

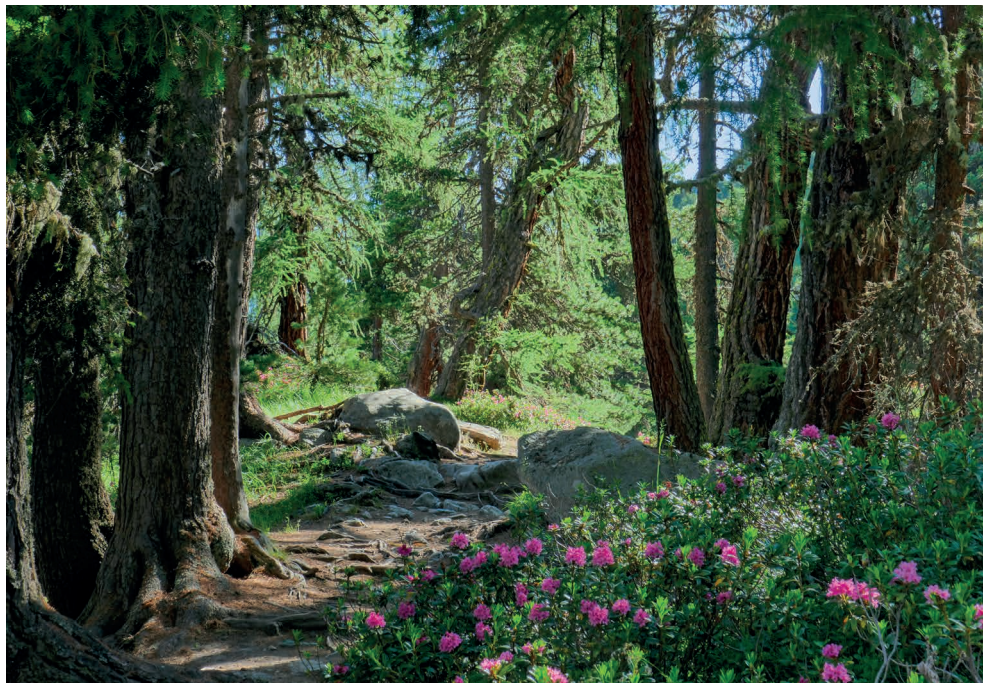


SUSTAINABILITY REPORT 2023

VZ GROUP

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The photos in this report were commissioned by VZ VermögensZentrum for a series of books about Swiss forests. We created these books with Heinz Staffelbach and produced them as an exclusive Christmas gift for our clients.

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INTRODUCTION

We founded VZ in 1993 with the aim of making the financial industry more transparent and giving consumers access to more attractive services. Today, VZ Group is the leading independent financial services provider in Switzerland.

Three elements are key for us: services that are geared to the benefit of our clients, consulting without conflict of interest and individual support by highly qualified specialists. We ensure that our clients prepare properly for retirement, make the right decisions at the time of retirement and are financially secure throughout the third phase of their lives. This is how we contribute to overcoming one of the great social challenges of our time.

VZ does not aim for short-term profit, but for healthy, long-term growth. We offer attractive and secure jobs, and we create many new positions year after year. Our success is made possible by our employees. Their accomplishments are extraordinary, and they shape our corporate culture. Our clients appreciate the fact that they receive comprehensive advice and individual support from us. In uncertain times and a challenging market like last year, this is particularly valuable.

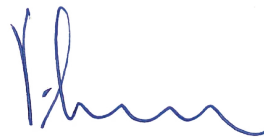
Our success is measured by our clients' satisfaction. Many of them recommend us to others because they feel well taken care of and have noticeably more money at their disposal thanks to our work. They also appreciate that VZ is a down-to-earth, scandal-free company with stable management and an impeccable reputation.

At VZ, we take our social responsibility seriously and also consider aspects of sustainability when making decisions. This report shows where we stand today in terms of sustainability and where we were able to improve last year.

We are grateful to all those involved with VZ and wish you an insightful read.



Matthias Reinhart
Chairman of the Board of Directors



Giulio Vitarelli
Chairman of the Executive Board

Zug, May 2024



Investing according to ESG criteria
(chapter 4)

- In addition to the existing ESG asset management mandates, we have launched a new mandate in which ESG criteria are applied to the selection of individual positions.
- Information on ESG risks is now integrated into the consulting as standard. After risk disclosure, we ask all clients with asset management, investment advisory or custody advisory mandates what emphasis they would like to place on ESG.
- In 2023, additional employees from asset management successfully completed certified ESG trainings, and we were able to expand the ESG team.
- All VZ Group employees with client contact have acquired knowledge on the topic of ESG in various training courses.
- VZ published studies and knowledge articles on ESG topics in 2023 as well, which are available to all interested parties free of charge.
- We have again systematically surveyed the ESG considerations of all fund providers in our ESG investment solutions using a questionnaire. The answers form the basis of our ESG dialogue with the fund companies.
- We have renamed the 'VZ Sustainability Profile' to 'ESG Rating' to emphasise that this assessment is based on ESG ratings. In client reportings, we also specify that this refers to financial opportunities and risks with regard to ESG in order to prevent misunderstandings.
- We are now also including our ESG rating for all clients who manage their portfolio themselves.
- We have launched a project to integrate the Swiss Climate Scores into our ESG reporting.

Responsible corporate governance
(chapter 5)

- In 2023, we have once again achieved stable revenue and profit growth in a challenging environment.
- The rating agency Moody's confirms VZ Depository Bank's 'Long-term Bank Deposit Rating' of Aa3 – one of the best grades.
- We have revised our Code of Conduct to include our expectations regarding ethical behaviour and respect for human rights, among other things, and also set out what we expect from our business partners.
- We have revised the whistleblowing process and introduced an electronic whistleblowing system. Employees and third parties can use this system to report possible misconduct anonymously or confidentially.

Social responsibility
(chapter 6)

- We have organised over 600 events on the topics of retirement, investing, home financing, estate planning, insurance and banking.
- VZ experts have given lectures at universities and universities of applied sciences.
- We publish valuable information on pension topics and practical tips from our experts on our website.
- Fotostiftung Schweiz, Synapsis Foundation, Casinotheater Winterthur and La Ligue vaudoise contre le cancer were introduced to a large audience in vz news.

**Social responsibility
as an employer**
(chapter 7)

- Compared to the previous year, we have increased our headcount by more than 140 new employees.
- VZ was also honoured with the Best Recruiters Award in 2023. This award evaluates all stages of recruitment, from the careers website and online job adverts to the response to letters of application and enquiries from interested parties.
- Converted to a full-time equivalent, our employees spend an average of 2.7 days on internal training courses that we offer as part of our career programme.
- Employees from the back office can now accompany consultants to client meetings for two days so that they can familiarise themselves even better with client concerns.
- We have continued to expand our training programme. Employees from some areas can now access the digital learning platform Udemy.
- 80 employees from five locations have taken part in the B2Run company run.

**Environmental
responsibility**
(chapter 8)

- vz news, our most important publication, is printed in a climate-neutral way. We continued to use recycled paper certified with the 'Blue Angel' environmental label for all other printed matter in 2023.
- The measures to save electricity when heating, ventilating and lighting proved successful and were continued.
- Thanks to our partnership with Swiss Climate, we were able to increase the scope and level of detail of our carbon balance sheet.
- In addition, we conducted a comprehensive mobility survey for the first time in order to better understand our employees' commuting behaviour.

VZ Group has branch offices in Switzerland, in Germany and the UK. As the major part of our business is in Switzerland, this sustainability report mainly refers to our Swiss activities.

Securing retirement provision poses enormous challenges for our society. This topic has consistently occupied one of the top three places on the gfs.bern research institute's Worry Barometer for years.

The 10 main concerns of Swiss voters

Concern	2023	2022	2021	2020	2023	2022	2021	2020
	Position				in percent of respondents			
Health/health insurance	1	6	5	6	40%	24%	25%	28%
Environment/climate change ¹	2	1	2	4	38%	39%	39%	29%
AHV/retirement provision	3	2	3	2	32%	37%	39%	37%
EU (bilateral treaties, integration)	4	4	4	7	26%	25%	33%	23%
Secure energy supply/nuclear power	5	3	10	10	26%	25%	14%	14%
Immigration ²	6	9	6	5	23%	19%	20%	28%
Inflation/depreciation	7	5	–	16	22%	24%	8%	10%
Housing costs/rental prices (new)	8	–	–	–	22%	13%	–	–
Refugees/asylum issues	9	10	7	8	20%	16%	19%	23%
Social security/social services (new)	10	–	–	–	15%	13%	–	–

1 Environmental protection/climate change/environmental disaster

2 Foreigners/immigration/free movement of persons

Long-term financial security after retirement is one of the main concerns in Switzerland. We embrace this challenge and aim to make a meaningful contribution in this area. Our goals are derived from there.

3.1 Our goal: well prepared for retirement

Our goal is to ensure that everyone prepares properly for retirement, makes the right decisions, avoids costly mistakes and is therefore financially secure during the third phase of their lives. With our advice, we ensure that they save more money for their old age, invest more successfully, reduce their tax burden, pay lower fees and mortgage interest, are better insured and can pass on their estate in accordance with their wishes.

Our expertise covers all topics relevant for retirement:

- Retirement planning
- Financial investments
- Real estate financing and development
- Taxes
- Insurance
- Estate planning and execution of wills
- Succession in business

Our work is based on the following principles

Financial consulting free from conflict of interest

Our experts develop concepts to optimise income, assets and taxes. We do not broker or sell financial products, but are financed by consulting and management fees. This is why we can advise our clients without any conflict of interest.

Expertise

It takes experience and a genuine culture of consulting to provide sound advice. At VZ we see the big picture and offer everything from a single source – because we combine expertise in retirement planning, investment advice and asset management, tax, insurance, estate planning and real estate.

Investing without experiments

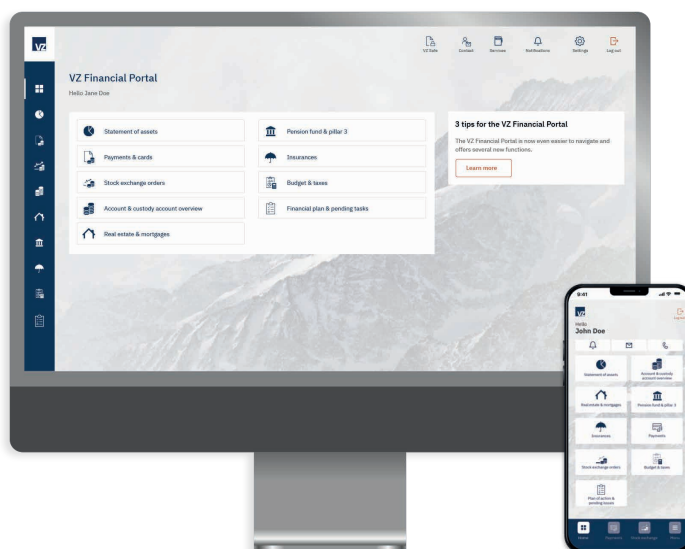
For us, security is as important as returns. That is why our clients do not experiment when it comes to investing money. We strictly refrain from issuing our own investment products. Depending on our clients' preferences, we also take ESG criteria into account in our objective selection process.

Cost-effective solutions

Our solutions for investments, mortgages, insurance and pensions are simple and inexpensive, and they create real added value for our clients. VZ can cover all the financial needs of a household at a much lower cost than other providers – also because unnecessary commissions and brokerage costs are eliminated from all services.

Personal support on site and online

Every client has a personal consultant who accompanies them. Clients choose whether they come to our premises for meetings, prefer video advice or use VZ Finanzportal.



Financial consulting for the LGBT community

We cater to client groups with different needs. That is why we offer specialised consulting and a free newsletter with financial tips for the LGBT community (www.vz.ch.com/lgbt). The newsletter covers questions such as «What are the financial consequences if I convert my registered partnership into a marriage?», or «How do I settle my estate in a same-sex partnership?».

Awards for our consulting

We regularly review the quality of our work with client surveys, using the Net Promoter Score (NPS) as an important indicator. In 2023, our NPS was 74.6, a very high satisfaction and recommendation rate. Poor ratings are analysed in detail and measures are taken to improve our services. External ratings also confirm that we are on the right track. These reveal that VZ is one of the best financial advisors and asset managers.

In recent years, the VZ has been regularly honoured by independent juries



3.2 These are the principles we adhere to

We have established a set of principles that govern our strategy and guide us in our day-to-day interactions with clients:

We create value

Everything we do should bring our clients the greatest possible benefit. Our work is successful when they achieve a measurable improvement. We measure our clients' satisfaction by unfiltered feedback.

We put our clients' needs at the centre of everything we do

We focus our work on providing our clients with the best possible service. All other activities are subordinate to this mission.

We think long-term

While the financial industry still tends to have a short-term mindset, we are committed to the long term. Clients trust us because we act with integrity and professionalism and treat all parties involved fairly and responsibly.

We make complex things simple

Our experts make complex topics accessible to everyone by explaining things in a simple and understandable way. This enables our clients to make informed decisions at the right time.

We are committed to quality and innovation

We expand our expertise on an ongoing basis. Our employees are qualified and highly motivated. They continue to train and share their knowledge with each other. This allows us to continuously improve the quality of our consulting and to give our clients access to innovative services.



Investments are particularly important for retirement provision. With the proper strategy, investors can significantly increase their savings for retirement. In the following sections, you will learn about the principles on which our investment philosophy is based and how ESG criteria are incorporated into the investment process. ESG stands for Environment, Social, Governance. These are important dimensions of sustainability – however, there is still no generally recognised definition of sustainability.

4.1 The VZ formula for long-term investment success

When it comes to old-age provision, the focus lies on long-term investment success. That is why we believe in an investment strategy without experiments, in independent implementation and in active client support:

Three factors for success



Investment strategy without experiments

The first step is to identify the appropriate investor profile for each client and to determine their ESG preference. For this purpose, we evaluate the individual risk tolerance and risk capacity – usually within the framework of a comprehensive and long-term income and wealth planning.

When consulting new clients, we have also been addressing ESG criteria as standard for several years. We expanded this content in 2023. Clients are informed about ESG risks. This enables them to make an informed decision as to whether ESG criteria should be explicitly considered when selecting their investments. In 2024, we will provide this information to existing clients who have not yet explicitly decided in favour of or against the consideration of ESG criteria.

Within the defined investor profile, we implement the investment strategy primarily with traditional asset classes that are simple, liquid and can be replicated transparently. These assets primarily include equities, interest-bearing securities and property. For clients who wish to take ESG criteria into account, we prefer products that apply ESG strategies in the investment process and can therefore achieve better ESG characteristics. We pursue international diversification with a focus on the Swiss market. We also deliberately avoid direct investments in commodities and do not invest in hedge funds, private equity or private debt. With this conservative policy, we avoid unnecessary risks without compromising on the expected long-term return.

Independent implementation

Our independence facilitates an efficient implementation of the investment strategy. For example, we were one of the first providers in Switzerland to introduce transparent all-in fees that do not incentivise unnecessary transactions. And because we do not issue our

own investment products, we can select the most favourable products in the interest of our clients. For more than 10 years, we have relied on straightforward and transparent index funds to minimise product costs. Active funds are only used very selectively with individual mandates, for example if no suitable passive product is available or if we can improve the portfolio's ESG characteristics with such funds.

Active support

Our consultants are familiar with retirement and pension issues, securities, taxes, insurance or estate planning and actively guide their clients through all stages of life. Clear communication and regular exchanges support long-term success. This also includes constantly reviewing the clients' situation. For example, investor profiles are regularly adjusted on the basis of detailed, long-term income and wealth planning covering the upcoming 15 years.

Active support also protects our clients from decisions motivated by short-term considerations, such as panic selling during the Corona pandemic. It is well established that an emotionally driven turn away from a long-term investment strategy can noticeably worsen the return.

4.2 Launch of an additional ESG investment solution

In 2023, we expanded our ESG investment solutions by launching an additional mandate ('Index based asset management with ESG focus') for clients who wish to explicitly take ESG criteria into account. This mandate invests exclusively in low-cost, passive index funds that pursue ESG strategies wherever possible. As a result, we can cater even better to the needs of this client group.

4.3 ESG criteria in our investment process

Within an investment context, we assess sustainability using the three ESG dimensions of environment, social and governance. ESG characteristics can be improved on several levels throughout the investment process. The chart on the following page illustrates our three-stage investment process, in which we can take ESG aspects into account depending on the mandate and client preference, from the definition of the strategic allocation to tactical investment decisions and security selection.

ESG criteria in our investment process

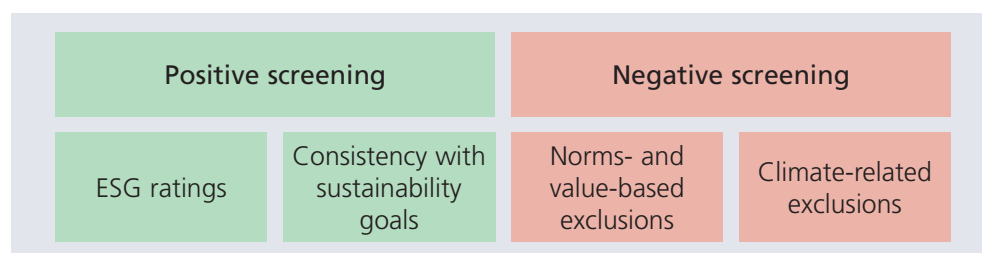
	Description	ESG measures (examples)
Step 1: Strategic asset allocation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Long-term target weight of asset classes Annual review 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exclusions (e.g. commodities)
Step 2: Tactical asset allocation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seizing short- to medium-term opportunities Ongoing review 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investment in sustainability topics (e.g. green bonds)
Step 3: Security selection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Selection of investment instruments Ongoing review 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investment in ESG funds (e.g. index funds on MSCI World SRI)

In the strategic asset allocation (step 1), the long-term target weights of the asset classes are defined. This allocation to main and subclasses determines the expected relationship between return and risk as well as the ESG characteristics of the securities portfolio to a large extent. We focus mainly on broadly diversified markets in the areas of equities and interest-bearing securities and refrain, for example, from direct investments in commodities.

In the tactical asset allocation (step 2), temporary deviations from the target weighting are made in order to take advantage of short- and medium-term opportunities. Both return and risk considerations as well as ESG characteristics aspects are taken into account here as well.

The final step is the selection of securities. VZ primarily uses passive funds (ETF/index funds) and only occasionally active funds and individual securities. For certain mandates, we primarily use passive funds that are based on ESG-optimised indices such as the MSCI World SRI. For these mandates, we consider up to four criteria when selecting securities:

Positive/negative screening



In positive screening, investments with high ESG ratings are preferred. Depending on the mandate, only investments with a minimum rating may be selected. Equity and fixed-income funds must score at least 10 out of 20 points. In addition, compliance with sustainability goals may also be taken into account. This includes, for example, «Green Bonds» and companies with a high share of revenue in one or more of the UN's 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

In negative screening, investments that do not meet certain criteria are excluded. Within the framework of the value-based criteria, these are, for example, companies whose revenues in business areas such as alcohol, tobacco, weapons, gambling, pornography, genetically modified organisms or nuclear energy exceed a defined threshold. Or companies that violate principles listed in the UN Global Compact (UNGC), such as the ban on forced labour. Climate-related exclusions include, for example, companies that emit above-average amounts of greenhouse gases (tonnes of CO₂ equivalents in Scope 1 and 2 per million US dollars in revenue). Equity funds must perform better overall than the world equity index in terms of their associated CO₂ emissions. In addition, equity funds may only contain a certain proportion of companies that rely on substances that are particularly harmful to the environment, such as shale oil. Limits also apply to the entire portfolio, which may not be exceeded for value-based criteria.

Dialogue on ESG topics

Since we invest almost exclusively in collective investment funds, the voting rights are held by the fund providers, with whom we engage in an ESG dialogue. In regular discussions, we motivate them to expand their range of ESG funds. 2022 we have developed an ESG questionnaire that we ask fund providers to answer. This questionnaire was sent to all fund providers in our mandates with an ESG focus in 2023. We have also increased the proportion of ESG funds used in 2023.

4.4 ESG Rating

Environment, Social and Corporate Governance (ESG)



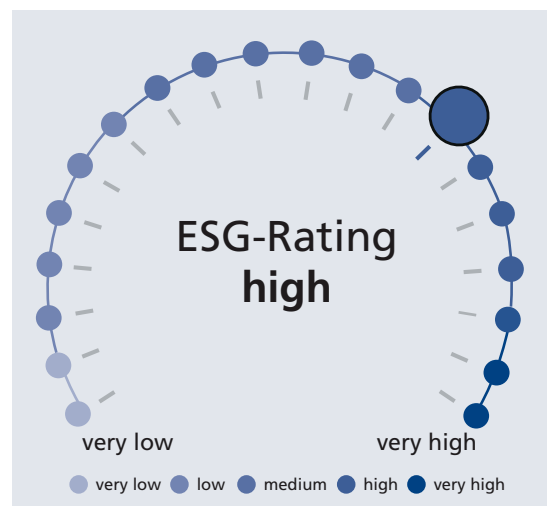
ESG rating providers include different topics in their analysis and apply different criteria, which they weight or assess differently. This can lead to several rating providers rating the same company differently.

Assessing portfolios

We assess the ESG characteristics of investments with the ESG rating based on the three dimensions of environment, social and governance (figure above). In 2023, we renamed the rating from 'VZ sustainability profile' to 'ESG rating' to make it clear that the ESG characteristics of investments are assessed using ESG ratings. In the client reporting, we further specify that financial opportunities and risks are assessed regarding ESG in order to avoid misunderstandings. Along with the name, we have also slightly adjusted the methodology, partly to take account of changes in data providers.

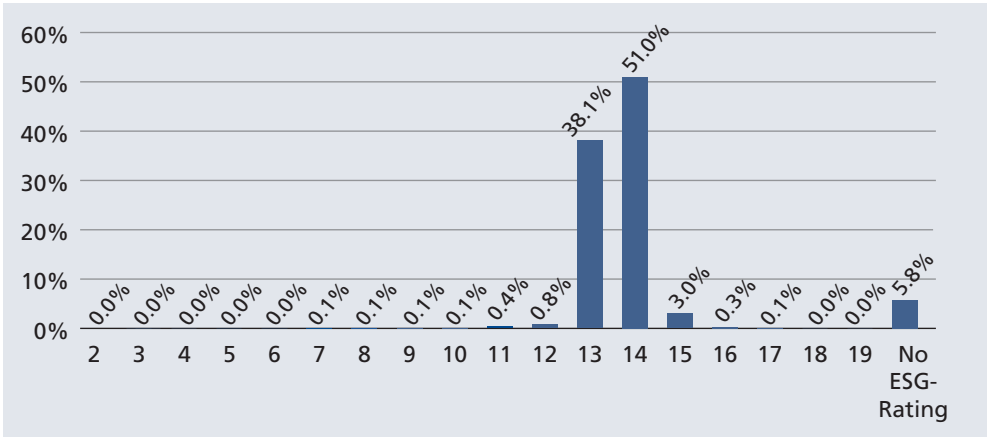
For the ESG rating, we use two providers that are global leaders in this area: MSCI ESG and Morningstar/Sustainalytics. ESG rating providers specialise in the analysis of ESG data, which is why we rely on their assessment. Our ESG rating takes into account the ratings of these two providers in equal measure. As a result, our assessment is backed up more broadly.

The ESG rating gives companies and countries a score of 1 to 20 points. The higher the ESG characteristics are rated, the higher the score. To determine the ESG rating of an entire portfolio, the weighted average of the ESG ratings of all individual securities in the portfolio is calculated. The example on the right shows a portfolio with the ESG rating «high».



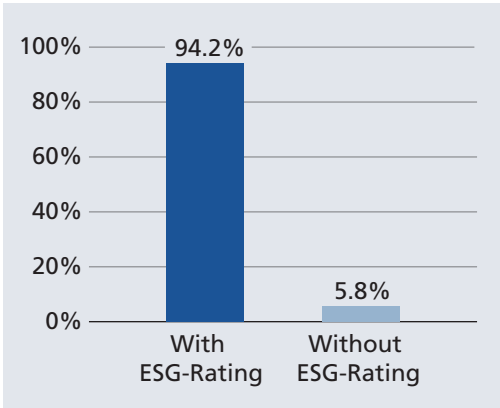
The chart below shows that the majority of our portfolios achieve at least 14 out of 20 points. That is a high rating. The majority of the remaining portfolios achieve 13 points, the highest medium rating. All investment solutions are taken into account in the following evaluation (asset management and advisory mandates within the 2nd pillar, unrestricted pension provision and pillar 3a and self-managed accounts). Portfolios with scores below 13 points typically belong to clients with a advisory mandate (the decision to buy or sell assets lies with the client) or are self-managed custody accounts that place less emphasis on ESG. No ESG rating is calculated for portfolios in which less than 65 percent of the investments can be covered by ESG ratings. The proportion of these portfolios is below 6 percent. Most of these portfolios also belong to advisory clients or are self-managed portfolios.

93 percent of all portfolios score at least 13 points in the ESG rating



4.5 ESG rating in our reporting

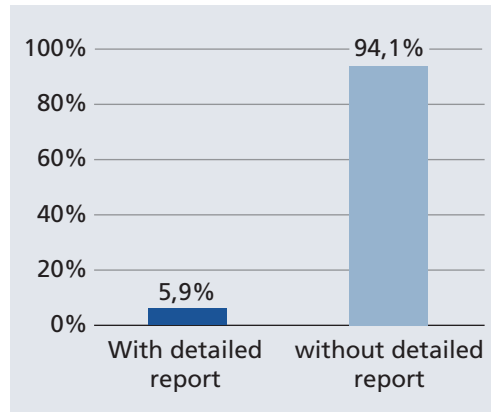
94 percent of our clients receive the ESG rating



Existing clients regularly receive a comprehensive report on the development of their assets. This includes, for example, transparently disclosing the net return after deduction of all fees. VZ was one of the first financial services providers to integrate information on ESG characteristics into its reporting as standard (e.g. ESG rating of invested assets). In total, more than 94 percent of our clients receive

the ESG rating within the unrestricted savings (including self-managed portfolios), 2nd pillar and pillar 3a (see chart above). Only a few clients do not yet receive this information because they do not have a comprehensive investment solution or use special investment instruments without an ESG rating.

Almost 6 percent of all clients receive the detailed report



Around 6 percent of our clients also receive a detailed report, which contains additional analyses such as the proportion of undesirable business activities or CO₂ intensity (chart on the left).

Comprehensive ESG reporting is to be expanded further. In 2023, we launched a project to further develop our existing ESG reporting, for example by including the Swiss Climate Scores. The transparency

criteria developed by the Swiss Confederation provide clients with meaningful and comparable information on the climate compatibility of their portfolio.

4.6 Awareness for sustainable investments

We provide studies, specialist articles, videos and seminars to build expertise on the topic of investing according to ESG criteria (illustration below). In 2023, for example, we analysed seven widespread claims about sustainable investment in a comprehensive study. This study is available to all interested parties free of charge. This is also a contribution as part of our commitment as a signatory to the UN Principles for Responsible Investment (UN PRI).

Information on ESG investments

Studies

Fact sheets

Tutorials

Seminars

ESG expertise in asset management

ESG is a key topic in asset management. More than half of the employees in asset management have already successfully completed external training in the area of ESG (e.g. CFA Certificate in ESG Investing, CFA UK Certificate in Climate and Investing, EFFAS Certified ESG Analyst, GARP Certificate in Sustainability and Climate Risk, GRI Certified Sustainability Professional). VZ sponsors such external training courses and covers 100 percent of the costs. In 2023, further employees successfully completed such certified ESG training courses, and we were able to hire a dedicated ESG analyst with a doctorate in ESG. In addition, VZ was able to support the roll-out of the new Certificate in Impact Investing certification through the participation of several employees in the CFA Society of the UK pilot project.

Ongoing internal training on ESG

The training of our employees is central to ensuring that our clients are properly informed and advised. In addition to promoting external training, we therefore also organise internal training courses on ESG. This ensures that the entire asset management team and all employees who are in contact with clients have specialised knowledge on the topic of ESG in investments. The key topics relating to sustainable investment and ESG are discussed in several meetings each month. This keeps asset management employees informed about trends and regulatory requirements.

New consultants complete a module on ESG as part of their basic training. In addition, there are mandatory e-learning sessions, a lunch campus, visits to branch offices and other knowledge transfer formats for all employees.

Portfolio checks

Since 2021, interested investors have been invited to have the ESG characteristics of their securities analysed by our experts. Our analyses show, for example, the proportion of undesirable business activities or the CO₂ intensity of a portfolio.

4.7 Data suppliers and network

In the area of sustainability, we cooperate with renowned data suppliers. We are members of industry organisations and support an international network for sustainable investment with the UN PRI. These are our main collaborations:

MSCI ESG Research

VZ uses the expertise and data of MSCI ESG Research, a leading US-based rating agency in the assessment of sustainability.

Morningstar/Sustainalytics

We enrich our data with information and ratings provided by Morningstar/Sustainalytics, another major provider of ESG data from the Netherlands and the US.

UN Principles for Responsible Investment (UN PRI)

The UN PRI are an investor initiative in partnership with the UN Environment Programme UNEP and the UN Global Compact. The UN PRI help to ensure that ESG criteria are taken into account in investment decisions. VZ is a member and has committed to comply with the six UN PRI principles and to gradually integrate ESG into its investment processes.

Swiss Sustainable Finance (SSF)

We are a member of SSF, a platform of financial service providers, investors, universities, and public bodies. The aim of SSF is to make Switzerland the leading centre for sustainable financial services.

PACTA 2020/22 Climate Alignment Test

In 2020 and 2022, we took part in the voluntary climate compatibility tests organised by the Federal Office for the Environment (BAFU) and the State Secretariat for International Financial Matters (SIF). The test is carried out every two years and VZ will also take part in the next BAFU climate compatibility test in 2024.

VAV/ABG Contact Group Sustainable Finance

The Association of Swiss Asset and Wealth Management Banks (VAV/ABG) represents the interests of the Swiss financial sector. We have been a member of the VAV/ABG for many years and have been involved in this contact group since 2020.

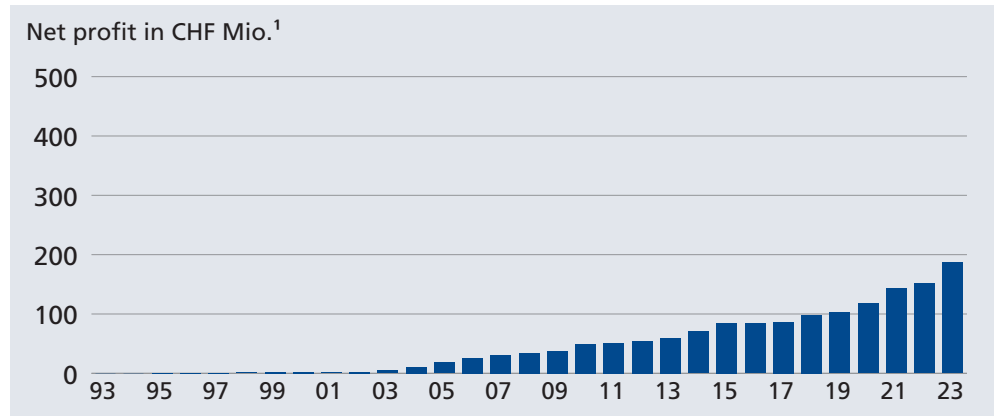
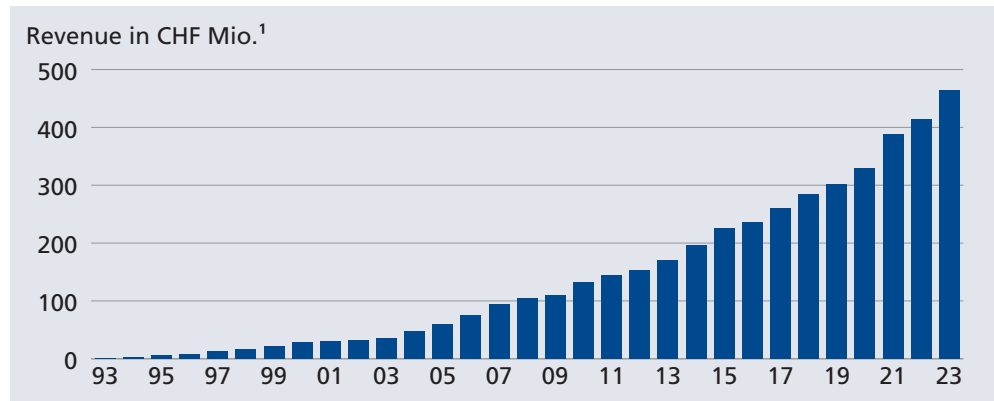


VZ Holding Ltd has been listed on the SIX Swiss Exchange since 2007 and is supervised by the Swiss Financial Market Supervisory Authority (Finma). We comply with all regulatory requirements, laws, regulations and best practices. The following sections focus on the topics that are particularly relevant for financial service providers in terms of responsible corporate governance.

5.1 Stable and low-risk business model

A solid financial foundation is the core of responsible corporate governance. Our business model is geared towards stability, the long term and thus sustainability, without short-term profit maximisation. For almost 30 years, VZ Group has recorded stable, organic revenue and profit growth.

VZ Group’s revenues and profit since its foundation in 1993



¹ 1993–2003 according to Swiss GAAP, from 2004 according to IFRS

We have always limited ourselves to the onshore business. This decision reduces our risks and saves us, for example, from the disputes over untaxed assets with the EU and the USA, which brought many Swiss banks into distress.

Our balance sheet is very solid and low-risk. About 60 percent of the balance sheet total is invested in first-class Swiss residential mortgages with top credit ratings. The rest is mainly invested with the Swiss National Bank, other Swiss banks, public corporations or in very safe bonds. We do not lend to companies or finance industrial or infrastructure projects such as gold mines, dams or pipelines. The Equator Principles, a voluntary set of rules for banks to comply with environmental and social standards in the area of project financing, are therefore not relevant for us.

At 26.2 percent, VZ Group's core capital ratio is very solid and above average compared to Swiss banks. The regulatory minimum requirements are exceeded by far.

VZ Depository Bank Ltd's own funds are also well above average. Since 2021, VZ Depository Bank has been rated by Moody's and received a «Long-term Bank Deposit Rating» of Aa3 with a stable outlook. This is one of Moody's highest ratings (the highest being Aaa). It reflects VZ Depository Bank Ltd's above-average capitalisation and prudent risk strategy. Since the first analysis, Moody's has confirmed VZ Depository Bank Ltd's rating every year.

5.2 Exemplary compliance

Compliance with legal, regulatory and internal provisions as well as market standards is standard practice for us. There have never been any relevant legal cases against VZ Group, its subsidiaries or their governing bodies that could jeopardise the company's reputation or its financial security.

Code of conduct

Our code of conduct sets out our core values, objectives and behaviours that guide all VZ employees and the Board of Directors. These rules outline what VZ expects and what all stakeholders can rely on. The Code of Conduct has been revised in 2023. We affirm that we fulfil our responsibility towards society and the environment, and we have introduced a whistleblowing process. We also included our expectations regarding ethical behaviour and respect for human rights and specify what we expect from our business partners. Every year, all employees confirm that they have complied with the specified rules of conduct and behaviour and receive regular training on how to adhere to them. The Code of Conduct is published at www.vzch.com/code-of-conduct (PDF).

Bribery and corruption

In our Code of Conduct, we commit ourselves to incorruptibility, compliance with the law and fair competition. We have concretised these principles in directives. Employees must not offer, promise or grant any benefits (payments, gifts, favours) in order to carry out an act in breach of duty (active bribery). They must also not accept or demand benefits (payments, gifts, favours, etc.) from clients, business partners or public officials in order to carry out an act in breach of duty (passive bribery).

As a matter of principle, no gifts, invitations or pecuniary advantages may be accepted from clients or business partners. In this way, we minimise the risk of a conflict of interest, acceptance of benefits or bribery. Employees may exceptionally accept gifts or invitations

of a small value (maximum CHF 200) if they inform their superiors. If the value exceeds CHF 200, a written authorisation from the superior is required. Cash must not be accepted. Employees and supervisors shall ensure that the acceptance of gifts and invitations does not lead to a conflict of interest.

In additional directives, we regulate how conflicts of interest are handled, which mandates and secondary employment employees are permitted to hold, and how a mandate or secondary employment is approved.

Money laundering

In the financial industry, it is particularly important to comply with the requirements for combating money laundering and terrorist financing. VZ Group's policies and processes are designed to effectively prevent money laundering and terrorist financing and to identify all parties involved in such transactions. It is forbidden to have business relationships with companies and individuals that we know or have reason to believe belong to, support or finance a terrorist or criminal organisation. It is also prohibited to accept assets that we know or have reason to believe are derived from a crime or qualified tax offence, even if the offences were committed abroad.

Market conduct rules

We undertake to comply with all applicable laws, rules and regulations, also in transactions involving securities. In particular, insider trading and market manipulation by employees for their own benefit, for the benefit of third parties or for the benefit of VZ Group are prohibited. In addition, we prevent VZ Group from becoming involved in securities transactions for clients if there are indications of insider trading or market manipulation. As part of the regulatory audit plan of the external auditors, the topics of conflict of interest, money laundering, financing of terrorism and market conduct rules are audited for the entire VZ Group.

Undeclared assets

We do not accept assets that have not been declared for tax purposes. If it turns out that assets have not been declared for tax purposes, we show how they can be retroactively declared. Previously undeclared assets are only accepted once they have been demonstrably cleared for tax purposes.

Human rights and ethical behaviour

VZ attaches great importance to ethical business behaviour. We expect our employees to adhere to ethical standards in all areas of business, and we are committed to respecting human rights in all areas of business. Within our sphere of influence, we support the protection and promotion of human rights and ensure that all employees act in accordance with internationally recognised human rights. We do not tolerate child labour, forced labour or other forms of exploitation. This applies to the entire VZ Group with all its locations and employees.

The same is also expected of our business partners. We are active in Switzerland, Germany and England. Human rights are enshrined in the constitutions of these countries and in the European Convention on Human Rights.

Corporate governance

VZ Group applies corporate governance standards and best practices and clearly defines the responsibilities of the governing bodies and committees. Full details are published in the Corporate Governance section of the Annual Report:
www.vzch.com/corporategovernance2023

Whistle blowing

Integrity, law-abidance and compliant behaviour are the basis for VZ Group's good reputation and the prerequisite for our clients, employees and business partners to trust VZ. To protect our good reputation, we must all be vigilant, point out irregularities, misconduct or risks in the workplace and report signs of violations of the law and criminal offences. In 2023, we revised the processes for whistleblowing and introduced an electronic whistleblowing system. It is also available to clients, business partners and other persons outside VZ.

The principles and the reporting process are detailed in the «Whistleblowing» directive. Reports of possible wrongdoing are to be addressed primarily to line managers, the responsible HR manager, a person of trust (ombudsman) within VZ or a member of management. If this is not possible or expedient, the electronic whistleblower system is available. It is accessible around the clock, both from VZ devices and from private devices.

Information can be reported anonymously or by disclosing the whistleblower's identity. All reports and the whistleblower's identity will be treated confidentially. Anyone who makes a justified report is protected from sanctions and negative consequences. Persons who are subject to any sanctions or fear negative consequences as a result of their report can contact their line manager, the HR manager, the ombudsman's office or a member of the Executive Board. All employees have been informed about the electronic whistleblowing system, including part-time and temporary employees. They are regularly informed about how to report complaints in training sessions and information events.

5.3 Responsibilities and control

VZ Group's Board of Directors is responsible for compliance with and review of applicable regulations and for the effectiveness of the internal control system. The Risk, Sustainability & Audit Committee supports the Board of Directors, among other things, in complying with legal and regulatory requirements and in overseeing risk management. With the help of the internal audit department, it reviews the effectiveness of the control systems and processes and informs the Board of Directors.

Internal control system

The internal control system (ICS) is an important part of the Group-wide risk management. It comprises the control structures and processes that are the basis for proper operation and the achievement of business policy goals at all levels of the organisation. On the one hand, the ICS defines processes for units with client contact, the mid- and back-office. According to the Finma Circular Corporate Governance, these are the controls of the profit-oriented business units (first line of defence). On the other hand, the ICS includes the independent control bodies (risk control and compliance), which monitor the risks as well as compliance with legal, regulatory and internal regulations

(second line of defence). The independent control bodies conduct regular reviews in cooperation with the profit-oriented units. In these reviews, significant risks are evaluated, controls are defined and documented.

Audits

Internal and external auditors carry out annual audits of all VZ Group companies based on a comprehensive risk assessment and the requirements of the supervisory authorities as well as of the Risk, Sustainability & Audit Committee. Compliance requirements are audited annually. The auditors inform the Risk, Sustainability & Audit Committee and the Executive Board in writing about the results of their audits. If necessary, the appropriate measures are initiated immediately.

5.4 Protection and security of data

VZ is subject to confidentiality obligations that are governed by data protection law, bank client confidentiality and other regulations.

Information is classified into the categories secret, confidential, internal and public. Different security precautions apply for each of these categories. This classification defines how employees must handle the information when receiving, processing, disposing of or deleting it. Independently thereof, a clean-desk rule applies: employees must store away all documents and lock their computer even when they leave it for a short time. Documents containing sensitive data are disposed of in the designated shredder containers only.

On 1 September 2023, the revised Swiss Data Protection Act came into force, which we have implemented for the companies in Switzerland. Among other things, we inform all clients transparently about what happens with their data.

The respective country's data protection declaration is published on the local websites:

Switzerland: vzch.com/datenschutz

Germany: vermoegenszentrum.de/datenschutzerklaerung

UK: luminwealth.co.uk/privacy-policy

We do not sell personal data to third parties. How long personal data is stored depends on the processing purpose. VZ complies with the prescribed retention periods and safeguards its legitimate interests (e.g. for contacting and maintaining contacts).

We continuously monitor the legal requirements for data protection and information security and ensure that they are complied with. The parameters for compliance (e.g. local data protection laws, bank client confidentiality, good business practices) are specified and monitored by the Legal & Compliance, Risk Office and IT departments.

VZ is a member of several professional associations for a regular exchange of information with experts on data protection and information security.

Responsibility

Legal & Compliance or – where required by law – local data protection officers are responsible for ensuring that legal requirements are met. Responsible for the IT operations is the IT Board, where the heads of all IT departments are represented. In addition, there is an Executive Committee for all subsidiaries, which deals with key IT issues. The risk office is responsible for information security.

The Head Legal & Compliance, the Data Protection Officer and the relevant risk officer regularly inform the Executive Committee and the Risk, Sustainability & Audit Committee of the Board of Directors. Reporting is mainly based on the standard of the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST).

We resolve security incidents, analyse and assess them to identify risks and define preventive measures. If security breaches occur, we report them to the responsible authorities in accordance with legal requirements and inform the affected individuals. There were no reportable incidents in 2023.

Cyber security

With digitalisation, cyber-crime is becoming an increasingly urgent problem, and the threat is growing constantly. Therefore, cyber security has a high priority.

We proactively assess potential threats, take measures to protect IT systems, data and processes and keep them up to date. This is confirmed by annual audits by internal and external auditors. In 2023, we were able to certify our internal IT in accordance with ISAE 3402. Moreover, we work with specialised partner companies, for example regarding the Security Operations Centre, Incident Response, forensic analysis for periodic security audits or penetration tests, and we network with the National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC). This government agency is responsible for combating cybercrime in Switzerland.

The majority of the essential IT systems are operated by external IT providers in Switzerland, including the Finnova banking software, VZ Finanzportal and the related systems. The risks of new outsourcing partnerships are thoroughly reviewed by the Business, IT, Risk Office and Legal & Compliance units. At least once a year, outsourcing partners are reviewed to ensure that they comply with all contracts and service level agreements (SLAs).

We also conduct ongoing awareness campaigns to sensitise employees to cyber security. They learn to identify and report suspicious emails. This helps them to know what to expect, what the attackers' targets are and how to react when they receive suspicious mails.

5.5 Employee training

Regular trainings

To ensure compliance with the regulations and directives, we regularly train all permanent, temporary and part-time employees on topics such as bank client and business secrecy, cybercrime, market conduct rules or the Financial Services Act (Fidleg). We also inform them about combating money laundering, terrorism financing and child and adult protection and repeat these training courses at fixed intervals. All employees must complete these training courses and answer the examination questions correctly.

Once a year, all employees confirm that they have complied with all applicable rules of conduct, directives and regulations and have fulfilled their duties. All directives and regulations are published on the intranet. In addition, we obtain an extract from the criminal and debt enforcement register; for employees from certain business areas annually, for the others every three years.

5.6 Organisation in relation to sustainability

Three members of our Board of Directors have proven expertise in the area of ESG. As current or former CEOs of banks, three are also proven experts in the area of risk management. The Risk, Sustainability & Audit Committee is responsible for sustainability and risk management. Manuel Rüttsche is responsible for sustainability within the Executive Board. Manuel Rüttsche has been a member of VZ Group's Executive Board since 2018 and is Head of asset management. Among other things, he heads the Sustainability Committee, which is made up of representatives from various business units. This committee meets at least once a month.



We are also committed to charitable and cultural causes. For example, VZ finances benches along hiking trails throughout Switzerland, our employees spend a few hours a year working in nature, experiencing ecological knowledge first-hand, and they pass on their professional expertise to students at universities and universities of applied sciences.

6.1 Sponsoring and charitable activities

In 2023, Fotostiftung Schweiz, Stiftung Synapsis, Casinotheater Winterthur and Ligue vaudoise contre le cancer were featured in the vz news. With well over 950,000 readers, vz news is a valuable platform for these organisations to present their work in order to gain members and receive donations (examples below).

vz news features

Das VZ unterstützt die Fotostiftung Schweiz und das Fotomuseum Winterthur

Die Fotografie ist ein wertvolles Kulturgut und eine wichtige Zeitzeugin. Das geht leicht vergessen angesichts der Bilderflut auf allen Kanälen. Auf das Sammeln, Konservieren und Vermitteln fotografischer Werke hat sich das Fotozentrum in Winterthur spezialisiert.

Zum Fotozentrum gehören die Fotostiftung Schweiz und das Fotomuseum Winterthur. Diese beiden unabhängigen Institutionen sind das führende Kompetenzzentrum für Fotografie und fotobasierte Kunst. Ihre Bestände machen einen bedeutenden Teil des visuellen Gedächtnisses der Schweiz aus.

► **Die Fotostiftung** verfolgt das Ziel, ihre Sammlung öffentlich zugänglich zu machen. Sie engagiert sich vor allem für das fotografische Erbe der Schweiz. Im Auftrag des Bundesamts für Kultur betreut sie rund 100 Archive herausragender Fotografinnen und Fotografen sowie eine umfassende Sammlung zur Schweizer Fotografie.

► **Das Fotomuseum** zeigt in wechselnden Ausstellungen internationales, zeitgenössisches Fotoschaffen, etablierte Kunstschaffende und Nachwuchsfotografen. Der Förderverein finanziert unter anderem spezielle Ankäufe. So ist eine hochkarätige Sammlung entstanden.

1 Das VZ Vermögenszentrum unterstützt diese Organisationen. Wenn Ihnen das fotografische Erbe der Schweiz am Herzen liegt, können Sie Mitglied oder Gönner werden und so den Erhalt, die Erforschung und die Vermittlung fotografischer Werke unterstützen. Mehr dazu erfahren Sie unter: www.fotomuseum.ch www.fotostiftung.ch

Unterstützung für die Stiftung Synapsis

In der Schweiz leben fast 150'000 Menschen mit einer Demenz-Erkrankung, die meisten von ihnen mit Alzheimer. Das Bundesamt für Gesundheit schätzt, dass sich diese Zahl in den nächsten 30 Jahren mehr als verdoppeln könnte. Trotz intensiver Forschung ist eine Heilung bis heute nicht möglich. Hier setzt die «Stiftung Synapsis – Demenz Forschung Schweiz» an. Die unabhängige Stiftung bündelt finanzielle Mittel, um damit Projekte an Schweizer Spitälern und Universitäten zu unterstützen. «Jedes Jahr gibt es eine öffentliche Ausschreibung. Unser wissenschaftlicher Beirat wählt zusammen mit führenden Fachleuten aus dem In- und Ausland die besten acht bis zehn Projekte aus», erklärt Geschäftsführerin Corinne Denzler. Ein Beispiel ist ein wegweisendes Projekt an der Universität Zürich, wo minimal invasive und kostengünstigste Methoden zur Früherkennung erforscht werden. «Neben der Grundlagenforschung ist die Früherkennung ganz entscheidend. Denn wenn die ersten Anzeichen einer Demenz auftreten, ist das Gehirn bereits stark geschädigt.»

1 Möchten Sie mithelfen, dass die Forschung wirkungsvolle Methoden zur Früherkennung und Behandlung von Demenz findet? Mit einer Spende, Schenkung oder einem Vermächtnis können Sie einen Beitrag dazu leisten. Die Stiftung ist steuerbefreit und wird vom Bund beauftragt. Erfahren Sie mehr unter: www.demenz-forschung.ch

DEMENTZ FORSCHUNG
STIFTUNG SYNAPSIS SCHWEIZ

Casinotheater Winterthur: erfolgreicher Kulturbetrieb ohne Subventionen

Comedy, Satire, Kabarett, Poetry-Slam, Improvisationstheater und Musik: Das Casinotheater Winterthur ist ein Leuchtturm der Schweizer Comedy-Szene. «Unser Betrieb funktioniert seit über 20 Jahren erfolgreich ohne Beiträge der öffentlichen Hand», sagt Beat Imhof. Er leitet das Casinotheater, das heute ein KMU mit rund 70 Mitarbeitenden ist. Neben einem abwechslungsreichen Theaterbetrieb gehören ein Restaurant und eine Event-Abteilung zum Kulturbetrieb. «Satire ist Kritik von unten nach oben – sie muss übertreiben, zuspitzen und unterhalten», sagt Imhof. Darum ist es wichtig, dass das Casinotheater unabhängig bleibt, und dafür ist es auch auf private Unterstützung angewiesen.

«Das Publikum, die Gäste in unserem Restaurant sowie Firmen und Private, die Anlässe bei uns buchen – das sind unsere wichtigsten Einnahmequellen. Mit vollem Magen lacht es sich besser. Zum Beispiel ab September, wenn *Die Nervensäge* anläuft – die neue Eigeninszenierung. Die schwarzhumorige Slapstick-Komödie des Franzosen François Veber wurde schon mehrfach verfilmt, etwa mit Jack Lemmon und Walter Matthau unter dem Titel *Buddy Buddy*. Jetzt kommen die beiden ungleichen Buddys, deren Schicksal nur eine Hoteltüre miteinander verbindet, zum ersten Mal nach Winterthur.»

1 Sie möchten das Casinotheater kennenlernen? Hier finden Sie den Spielplan, können Tickets buchen und erfahren, wie Sie diese einzigartige Institution unterstützen können – übrigens die einzige AG, die zugibt, dass ihr VR-Präsident Komiker ist: www.casinotheater.ch

CASINO THEATER
Bühne Restaurant Events

Préparer ses dernières volontés: séminaire proposé par la Ligue vaudoise contre le cancer et VZ

La Ligue vaudoise contre le cancer est une association caritative venant en aide aux malades du cancer et à leurs proches. En collaboration avec VZ, elle organise une soirée d'information à l'intention de toutes les personnes intéressées: le séminaire a pour thématique «Préparer ses dernières volontés en toute sérénité» et aura lieu le 15 novembre 2023 à Lausanne, de 17h à 19h. Des spécialistes des domaines de la santé, de l'économie et du droit y communiqueront des renseignements essentiels sur les directives anticipées, le mandat pour cause d'incapacité ou encore le droit successoral. Ils répondront ainsi à des questions importantes en lien avec l'établissement des dernières volontés: pourquoi nommer un exécuteur testamentaire? Qui informer de ses dispositions de fin de vie? À qui et comment léguer son patrimoine?

1 Le séminaire est sans frais pour toutes les personnes souhaitant y participer. Le sujet vous intéresse? Afin d'obtenir plus d'informations sur la manifestation, rendez-vous sur www.lvc.ch/seminaire ou bien scannez le code QR pour réserver votre place.

ligue vaudoise contre le cancer

>>venture>>

Since 2009, VZ has been a sponsor of >>venture>>, the premier competition for aspiring entrepreneurs in Switzerland. The competition supports innovative young people to transform business ideas into start-up companies. Matthias Reinhart, founder of VZ, is a member of the Advisory Board and helps select the winners.



We provide all our employees with free admission tickets to Zurich Zoo. In this way we support the zoo as a nature conservation centre. After all, only those who know animals will protect them.

Every year we create books together with external partners, which we publish as an exclusive edition. The books cover cultural or ecological topics. More than 30,000 copies are sent to our clients each year as Christmas gifts. These gifts are wrapped in sheltered workshops, because participation in the working world is an important factor for self-esteem and social recognition. We partner with the following organisations:



ESPAS is committed to the social and vocational rehabilitation and integration of people with mental or physical impairments.



The St. Jakob Foundation offers people with an impairment market-oriented work in a social environment and thus promotes their integration.



In French-speaking Switzerland, Polyval helps people who receive a disability pension or face social difficulties to become more independent and to integrate into the world of work and society.

We also supported Fragile Suisse, Berghilfe and the Kinderhilfe Sternschnuppe foundation with donations.

The VZ umbrella foundation for charitable purposes was established in 2023. The foundation enables clients to financially support charitable causes beyond their death. They specify what purpose their donations should serve, and the foundation board selects suitable institutions or projects to which the money is paid out in their name or anonymous. VZ assumes the costs for the administration of the foundation.

6.2 Our employees' commitment

Supporting biodiversity

naturnetz



At certain intervals, individual teams and entire departments reserve a day for voluntary work in nature, organised by Naturnetz. Naturnetz is committed to nature throughout Switzerland by maintaining and enhancing nature reserves and other ecologically valuable areas in order to restore a species-rich cultural landscape. In numerous field interventions, invasive species (neophytes) are combated in order to strengthen biodiversity. Neophytes are one of the greatest threats to biodiversity. They can crowd out native species, cause health problems and economic



damage. In Switzerland, harmful neophytes include Japanese knotweed, Canada gold-enrod, summer lilac and cherry laurel (see picture of a field intervention to combat Japanese knotweed). With neophyte control, employees experience first-hand ecological knowledge and realise how they can impact and sustainably shape the environment through their actions.



In recent years, we have donated over 700 wooden benches located along hiking trails throughout Switzerland. The benches are made by foresters on site from local woods.



Every five years, our wealth management clients receive a jar of Swiss honey as a thank you for their loyalty. This honey is produced by beekeepers who meet high standards of beekeeping. It is certified by the Bee Family company located in Frasnacht, which is committed to the protection of bees.

Internal seminars are held in Hausen am Albis. The park at the site is a listed garden. With its trees, fruit and vegetable garden and variety of plant species, it makes an important contribution to preserving biodiversity in the region.

Talks and lectures



Our experts volunteer to give talks and guest lectures at universities and universities of applied sciences free of charge. In 2023, for example, they spoke at the University of Applied Sciences for Business Administration Zurich (HWZ), the University of Applied Sciences and Arts Lucerne (HSLU), the University of Zurich, the Zurich University of Applied Sciences (ZHAW) and the University of Applied Sciences of Eastern Switzerland (OST).

6.3 Cultural commitment

For many years we have been committed to cultural institutions such as Haus Konstruktiv in Zurich, Tonhalle Zurich, Casino Winterthur and Camerata Schweiz, which specialises in promoting musical talent. In the spirit of a sustainable relationship, we support these institutions in the long term.

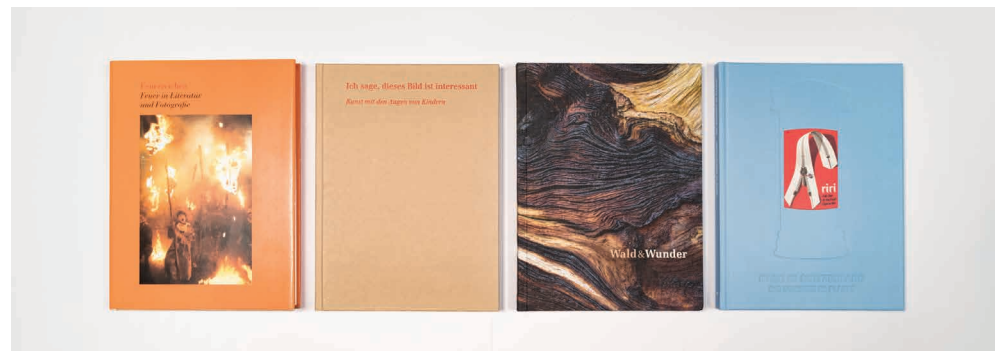


Concerts

Our clients benefit directly from this commitment. The summer concert with Camerata Schweiz at the Tonhalle Zurich or the KKL Lucerne is very popular and fully booked every year.

Books

For a number of years now, we have been giving our clients books as Christmas gifts. Together with external partners, we create these books from A to Z and publish them as an exclusive print in our own publishing house. So far, four series with four volumes each have been published. Every series revolves around a cultural or ecological theme.



6.4 Expert knowledge on old-age provision

The topics concerning old-age provision are diverse and complex. A research team at Lucerne University of Applied Sciences and Arts has investigated the level of knowledge of the Swiss population in this area (Lucerne University of Applied Sciences and Arts, VorsorgeDIALOG: Financial Literacy mit Fokus Altersvorsorge, 2021). The study shows that a large part of the respondents are hardly familiar with the topic. According to this study, many are not even aware that they lack knowledge. This means that there is a great danger that they will make the wrong decisions when it comes to their old-age provision.

We are committed to closing this knowledge gap and to promoting the debate on old-age provision. An important tool for this are the free vz news, which provide concise and comprehensible information on key topics five times a year. In addition, we hold around 600 information events throughout Switzerland every year to improve participants' knowledge. Countless books, fact sheets, studies and a comprehensive online knowledge library on all relevant topics related to old-age provision round off our knowledge transfer. In the year under review, we published a study on the reform of occupational benefit schemes (BVG 21). It analyses what the reform means in concrete terms for different groups. The calculation examples show exactly what pensions they can expect in Swiss francs.

VZ books on financial topics



Additional reference books are published in cooperation with third parties, such as Beobachter, the Homeowners' Association and the Swiss Paraplegics Foundation.

Useful online information

We want to offer our clients as much value as possible online. Our website offers a wide range of knowledge and specialist articles, as well as videos on topics such as investments, retirement, inheritance, mortgages and insurance.





SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY AS AN EMPLOYER

We understand that our long-term success depends on loyal, committed and competent employees. VZ is constantly expanding its services and opening up new markets and business areas. In order to achieve this, we need to attract new talent. Our success lies in offering attractive and secure jobs. We invest significantly in the training and further education of our employees and have a fair and long-term oriented salary policy. We ensure equal opportunities, do not tolerate discrimination and treat all employees equally regardless of gender, age, origin and sexual orientation. Moreover, we are committed to ensuring that everyone is protected from discrimination and to promoting the health of our employees.

Our Human Resources department is responsible for recruiting, people development and services and reports directly to the Executive Board. Initiatives are developed and implemented together with the Executive Board. Monthly reports provide information on open positions, applications, time-to-hire, or ongoing measures.

7.1 Attractive and secure jobs

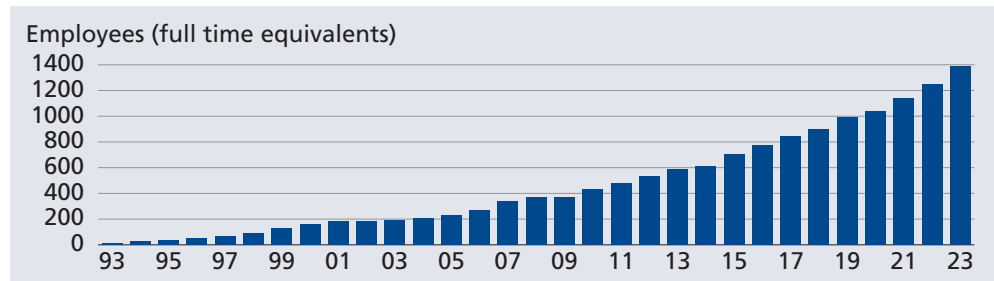
Meaningful work in a positive culture

At VZ, every individual makes an important contribution to ensuring that our clients retire well prepared. To this end, we challenge and encourage our employees in a collegial environment that leaves plenty of room for personal initiative and development, putting our clients and their needs at the centre. We are open, straightforward, fast and direct. Characteristic of our open and down-to-earth culture are the few hierarchies and the promotion of entrepreneurial thinking and behaviour. We promote the cohesion of the VZ community with events and activities outside working hours.

Many opportunities for individual careers

Perspectives are written in capital letters at VZ. Thanks to the strong growth, there are unusually diverse career paths that are developed individually by employees, managers and HR. We actively promote these development opportunities with a systematic process – even outside the job profile. That is why, for example, vacancies are always advertised on the intranet first.

VZ creates attractive jobs



Since its foundation in 1993, VZ has been able to create jobs year after year. We are also proud of the fact that we have never had to lay anyone off for economic reasons. By the end of 2023, VZ Group employed more than 1500 people.

The strong growth creates a high level of job security and opens up many opportunities. Careers in new specialist areas are also emerging constantly. Therefore, there is plenty of room for both specialist careers and management careers. All new managers complete a multi-level leadership training. Many employees have also signed up for a mentoring programme. Here, the focus is on cross-divisional exchange, support with leadership topics and personal development.

At VZ, everyone can help shape our future

Innovative and progressive thinking is anchored in VZ's DNA. Every employee can launch innovative projects. In order to facilitate participation, we have developed an innovation programme. Suggestions for improvement can be submitted via the ARENA platform, such as optimising a process or launching a new business. ARENA creates an open, collaborative environment to generate, develop and implement ideas. Anyone who knows something about a topic can volunteer to work on a project – this is how we tap into our employees' full potential.



VZ Kickbox is an important innovation tool. It supports good ideas through a systematic process to the point of major innovation. For promising ideas, VZ provides financial resources, time, a suitable network and the support of a member of the Group Executive Board.

Transparent information on developments at VZ

It is essential to us that all employees understand why we do what we do. Only then can they think in the right direction and develop new solutions for the benefit of our clients. To ensure that everyone understands the big picture and VZ's raison d'être, we attach great importance to comprehensive communication. For example, at our kick-off event at the beginning of each quarter, we inform all employees about the business development and VZ Group's ongoing projects. We also share current and relevant information regularly on the intranet.

Participative feedback culture

We make sure that managers and employees are in a regular dialogue. We lead situationally so that everyone can develop individually according to their level of knowledge and their personality. Our feedback culture enables all employees to contribute their self-assessment and personal goals. The exchange with superiors takes place regularly – up to 20 times

a year, depending on the job. Some areas conduct so-called «bi-weekly check-ins» as part of an OKR framework (Objectives and Key Results). In these meetings, employees collaborate on the definition and implementation of the company's goals. Regular joint reflection creates a great deal of transparency and flexibility in the pursuit of goals and provides an opportunity for mutual, constructive feedback.

High satisfaction and motivation

We have the satisfaction and motivation of our employees surveyed every three years by ValueQuest, an independent external institute. The last survey was conducted in 2021. It revealed that the VZ offers an above-average positive working environment that leaves room for personal development. VZ received 80 out of 100 points from its employees, placing it in the top 20 percent in the financial sector. The next survey is planned for 2024.

Anyone leaving the company is invited by HR to a confidential interview. These interviews help us to continuously check across all areas and levels whether and where we can improve.



VZ is a successful recruiter. This is important to attract new talent. In 2023, we once again took part in the recruiting study in the DACH region (Germany, Austria and Switzerland). We are among the top 10 percent of employers in Switzerland and ranked fourth in the banking industry.

7.2 Education and training

Our employees have an excellent reputation with our clients and throughout the industry. This is something we are proud of. We know that their competence is the most important prerequisite for our success. And we can only be successful in the future if they continue to train. That is why we support and promote the training and further education of our employees as much as possible, because we see this as a strategic priority and an investment in the future.

External further training

VZ generously supports external further training as well. Depending on the training (university of applied sciences, federal diploma, bachelor's or master's degree or postgraduate training), VZ will cover all or half of the costs. Cost coverage is defined in consultation with the supervisor. Depending on the amount, employees commit to continue working at VZ for 12 to 36 months after completing the training. Otherwise, they have to pay back the costs assumed. On average over the last few years, around 20 percent of employees are in external training supported by VZ at any given time. Almost CHF 1.1 million has been budgeted for external training in 2023.

Internal training and development

Internal training and development programmes are just as important. As part of the VZ Career Programme alone, our employees completed an average of 2.7 training days per full-time position in 2023. The CareerProgramme is our own academy with over 70 modules covering all relevant areas. This breadth and depth of topics is unique in the financial industry.

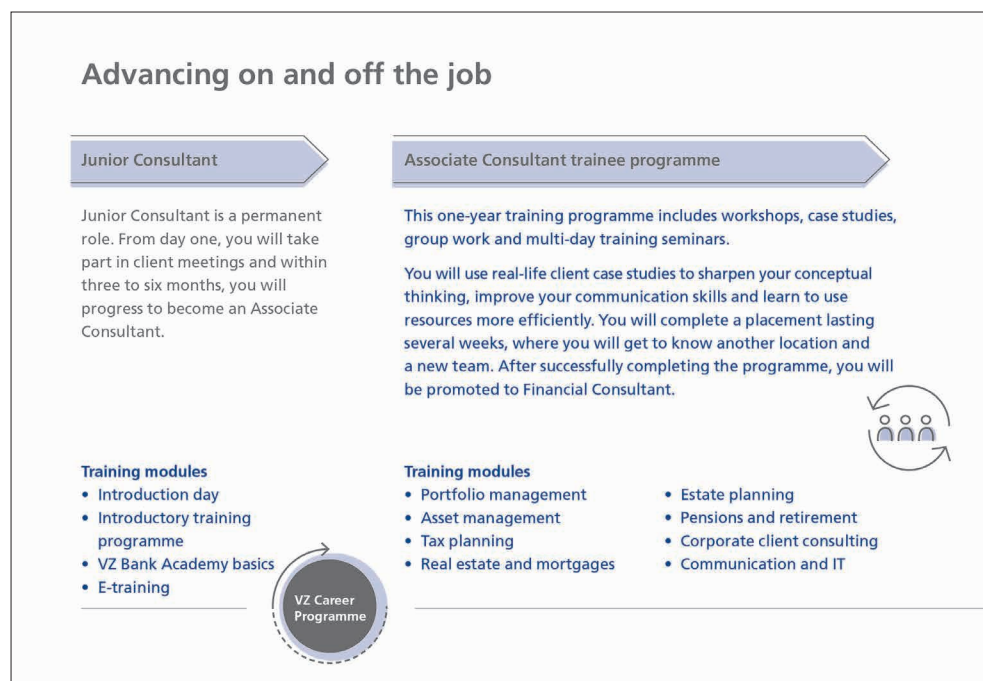
The CareerProgramme covers all relevant areas: Employees who are new to VZ attend an introductory day that provides an overview of the services, departments and key contacts. It is followed by a two-day Introductory Training Programme, which provides a comprehensive picture of all fields of activity at VZ. Each department introduces itself, employees from different departments get to know each other and can exchange ideas. During their first weeks at VZ, employees also complete various e-learning courses and get to know the main functions of our CRM system.

Employees who have been working with VZ for a longer period of time can complete more advanced modules: Conversation training, writing workshop, client base management and workshops to improve presentation, project management or leadership skills.

The core of our CareerProgramme is the trainee programme that we have developed. Every year, some 70 graduates of (technical) universities use this programme as an opportunity to enter the financial sector. In the trainee programme, our future financial consultants learn to analyse the needs of their clients and to develop tailor-made concepts for the long-term development of income and assets. This expertise is unique and requires comprehensive training. The programme is demanding and teaches specialised knowledge on topics such as financial investments, taxes, retirement planning, estate and real estate financing.

The content is taught in lectures and workshops, supported by e-learning and apps (quiz duels). After completing the modules, we create an online learning unit on a current topic as additional proof of achievement, which we make available in our media centre. The final module is held at VZ Munich to encourage exchange across national borders.

Learning on & off the job



To ensure the quality of our training programmes, we have them certified by SQS according to the eduQua standard. SQS is the leading organisation for certification and assessment services in Switzerland. The VZ CareerProgramme has carried the eduQua seal of approval since 2011.

In addition to the Career Programme, we offer numerous other training formats:

VZ eTrain

Our new learning app VZ eTrain offers off-the-job learning opportunities. It allows users to practise new skills, deepen and test their knowledge. Participants in the trainee programme use the app for an initial test before each module in order to achieve a homogeneous level.

Digital Talks

Digitalisation and technology are important elements of our continuing education. Digital Talks are organised to facilitate the exchange of knowledge with internal and external speakers. Topics such as decentralised finance, robotic process automation, cryptocurrencies, blockchain or artificial intelligence (AI) in banking were covered. The monthly digital talks are recorded and made available to all interested parties on the intranet. Some departments started to measure the digital readiness score of their employees and to improve it in a targeted manner. This helps us to strengthen the skills of our employees in the company and their value on the labour market.

Udemy

Employees in some areas can now access the entire content of Udemy free of charge. On this digital learning platform, they can acquire job-related skills on their own, at any time and from any location. This is also an initiative to promote lifelong learning.

VZ internship programme

It is essential for our growth that all employees understand our business. This includes understanding our business model, the value of our services and the synergies between departments, divisions, locations and Group companies. Since the end of 2023, we have been offering an internship programme in which back-office employees can accompany financial consultants for two days as they interact with our clients. We expect 25 to 30 employees to take advantage of this programme each year.

Apprenticeships and internships

In Zurich and Berne, we offer several apprenticeships every year in banking, private insurance, fiduciary services, application development and IT systems technology. Young people with different profiles can also explore different areas of the financial industry through an internship. Up to 50 people benefit from this opportunity every year.


Future Day

VZ has been taking part in National Future Day for many years. On this day, pupils in years five to seven are encouraged to discover the diversity of the professional world and broaden their future prospects. The aim of Future Day is to boost young people's self-confidence and encourage them to focus on their own interests and talents rather than stereotypical roles. We invite fathers and mothers to bring children of this age group to work. In the complementary programme, the children get to know the financial industry and VZ in a playful way. They spend the afternoon with their parents to experience their everyday working life. 15 children took part in the Future Day 2023.

Our education and training principles are summarised in an andragogical mission statement:

Andragogical mission statement

Andragogic model



VZ is an agile company and continually adapts to the future. We embrace a corporate culture that allows change and promotes learning as an individual, team and organisation. Ongoing learning also entails regular "unlearning", that is to say the dismantling of traditional ways of thinking. Our goal is to foster our unique consultancy, management and learning culture while growing at the same time.

Our success is based on innovative ideas and the expertise of our staff. One of our strategic priorities is to develop these resources to ensure our further growth and success. We believe the VZ CareerProgramme to be a key component in VZ's development as well as the development of our employees' careers. That is why we invest so much in practice-based training and education.

We adhere to the following principles:

- We respect our employees with their skills and potential. We encourage them to focus on their professional and personal development.
- We aim to provide them with professional expertise that is both highly practical and of an extremely high quality.
- Our training methods are modern, diverse, target-oriented and practice-based and they are tailored in line with our employees' needs.
- As part of the VZ CareerProgramme, we encourage our employees to share their experiences and embrace a fair, direct and open feedback culture.

7.3 Attractive working conditions

Fair and long-term oriented salary policy

In order to remain successful in the long term, we need to attract, develop and retain qualified and loyal employees. Our remuneration system is geared towards this goal. Remuneration is designed to support VZ's strategy and promote a corporate culture that contributes to long-term success. Client satisfaction is at the heart of everything our employees do. Therefore, all employees are measured by their direct and indirect contribution to the clients' satisfaction.

The remuneration for a full-time position should be sufficient to ensure a decent standard of living in the employee's place of residence. As a rule, our employment contracts are open-ended: At the end of 2023, only 3.7 percent of all employees had a fixed-term contract. Most of these are apprentices or employees working on a project for a limited period of time. They also receive all non-salary-related benefits (more on this in the section «Non-salary-related benefits and gifts» on page 43).

Our remuneration is based on the following four principles:

1 Objective and fair

Objectivity is the basis of a fair remuneration system and ensures that no one is discriminated against. That is why objective criteria are at the forefront when determining compensation.

In 2020, VZ Group's Executive Board had the salaries of the entire group analysed using the federal government's standard analysis tool (Logib). The analysis did not reveal any significant inexplicable pay differences between women and men. PwC reviewed the results and confirmed that it «did not come across any facts from which it would have to conclude that the analyses do not comply with the legal requirements in all respects.» The analysis of wages for the entire VZ Group was repeated in 2021, 2022 and 2023 using the same methodology and tool, and again no significant unexplained wage differences between women and men emerged. The last three analyses were not audited by PwC because an external review is only required once under the Equality Act as long as no changes are made to the methodology.

2 Performance-oriented

At VZ, remuneration primarily reflects a person's performance and function (competencies and responsibilities). In addition to individual performance, work in a team and across departments is encouraged and recognised. In certain functions, experience or specific know-how are also important components. In addition to fixed compensation, remuneration can include variable components – especially where individual performance is measurable and contributes directly to the company's success.

3 Competitive

Only with a competitive remuneration system can VZ Group recruit and retain enough staff. That is why we are guided by the remuneration models of companies that compete with us for talent.

4 Long-term

VZ Group's corporate culture is geared towards long-term success. This is evident in the services, processes and structures and especially in the development of employees. The remuneration system is also designed to support our long-term and sustainable development. That is why the variable components in particular are designed in such a way that no conflicts arise with the interests of the company. For example, the remuneration must not create incentives to take disproportionate risks. Management employees receive part of their variable remuneration in the form of blocked VZ shares. This aligns their interests with those of the company and reinforces their long-term commitment. In 2023, 33 percent of employees benefited from our management benefit programme.

Flexible working models

VZ offers flexible working models to promote a healthy work-life balance. The options for part-time work and home office are regulated in our directives. Working hours are based on legal requirements and operational needs. Beyond that, employees can organise their working hours flexibly. Around 80 percent of all advertised positions at VZ Group are open for a part-time work schedules. At the end of 2023, around 40 percent of all employees were working part-time. Flexible models are also open to management staff. Up to two days of home office per week are granted. In implementing these arrangements, we are guided by the needs of our clients and comply with all laws, regulations, directives and work instructions.

Holidays and unpaid leave

Employees with a full-time work schedule are entitled to 25 to 28 days of paid leave per year. This applies pro rata temporis to employees who work part-time or who are employed on a temporary basis. In the year under review, 47 employees went on unpaid leave.

Maximum working hours

The Labour Code sets the maximum working hours for employees in Switzerland (Federal Act on Work in Industry, Trade and Commerce). Overtime and excess hours are regulated there and in the Swiss Code of Obligations (OR). VZ Group also regulates these aspects in its directive «Working Hours and Holidays».

Freedom to organise

We respect our employees' right to organise in a workers' association. Members are neither discriminated against nor favoured, and we do not collect information about membership. The CO prohibits dismissals on the grounds that employees are members of an employee association or are lawfully engaged in trade union activities. There are no statutory collective agreements in Switzerland, and VZ has not joined any voluntary ones.

Non-salary benefits and gifts

Our employees can take out cheaper insurance with VZ, benefit from preferential conditions for mortgages and banking services and receive advice at a reduced fee. These benefits also apply to part-time and temporary employees.

All employees are insured under the compulsory accident and supplementary accident insurance scheme. VZ pays the insurance premiums for treatment costs in the private ward in hospital in the event of accidents at home and abroad. The pension fund benefits exceed the compulsory benefits, and VZ bears 60 percent of the contributions to the pension fund. The contributions to the daily sickness benefit insurance are paid in full by VZ.

These benefits go beyond the statutory minimum. After a certain number of years of employment, employees receive anniversary gifts in the form of paid leave or additional remuneration. Coffee, tea, cold drinks and fruit are offered daily at all VZ locations.

Various other benefits for all employees are published on the intranet on an ongoing basis; for example, special offers for physiotherapy, e-bikes, cultural events or online shops.

Promotions

Employees who perform above average can be promoted to a rank or management level depending on the business area. Performance is assessed according to objective quantitative and qualitative criteria, e.g. achieving budgets, participating in projects, transferring knowledge, etc. Superiors propose promotions to the department's nomination committee. Beyond a certain rank, promotions are approved by the Executive Board and the Board of Directors.

Everyone deserves the same opportunities and fair treatment, regardless of gender, age, origin or sexual orientation. That is why bullying, discrimination and sexual harassment are not tolerated at VZ, and we are committed to ensuring that everyone is protected from these, because everyone has a right to protect their personal and sexual integrity. Anyone who violates this principle must expect severe sanctions. All employees of VZ Group are informed as to what we expect of them and what they can rely on. The principles on this issue are contained in the guideline "Bullying, Discrimination and Sexual Harassment in the Workplace".

Employees are encouraged to report violations of personality rights, breaches of laws, rules, regulations, standards or codes of conduct. They can contact their superior, a member of the Executive Board, two persons of trust, the Legal & Compliance department, or the Human Resources department. An electronic whistleblower system has been available since 2023 if reporting to an in-house entity is not appropriate or reasonable. This process is described in an additional directive. Employees can report irregularities anonymously or confidentially around the clock and are protected from sanctions. Our Board of Directors monitors this process and is regularly informed about the reports and the measures taken.

Our values are set out in VZ Group's Code of Conduct. This code forms the basis of our corporate culture. Internal directives substantiate the topics covered in our Code of Conduct.

Do you contribute towards VZ's positive reputation?

VZ trusts you to adhere to the rules set out in this Code of Conduct. If you can answer these five questions in the affirmative every day, then you have earned this trust:

- Does my work focus on realising benefits for our clients?
- Do I help within and outside VZ to earn our positive reputation?
- Do I perform my work with interest and commitment?
- Do I treat my colleagues with respect?
- Does my performance contribute towards VZ's success?

Welcome to the team: we are pleased that you help developing VZ further!

Equal opportunities

Flexible working models help to improve equal opportunities. That is why VZ also offers many part-time positions in a job-sharing model. Pragmatic solutions are also sought for short-term emergency situations (care of parents or children, personal needs). More than 80 percent of all mothers remain employed at VZ after maternity leave. At 16 weeks and 100 percent pay, maternity leave is more generous than the statutory regulations. Fathers receive ten days of fully paid paternity leave after the birth of a child.



Sandra Frey is Deputy Head of Legal & Compliance at VZ Group and works 60 percent

At the end of 2023, women accounted for 40.5 percent of the workforce. In management, this share is 28.2 percent. There are no women on VZ Group's executive board.

Health initiatives

Each year, we choose a focus area to support the health of our employees:

- 2016 Dealing with stress
- 2017 Healthy eating at the workplace
- 2018 Exercise in and outside the workplace
- 2019 Yoga at VZ
- 2020 Step challenge
- 2021 Bike to work
- 2022 Activity Challenge
- 2023 bike to work

Bike to work is the largest campaign in Switzerland to promote cycling and health. In 2023, many VZ employees once again formed teams to take part in the challenge. They cycled to work on as many working days as possible. bike to work boosts fitness and team spirit and promotes sustainable mobility.

In 2023, 80 employees at five locations took part in the B2Run company runs. At B2Run, runners from all sectors tackle a five to six-kilometre course.

We also offer regular lunchtime yoga sessions, and employees organise tennis and ice hockey tournaments and ski days for their colleagues on their own initiative. VZ contributes to the costs of these events or covers them entirely.

We provide all employees with height-adjustable desks so that they can optimise their work at the computer screen ergonomically and avoid discomfort. To prevent flu, we invite our employees to a free flu vaccination every year. As an alternative, we also offer homeopathic flu prophylaxis.

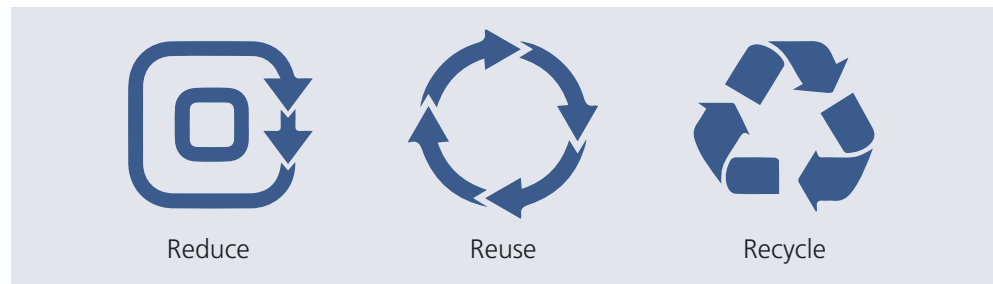


We are committed to the sustainable use of resources and have implemented a number of measures, for example the use of renewable energy and recycled paper.

VZ is committed to achieving net-zero emissions by 2050. This is in line with the Federal Council's climate strategy and the requirements of the Federal Act on Climate Protection, Innovation and Strengthening Energy Security (CISA).

The Board of Directors reviews the achievement of the net zero target on the basis of VZ Group's greenhouse gas balance sheet. We have prepared this balance sheet for 2023 together with Swiss Climate. It includes the development of direct emissions (Scope 1), indirect emissions (Scope 2) and indirect upstream and downstream emissions (Scope 3).

The principles we adhere to



We reduce our consumption, look for ways to reuse materials and recycle as much as possible.



In 2019, employees from different areas founded the RUN Committee. RUN stands for ressourcenschonend, umweltbewusst und nachhaltig (resource-conserving, environmentally conscious and sustainable). The committee is the point of contact for anyone who wants to contribute ideas and suggestions for improving environmental sustainability. The members develop and define measures that drive a more environmentally conscious and sustainable future of our business.

The committee raises awareness among all employees. For example, RUN encourages them to behave more sustainably in their daily routine, using less paper or electricity at work and at home. As part of this effort, the committee has created a checklist for all employees.

8.1 Saving energy and other resources

In 2023, we used 1618 kWh of electricity per full-time position in Switzerland. Energy-saving LED lighting is standard in new and renovated buildings. Wherever possible, we also switch to LED in existing buildings to save electricity and extend the service life. We also use motion detection to make sure the light only turns on when needed. In addition, older systems and devices are constantly replaced by new, more energy-efficient models.

naturemade

● ● ● ● star

In Switzerland, VZ uses electricity from renewable sources as far as possible. We use hydro and solar power certified as naturemade star only. The hydro energy meets the highest environmental standards for the protection of water bodies and the species living in them, and has the best track record in Europe. In the vicinity of naturemade-star-certified hydroelectric power plants, environmental improvements are continuously made and the construction of new power plants for green energy is promoted.

If electricity cannot be obtained directly from renewable sources, we buy certificates of solar power to promote the expansion of solar power plants in Switzerland.

The energy-saving measures we took in 2022 to alleviate the impending electricity shortage have proven their worth. That is why we continued them in the reporting year.

Heating measures

In the offices, the temperature is 21 degrees, at night and at weekends 18 degrees. The room temperature is controlled centrally rather than via individual radiators. All thermostatic valves were checked by a plumber and set to the correct temperature. The radiators were vented so that the whole space is heated optimally. In addition, we informed our colleagues that they should neither open nor close the radiators completely.

Ventilation measures

Part of our office space has ventilation. The operating times were adjusted to the actual use of the space. They are switched off when offices are not in use. Heat recovery has been tested and our colleagues have been briefed that they can improve the air quality with push and cross-ventilation without losing heat.

Lighting measures

The illumination of all shop windows, showcases and VZ logos is switched off at 10 pm.

Employees are encouraged to climb stairs instead of taking the lift, wash their hands with cold water and turn off computers completely whenever they are not in use for a longer period of time.

Commuting and travels

All VZ branch offices are centrally located and within walking distance of a train station. The central location makes the workplace attractive and encourages the use of public transport. At our locations, we offer covered parking areas for bicycles but only a few parking spaces. That's why most employees commute by public transport, by bike or on foot. Only a few employees travel on our behalf between branch offices in Switzerland and abroad for specific purposes. They mainly use public transport. Wherever possible, we avoid travelling by air. If business trips by plane are unavoidable, the CO₂ emitted is offset. Our own vehicle fleet comprises two vehicles that we use exclusively for internal logistics.

8.2 Reduce consumption and recycle

We reduce our paper consumption by prioritising digital communication channels where it makes sense. For example, more and more clients are dispensing with printed bank statements and access information on demand in our financial portal instead. Our clients receive insurance quotes and completed tax returns electronically. The introduction of e-bill enabled us to stop sending paper invoices in some business areas. All these measures contribute to reducing paper consumption.

Where we decide to hand over printed documents, we keep the environment in mind: vz news, our main publication, is sent to over 950,000 households. This magazine is printed in a climate-neutral way.

In 2021, we decided to use recycled paper for all other printed matter. The changeover was implemented gradually throughout 2022, and we have been printing exclusively on this paper since the beginning of 2023. The recycled paper is certified with the Blue Angel seal. This seal guarantees that 100 percent of the paper fibres were obtained from waste paper. No trees have to be felled in the process, and valuable habitats for animals and plants are preserved. Recycled paper also scores well in other respects: its production uses around 70 percent less water and 60 percent less energy than virgin fibre paper. The Blue Angel label also guarantees that no harmful chemicals or optical brighteners are added to the paper during production.

At our premises, recyclable materials are separated and as much of it as possible is recycled. Among other things, paper, cardboard, PET, aluminium, electronic waste and toner are collected and fed back into the recycling loop. To reduce the amount of waste, all employees use glass bottles that they can fill up at water dispensers. This alone saves more than 100 tonnes of PET per year.

8.3 Comprehensive determination of greenhouse gas emissions

Greenhouse gas emissions are divided into three scopes: Scope 1 includes all direct emissions, i.e. those from sources within the company. Indirect emissions from electricity, steam, heating and cooling purchased by a company are reported in Scope 2. All other, indirect upstream and downstream emissions, e.g. from manufacturing and transporting of purchased goods as well as emissions due to commuter traffic, are included in Scope 3.

We compiled our greenhouse gas balance sheet together with Swiss Climate for the first time in 2023. The extrapolation methodology and emission factors have changed, which is why the current figures can only be compared with previous years to a limited extent. The balance sheet is based on the internationally recognised Greenhouse Gas Protocol standard and ISO standard 14064-1. The organisational and operational system boundaries were defined in collaboration with Swiss Climate. On this basis, we collected the relevant data and recorded it in the 'SERAM' carbon footprint software. For the greenhouse gas balance, we rely on available data from the service providers as far as possible. We analysed data gaps with Swiss Climate and closed them based on their recommendations, making conservative extrapolations where necessary.

In 2023, we conducted a more comprehensive and specific survey on employee commuting. Emissions from the purchase of IT equipment, the dispatch of printed materials and electricity from external data centres were also taken into account.

We recorded the emissions under Scope 1 and 2 for all VZ Group locations in Switzerland, Germany and the UK.

Emissions under Scope 3 were recorded for the categories 3.1 purchased goods and services, 3.2 capital goods, 3.3 fuel- and energy-related activities not included in Scope 1 or 2, 3.5 waste generated in operations, 3.6 business travel and 3.7 employee commuting – wherever possible for all locations, but at least for Switzerland. Some emissions are not relevant in our case, which is why we have not factored them in. These include emissions from category 3.4 upstream transport and distribution, 3.8 upstream leased assets, 3.9 downstream transport and distribution, 3.10 processing of products sold, 3.11 use of products sold, 3.12 end-of-life treatment of products sold, 3.13 downstream leased assets, 3.14 franchises. In 2024, we will assess the inclusion of further emissions (3.15 Investments) in order to capture the components of the greenhouse gas balance even more comprehensively.

	t CO ₂ e ¹
Scope 1 – direct emissions	349
Scope 2 – indirect emissions	112
Scope 3 – indirect emissions	2'080
Total by scope²	2'541
	t CO ₂ e ¹
Electricity	135
Heat	489
IT equipment	244
Shipping	174
Business travel	547
of which employee commuting	455
Paper	920
Water	1
Waste	31
Total by source	2'541
	t CO ₂ e ¹
Per FTE	1.92

1 In tonnes (t) of greenhouse gas emissions in CO₂ equivalents (CO₂ e). The emissions were calculated with "SERAM" and in collaboration with Swiss Climate and include assumptions and estimates.

2 We have recorded Scope 1 and 2 emissions for all locations (Switzerland, Germany, England). We recorded Scope 3 emissions for the categories 3.1 purchased goods and services, 3.2 capital goods, 3.3 fuel- and energy-related activities not included in Scope 1 or 2, 3.5 waste generated in operations, 3.6 business travel and 3.7 employee commuting wherever possible for all locations, but at least always for Switzerland. Emissions in the other categories were not included.

A large part of our emissions are classified in Scope 3. In 2023, per employee on a full-time basis, CO₂ emissions amount to 1.92 tonnes.

We are constantly working to improve data quality and expand the scope of emissions taken into account.

Association for the decarbonisation of the local industry

In 2022, VZ Depository Bank Ltd co-founded an association for the decarbonisation of the local industry (Verein zur Dekarbonisierung der Zuger Industrie). The association, with representatives from industry, energy, finance and research, adopted a joint strategy to develop rapidly implementable and holistic approaches to reducing CO₂ emissions. The focus is on high-temperature processes and logistics.

Industrial high-temperature processes rank third in Switzerland's energy consumption. The association plans to build a plant in Zug that will generate hydrogen in a new process. The process is based on methane pyrolysis, in which hydrogen (H₂) is split off from methane (CH₄).

The association aims to contribute to the rapid implementation of this technology in industrial operations. With their broad professional backgrounds, the partners in the association's network cover the entire value chain.

This Sustainability Report is published in German and English:
www.vzch.com/investor-relations
If there are any differences, the German version prevails.

Electronic information

Additional information on VZ Group can be found on our website: www.vzch.com

Disclaimer

All statements in this report that are not historical facts are forward-looking. They do not guarantee future results and contain uncertainties, for example regarding the development of the economy, laws, market conditions and other factors that are beyond the company's control.

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