

In its own operations, voestalpine attaches great importance to the safety and well-being of its employees in order to ensure sustainable and responsible production. Employees can express their interests to the company in various ways and trust that their needs will be taken into account in decision-making processes.

The downstream value chain includes the worldwide transportation of voestalpine products to business customers, their industrial processing, and final use by end customers. At the end of their useful life, a proportion of the products are recycled. This promotes a circular economy and contributes to the company's sustainability goals. In the event of planned operational changes at the sites, the neighboring communities, political actors, and other stakeholders are involved in order to take local requirements into account and promote social acceptance.

The customers of voestalpine are made up of business customers from various industries and geographical markets, in particular from the automotive, energy, and aerospace industries, rail infrastructure, mechanical engineering, and the construction and consumer goods industry. The main geographical markets are located in Europe, North and South America, Asia and, depending on the business unit, in additional complementary markets.

A close dialogue is maintained between voestalpine and its customers, who are placing increasingly high demands on reducing the carbon footprint in their supply chains. This demand for "green steel" has led to an uptick in the development of solutions produced in collaboration with customers to increase efficiency and reduce emissions throughout the product lifecycle. These include innovative recycling processes and energy-efficient production technologies.

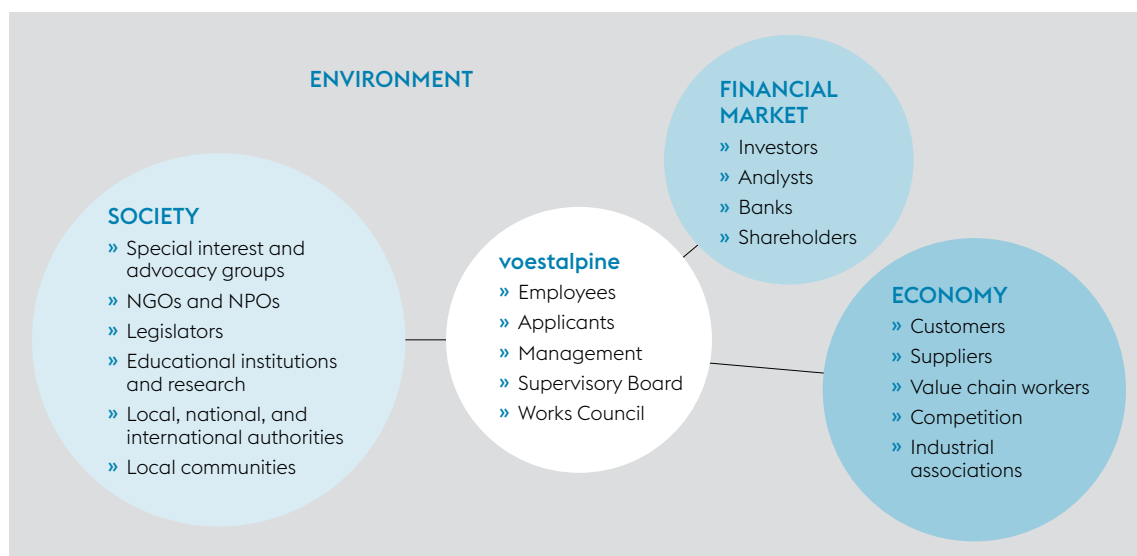
Additionally, voestalpine attaches great importance to transparency in the value chain. Environmental impacts and adverse social impacts, such as labor and human rights violations, need to be minimized to the greatest possible extent. In cooperation with suppliers, attention is paid to compliance with environmental and social standards.

SBM-2 – Interests and views of stakeholders

Stakeholders are persons or groups who can affect or be affected by voestalpine. They can be broken down into affected and interested stakeholders.

Identifying the relevant stakeholders and analyzing their requirements, interests, and expectations were core tasks to which voestalpine devoted itself in a structured and comprehensive manner in the business year 2023/24 as part of its double materiality assessment. The list of key stakeholders is reviewed at regular intervals to ensure that it is complete and up to date. The following table shows an overview of key stakeholders.

STAKEHOLDER CATEGORIZATION



The involvement of stakeholders includes representatives of affected groups such as trade unions, works councils, local communities, non-governmental organizations, suppliers, business partners, customer representatives, and industry associations. In addition, voestalpine works with sustainability experts from the world of academia and actively engages in a dialogue with users of the sustainability report, such as public authorities, banks, and investors. The undertaking takes into account their information needs with regard to the policies, actions, metrics, and targets of voestalpine in relation to material sustainability matters. Exchanges with the various stakeholder groups take place regularly in different formats and address the issues of relevance to them.

The most important stakeholders were involved in the double materiality assessment in two ways: Through face-to-face interviews and a large-scale anonymous online survey (see also IRO-1 Description of the processes to identify and assess material impacts, risks, and opportunities). In addition, the administrative, management, and supervisory bodies were informed about the views and interests of stakeholders with regard to voestalpine's sustainability-related impacts during sustainability board meetings.

Sustainability matters are increasingly becoming a main topic in voestalpine's communications with customers and suppliers, as well as with analysts, investors, NGOs, platforms, and advocacy groups. As far as the topic of sustainability is concerned, greenhouse gas emissions and climate-related risks, human rights in both the undertaking and the supply chain, as well as the EU Taxonomy Regulation, are often relevant concerns that are frequently discussed with stakeholders such as analysts and investors, for example. These frequently long-term relationships with customers and suppliers provide the basis for trusting and transparent partnerships.

The suggestions, proposals, and expectations of voestalpine's stakeholders are taken into account in strategic deliberations. This approach ensures transparent decision-making and strengthens trust in the undertaking. Taking into account different stakeholders helps to develop and implement a responsible and sustainable business strategy.

As a global steel company, voestalpine pursues a sustainable business model with a clear focus on decarbonization, resource efficiency, and circular economy. The shift towards more climate-friendly technologies and the focus on employees are central elements of the corporate strategy. The interests of relevant stakeholders are actively taken into account. In this way, voestalpine not only strengthens its long-term competitiveness, but also assumes responsibility for the interests of its stakeholders.

The following section outlines how communication with key stakeholders is structured. The examples given include the main stakeholder groups as well as the platforms most commonly used by voestalpine for dialogue and reconciling interests with them. voestalpine's executives also engage with other groups at different locations in various ways.

EMPLOYEES

The voestalpine Group currently has a global workforce of about 50,000 employees. Both the annual employee performance review and the regular Group-wide employee survey are key tools for engaging in structured communications. Employees' feedback is analyzed by management and flows into any action plans the company develops—for example, with respect to personnel development.

In many voestalpine Group companies, a works council represents employees' interests. Local works councils are superseded by a European Works Council and a Group Works Council, both of which hold regular discussions with management. Through internal audits and training courses—for example, on the topics of compliance, health and safety, IT security, or data privacy and protection—voestalpine ensures not only that its employees abide by and implement a range of requirements, but also that their knowledge is current.

CUSTOMERS AND SUPPLIERS

voestalpine maintains open and close-knit relationships with all its business partners. These frequently long-term relationships with customers and suppliers provide the basis for trusting and transparent partnerships. Together, processes and products are developed that satisfy the requirements of all parties involved and ensure low-impact utilization of resources.

Sustainability matters are increasingly becoming the focus. Besides conventional supply chain management issues such as quality, costs, availability, and delivery dates, a greater role is increasingly played by climate change mitigation, energy and resource efficiency, as well as compliance with labor and human rights. The voestalpine Code of Conduct is binding for all suppliers and business partners.

ANALYSTS AND INVESTORS

Institutional investors and analysts are a key stakeholder group of voestalpine in its capacity as a listed company. The members of the Executive Board and the Investor Relations department maintain close contact with representatives of the owners and providers of capital, including through investor conferences, road shows, and individual meetings. Discussions with analysts and investors focus on the latest developments and the market situation as well as sustainability issues. In particular, the focus is on climate-relevant emissions and risks, respect for human rights in the company and in the supply chain, and regulatory requirements such as the EU Taxonomy Regulation.

RESEARCH INSTITUTES AND UNIVERSITIES

The collaboration between voestalpine and universities, and unaffiliated research institutes is indispensable and boosts the Group's research and development work. voestalpine supports outstanding dissertations, master's theses, and research projects. It also endows professorships that can generate knowledge relevant to its core business and contribute new insights. The members of voestalpine's Management Board personally represent the Group during special student events (some of which are also held virtually) and answer questions from the students, who, in their capacity as potential future employees, are considered an important stakeholder group.

NGOs, SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS, AND PLATFORMS

Representatives of voestalpine belong to various working groups and committees of advocacy groups and platforms. These include the World Steel Association ("worldsteel"); the Austrian Society for Metallurgy and Materials (ASMET); the European Steel Technology Platform (ESTEP); and the Austrian Financial Reporting and Auditing Committee (AFRAC). In addition, voestalpine actively engages in political debates with relevant industry associations such as the European Steel Association (EUROFER) and the European Rail Supply Industry Association (UNIFE) in order to present its views on socially and politically-relevant topics or to support a unified approach to the interpretation of particular statutory norms.

In April 2019, voestalpine became a member of ResponsibleSteel—a non-profit organization that focuses on the sustainable production of steel and the sustainable procurement of both raw and other materials. voestalpine actively engages in the ongoing development of the standard on which these policy initiatives are based. In the summer of 2021, the Group's largest steel plant (located in Linz, Austria) underwent an audit process aimed at obtaining certification pursuant to the ResponsibleSteel Standard; it is one of the very first steel companies to have done so. The surveillance audit provided for in the audit process was also completed with a positive outcome in the summer of 2024.

The company also maintains good communications with non-governmental organizations (NGOs). Its Management Board and experts engage in intensive and constructive exchanges of opinion with several NGOs, particularly with respect to energy and climate policies as well as other environmental topics.

The following outlines how the interests, views, and rights of its own workers, workers in the value chain, and affected communities are integrated into the strategy and the business model:

SBM-2 – S1 OWN WORKFORCE

The ongoing engagement of the workforce in decision-making processes not only strengthens the corporate culture but also ensures that the strategic direction of voestalpine is specifically tailored to the needs and expectations of its employees. Structured feedback processes make it possible to identify needs at an early stage, identify potential for improvement, and systematically incorporate these into business-critical decisions. Respect for human rights is a top priority: Internal guidelines, training courses, and monitoring mechanisms ensure that labor and social standards for all employees are consistently adhered to and continuously developed.

SBM-2 – S2 WORKERS IN THE VALUE CHAIN

There is currently no standardized process in place for the direct involvement of value chain workers. Any involvement takes place on an ad-hoc basis and the value chain workers can make use of the whistleblower system. A direct involvement process will be developed in preparation for the requirements of the CSDDD. Indirectly, this involves regular exchanges and close cooperation with relevant suppliers. For more information, see the topic-specific information on S2.

SBM-2 – S3 AFFECTED COMMUNITIES

Local communities, such as those located in the immediate vicinity of production facilities, are regularly involved in dialogues in the regions in which voestalpine operates, in order to understand their needs and concerns with regard to the company's activities. Based on this feedback, the company develops action plans that take into account both the economic success of voestalpine and the social and environmental concerns of the affected communities. In addition, the views of the communities are essential when it comes to ensuring voestalpine plays a long-term role as an important employer in the respective local communities. Further information is provided in the specific information on S3.

SBM-3 – Material impacts, risks, and opportunities and their interaction with strategy and business model

Prior to the compilation of this sustainability report, voestalpine identified and assessed its impacts on the environment and society (impact materiality) as well as the sustainability-related financial risks and opportunities (financial materiality) for the Group. The impacts, risks, and opportunities (IROs) assessed as material were assigned to the sustainability matters in accordance with ESRS 1 AR 16. In an aggregated presentation, nine of the ten topics for which topic-related standards are set forth in ESRSs were assessed as material. Only the issue of consumers and end-users (ESRS S4) was considered to be non-material.

The following topics are material and covered in the reporting through the application of the respective standards:

- » Climate change (ESRS E1)
- » Pollution (ESRS E2)
- » Water and marine resources (ESRS E3)
- » Biodiversity and ecosystems (ESRS E4)
- » Resource use and circular economy (ESRS E5)
- » Own workforce (ESRS S1)
- » Workers in the value chain (ESRS S2)
- » Affected communities (ESRS S3)
- » Business conduct (ESRS G1)

In addition, the topics of innovation, research, and development, and taxation were assessed as being material. The company-specific information on these issues can be found in the chapter on Environment or Corporate governance. For more information on the materiality assessment, see chapter IRO-1.

The following table summarizes the key voestalpine IROs. Detailed information on the individual IROs as well as on the policies, actions, targets, and metrics with which voestalpine manages them is provided at the beginning of each of the topic-specific chapters of this sustainability report.