

EMPLOYEES

Corporate responsibility

People from widely differing backgrounds and cultures work hand in hand at our globally active group of companies. We focus on their individual skills and talents. Every day, we work to create a climate of mutual trust at our group of companies, as well as a work environment free of any type of prejudice and discrimination, where everyone is accepted and can contribute with their talents, knowledge, experience and opinions. Südzucker Group's values – responsibility, creativity, respect and cooperation – also help us achieve our overarching goal: to leverage more power from the group.

Südzucker's code of conduct

The basis for Südzucker Group's interaction with employees and for the employees' behavior towards each other and towards external persons is the company's code of conduct. With the exception of AGRANA, which as a listed company has its own code of conduct, our code of conduct applies to the entire group and combines applicable law and international standards, operating procedures and rules, Südzucker corporate guidelines and employment-contract-related obligations toward Südzucker. Its contents are communicated via training measures and the provision of appropriate documents. Executives therefore take on a special role as both mentors and multipliers. They are trained specifically on this topic as part of management training courses. Adherence to Südzucker's code of conduct is supported by an anonymous whistleblower system. Parts of the code of conduct are also included in the planned and ad hoc audits by the internal audit department (→ Compliance).

Human rights protection

Strict adherence to applicable human rights protection regulations is an integrative component part of Südzucker Group's corporate responsibility. Every employee is obliged to respect the dignity and personal rights of every other employee and colleague, as well as other third parties (→ Society / Respect for human rights).

Group-wide HR strategy

Our group-wide HR strategy forms the basis for numerous measures and programs that cover topics such as leadership, digitalization, diversity, internationalization, talent management, incentive systems, teamwork and the work environment. The measures and programs are continuously developed and expanded.

Open communication

Südzucker Group fosters open communication with its employees. We use a group-wide magazine, townhall meetings, newsletters, video messages and our intranet to provide information about key developments within the company. In fiscal 2023/24, the focus was on implementing our corporate strategy along with working conditions and our compensation policy. Employee surveys were also conducted again on topics such as food safety culture in the sugar segment and the employee satisfaction at AGRANA. Another measure was to enhance the employee suggestion program to create a new, digital and transparent idea management system. Almost 1,000 (500) ideas were submitted via the group-wide idea management system last calendar year.

Number of employees¹

Employees by segment at balance sheet date

The total number of Südzucker Group employees increased to 19,204 (18,341) as of 29 February 2024. At Südzucker AG, the number of employees grew to 2,368 (2,241).

Employees by segment at balance sheet date

| 28/29 February | 2024 | 2023 | +/- in % |
|--------------------|---------------|---------------|------------|
| Sugar | 6,458 | 6,206 | 4.1 |
| Special products | 5,422 | 5,262 | 3.0 |
| CropEnergies | 515 | 480 | 7.3 |
| Starch | 1,167 | 1,148 | 1.7 |
| Fruit | 5,642 | 5,245 | 7.6 |
| Group total | 19,204 | 18,341 | 4.7 |

TABLE 022

Employees by region, relationship and gender

In fiscal 2023/24, the number of the company's workers permanently employed remained virtually unchanged to around 86 (88) %. Around 14 (12) % of employees were on fixed-term contracts. The majority of these were hired seasonally, mainly to help with harvesting and/or during processing campaigns. In fiscal 2023/24, Südzucker AG continued to employ around 87 % of its employees on permanent contracts and around 13 % on fixed-term contracts.

¹ The information on employees by segment is stated as full-time equivalents. All other information relates to employee headcount at the balance sheet date.

Employees

Germany had 4,784 (4,562) employees, as the country's share of the total increased moderately. The share of permanent employees thus rose slightly to 4,292 (4,028), or 90 (88) %. The remaining EU countries accounted for 7,870 (7,648) employees or around 39 (40) % of the total, while the other foreign countries accounted for 7,460 (6,813) or around 37 (36) %. About 7,476 (7,274) or unchanged around 95 % of employees in the rest of the EU and 5,579 (5,529) or around 75 (81) % of employees in countries outside the EU remain permanently employed. The share of part-time employees throughout the group remained unchanged at about 5 %; at Südzucker AG the figure remained unchanged at about 12 %.

Employees by region at balance sheet date (headcount)

| 28/29 February | 2024 | 2023 | +/- in % |
|-----------------|---------------|---------------|------------|
| Germany | 4,784 | 4,562 | 4.9 |
| Other EU | 7,870 | 7,648 | 2.9 |
| Other countries | 7,460 | 6,813 | 9.5 |
| Total | 20,114 | 19,023 | 5.7 |

TABLE 023

As of 29 February 2024, the number of employees according to employment relationship and gender for the group overall were as follows:

Employees by contract type and gender

| 29 February 2024 | Total | Permanent | Non-permanent |
|-------------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| Full-time | Male | 13,140 | 11,975 |
| | Female | 6,020 | 4,488 |
| Part-time | Male | 230 | 194 |
| | Female | 724 | 690 |
| Total | 20,114 | 17,347 | 2,767 |
| 28 February 2023 | | | |
| Full-time | Male | 12,899 | 11,767 |
| | Female | 5,251 | 4,279 |
| Part-time | Male | 170 | 152 |
| | Female | 703 | 663 |
| Total | 19,023 | 16,861 | 2,162 |

TABLE 024

Südzucker Group has committed to the goal of increasing the proportion of women at the first and second management levels below the executive board to 25 % by 2027. In fiscal 2023/24, the proportion was 21 %. The measures that specifically address the subject of gender were expanded.

We also pushed ahead with the group-wide Empowering Women program launched in 2020, which aims to support women in management positions and foster networking between them. A total of 23 (11) women from different divisions, levels of hierarchy and international locations participated in 2023/24. A women's network has also recently been set up that aims to strengthen and support women within and outside the network in their career paths. The "Women in Tech" network has also been set up within the IT department to provide a platform for women in our technical professions.

On the occasion of International Women's Day in 2023, colleagues of all genders pledged to promote equal opportunities between the sexes in companies as part of a video campaign titled "Embrace Equity". On Girls' and Boys' Day in April 2023, students had the opportunity to visit our German production locations or learn more about careers in administrative areas at our headquarters in Mannheim.

Südzucker Group's very first cross-divisional mentoring program was launched in June 2023. A total of 12 tandem pairs, each comprising an experienced mentor and a young female professional, are supported and guided through a year-long mentoring process. There are plans to expand the project in the coming fiscal year.

To raise awareness across every dimension of diversity, the "Unconscious Bias" workshops were initiated in the spring of 2023, aiming to uncover and challenge unconscious forms of bias. Plans are in place to further expand these workshops in the coming fiscal year.

Promoting diversity

As a signatory to the Diversity Charter, Südzucker AG has committed to promoting diversity and inclusion on behalf of the entire Südzucker Group. We are convinced that our ability to bring together a wide range of backgrounds and perspectives increases our company's innovative strength and our employees' motivation. We take a comprehensive, group-wide approach that encompasses the dimensions of age, gender, sexual orientation, physical and mental abilities, religion and ideology, social background, ethnic origin and nationality.

Employees

A virtual event on German Diversity Day as well as interviews on diversity management and the distribution of roles in the family are examples of communication measures carried out in the past fiscal year to heighten awareness among Südzucker Group employees regarding the topics of diversity, inclusion, family and career.

To respond even more decisively to the needs of our locations, an “Ambassador Program” was launched aimed at strengthening international networking efforts in the area of diversity and inclusion at the various locations.

Equality

The entire Südzucker Group has enshrined its policy of equal treatment and the prohibition of discrimination in its code of conduct. Employees are hired and promoted according to their suitability, qualifications and performance along with their willingness to learn. Equal opportunities are of paramount importance to us in the hiring process – we actively strive to ensure that all candidates receive equal opportunities and do not experience any form of direct or indirect discrimination. For instance, our job postings encourage all candidates (m/f/d) to apply, irrespective of their gender, nationality, religious or social background, sexual orientation or identity, origin, or physical or mental abilities.

In our standardized application process, all incoming applications undergo the same process, in which the candidates are compared with the requirements of the job profile. New employees are recruited based on their suitability and qualifications for the position to be filled, as well as their willingness to perform and learn. In Germany, a member of the local representative body for the severely disabled is consulted whenever people with a recognized severe disability apply for a job. As a result of the company’s extraordinarily strong production and technology orientation, male employees still account for a significantly higher proportion of the workforce in almost all segments.

With collective bargaining agreements and a job architecture, we contribute to a transparent wage structure.

We inform all employees equally about continuing education, vacancies and promotion opportunities throughout the entire course of their careers.

The 41 % share of women in the group-wide trainee programs is encouraging. In the junior management programs, the proportion of women is 50 %.

| Management ¹ | | | | | |
|----------------------------------|------------|------------|-------------|-----------|-------------|
| 29 February 2024 | Total | | Male | | Female |
| 1 st management level | 128 | 117 | 91% | 11 | 9% |
| 2 nd management level | 330 | 246 | 75% | 84 | 25% |
| Total | 458 | 363 | 79% | 95 | 21% |
| 28 February 2023 | | | | | |
| 1 st management level | 131 | 122 | 93 % | 9 | 7 % |
| 2 nd management level | 347 | 260 | 75 % | 87 | 25 % |
| Total | 478 | 382 | 80 % | 96 | 20 % |

¹1st management level: management of the corporate departments and executive board/management of the segments/divisions; 2nd management level: management level that reports directly to the management of the corporate departments and management level that reports directly to the executive board/management of the segments/divisions.

TABLE 025

Women accounted for around 33 (31) % of the total workforce at Südzucker Group. The share of women working at management levels 1 and 2 increased slightly to 21 (20) %. At Südzucker AG, the share of women in the total workforce remained unchanged at around 24 %. The proportion of women working at management levels 1 and 2 rose slightly to 12 (11) %.

Age structure and length of service

The company’s age structure continues to be relatively balanced and the average length of service within the group is almost unchanged from last year. Nearly 55 % have been working for the company for more than five years. The average length of service at Südzucker AG is significantly higher; about 65 % have worked for the company for more than five years and almost 12 % for more than 35 years. These figures are also reflected in the age structure. At just under 32 %, the number of employees over the age of 50 is higher than in the group.

Employees according to age group in %

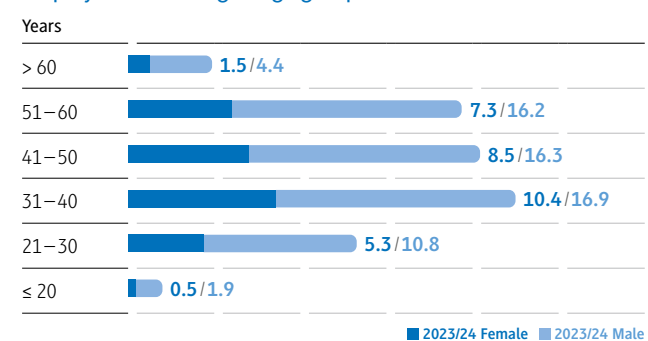


DIAGRAM 010

Length of service in years in %

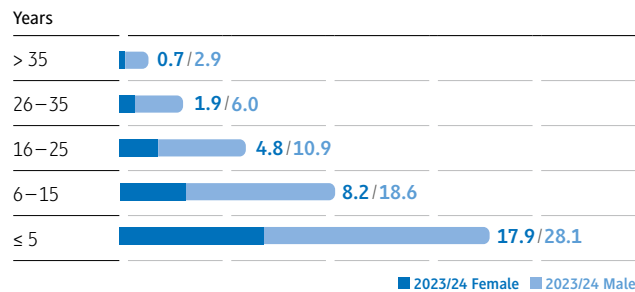


DIAGRAM 011

Südzucker – an attractive employer

As an attractive employer, we aim to give as many employees as possible access to a wide range of learning and development opportunities. In addition to providing the appropriate hardware and software, this also includes developing a culture of learning that enables employees to select educational opportunities within a certain framework and use them in a self-directed manner in order to advance their own personal and professional development. To jointly establish a culture of learning within the commercial sector, we will form a committee with various representatives from the production environment during the 2024/25 fiscal year to discuss the general conditions and measures required to establish and promote successful learning activities.

Apprenticeship

Südzucker AG's training initiative was continued in 2023/24 in order to simultaneously increase its visibility and appeal as a training company. Among other things, marketing measures were implemented throughout Germany and partnerships with schools and educational institutions were expanded.

¹ The number of trainees is reported in FTEs.

Südzucker Group's apprenticeship program in about 20 different professions continues to be a key building block toward securing its own skilled workforce for the long term. The number of apprentices remained unchanged at 370 (370)¹ as of 29 February 2024. In total, 199 apprentices were enrolled in the dual system or as part of an in-company study program at Südzucker AG, Freiburger Group and AGRANA in Germany as of 29 February 2024. Here too, the focus is on sustainability. Last fiscal year marked the first time we offered an international business course focusing on sustainable business. In our companies in Algeria, France and Austria, 126 people are trained according to a system comparable to one in Germany. The remaining 45 trainees are employed in accordance with the training modalities applicable in the respective countries.

Personal development

We further expanded the range of group-wide and division-specific learning opportunities and development measures in the 2023/24 financial year. Our ambition is to develop a holistic, modular training program that supports both our managers and our employees in their individual development by means of different levels and formats. Our group-wide digital learning platform, the Südzucker Group Campus, plays a crucial role in providing this support.

On the one hand, Südzucker Group Campus provides support for the regular, documented mandatory training, as well as for the adherence to legal and other code requirements (work safety, compliance, data security, hygiene, environmental protection, human rights, etc.).

Since November 2023, the Südzucker Group Campus has also offered a new, significantly more extensive and steadily expanding range of online training courses to develop soft skills, such as presentation techniques, remote working and personal branding.

The catalog of training and further education courses is augmented by new self-directed online language training courses and additional face-to-face events aimed at improving specialist and methodological knowledge (e.g. conducting job interviews, agile project management) or strengthening personal or social skills (e.g. modern self-management and time management, strengthening personal resilience).

Naturally, employees receive support when selecting external seminars that extend beyond the Scope of our training catalog.

In addition, Südzucker conducts trainee programs and junior management development programs at regular intervals.

At regular feedback meetings, managers and their employees are encouraged to jointly develop ideas for their further training and individual development, among other things.

Executive development

A basic qualification for executives is intended to convey a modern, standardized management model based on the newly developed leadership principles to provide guidance on how to take appropriate action in their role as managers. In addition, new training courses such as "Lateral leadership – leading without disciplinary responsibility" and "From employee to manager" were developed and introduced. In order to address some of the special challenges in the production environment, additional specific training courses are also offered for foremen. Virtual training courses on labor law and occupational safety for managers were offered during the 2023/24 fiscal year to make it easier for interested parties to participate.

Succession planning

Südzucker Group has identified the shortage of skilled workers as a strategic risk and has introduced preventive measures. A concept has been in place since the 2023/24 fiscal year to ensure that key positions in the company are filled in good time and in line with requirements. Systematic succession planning should also help secure valuable expert knowledge, motivate and retain employees by highlighting internal promotion/career opportunities and reduce recruitment costs.

Vacancies are advertised internally and, if appropriate, preference is given to employees from within. This is how we promote career mobility, retain know-how and experience within the Group, and encourage the transfer of knowledge and experience between locations and divisions.

International collaboration

The group-wide IOP onboarding program is designed to facilitate the networking of employees from different departments and locations, deepen insight into international group structures and promote mutual understanding and personal growth.

In order to share experience and knowledge and to support the timely implementation of key projects, we have held regular international, sometimes group-wide meetings of various group functions for many years.

Work-life balance

Our working conditions and the associated agreements offer – if possible – in all business areas a basis for work-life balance; for example, policies regarding remote work, flex time or temporary part-time work, childcare options during vacation periods or special leave for important family events.

Compensation and benefits

Südzucker Group's pay system is based on fixed and variable components plus a benefit plan. Depending on the region and corporate company, they comprise monetary and non-monetary components, such as a company pension plan, profit sharing, Christmas bonuses, share ownership plans and various insurance policies, some of which also apply in the private sector. In addition, Sunday, holiday and night work are paid separately.

Südzucker – a reliable employer

Occupational health and safety is a high priority throughout the Südzucker Group. The company is committed to implementing worker protection policies that guarantee employees a high level of health and safety at the production plants. The importance of this topic is also underscored by the fact that occupational safety is one of the eight focus areas in the group-wide sustainability strategy. We aim to reduce the accident rate¹ for the entire group by more than half from 11.1 in 2021 to 5.0 by 2026. Accordingly, our focus in fiscal 2023/24 was on cross-company initiatives and measures to further develop our safety culture. The group-wide target forms the framework for the group; there is no holistic management system for occupational health and safety.

Management policy

The occupational health and safety management systems of the divisions or companies, including Südzucker AG, describe processes and responsibilities and provide ways to evaluate and continuously improve them. The processes defined therein ensure compliance with occupational health and safety requirements. Our safety policy involves the employees of the partner companies working at our production locations in that safety rules are already contractually agreed and appropriate instructions are given on site.

Those responsible for ensuring compliance with all occupational safety measures required by law or stipulated by the company are defined in the management system and receive technical support both from internally appointed occupational safety experts and, if required, from external specialists. Südzucker Group occupational health and safety experts work closely with one another to ensure a comprehensive exchange of ideas, problems and resolutions. The focus is on ways to implement best practice solutions, hazard analyses and training for employees and managers. Südzucker has also drawn up an action plan for occupational health and safety, which is implemented by the divisions and locations. Developing proactive management indicators (leading KPIs) is closely linked to these measures, which, in addition to accident/incident-related key figures, should also enable an assessment of prevention performance in the respective area.

We conduct internal audits to verify practical implementation of the management system processes and determine improvement potential.

¹ Lost working days are recorded if they lead to one or more days' absence. Accident rate and lost working rate are both based on one million work hours.

Workplace safety

We regularly identify and evaluate risks in the workplace with regard to occupational and plant safety. The necessary risk assessments are implemented to provide a basis for determining protective and preventive measures.

Established checklist-based procedures are used to assess the severity of possible injuries and their probability of occurrence. In addition, we are especially careful with machines and systems maintenance processes, where we use so-called work approval procedures to also identify hazards.

Equipment and systems are regularly maintained and inspected in accordance with specifications in order to ensure they are safe. Specially trained personnel conduct additional tests where necessary in cases of severe potential hazard.

Learning from events

We document and investigate work-related accidents. We also intend to include so-called "near misses". Events are communicated throughout the company by way of accident reports and lessons learned newsletters. In the event of serious accidents and incidents with a high hazard potential, a "Safety Flash" is also prepared and distributed in a timely manner to provide information about particular risks at short notice.

Safety culture

A strong traditional Südzucker safety culture is a prerequisite for accident-free work. Efforts must be made to systematically prevent unsafe work practices, to convert unconscious, improper actions into conscious and safe actions, and to create a common understanding of the values of occupational health and safety at all levels and in every division throughout the company. Therefore, we launched a process designed to further develop the Südzucker Group safety culture last fiscal year.

Besides workshops and seminars on safety culture, so-called Safety Days were held, for example at CropEnergies in Belgium and at the sugar division in Poland and Germany. We have introduced and refined various communication tools. One such tool is the so-called safety moment, in which a topic relevant to occupational safety is addressed at the beginning of meetings or conferences. Five plants in the Freiburger division were certified in accordance with ISO 45001 (occupational health and safety).

The following production locations, among others, operated accident-free during the past fiscal year: In the sugar segment, the factories in Drochia, Moldova; Étrépagny, France; Roye, France; Roman, Romania; and Ropczyce, Poland; in the starch segment, Tandarei, Romania; and Szabadeyhaza, Hungary; and in the CropEnergies segment, the plants in Loon-Plage, France, and Wilton, UK, as well as a number of other locations in the fruit segment. Accident-free plants were awarded as part of the annual occupational safety competition.

Occupational safety indicators¹

| | 2020/21 | 2021/22 | 2022/23 | 2023/24 |
|-------------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Injury rate | 11.1 | 11.3 | 9.6 | 10.1 |
| Lost working day rate | 187 | 186 | 192 | 214 |
| Number of injuries | 377 | 383 | 366 | 377 |
| Occupational fatalities | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 |

¹From 2023/24, the figures are based on the financial year (March 1 to February 28/29), previously on the calendar year. Accident rate and lost working rate are both based on one million work hours. Lost working days are recorded if they lead to one or more days' absence. Estimates may be made for new sites.

TABLE 026

The group-wide number of accidents rose to 377 (366). Accordingly, the accident rate climbed year-on-year from 9.6 to 10.1. Lost time per accident increased from 192 to 214. The number of hours worked in the reporting year was 37.3 million. There were no fatal accidents among our own employees. Unfortunately, one person from a partner company had a fatal accident in fiscal 2023/24. Fatal accidents at work are accidents at work that are considered to have caused the death of the injured person within one year. The number of accidents at Südzucker AG rose to 54 (41). The time lost per accident at work fell from 216 to 186. The number of hours worked totaled about 3.7 million and the accident rate was 14.3.

The most frequent work-related injury types were bruises, contusions and sprains followed by cuts, lacerations, punctures and abrasions, scalds and burns, and fractures. The main factors contributing to injuries in the reporting period were the handling of mechanical work equipment and physical movement (tripping, falling, slipping). We conduct risk assessments to identify and evaluate possible risk of injury and determine ways to reduce these risks (Management policy).

Health protection

We strive to protect the health of our employees to the best of our ability.

The expertise of occupational physicians makes an important contribution to reducing the risks of work-related diseases; for example, external occupational health service providers or external physicians are commissioned within the framework of legal requirements. Occupational medical examinations are carried out to determine physical fitness for certain activities where necessary. Company doctors strictly adhere to personal health information confidentiality when advising on workplace design. Mental stress is also assessed as part of the risk assessment process. Organizational adjustments are made if necessary and employees are offered prevention training, such as stress management courses. Part-time retirement programs help older workers manage the transition to retirement according to their individual state of health.

Südzucker offers individualized programs to protect physical and mental health at its locations as part of its company health management, such as preventive measures (strong back exercises, yoga, health days, nutrition and non-smoking courses, cooperation with gym facilities, participation in running events) or reintegration measures after long-term absence. The seminars and training are intended to heighten employee awareness of the importance of maintaining healthy professional and personal daily lifestyles.

We also offer these programs online. Furthermore, offers for flu vaccination are also provided.

Exceptional regulations associated with the coronavirus pandemic were lifted in the course of the past financial year, although the situation with regard to the occurrence of infectious respiratory diseases is still being closely monitored. Specific protective measures will be taken if necessary. The aim is to continue to achieve a high level of protection for the health of our employees.

Communication and training

The company sees communication and the participation of employees or their representatives in developing occupational safety and health protection programs as a high priority. For example, we have committees in which managers, experts and employees or their representatives regularly discuss topics relevant to occupational health and safety. Over 63 % of the workforce is represented by formal occupational health and safety committees. We actively practice the ways of co-determination described by law in a spirit of partnership. Employees also have access to systems for the structured communication of ideas and suggestions for improvement, such as digital idea management, which is accessible to employees via company PCs.

Employees receive initial instructions dependent on the hazards associated with their jobs, followed by regular reinforcement. Checklists are normally used to identify and systematically record any need for training, which is subsequently provided either by supervisors, representatives or external specialists at the sites. Training courses are also held externally when necessary. We also have theme days with occupational safety topics and communicate occupational safety aspects as monthly topics on the intranet, using posters, brochures or classroom training.

We developed a comprehensive group-wide communication concept to support the measures in the past financial year in line

with the high importance of occupational health and safety in the company. The newly developed slogan is "Safety First. Because you matter". The aim is to make the topics of occupational safety and health protection prominently known to all employees, create identification and recognition effects and make them an integral part of the corporate culture.

Further information and motivation campaigns with the new slogan are planned, e.g. a campaign to raise awareness of tripping and falling accidents.

Dialogue with employee representatives and unions

We consider social dialogue with the elected representation of our employees to be important. Regular working meetings are held to inform the delegates of employee representation at plant, company and European levels. Key co-determination issues such as organizational changes, structural or cost efficiency programs are generally decided by consensus.

Half of the board seats are held by representatives of the company's own employees and members of the trade union, who are thus involved in all key corporate decisions.

The unions negotiate annual or multiyear collective bargaining agreements at almost all European sites as well as some locations around the world.

Südzucker Group has a total of 63 (62) % of its employees worldwide who are covered by collective bargaining agreements; in Germany, the ratio is 77 (71) %, and in the rest of the EU, 85 (88) %. Broken down by segment, the share in the starch segment is 99 (99) %, followed by the sugar 96 (89) %, CropEnergies 59 (71) %, fruit 41 (43) % and special products 40 (39) % segments.

Bargaining agreements cover issues such as occupational safety, profit sharing, flexible working hours and employee training.

Südzucker Group established a European Works Council over 25 years ago. It meets regularly with the executive board to discuss cross-border topics.

