

Symrise declaration on slavery and human trafficking 2022

California Transparency in Supply Chains Act of 2010 UK Modern Slavery Act of 2015

Symrise commends the provisions of the California Transparency in Supply Chains Act of 2010, Section 54 of the UK Modern Slavery Act and further international laws fighting slavery and human trafficking. The principles of this legislation correspond to the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, which Symrise supports.

Our organization

Symrise is a global supplier of fragrances, food ingredients, flavorings, cosmetic active ingredients and raw materials, as well as functional ingredients for foods. Its clients include manufacturers of perfumes, cosmetics, food and beverages, the pharmaceutical industry and producers of nutritional supplements and pet food.

Its sales of are approximately € 3.8 billion in the 2021 fiscal year make Symrise a leading provider worldwide. Headquartered in Holzminden, Germany, the Group is represented in more than 100 locations in Europe, Africa, the Middle East, Asia, the United States and Latin America.

Symrise works with its clients to develop new ideas and market-ready concepts for products that are an integral part of every-day life. Economic success and corporate responsibility are inextricably linked as part of this process.

Symrise - always inspiring more...

Our principles

The guiding principles of the United Nations for the economy and human rights and their national Implementation in the German government's National Action Plan for Business and Human Rights (NAP) explicitly emphasize corporate responsibility. After all, the activities of companies can have unintended negative effects on human rights. This applies above all to globally operating corporations with complex supply chains. Particularly threatened by human rights violations in supply chains are those population groups who are already marginalized in their respective country and therefore are exposed to higher risk, such as children, women and religious or ethnic minorities. At the same time, a precarious human rights situation also weakens companies since their success depends on a stable and predictable environment. Within the framework of SOG 8, humane working conditions are emphasized as the prerequisite for sustainable and inclusive economic growth. Our materiality analysis conducted in 2019 underscores the importance of the topic „respecting human rights“ via a high rating, especially for our external stakeholders. This topic is also becoming increasingly important in regular investor and consumer discussions in 2021, particularly regarding the German Supply Chain Act which will come into force 2023.

At Symrise, Corporate Sustainability is responsible for the topic of human rights and reports on it to the Executive Board several times per year. By signing the United Nations Global Compact, we officially announced Our active support for the protection of international human rights as a company. This applies both to our own employees and to the observance of human rights at our business partners. Our Human Rights Policy reinforces this commitment.

The Symrise Code of Conduct describes our company's worldwide rules on the topic of human rights. The provisions are implemented worldwide in our Integrated Management System (IMS), which is based on the provisions of the Group-wide SA 8000 social accountability standard. This standard is based on the conventions of the International Labour Organization (ILO), the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. The abuse of employee's rights or work safety provisions is illegal and is not tolerated in any form at Symrise. Independent auditing companies regularly confirm compliance with these regulations on social responsibility. For violations of our Code of Conduct, our employees can anonymously and confidentially contact the relevant Compliance Officer at their local or our Integrity Hotline (for more on the complaints mechanism, see GRI 102-17).

Symrise has implemented its own corporate grievance mechanism for external informants to report problems and seek remedy. Symrise will also abide by any national state-based grievance mechanisms or laws, and work with the relevant authorities where needed, to address any grievances that may arise, relevant to Symrise. External informants can directly contact the Symrise Compliance Officer Sustainability at Sustainability.Office@symrise.com. External informants who wish to report violations of our Code of Conduct by a Symrise employee or our business partners do not have to fear reprisals. Rather, we actively encourage dialogue.

We welcome and expressly support corresponding laws against forced labor or human trafficking, such as the California Transparency in Supply Chains Act or the UK Modern Slavery Act and the German Supply Chain Act. Symrise therefore voluntarily participated in the monitoring prior to the implementation in 2019 and 2020. We also spoke out prominently in the reporting year as part of the Initiative for Sustainable Agricultural Supply Chains (INA) for the German government to pass the German Supply Chain Act by 2023. It will create binding due diligence obligations in relation to human rights and environmental friendliness for companies. We welcome recent policy developments on the subject.

Our risk assessment

Since 2010, almost most of the Symrise production sites have been externally audited in three-year intervals based on the SEDEX/SMETA 4-pillar Standard. In the reporting year 2021, sites in Argentina, Egypt, Germany, Mexico, UK and the US were audited by external auditors: No significant deviations from specifications were identified. All identified deviations and potential improvements were promptly implemented at the respective sites and verified in a follow-up audit, if necessary.

In addition, several customers had independent certification organizations audit selected Symrise locations according to their own standards for social aspects.

We also require our suppliers and business partners to uphold basic human rights. Before a new supplier is accepted as a business partner, it must pledge in writing that it will maintain and comply with the provisions of the Responsible Sourcing Policy & Supplier Code of Conduct. The international supplier rating platforms „Supplier Ethical Data Exchange“ (SEDEX) and Ecovadis, which we added to the supplier rating section in 2020, are valuable tools with which we can more easily assess suppliers and disclose our own data to customers. Since 2006, we have been publishing information pertinent to Symrise on working conditions and employee rights, health and safety as well as on environmental and ethical business practices on the SEDEX platform. Almost most of the Symrise production sites in the Scent & Care and Taste, Nutrition & Health segments are registered with SEDEX. All production sites are to be registered on the SEDEX platform by the end of 2022. Since 2012, we have requested that our most important suppliers register at SEDEX or Ecovadis and disclose their data there. Furthermore, since 2014, numerous suppliers of natural substances that are strategically important for Symrise have been evaluated via the Union for Ethical Bioproducts (UEBT), thus ensuring ethical sourcing of the products.

We carry out audits for suppliers that pose an especially notable risk (as defined by SEDEX and Ecovadis), that have crucial raw materials or that have had problems flagged in the assessment. Suppliers from whom we require certification by specific audit companies such as UEBT, SAI or FSC are also visited on site if high risks are present. Suppliers with medium and low risks are subject to regular assessment by SEDEX and/or Ecovadis or by audit companies such as UEBT, SAI and FSC. In the reporting year 2021, more than 120 supplier audits were performed by trained and experienced internal supplier audit teams. Additionally, we request at least 50 suppliers annually to carry out SEDEX/SMETA audits by verified, independent audit agencies.

During the recruitment process, Symrise makes sure all new employment relationships are made in accordance with local labor laws. Symrise also ensures that all new employees have a valid work permit for their country of employment, a fair employment contract, an employee handbook and are trained in all aspects of occupational safety necessary for their respective functions. We expect the same from all our business partners. Symrise works with international companies and organizations to strengthen its influence. We consider internationally renowned companies and organizations like the Rainforest Alliance (RA), the German Society for International Cooperation (GIZ), the Union for Ethical Bioproducts (UEBT) and Save the Children to be an essential part of our business model to improve our social influence, our environmental footprint in all areas of our business and that of our suppliers of goods and services.

Naturally, Symrise is also committed to consistently complying with the SDGs (Sustainable Development Goals) of the UN Global Compact, Goal 8.7 especially focuses on eradicating forced labor, ending modern slavery and human trafficking and securing the prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labor.

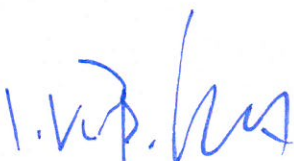
Continuous improvement

In light of the Supply Chain Due Diligence Act, we have expanded the goal for evaluating our suppliers. By 2025, the suppliers, who together account for 90 % of our procurement volume, will be assessed according to sustainability criteria. The assessment of the suppliers of the newly acquired ADF/IDF started at the end of 2020. Accordingly, 72.7 % (2020: 67 %) of our suppliers, based on 90 % of the procurement volume, have already been assessed according to sustainability criteria in the reporting year.

In order to ensure compliance with all compliance requirements on an ongoing basis, the need for training is regularly identified and suitable training courses are held in both the areas, technical and legal compliance. In addition to training courses where employees are present on site, internet-based training is also offered. This allows us to reach more employees in a shorter period. It also gives employees greater flexibility in terms of where and when they complete their training. Subsequent tests confirm not only that a training course has been completed, but that its content has also been understood.


In addition to the requirements of their position, new Symrise employees are given comprehensive training when they join the company on the fundamental principles of our Code of Conduct. All employees then take part in rolling training courses based on predefined schedules. Depending on whether they are basic, refresher or specialized training courses, these schedules cover a period of between one and three years.

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