Human Rights.

We respect the rights and dignity of each employee. We promote equal opportunity and do not discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment based on age, race, nationality, social or ethnic descent, gender, physical disability, sexual preference, religion, political preference, or union membership. We foster diversity and inclusion and recognize and respect the cultural identity of our teams in all the countries in which we operate and do business.

The recruitment, remuneration, application of employment conditions, training, promotion, and career development of our employees are based on professional qualifications only.

GRI 2-23, GRI 2-27

The Bekaert Code of Conduct describes how we put our Bekaert values into practice and which leadership principles or behaviors we expect from every Bekaert employee. Our Code of Conduct covers, among other elements, key areas regarding human rights, child labor and forced labor, and anti-bribery and anti-corruption policy and principles. All Bekaert policies related to responsible business conduct are available on the Bekaert website.

GRI 2-23, GRI 2-24, GRI 3-3, GRI 205-1, GRI 205-2, GRI 407-1 GRI 408-1, GRI 409-1



Learning & development

We nurture talent through career development and life-long learning. We attach great importance to providing challenging career and personal development opportunities to our employees. Training programs not only include technical and job-specific training, but also leadership modules that help our people develop and cooperate in a global business environment.

On average, each employee received 41 hours of training in 2023, a significant increase compared to 2022 (34 hours).

GRI 3-3, GRI 404-1, GRI 404-2



Sustainability Academy



We are investing in continuous learning to integrate sustainability in everything we do. In early 2023 we established the Bekaert Sustainability Academy. Through the academy we provide information and materials for employees to build a common language on sustainability and on our sustainability ambitions.

- Our training provision covers more than 30 sustainability topics, ranging from environment, to social and governance, with more than 47 courses.
- More than 1 500 of our managers have completed the sustainability competencies and skills training via e-learning.
- For more in-depth knowledge, we typically hold 10 or more workshops and webinars each year on topics such as LCAs, EPDs, and Circular Economy.

In addition, building on our previous successful collaboration with the University of Cambridge Institute for Sustainability Leadership, whereby 60 of our senior leaders completed a comprehensive sustainability leadership program, in 2023 Bekaert partnered with Chapter Zero Brussels (the Belgian chapter of the Climate Governance initiative in collaboration with the World Economic Forum). Through this partnership, we exchange best practices with other member companies and, as the climate journey of every company starts in the boardroom, we participated in Climate Zero Brussels' Director Climate Journey, which aims to help board members understand the risks and opportunities of climate change.

More details about learning & development in Bekaert are included in Part II: Social Statements of this report.

Health & safety



Bekaert's global safety approach aims to create a no-harm, risk-free working environment for all our employees and for anyone working at or visiting our premises. We believe that taking care of people is fundamental to the success of the business. To achieve this, we operate with a set of standards, based on internal and external principles and compliance rules, while encouraging a culture of leadership and accountability.

GRI 3-3, GRI 403-1

After five consecutive years of improvement, the safety-related key performance indicators LTIFR and TRIR declined. 2023 data showed an increase in LTIFR (+0.58), TRIR (+0.89), and SI rate (+0.05). The number of serious incidents leading to life-altering injuries increased from six² in 2022 to nine in 2023. All of these were related to hand and finger injuries. Bekaert is reinforcing its safety program through awareness campaigns, training, performance evaluations and dedicated investments to secure safe working conditions for all people.

GRI 2-4, GRI 403-9

TRIR: Total Recordable Incident Rate (all recorded incidents per million worked hours)
LTIFR: Lost Time Incident Frequency Rate (Number of lost time incidents per million worked hours)
SI: Serious Injury (incident leading to life-altering injuries)
The safety data we report include both Bekaert employees and contractors on our sites, in consolidated entities as well as in joint ventures.

More details about Bekaert's safety performance (consolidated and combined) are included in Part II: Social Statements of this report.

Safety champions

In 2023, 17 plants achieved 1 year without any recordable safety incidents. 16 plants were 2 years incident-free. 2 plants achieved 5 years without recordable safety incidents, and 3 plants have been incident-free for 10 or more years. They are Bekaert's safety champions and lead the way toward a no-harm, risk-free working environment for all.

BeCare Pro: a safety and compliance learning journey

In 2023 we continued the roll-out of the BeCare Pro development program for site managers, regional operations leaders, and other roles in operations. This safety, health & environmental training aims at building awareness, knowledge and understanding about SH&E-related compliance and liabilities. The program is structured in four streams aligned with the BeCare Safety program: Leadership, Governance, People & Environment at Risk, and People Take Risks.

During the training, participants learn to manage SH&E compliance in their plants while they become familiar with the tools that support them. In each online module, participants tackle a specific topic and bring a local SH&E challenge to the table to discuss it with their peers. This focus on action learning makes the theory tangible and lets leaders implement improvements immediately after the training. As a conclusion to the training, the participants gather for a very practical three-day workshop to further deepen their knowledge and work on concrete cases.

A further expansion of the BeCare Pro program is planned in 2024 focusing on measuring the safety culture and the upgrading of the behavioral-based safety observation process.

GRI 3-3, GRI 403-2, GRI 403-5

² 2022 data have been restated due to the divestment of the Steel Wire Solution business activities in Chile and Peru.



Health & Safety Week 2023: Creating a strong safety reporting culture

Every year, we organize a global Health & Safety Week for all our employees. In 2023, we built it around the creation of a good safety reporting culture, with a focus on the proactive reporting of unsafe situations in a psychologically safe environment.

Establishing the new possible, Bekaert's purpose, reflects very well what safety ambition we want to achieve. Creating a psychologically safe environment means ensuring everyone feels safe to speak up, raise their concerns, and dare to disagree with team members and leaders openly. All of this without fear for negative repercussions. This allows everyone to report incidents or unusual situations with confidence and without hesitation. This is key to creating a good safety reporting culture, and a no-harm-to-anyone work environment.

To make it tangible, experts in creating psychological safety shared their experiences during several sessions in different parts of the world with hundreds of live attendees in each regional session.

All sorts of events were organized during our Health & Safety Week 2023, and all were aimed at enhancing transparent safety reporting and increased focus on the reporting of hazardous situations to reduce the likelihood of severe incidents. Apart from global webinars, our employees across the globe ran local events, such as a hunting game on the shop floor in search of potential risks from machines, unsafe behaviors, CPR (cardiopulmonary resuscitation) or other emergency preparedness training, health promotion initiatives, and hearing loss prevention.

GRI 403-5



Diversity & Inclusion



We want Bekaert to be a great place to work. A place that inspires and ignites creativity and where everyone feels safe and welcome. We want our employees to actively take part in building an inclusive workplace for all. With the support of the Bekaert Group Executive (BGE) and the Diversity & Inclusion (D&I) Council, employees are encouraged to form affinity groups and collaborate in generating inspiring ideas and creating positive change.

Bekaert is a truly international organization and embraces the very rich cultural diversity within our team. We employ people from 74 nationalities in 43 countries in the world.

More details on diversity are included in the Leadership section of this report and in Part II: Corporate Governance and Social Statements.

GRI 3-3

Female leadership in China



To support Bekaert's Diversity & Inclusion strategy, the team in China launched the Steel Rose Club, a self-managing community open to every female colleague in China. The objective is to facilitate collaboration and support amongst women across China and provide a space for women at Bekaert to build on their talents and achieve their potential.



In relation to gender diversity, 28.3% of the managers and salaried professionals of the Bekaert subsidiaries are female (as per year-end 2023). We are committed to increasing this share in support of gender equality. Our target is to achieve a ratio of 40% by 2030. This target has also been added in the short-term incentives targets for the management.

Communities



- Taking care of people is fundamental to the success of our business.
- We support and develop initiatives that help improve the social and environmental conditions in the communities where we are active.
- We engage and support external stakeholders in our health & safety, diversity, and environmental programs.
- We believe that education is the backbone of society and therefore stimulate support programs that enhance access to school education or that develop the skills and empowerment of people living in underprivileged communities.
- Our attention for diversity & inclusion extends beyond our role and responsibility as an employer: we support programs that help break down the social and economic barriers of girls, women, people with a disability, and underserved population groups.
- United by our values, we support humanitarian initiatives that provide emergency relief to people in need.





INPUTS

80+ programs in support of local communities and disaster relief

Stimulating employment and development in **43** countries



OUTPUTS

€62 miljoen in income tax payments relative to 2023 consolidated result

€620 000 funding for disaster relief and social and environmental support programs

Our commitment toward society

Bekaert strives to be a loyal and responsible partner in the communities where the company is active.

Our teams in more than 40 countries are proud to give back to the community. Our activities target improvement programs that enhance education, social conditions, and the environment, particularly in the communities where we are active.

Supporting education and social development

In 2023 Bekaert teams have organized various support programs that benefit the local communities. To name a few, our team in India provided PCs and a water purifier to a school in a rural area and sponsored sports uniforms for the children.

Our building products team in Europe supported students participating to the 4L Trophy, an annual humanitarian rally across the Moroccan desert. The mission of the organization is to support schools in the region. The edition of February 2024 that we sponsored, gained even more attention and importance after the devastating earthquake in the region in September 2023.

Teams all over the world participated in sports and other events to support programs that benefit people with a physical or mental disability or in financial need. Various entities engaged local stakeholders in safety programs during the Bekaert Health & Safety week.

We believe that everybody has the right to education and to social and financial safety - regardless of background, gender, or physical or mental ability. That is why many of our support programs have a focus on diversity and inclusion.

GRI 3-3, GRI 413-1

Stimulating creativity in the Floating Wind Challenge

Bekaert supported the 2023 Floating Wind Challenge of OffshoreWind4Kids, a non-profit organization whose goal is three-fold: inspire children about engineering, technology, and renewable energy; stimulate innovation in offshore wind technologies; and spread awareness about offshore wind benefits to the general public.

The annual Floating Wind Challenge stimulates young engineers to design and build the best floating wind support structure. The 2023 event took place on 12 May at the beach of Scheveningen beach in the Netherlands.

Bekaert co-funded the event and delegated two managers of the Bridon-Bekaert Ropes Group team as coaches and jury members of the [event](#).

Pontis Foundation Slovakia

Bekaert's Slovak entities have a long-term partnership with the Pontis Foundation that supports social innovation, philanthropy, and responsible entrepreneurship. Bekaert supported 54 projects of the foundation in 2023, mainly related to education support to local schools and kindergartens, and social help for people with a disability.

Christmas market at Bekaert Headquarters

On 21 December 2023 Bekaert colleagues organized a Christmas market in the garden of the group's headquarters in Zwevegem, Belgium. The proceeds of the event totaled € 10 077 and were donated to ALLEZ EDDY, a project focusing on sports activities, socialization, skills training, and identity formation of vulnerable children and adolescents.



Community engagement benefiting the environment

Another focus area in our community engagement programs is about creating a clean and green environment. In such programs we work together with various stakeholders in our communities and engage them to participate in the events we organize.

GRI 3-3, GRI 413-1

Combating climate change on World Tree Day

Our teams in Karawang, Indonesia, planted 500 mangroves on World Tree Day, along the shores of Tangkolak Beach (Karawang) and Bahagia Beach (Bekasi). The trees form a natural barrier, protecting the local communities and coastal ecosystems from the erosive forces of the sea.

With this initiative our teams combat the negative impact of climate change, promote biodiversity, and contribute to carbon reduction.



GRI 303-1

Water is life

Bekaert is a supporting partner of River Cleanup, a non-profit organization that organizes river clean-up events, develops technology for permanent and mobile plastic removal from rivers, and educates and creates awareness to stop plastics from entering the ecosystems.

GRI 303-1

Disaster relief



After the devastating earthquakes early February 2023 in Turkey and Syria, teams from our Turkish plants immediately volunteered in rescue operations together with local disaster relief organizations.

Bekaert donated € 150 000 to a local humanitarian organization in support of first-aid actions in the affected areas.

GRI 3-3, GRI 413-1

Other contributions in 2023

Apart from the disaster relief donation in Turkey, Bekaert has contributed approximately € 470 000 in 2023 to a wide variety of community support and engagement programs worldwide. Some of these initiatives are steered and coordinated at the Group level, like River Cleanup and the Floating Offshore Wind Challenge, while most of them are initiated and managed locally, and often form a combination of monetary support and donations in-kind. More details are reported in Part II: Social Statements.

Politically neutral position

Being active in many countries all over the world, we recognize and appreciate the existence of different values and cultural standards in the countries where we operate.

We interact with the local governments in a transparent, constructive way.

We do not support political institutions and adopt a neutral position with respect to political issues. We do not offer donations or other forms of contributions to political parties, political campaigns and events, or organizations associated with political institutions.

We do condemn any act of violence and aggression against people.

GRI 415-1

Updated Community Engagement Policy



Bekaert has updated and implemented its Group Community Engagement Policy in 2023 and organized trainings with all sites so that engagement initiatives are stimulated and aligned with the priority areas determined.

