

# Corporate Social Responsibility

## Review 2021



## Dear reader,

Following two years of huge change to the way we live, work, and think, Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is even more in the spotlight than ever.

The ever-increasing importance of CSR across our industry corresponds not only with our firm's mission and values which put people at the heart of our business, but also with our commitment to being a trusted partner for our clients, people, and communities.

Over the last year, the Loyens & Loeff CSR team has worked hard on the organisational framework and more visibility for our CSR activities and partnerships. We implemented a firmwide CSR Policy, elevated our EcoVadis rating and, as of 2022, any time dedicated to approved CSR work will be attributed special status to highlight its importance.

It was also a year to focus on the well-being of our own people and dedicated time was spent on creating awareness about diversity & inclusion and vitality. We listened to clear employee feedback about hybrid working and introduced a principle-based Working from Home Policy to support flexible working.

In support of our communities, we reviewed our partnerships under the 'Youth & Education' theme and continue to offer our tax and legal expertise and knowledge on a pro bono basis. In working towards a cleaner future, we actively took part in local initiatives such as the Green Business Club and kicked off our Green Team to help develop our sustainability initiatives under the 'Zero Emissions' and 'Zero Waste' themes.

It is also important to know what our clients think of us, so we asked our top 500 clients to let us know in an online survey. The results were extremely positive and showed how that, even in challenging times, we continue to connect well with our clients.

In this year's Corporate Social Responsibility Review, we review some of the main CSR activities we engaged in over the past year. We encourage everyone to participate and actively contribute towards these initiatives and activities.

Kind regards,



Bram Linnartz,  
Managing Partner



## Trusted as a partner

Our commitment to being a trusted partner for both our employees and our clients is enshrined in our firm's mission and value statement.

### Mission statement

#### One firm: law & tax

- We put **people at the heart of our business**.
- We empower **exceptional talent** and nurture **collective entrepreneurship**. We provide each other with room to develop so we can all maximise our impact.
- We are **a trusted partner** for our clients with a solution-driven approach. We provide them with smart, efficient services so they can succeed in their ambitions.

### Value statement

- **People-centred** - We create an inspiring, inclusive and fun place to work where we can all reach our full potential.
- **Trusted as a partner** - We work together to make a significant difference for each client.
- **Professional** - We apply the highest professional standards to everything we do.



## Code of Conduct

Loyens & Loeff is committed to being a great place to work and a great firm to do business with. Meeting those commitments depends on how we behave and work with each other and the clients that trust us with their business.

To complement the laws and regulations with which we must comply, we launched our [Code of Conduct](#) in 2020 setting out the principles that guide us within and on behalf of our firm. This was further embedded into our DNA during 2021.

In making the right decisions we fulfil our responsibilities to our people, our clients and our organisation and enhance our valuable reputation.



## CSR policy

To connect the various aspects of corporate social responsibility with our Firm's Code of Conduct, our [Mission and Values](#), and other policies, we have implemented a firmwide CSR Policy as advised by our CSR Steering Committee.

The policy clarifies the principles that we rely on to be trusted as a partner, to put people at the heart of our business, to contribute to a cleaner future and to support the communities that we live in.

Acting responsibly means applying the highest professional standards to everything we do, working together to make a difference for each client and creating a people-centred, inspiring, fun, and inclusive place to work where we can all reach our full potential.

It also means being recognised as a responsible corporate citizen and choosing suppliers wisely. We owe this to our clients and to our people, who count on us to be reliable, responsible and an organisation that leads by example.

*“Corporate Social Responsibility at Loyens & Loeff is about far more than pro bono work and recycling. It is about acting and being recognised as a responsible corporate citizen. We owe this to our clients, because they count on us to be a reliable and responsible partner and they will hold us accountable if we are not. We also owe it to our people because they should be able to count on being part of an organisation that leads by example. More importantly, we owe it to ourselves, because CSR is the right thing to do.*”

*The best part about CSR: everybody within our firm can (and should) be part of it and join our effort. For me personally, contributing actively to our CSR efforts (as chairman of the CSR Steering Committee and as board member of Green Business Club Rotterdam Centre) is not “just part of the job”. I got to know so many colleagues, clients, and external parties much better who share our firm's values and are willing to go the extra mile to live up to those values. It is so encouraging to see the wide range of projects that our people initiate, promote, and dedicate part of their time to. I am proud to be a part of that effort and can warmly recommend everyone to join us in our endeavours.”*

**Rick van der Velden,**  
**Chair CSR Steering Committee**

## Client feedback

We like to know what our clients think of us. This is vital to strengthening our relationship with them and improving our services where needed. By renewing our client review programme in 2021, we have implemented a systematic process to monitor client satisfaction and appointed an experienced research and consultancy agency to assist. This kicked off with us asking 500 of our top clients for their feedback in an online survey focused on overall client satisfaction with our service delivery.

Clients participated anonymously in the survey with the option to allow their feedback to be shared with us. As a 'thank you' gesture, a tree was planted for every completed survey.

The results were extremely positive and even better than we had hoped for. 98% of the clients who responded said they were happy with our services and many of them would recommend us to others. This shows that, even in COVID times, we connect well with our key clients. Follow up will focus on our top 50 clients for more in-depth interviews, and reviews of our work on matters post-completion.

## EcoVadis

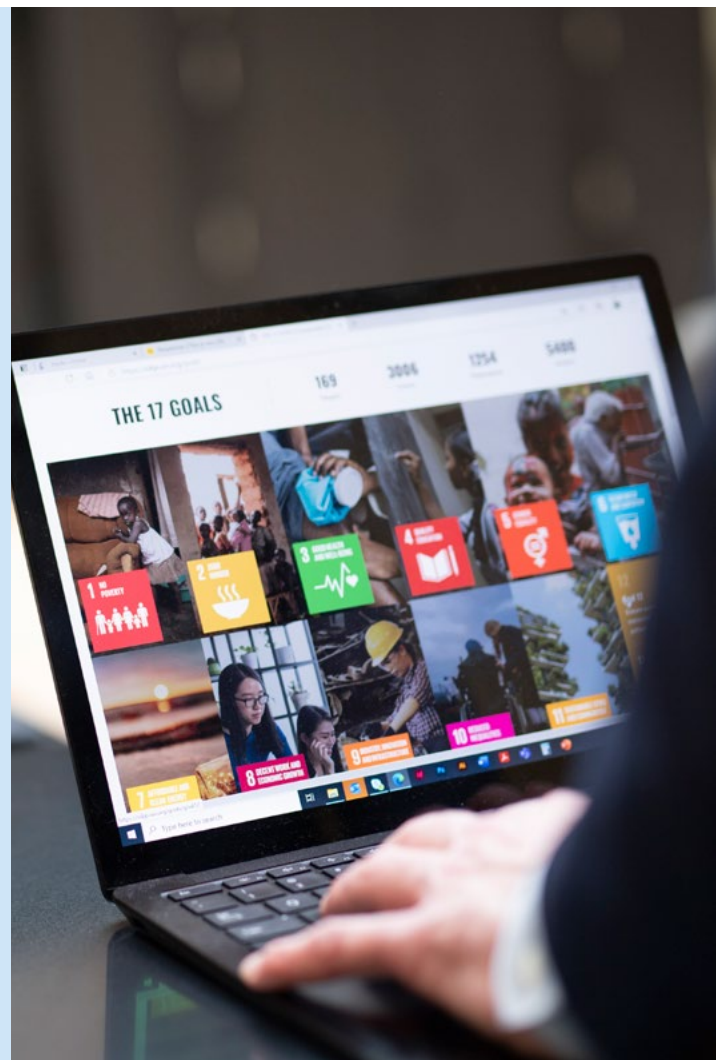
In June, our firm was awarded a bronze medal by EcoVadis in recognition of our achievements in respect of ethics, labour & human rights, environment, and sustainable procurement. This is a substantial improvement compared to our previous rating, due to increased investments in our policies. EcoVadis globally supports and rates firms in this regard and whilst we are very proud of this achievement, we are determined to improve our performance even further.

## UN Sustainable Development Goals

In 2015, the United Nations adopted the **17 Sustainable Development Goals** (SDGs), a global call for action to promote climate protection, sustainability, and social justice by 2030. The UN SDGs serve as a guide for developing responsible policymaking and reporting practices in the public and private sector.

Loyens & Loeff has chosen focus areas and themes to support the targets laid out in SDG4 (our Youth & Education initiatives), SDG5 (Diversity & Inclusion measures) and SDG12 (sustainability projects and membership in organisations like the Green Business Club).

By embracing the UN SDGs, we have gained a clear view of our company's responsibilities towards society and the environment, and how we can measure and report on our impact. The topics discussed in this CSR report reflect our firm's commitment to making the UN SDGs a reality.





## People at the heart of our business

Our people continue to be our greatest asset. At the start of the pandemic, our concentration was rightfully on keeping our people safe and ensuring everyone was equipped with healthy working environments and up to date technology to keep connected. This year, we focused on inclusion, development, and support within our firm; recognising that happy and supported individuals create positive, dynamic, and successful professionals.

### Diversity & Inclusion

We are constantly building on how to make our firm a more inclusive place to work and in 2021, launched several Diversity & Inclusion (D&I) initiatives which focused on communication, policies and the provision of support and training.

The year started with a full week dedicated to D&I to highlight the importance of being a diverse and inclusive firm. Colleagues from across the firm joined in training programmes on D&I and unconscious bias e-learnings, webinars, and the launch of a D&I community – a place where everyone can share ideas and discuss D&I related topics.

To increase awareness around biases and inclusion, we launched the “Fly on the Wall” approach and policies. Specially trained partners act as a ‘Fly’ and sit in on performance review meetings, recruitment decisions or informal sessions to observe and evaluate the process, hence creating more transparency.

A variety of D&I related training in various formats has been offered on topics from what inclusion in the workplace fully means, to how to balance work ambitions with family-life and responsibilities. We also looked at how to further connect and unify the various D&I groups within Loyens & Loeff.

## Vitality Week

We organised a Vitality Week for the entire firm to highlight the importance of staying fit and healthy mentally and physically, especially during the pandemic. Focusing on the four topics of Eat, Sleep, Move and Relax, everyone was encouraged through a variety of online events, activities, and challenges to stretch, cook a healthy meal, and get moving over the course of the week. In recognising the value of our personal wellbeing, we intend for activities such as these to continue beyond just the one week.

## Working from Home Policy

In 2020, an internal survey showed that most people considered working from home to be one of the most important lessons to be learned from the pandemic. In our 2021 Engagement Survey, most people went on to say they wanted some flexibility to work regularly from other locations, such as home. We listened to this feedback and have launched a firmwide, principle based, Working from Home Policy. We strive to find the right balance between training and social contact with colleagues, and flexibility. Another important positive side effect of working from home more often is that we can sustainably reduce our environmental footprint e.g., through less travel and paper use.

## Learning & Development

Encouraging people to continuously develop their skills and knowledge is part of putting people at the heart of our business. We believe that people learn as they do their job, from their colleagues and in organised learning settings. Our Learning & Development department

offers a curriculum on important topics such as Personal Leadership which is available to everyone within the firm. Our online learning platform, GoodHabitZ, also offers an extensive range of on-demand e-learning courses for the entire firm. The platform enables us to continually develop ourselves, whenever and wherever we want.

## Surveys

Every year our firm alternates a full engagement survey with a pulse survey to gauge what our people find important when it comes to topics such as collaboration, diversity and inclusion, efficiency, safety and leadership. We also believe that hearing from our newest colleagues is just as important as those who have been with our firm for longer. For that reason, we regularly ask them to provide us with input and fresh ideas on topics such as CSR and D&I.

## ECHO Partnership

Loyens & Loeff is an active partner of the ECHO Foundation (Expertise Centre on Diversity Policy) who use their knowledge to support our firm in implementing effective and sustainable policies to help us become the inclusive firm we want to be.

Annually, excellent students with a non-western background who stand out because of their entrepreneurial spirit, organisational skills, active social involvement, and constructive approach to challenges related to exclusion, are recognised with an ECHO Award including the **Loyens & Loeff Law & Tax Award**. This award honours students with a clear vision for diversity and inclusion within business (legal) services in a changing social context.

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## A cleaner future

In a world increasingly aware of the importance of environmental sustainability, Loyens & Loeff is undertaking several initiatives to reduce our ecological footprint. Our impact, as a professional services firm, is mainly related to catering, business travel, commuting, waste generation, and energy and paper consumption.

### Zero Emissions and Zero Waste

We decided to focus our ongoing efforts in the coming years on the central themes of 'Zero Emissions' and 'Zero Waste'. We already work from offices with limited environmental impact and by participating in local initiatives, we strive to reduce this impact even further. An ambitious "Green Team" has been set up to do this in collaboration with the Green Business Clubs [Amsterdam Zuidas](#) and [Rotterdam Centrum](#). In Luxembourg, we continue to maintain the high standards for the CSR Label and SuperDrecksKëscht trademark.

### Reducing our CO<sub>2</sub> emissions

Along with the Green Business Club projects, we are taking concrete steps to reduce our CO<sub>2</sub> emissions and waste flows.

Our International Business Travel Policy has been updated. The pandemic showed us that there are digital alternatives to meet clients and other contacts which not only save time but contribute to a better environment. We want our people to critically assess whether it is necessary to travel and if so, to consider the most sustainable option. Travelling by train on some of the regular routes in Europe and the UK is a viable alternative to air travel.



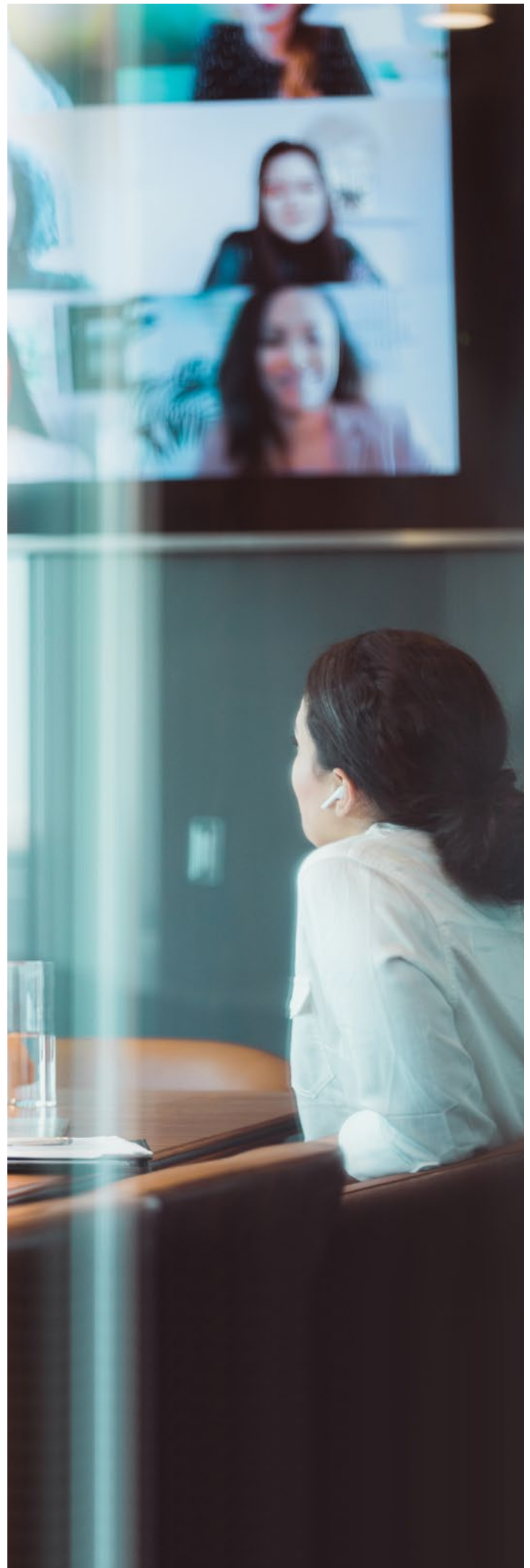
Reviewing our mobility policy for our Dutch offices identified the need to keep up with an evolving market and developments around working from home and sustainability. In 2021, a first step towards Zero Emissions was taken by sourcing and replacing the current Renault Twingo lease cars with the sustainable electric SEAT Mii and first reports are positive. In making our car fleet more sustainable we aim to have an entirely electric fleet by 2030 latest.

We have also amended our bicycle scheme for our Dutch offices with further incentives to encourage cycling, also for employees who live somewhat further away from the office.

In the coming years, we will be looking for external organisations that fit our central themes and can benefit from our legal and tax expertise. We would like to also consider how these initiatives can be filtered through to our clients.

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## Supporting our community

Our firm only thrives when the community around us thrives. We aspire to be the best neighbour we can by offering pro bono work and supporting initiatives that help keep our communities healthy and prosperous. We are also committed to protecting and serving the youngest members of our communities, which is why one of our firm's central CSR themes is Youth & Education.

### Pro bono work

As legal and tax experts, we are in a unique position to support our communities by offering our services on a pro bono basis. As part of our goal to increase engagement within our firm, as of 2022, any time spent on approved CSR projects will be valued the same as client work. We are convinced that making our expertise and knowledge available increases impact.

We strongly believe in collaboration, which is why we initiated a round table on the future of pro bono together with our longstanding partner [Pro Bono Connect](#) and other law firms during European Pro Bono Week 2021.

We aim to expand the international profile of the projects we support for example through a pilot in co-operation with UNICEF.

Beyond the specific focus of longer-term partnerships, we always have room for incidental projects. We worked pro bono on [Safisana](#), a project turning waste into value, and thus supporting communities in Ghana. Our Swiss colleagues advised [Pro Juventute](#), a Zurich based foundation that supports children, juveniles, parents, and families, pro bono in relation to the foundation's internal restructuring.

*"It's fantastic to be part of a pro bono project. In our case, the collaboration of a team of Loyens & Loeff lawyers and tax specialists provided very fast results, together with other stakeholders involved in the project. I am very proud of Loyens & Loeff's contribution and highly recommend colleagues to engage in pro bono work at least once in their careers."*

**Dieuwke Hooft Graafland,**  
**Competition & Regulatory Practice**

## Giving Back

We expanded our collaboration with **Giving Back** – a Dutch charitable organisation that aims to increase cultural diversity at the top. Their cross-cultural mentoring program brings two worlds together, to help first generation students realise their ambitions by connecting them to people and organisations that can serve as role models and inspire them. Last year we increased both our financial contribution and the number of colleagues that contribute by serving as mentors or providing guest lectures. Together we make diversity work.

*"As an outsider you could say that the Netherlands works fine, but it could be better. In fact, it should be better! Because if our country wants to stay relevant in a fast-changing world where there is a global war on talent, we need more (cultural) diversity at the top. Because diversity works. Diversity provides people who, for example from their background, bring just that little bit extra to stay relevant and compete on a global level. We empower the next generation leaders to make the impact we need!!"*

**Karim El Khetabi,**  
**director of the Giving Back Foundation**

## IMC Weekendschool



We continue to support the **IMC Weekendschool Foundation**.

This Dutch non-profit offers children from underprivileged neighbourhoods a three-year course to provide them with the skills, knowledge, and courage

to find a place in society matching their capacities.

Taught by volunteer professionals, including our own colleagues, the course introduces the children to a wide range of topics, including law, and trains them in skills such as presentation, research, debate, collaboration, and conflict resolution.

## JINC

Loyens & Loeff has been a sponsor of **JINC**, a Netherlands-based non-profit dedicated to helping young people create their own opportunities by preparing them to enter the job market, since 2006. We are very proud that in 2022, we will also partner with JINC Belgium and look forward to this new involvement. We share JINC's commitment to providing young people with guidance and strong role models, so they can become the skilled professionals of the future.



## Right to Play

We continued our long-term partnership with the international non-profit **Right to Play**. We share the organisation's belief that sport and play are powerful tools for empowering children with the knowledge and skills that they need to drive change in their lives. During our Vitality Week, we supported Right to Play in our "Make a Move" challenge. The 1.907.360 steps we took together resulted in a donation that will allow 1000 children to rise above adversity and play for an entire summer.



As a leading firm, Loyens & Loeff is the logical choice as a legal and tax partner if you do business in or from the Netherlands, Belgium, Luxembourg or Switzerland, our home markets. You can count on personal advice from any of our 900 advisers based in one of our offices in the Benelux and Switzerland or in key financial centres around the world. Thanks to our full-service practice, specific sector experience and thorough understanding of the market, our advisers comprehend exactly what you need.

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