BENE SUSTAINABILITY REPORT 2017

bene

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DEAR READERS,

Ecological thinking and behaviour have a long tradition at Bene.They span all our company divisions – from product development, procurement, production and logistics to product recycling.

This Bene Sustainability Report documents all or our economic, ecological and social efforts.

Today, people and companies have a much greater awareness of their responsibilities towards the environment than they did 20 years ago. In the office furniture sector, noticeably more attention has been paid to environmental questions in recent years, particularly as a result of the proliferation of eco-labels, such as
the Blue Angel and the introduction of building certification standards. Because today a sustainable building also needs sustainable contract furniture. The successful development of sustainable furnishing systems has given us a crucial competitive advantage as a responsible manufacturer.

Bene aims to be a reliable partner for sustainable, well-designed office solutions. In the future, we will intensify efforts to promote practical innovations in all product groups. We have defined the following sustainability goals, among others, for the coming business years:

I. Increase customer satisfaction
II. Reduce the CO_2 footprint of our products
III. Process wood-based materials from sustainable forestry
IV. Continue to develop expertise and make it sustainable
V. Promote a social community and health

Sustainability will continue to be an important topic for us in future, especially the question of how to develop strategies that strike a balance between ecological and economic interests.

Best wishes,

Michael Fried and Jörg Schuschnig
Executive Board Members at the Bene Group

1. OUR COMPANY

Bene is a leading international specialist in the design and furnishing of inspiring office and working environments. With its concepts, products and services, Bene turns the office into a living space where people can not only work well, but also enjoy what they do.

1.1. OVERVIEW OF BENE GMBH

Together with clients and partners, Bene develops office solutions to spatially represent the work processes, culture, and identity of a company. The high standards that Bene has always aspired to in terms of functionality, quality and design can be felt in every single product.

Bene can look back on a "long" history: founded in 1790 as a small joinery in the Lower Austrian municipality of Waidhofen/Ybbs, the company is now represented in more than 40 countries around the world. It sells its products both via its own branches as well as via a dense network of specialised trading partners.

The Bene world is still centred around Waidhofen/Ybbs, where development, design and production activities are combined under one roof. With an integrated order processing system and consistent just-in-time production, Bene has one of the most modern and efficient production facilities for office furniture in Europe.

INFO BOX

Owner:
BGO Beteiligungsverwaltungs GmbH

Company form:
Private Limited Company (GmbH)

Structure:
Line organisation

Bene's certifications:
ISO 9001 : 2008; ISO 14001 : 2004; PEFC™, FSC®, FISP®

Image 1 – Bene headquarters in Waidhofen/Ybbs

Image 2 – Bene production facility in Waidhofen/Ybbs

1.1.1. MILESTONES

The following chart provides a general overview of the Bene Group's most significant economic and ecological milestones.

1790-1980

Company founded (1790)

Industrial production of office furniture begins (1951)

New production site in Waidhofen/Ybbs (1975)

1981-2000

Bene Büromöbel KG was awarded the Austrian national coat of arms "Österreichisches Staatswappen"

Switch to water-based varnishes (1996)

Austria quality seal for wood products (1996)

2001/2002

Shutdown of the Zell production site in the centre of Waidhofen/Ybbs (2002)

2005

Changeover from intra-factory transportation to freight forwarders (reduction of empty runs)

2006

Certified in accordance with the standards EN ISO 9001 EN ISO 14001

Switch to electronic price lists instead of paper price lists (saving approx. 1.5 million sheets of paper per year)

2007

Production and office building connected to the public sewage network and wastewater treatment plant in Waidhofen/Ybbs

Construction of a waste management system, including a waste reduction system for chipboard residue.

2008

Recognition as an Austrian model business

Austrian Eco-Label for the T-Platform

GECA (Good Environmental Choice Australia) certification for T-Platform, P2_Group and AL_Group

"LGA tested for toxins" mark for all products manufactured in Waidhofen/Ybbs

2009

Introduction of the Bene EPD/LCA calculation method

Certified PEFC™ Bene AG

Sustainable Product Award Austria

FISP Bene PLC and Bene AG

2010

Blue Angel for all products manufactured at Waidhofen/Ybbs

Austrian Eco-Label for all products manufactured at Waidhofen/Ybbs

Admission to respACT and the UN Global Compact

2011

Publication of the first Bene Sustainability Report

ASRA – Austrian Sustainability Reporting Award

No electricity generated by nuclear power

2012/2013

Greenguard certification,

Trigos Ö and NÖ nomination in the workplace category

No tropical veneers used

2014

FSC® certification

2015

Superbrand Austria

2016

Sale of Zell plant

2017

Chart 1 – Timeline

1.1.2. PRODUCTS

As an integrated provider, Bene offers products for all spaces and places in the modern office.

Desks

Meetings, Conference & Media

Management

Room systems

Collaboration

Merchandise

Seating furniture

Storage

1.1.3. PRODUCTION SITE IN WAIDHOFEN/ YBBS (AUSTRIA)

Despite its worldwide activities, Bene intentionally concentrates its production at one site in Austria. This has been located in Waidhofen/Ybbs ever since the company was first founded in 1790. The modern and efficient production facility, with over 42,000 m² of floor space, is located on the company premises, which are approx. 11 ha (110,000 m²) in size.

High standards in terms of the environment and safety are guaranteed through this site in Austria. Austrian requirements related to areas such as quality standards, the legal framework and training opportunities help to ensure competitiveness and to create the framework for sustainable economic activity.

The Bene plant has been part of the municipality of Waidhofen/Ybbs for over 215 years[1]. As such Bene has long been an integral part of the regional economic structure. We are strongly committed to the region and therefore accept its disadvantages, such as its lack of motorway or train connections.

Thanks to our longstanding relationship with Waidhofen/Ybbs, no formal programmes to regulate the company's effects on the community are necessary.

By concentrating on the Waidhofen/ Ybbs production site, Bene not only enjoys advantages in logistics through the central location in Central Europe, but also provides secure jobs in the region.

In 2009, a Research and Development Centre was put into operation at the Waidhofen/Ybbs site, which allows the Group to comprehensively present its entire product expertise to customers and employees for the first time.

Bene produces around 100,000 workstations, 35,000 metres of wall and 600,000 individual pieces of furniture annually at its Waidhofen an der Ybbs site.

INFO BOX

Regular excursions and Bene customer visits from various countries help to regenerate the region. This is a highly positive economic aspect for gastronomy, the hotel business and tourism which is not to be underestimated.

Around 1800 international visitors and also some of our own employees from around the globe visited Bene Waidhofen/ Ybbs in 2016 alone.

1.1.4. CORPORATE STRATEGY

With the aim of expanding the Bene Group in a sustainable, growth-orientated and innovative way to make it European market leader, the company has been following this strategy:

- Aligning sales with the two channels of "Direct sales" and "Dealers" with the focus on growth markets and metropolises
- Developing and successfully launching a competitive full product range, thereby positioning itself as a high-quality supplier in the market.
- Developing an integrated IT and processing landscape with a highly-automated, central manufacturing process.
- Positioning itself as a specialist for the office that makes a sustainable contribution to its customers' business success with its pioneering concepts & solutions.

[1] http://waidhofen.at/

SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC ACTIVITY IS A KEY CHALLENGE

INTERVIEW WITH MICHAEL SCHUR (CHAIRMAN OF THE SUPERVISORY BOARD AT BENE)

WHAT DOES SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC ACTIVITY MEAN TO YOU?

Even though Bene as a company naturally dedicates particular attention to economic issues, of course the company also takes all three dimensions of sustainability into account: social, ecological and economic matters.

For me, sustainability primarily means using resources carefully in all areas of the company and also working in partnership with all the company's stakeholders.
In this sense, sustainable economic development is absolutely essential for any company, and it represents a crucial prerequisite for the business entity's long-term survival.

Bene was founded in 1790 and still enjoys market success, a fact that makes our company a prime example of sustainable economic activity and illustrates the our ability to adapt to changed framework conditions. This sustainable flexibility is a new challenge for us each and every day. This and the absolute focus on quality will safeguard Bene's future sustainably – for another 225 years.

WHAT ROLE CAN SUSTAINABILITY PLAY IN THESE TIMES OF ECONOMIC CHALLENGES?

Sustainable economic activity is always a key challenge and represents a crucial prerequisite to ensuring a company's future survival.

Continuous changes in thinking and lifestyle together with the avoidance of harmful influences are just as inseparable from the company's results as efforts to attain corporate fitness and durability. The objective is to achieve clear sustainable profitability and to meet the requirements for necessary investments and reserves, so we can face the challenges that are bound to lie ahead in a competitive and market environment that is becoming increasingly intense.

Achieving this at the Austria site will require maximum cooperation and flexibility from the company and its employees.

1.2. INTEGRATED MANAGEMENT SYSTEM POLICY

The CSR policy first published in 2011 was merged with the existing IMS policy (Integrated Management System Policy) in 2014. The requirements of the revised management system standards, handling of data, energy management, chain of custody, IT security and ICS[2] have been incorporated into the current edition.

At Bene Group we pursue the following IMS-Policy which is based on our vision and our mission statement.

We base our actions on the needs of our customers and our company in order to achieve success together.

We develop pioneering, innovative and inspiring concepts and products. We also believe that solutions that focus on people, optimal functionality and innovative design transform the working environment into an enjoyable space. The result is spaces where people work happily and successfully. This is how we are setting new standards for work environments.

Our ongoing goal is to continuously improve the entire organisation. We agree on joint goals, document them and measure their attainment with key performance indicators. What drives us is our never-ending pursuit of improvement. We challenge the familiar and question the status quo - even our own.We see the applicable statutory regulations as a minimum requirement and are committed to complying with them.

It is important to us that we handle information concerning our customers, suppliers and employees confidentially. This is why we protect this information appropriately and do not forward it to third parties without prior agreement.

Economic responsibility

The offices and work environments designed by Bene have an impact on the success of any company.

Working together with customers and partners, we design custom-tailored workplaces in which people like to work and can work well. As we plan them, we concentrate on the needs of our customers.

We create holistic working environments by developing innovative, high quality and design-oriented products.

We focus on our customers and maintain good and sustainable customer relationships. All our operations and processes are internally coordinated which is the key to our success. The more we align our processes, the more competitive and cost-efficient we become.

In complying with economic aspects we use state-of-the-art technology for our processes and products.

The inclusion of different management systems (QSE[3], CSR[4], Energy, CoC[5], ISM[6], ICS) into an integrated system allows for economic leadership and coordination of the company. The international norms and standards serve as the basis for this.

[2] ICS = Internal Control System
[3] QSE = Quality, Security, Environment
[4] CSR = Corporate Social Responsibility
[5] CoC = Chain of Custody
[6] ISM = Information Security Management

Environmental responsibility

We set demanding goals for ourselves when it comes to conserving resources. We attach importance to improving energy efficiency, increasing recovery and recyclability, and minimising emissions and waste. We think in complete product life cycles and consider environmental criteria from the initial product idea to its recycling.

As a company that processes wood products, we are committed to sustainable forestry. More than half of the materials we use are wood-based. All of the table top materials that we use have been certified in accordance with the CoC standards for sustainable forest management (PEFC™, FSC®).

Our production site, located in the heart of Europe, allows us to enjoy the advantage of the shortest routes to our customers and suppliers. We accept responsibility for the safety and health of our employees and for an intact environment.

Social responsibility

We are aware that a company also has social and community responsibilities in addition to its economic activities. We maintain respectful relationships, and work together in a way that fosters attentiveness to values. For Bene, cultural diversity is an important prerequisite for recognising needs and to offer people/customers all over the world holistic and innovative working environments.

We are a sought-after, fair and responsible employer that offers equality of opportunity and promotes a positive and secure working environment.
Excellent, motivated and creative employees are the keys to our company's success.

We support all staff members by offering relevant education and continuing education and we ensure that all staff members are employed in positions appropriate for their qualifications.

We respect, meet and support international human rights within our sphere of influence. Our ethical criteria ensure that our company does not participate in human rights violations. Company representatives, wherever they may be, must behave fairly, with integrity, and in line with Bene's ethical standards.

Michael Fried and Jörg Schuschnig
Executive Board Members at the Bene Group

The IMS policy[7] is communicated to employees via the intranet alongside additional policies, such as the procurement policy and the Bene Ethical Code of Conduct. External communication is achieved via our homepage and this report.

[7] Crucial items in the procurement policy, human resources policy, environmental policy and the product policy form part of the IMS policy.

1.3. SUSTAINABILITY AT BENE

The integrated management system represents the basis for identification and selection of sustainability aspects. The environmental aspects from the environmental management system are crucial for this.

Image 5 – Thomas Rigler (Customized Solutions Team)

Operational environmental protection is an important part of our mission. It is implemented through the objectives defined by us and the corporate strategy. The integrated management system is certified in accordance with EN ISO 14001 : 2015, EN ISO 9001 : 2015 and includes the essential content of OHSAS 18001 : 2007 and EN ISO 50001 : 2011.

It focuses on ecological, social and economic aspects. Bene is committed to continuous and sustainable improvements in environmental protection.

See also the section Managing sustainable development (see chapter 5 on page 77)

Image 6 – Martin Zehetgruber (Director Human Resources)

1.3.1. THE MOST IMPORTANT SUSTAINABILITY ASPECTS AT BENE

Quality of life and environmental protection are both sources of innovation for Bene. Our environmental management policy is continuously improving the efficiency of our production site. Ecology, health and social aspects constantly provide new impetus for our product design. Our fair economic values are improving our relationship with stakeholders. A good working environment at Bene itself is also key – particularly at times of economic strain.

The most important sustainability issues are explained in detail on the following pages. For each of these issues, individual chapters provide information on current developments.

Image 3 – Bene advertising from the 1950s

1.3.1.1. CUSTOMER SATISFACTION:

The ongoing satisfaction of our customers is very important to us. Customers and their employees should enter their offices with a sense of pleasure and enjoy working there. They should see Bene as an expert professional partner that provides good advice and support when needed.

We foster long-term customer relationships – our customers not only receive outstanding support at the stage of the sale, but also in the run-up to this as well as afterwards. We keep in touch with our customers via different channels, such as the Bene website, the customer newsletter, as well as events and personal visits. It is also important to us that we settle complaints in a positive and rapid manner.

Image 4 – Manuel Obernberger, Marion Schnabler and Franz Schörghuber (Finance and Accounting)

1.3.1.2. EMPLOYEES AND SOCIAL MATTERS

Development of employment numbers:
(see chapter 2.2 on page 20)
Well-trained expert staff who remain loyal to the company in the long term are essential for a company's success. Bene wants to safeguard local employment as an employer. Employees should as far as possible be retained in order to keep turnover and any loss of knowledge to a minimum. Our objective is for qualified employees to work together successfully for many years in well-balanced teams.

Health and safety:
(see chapter 2.3 on page 21)
Our measures aim to improve the quality of life in our own offices. We also strive to prevent accidents and long-term damage to health among production employees.

Education and further training:
(see chapter 2.4 on page 22)
As the market is constantly changing, continuous training for our employees is essential to us.

Equal opportunity:
(see chapter 2.5 on page 26)
Employees and modern society value diversity and equal opportunities –regardless of gender, origin or disability. Bene is committed to these values.

Communication and working atmosphere
(see chapter 2.6 on page 29)
Real-time communication, new media and social environments optimise collaboration and ensure the company's success.

1.3.1.3. PRODUCT RESPONSIBILITY

Innovative workstations:
Offices are places for social networking. Innovative collaboration ensures long-term success, both for the business and the quality of life of employees. Bene designs offices of the future.

Ergonomics and emission-free furniture:
(see chapter 3.1 on page 36)
Well-being depends on various factors. Well-designed furniture has many health benefits, and for instance helps avoid allergies or postural problems. More and more customers are demanding emission-free furniture which does not pollute the direct office environment. We adapt our chipboards and textile fabrics to meet these demands.

Image 7 – Tobias Harreither and Julian Auer (IT Client Management)

Sustainable use of raw material:
(see chapter 3.1 on page 36)
Bene products mainly consist of the renewable raw material wood. This should come from sustainable and preferably regional forests. When it comes to wood and other raw materials, the recycling rate is becoming more and more important.

Design with high recycling potential:
(see chapter 3.5 on page 52)
Thanks to its outstanding quality, Bene furniture has a high durability. At the end of product use, a simple and homogenous disassembly process is guaranteed, so that the recycling process can be completed as fully as possible.

Life cycle assessment:
(see chapter 3.3 on page 46)
At Bene, considering / examining a product's life cycle means continuously reducing all CO_2 emissions; from raw material production right through to recycling.

Product labelling:
(see chapters 3.2 on page 42 and 3.6 on page 45)
We use different environmental marks and labels as evidence of the sustainability of our products for our customers.

1.3.1.4. SUPPLY CHAIN, PRODUCTION AND LOGISTICS

A good relationship with our suppliers
(see chapter 4.1 on page 58)
Providing sustainable office furniture is only possible through collaboration with responsible suppliers. This allows us to use sustainable material, focus on the region and optimise our Carbon Footprint along the whole Supply Chain.

Image 8 – Peter Morawetz (Manager Group Operations)

Climate protection
(see chapters 4.2 on page 60; 4.3 on page 67 and 4.6 on page 71)
When optimising the carbon footprint of our products, we focus on those areas over which we personally have an influence: On the one hand, we reduce CO_2 emissions caused by heating, compressed air and other energy consumption at our production site in Waidhofen/Ybbs. On the other hand, we also optimise transportation emissions. Besides CO_2 we also reduce other environmentally-damaging emissions.

Efficient use of materials:
(see chapters 4.2 on page 60)
Raw material efficiency and the optimised use of varnishes and glues improve our impact on the environment and save costs. Further efficiency considerations include water and packaging.

Waste management:
(see chapter 4.4 on page 68)
We avoid waste and separate recyclable material into different waste streams. This reduces costs and protects our environment.

1.3.2. PRIORITISING THESE ISSUES

The Sustainability Team here at Bene has prioritised these relevant issues into two dimensions: these are in accordance with the influence on stakeholders' assessments and decisions and with the importance of the economic, ecological and societal effects.

Chart 2 – Prioritisation of topics

Sustainable products and employee issues are of utmost priority. It is evident that the market demands for sustainability are rising. We distinguish ourselves from competitors by increasingly focusing on eco-design and sustainability. We care about our employees and are conscious of the fact that any reduction in the number of employees increases the pressure on the remaining personnel and that high turnover rates involve a loss of knowledge.

Chart 3 – Detailed prioritisation of topics

Sustainable relations with different external stakeholders are already well-developed and form a central role in both eco-social and strategic assessments.

There is also a focus once again on cooperation with our suppliers following the years of restructuring and pressure on prices arising from this.

1.4. BENE STAKEHOLDERS

Responsible company management requires the communication with the company's stakeholders. Bene encourages constructive and critical exchange with all stakeholders who show openness and readiness to achieve a sustainable future together.

We continuously include our stakeholders in decision-making processes. Bene communicates on different levels with stakeholders and incorporates the findings of these discussions into its business.

Openness, clarity and constant communication with the public are indispensable for maintaining and restoring the stakeholders' trust in the company, particularly following the last five difficult years.

Image 9 – Bene at Clerkenwell Design Week 2016

Image 10 – Julia Permesser (Sales Team Vienna)

This sustainability report is an important instrument for reaching this goal. It provides information about current ecological, societal and social developments and forms the basic principle of constructive dialogue with different stakeholders in society.

OVERVIEW OF THE BENE STAKEHOLDERS
The Bene stakeholder environment – list of the most crucial stakeholders:

CUSTOMERS
Small- and large-scale customers, trade partners, potential customers

INTERMEDIATE CUSTOMERS
Architects, facility managers, project developers

OWNERS
BGO Beteiligungsverwaltungs GmbH, Dr. Erhard F. Grossnigg, Dr. Martin Bartenstein

EXECUTIVE MANAGEMENT
Managing directors, supervisory board

EMPLOYEES
Company management, workers' council, employees, families of employees, trade unions, potential and former employees

SUPPLIERS
Raw materials suppliers, OEM suppliers, commodity suppliers, network partners, service providers

POLITICS AND ADMINISTRATION
Legislators, authorities, municipal and local authorities, federal states, federal government, the European Union

NEIGHBOURS
Direct neighbours to the Waidhofen/Ybbs production site (Lietz GmbH, local transport association NÖVOG[8] (Citybahn Waidhofen, Gstadt railway station), Waidhofen road maintenance, Austrian Gymnastics Association ÖTB[9] Lützow gymnastics club, EVN AG, construction engineer Ing. Friedrich Deseyve, various residential houses, etc.), neighbours to the sales branches, local neighbours

JOURNALISTS/MEDIA
Local, regional, national and international media

SOCIETY
Associations, communities, research institutes, universities, schools

INVESTOR RELATIONS
Funding bodies, certified accountants, banks

PARTNER COMPANIES IN THE AFFILIATED GROUP (BGO BETEILIGUNGSVERWALTUNGS GMBH & AUSTRO HOLDING[10])
Ankerbrot AG, Dachstein Outdoor und Lifestyle GmbH, Deutz-Fahr Austria Landmaschinen GmbH, Domoferm International GmbH, Sleepwell Kauffmann GmbH, Lohberger, Heiz + Kochgeräte-Technologie GmbH, Astera Consulting GmbH, Gaulhofer Industrie-Holding GmbH, KUNERT Fashion GmbH, Neudoerfler Office Systems GmbH

ENVIRONMENT
Water (River Ybbs adjacent to the company premises in Waidhofen/Ybbs – see Image 119 on page 60), flora, fauna, soil, air

[8] Niederösterreichische Verkehrsorganisationsgesellschaft (https://www.noevog.at/)
[9] Austrian Gymnastics Association (http://www.ötb.at/)
[10] http://austro-holding.at/

1.4.1. FORMS OF COMMUNICATION WITH THE STAKEHOLDERS

In addition to this sustainability report, Bene also uses various media for target-group orientated communication, which is constantly being improved.

Examples of the forms of communication with stakeholders are explained in further detail below:

1.4.1.1. CUSTOMERS AND INTERMEDIATE CUSTOMERS

Customers and intermediate customers are regularly involved in a variety of different ways. The Bene Group has a systematic Customer Relationship Management policy for all areas and sites. Amongst other things, it comprises customer information and advice, a hotline and complaints management.

Image 11 – Andreas Krenn and Jakob Kolarz-Lakenbacher (Compliance and Control)

There have been no disputes such as massive complaints, negative product test results, recalls or breaching of the protection of customer data between the company and customers/organisations representing customers during the current reporting period.

The exchange between customers and intermediate customers takes place at fairs (e.g.: around the Orgatec Furniture Fair[11] in Cologne or the Salone Internazionale del Mobile[12] in Milan), at evening meetings on various topics at subsidiaries and at other events for different customer groups.

We are always happy to invite customers in to enter a discussion with them and convince them of our manufacturing quality.

We also regularly develop project-based solutions together with customers.

1.4.1.2. EMPLOYEES

Communication with employees is of utmost importance to us. Company management, the workers' council and all employees were invited to join the Bene Sustainability Team, or were given regular personal updates on any progress made.

The Bene Intranet has been an important tool for this purpose. Numerous documents and news items on the issue are available at work.bene.com (SharePoint).

1.4.1.3. SUPPLIERS

It is important to us to build up relationships with our business partners based on mutual responsibility and respect.

This is why we emphasise regular exchange of information on products and raw materials. We foster this continuous improvement by regular dialogue and audits.

Image 12 – Gottfried Haselsteiner (Customized Solutions Team)

1.4.1.4. POLITICS AND ADMINISTRATION; NEIGHBOURS

Image 13 – Hannes Dallhammer and Günther Strasser (Technical Project Management)

Bene enjoys a particularly well-established position at the production site and head office in Waidhofen/Ybbs. Regular exchange with local community representatives takes place.

During the reporting period, no conflicts with local neighbours, administrative bodies or NGOs occurred.

Bene does not perform lobbying with political representatives.

We do not sponsor or financially support parties or politicians in any way, shape or form.

1.4.2. ORGANISATIONAL CHART FOR THE BENE GROUP[13]

Chart 4 – Organisational Chart Executive Board Bene Group

[11] http://www.orgatec.de/ORGATEC/index.php
[12] http://www.salonemilano.it/

[13] PSI = Processes, Systems and IT; W-EU = Western European Union; CEE = Central and Eastern Europe; CIS = Commonwealth of Independent States

1.5. SALES: THE BENE SALES NET

A customer-oriented sales network that speaks many languages.

As an international brand with Austrian roots, we are proud to be represented in over 40 countries.

Over the past few decades we have established a dense network of our own sites and authorised dealers spanning from Vienna, London, Berlin and Paris, to Dubai and Sydney.

We speak the language of our customers through our local presence. Not just "literally", but also in regard to regional and cultural contexts.

Find the Bene location closest to you:

www.bene.com/de/standorte

6 locations in Australia

More than 15 locations in Asia and the Middle East

INFO BOX

BENE IN THE MIDDLE EAST

The favourable positioning of our company in the Middle East is illustrated by recent awards: STAR OF BUSINESS 2014: Out of 3,000 nominated companies in 22 categories, Bene came out on top and won the coveted STAR OF BUSINESS AWARD Middle East. Congratulations to all participants for this outstanding achievement!

More good news from the UAE region: Bene came 1st in the AUSTRIAN BEST BUSINESS IN THE GCC 2014 as awarded by the Austrian Business Council UAE for the ADNOC project.

1. BENE LOCATIONS

2. BENE PARTNERS

2. EMPLOYEES AND SOCIAL MATTERS

Bene aims to be one of the most attractive companies to work for. We are creating the corresponding frameworks and infrastructures for this purpose. Human Resource Management (HR) takes account of the various challenges in this regard and sees itself as a consultant and service provider for managerial staff and employees. As such, HR makes an essential contribution to the company's success.

"Our employees provide fundamental support to the Bene Group with their knowledge and skills."

(EXTRACT FROM CORPORATE PRINCIPLES)

2.1. STAFF POLICY

We support a corporate culture that promotes performance and competition as well as further personal development. Our business is characterised by good and respectful interaction, creating positive effects inside and outside the company.

We are aware that a company also has social responsibilities in addition to its economic activities. We maintain fair relationships, do business in a respectful manner.

Cultural diversity is anchored in our business model and reflected in our employee structure. This is how we manage to understand and meet the needs that people and organisations have for office design.

We speak out explicitly against every kind of discrimination and utilise the strengths of our own diversity.

We respect, meet and support international human rights within our sphere of influence. Our ethical criteria ensure that our company does not participate in human rights violations.

We consider it a matter of course that we need to follow the requirements of the UN Global Compact.

2.2. DEVELOPMENT OF EMPLOYMENT NUMBERS

Bene creates regional jobs. The company is one of the largest employers within the Ybbstal and within the Ybbstal/Erlauftal region. This goes hand in hand with a strong sense of responsibility, especially in times of economic crisis.

	2014	2015	2016
Employees (male)	387	318	272
Employees (female)	302	240	212
Workers (male)	309	249	224
Workers (female)	50	37	38
Total	1,048	844	746

Table 1 – Development of employee numbers (as at the end of the financial year)

To secure Bene's future viability, including at difficult times, we do our best to retain the expertise and experience of our employees. Many of the former international Bene sales branches (e.g.: Prague, Bratislava, Budapest, Russia) became dealers based on a change in strategy. The Bene employees located there were taken on by the relevant (newly-formed) dealers.

Chart 5 – Development of employee numbers (as at the end of the financial year)

2.2.1. HUMAN RESOURCES SITUATION

We have applied the necessary strategic and organisational measures required in order to enable a responsible and target-oriented staffing policy, including during challenging economic periods.

Image 15 – Victoria Schodl (Vienna sales team)

2.2.2. FLUCTUATION

Despite all our actions, a rise in staff turnover within the Bene Group was unavoidable. Following the restructuring measures, staff turnover was around 22% according to calculations for the GRI[1] for 2015 and around 24% in 2016.

	2014	2015	2016
Employees (male)	96	52	72
Employees (female)	64	58	81
Workers (male)	23	64	25
Workers (female)	3	9	1
Total	186	183	179

Table 2 – Employees who have left the Bene Group (as at the end of the financial year)

2.2.3. INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT

Most of Bene's staff are employed in Austria. In addition to this, Bene is represented in various European countries. Outside of Europe, Bene has branch offices in the United Arab Emirates and in India. The countries counting the highest numbers of employees are Germany and the United Kingdom.

Image 14 – Bene India team excursion to southern India - Chikmagalur

2.2.4. PART-TIME WORK, TEMPORARY CONTRACTS, AGENCY WORKERS

The number of employees working part time as a proportion of the total workforce has increased slightly in recent years as a result of part-time parental leave and semi-retirement along with the option of part-time study.

	2014	2015	2016
Part-time employees	88	74	91
	8.4%	8.8%	12.3%

Table 3 – Number or proportion of part-time employees (as at the end of the financial year)

Bene continues to employ 100% of workers once their parental leave has finished. Male colleagues have also claimed parental leave at Bene.

Agency workers are also employed for specific projects and in order to cover peak times.

[1] For further explanations see chapter „6.3. GRI Index“ on page 90

2.2.5. LEADERSHIP[2]

	2014		2015		2016	
	male	female	male	female	male	female
Top management	12	2	8	2	8	0
Management	35	7	30	7	35	8
Superiors	65	9	29	4	20	3
Employees without management responsibility	584	334	500	264	433	239

Table 5 – Employees with management responsibility (as at 31 January)

The management team the Bene Group considers leadership and management competence a major factor for the company's success.

Chart 6 – % of employees with management responsibility as a proportion of total workforce (as at the end of the financial year)

The ratio of managerial staff to employees with no managerial responsibilities has remained about the same over the last few years.

2.3. HEALTH AND SAFETY

More than 75 per cent of all employees at Bene are represented in safety committees. Safety issues are discussed together, adapted to current conditions and continually improved. Communication through a network guarantees an unlimited flow of information between safety representatives and facilitates the development of suitable preventative measures.

2.3.1. SAFETY AND ACCIDENT PREVENTION

Our measures aim to improve the quality of life in our own offices, as well as keep our employees safe and healthy, preventing accidents and long-term damage to health. Preventative fire protection contributes significantly to safer workplaces.

The infrastructure and working environment are reviewed regularly in terms of occupational safety legislation by internal safety officers in order to guarantee the health and safety of our employees at all times. All managerial staff must ensure that workstations comply with the regulations on the production of products and on health and safety at all times.

Safety issues are in the hands of a large interdependent team, which includes safety specialists, fire protection delegates, first-aiders, safety representatives, occupational health physicians and the in-house fire-fighters. Dealing with emergency situations represents an integrated part of the management culture. Every employee undergoes training from his/her superior.

	2014	2015	2016
Caused by accidents	11.3	13.7	13.2
Caused by sickness	343.5	416.8	355.87
Total of sick hours	354.8	430.5	369.07

Table 4 – Sick hours per 10,000 accomplished working hours (Bene GmbH)

The largest staff restructuring measures took place in 2013 and 2015. This can also be seen from the significant increase in hours lost through sickness.

At Bene, the prevention of accidents is of utmost priority. A safety management system has already been put in place. This includes early preventative measures, the implementation of necessary precautions as well as the motivation and training of employees. All this should contribute towards reducing the risk of accidents, especially in production.

2.3.2. CORPORATE HEALTH PROMOTION

The Bene company doctor is an important contact point for the physical well-being of our employees. Aside from her statutory responsibilities, which consist of working with the safety officers to evaluate the workplace and providing medical advice and support to executive management, the company doctor also advises and assists all employees with matters specific to the workplace and on general medical issues.

These services include sight and hearing tests, vaccinations, health check-ups (examinations) and psychological advice.

The company doctor administers around 100 vaccinations each year (e.g.: Hepatitis A+B, flu, ticks) and takes around 90 blood samples (with follow-up discussion of the results).

Further vaccinations (in accordance with WHO recommendations) are offered to employees who travel a lot as a result of their activities.

Image 16 – Bene team France excursion to Annecy

A blood donation campaign is one of the initiatives organised each year by the workers' council as part of Bene's aspiration to be a socially responsible company.

2.3.3. WORK-LIFE BALANCE

We believe that a balanced work and private life improves the health and the satisfaction of our employees. We therefore support part-time jobs. Around 12% of our employees work part time at present.

[2] Explanation of hierarchical levels for Table 5 as well as Chart 6: Top Management: Executive Board, including the first executive level according to the organisational chart of the Bene Group. Management: All employees indicated in the organisational chart of the Bene Group, including board support positions, but excluding top management. Superiors: All superiors according to Human Resources data, excluding top management and management.

2.4. EDUCATION AND FURTHER TRAINING

With constantly-changing market requirements, individual further training for our employees is growing in importance. Irrespective of whether new employees take the "Start-up training" or are informed about new products, innovative developments and strategies within the framework of "Bene Fit" events – we always focus on community spirit, creativity and continuous improvement.

The head office in Waidhofen/Ybbs is also the first contact point for the training questions of all our international employees.

Image 17 – Stefan Schulze presenting at the Bene Fit event 2017

2.4.1. EMPLOYEE DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING

Employee development is a responsibility of management at Bene. Managers and employees agree on and document development objectives and topics for further training at the annual appraisals.

New Bene employees go through a three-day start-up training at the Waidhofen site with the objective of bonding employees with the company and getting to know the most important contacts and relationships.

Image 18 – Hans-Peter Wunsch at Bene Fit 2017

Professional and cross-departmental learning takes place close to the workplace. Staff development methodically supports managers in developing employees under their own responsibility and in promoting informal learning at the site.
Further training initiatives are looked at on a highly individual basis and are provided with adjustments to the specific market. Learning with digital media is possible through implementation of a wide range of tools and also enjoys wide use and acceptance. A total of 382 participants took part in online training in 2015 on topics such as new products, IT applications and processes. Employees can register for this training themselves.

Image 19 – Didi Lenz at a fringe event at Orgatec 2016 in Cologne

Selected product content was implemented via e-learning in 2016. This ensures that product training is standardised when combined with a learning platform. The expertise and know-how developed and practised by Bene employees over decades not only reflects positively in production-related processes, but also in all other processes. Bene's numerous patents and industrial designs are[3] proof of this.

2.4.2. KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT

Knowledge management at Bene means: Generating, evaluating, consolidating, sharing and communicating knowledge in such a way that as many people as possible can easily access and use it.

All expertise is continually documented and archived in a structured fashion as part of internal knowledge management. It can be accessed within the Bene Group via the information platform for employees, trade partners and assembly companies. Knowledge is laid out at Bene in documents, videos, graphics and images. Personalised knowledge is also conveyed and shared using the latest tools such as Skype for Business.

A new intranet based on SharePoint was introduced in early 2015. Around 400 GB of documented knowledge is currently available at any time on the intranet.

Aside from sections such as Company, Products, Customers and Knowledge, this system also contains various workflow applications as well as virtual team spaces for working on projects on a cross-departmental basis.

The intranet is also used for internal communication using the "Newsblog". Each employee can write contributions provided that they are relevant to the organisation. The most important content related to executive management, product management and marketing is also summarised and communicated in the form of regular newsletters with "Bene Inside" and "Bene Spotlight".

All employees can upload presentations, project images and visualisations in the "Inspirations" section. The aim is to make creative solutions from sales available to everyone and to exchange knowledge.

Bene organises internal informational events at regular intervals known as "Bene Fit" in order to show new products live and to foster links between employees and partners.

EXPERTS TRAIN EXPERTS

In line with the idea that "the experts are among us", Bene offers internal specialised training on topics such as product certifications. There are countless experts on a wide range of topics in the company, and the idea is that this expertise should be shared as effectively as possible with interested parties, thereby creating a direct added value both for the individual as well as the company.

2.4.3. INTERNSHIPS AT BENE

Bene has many partners in higher education. Aside from internships, Bene also offers various informational events to students.

INFO BOX

BENE FIT 01/2016

A Bene Fit event took place in Waidhofen/Ybbs between 25 and 29 January 2016. A total of 155 participants took part from 26 countries, including New Zealand, India, a number of countries from the Middle East and the whole of Europe. Workshops and presentations over two days covered the most important topics relating to design, marketing and product development. Discussions and presentations were also held on projects completed and reference customers.

The programme also gave the delegates the opportunity to get to know one another better and to network. The varied programme was rounded off by a communal dinner, an informal curling evening and a visit to a blacksmiths.

[3] A registered design is a commercial protection right which confers to its owner the exclusive authority to use a certain aesthetic design, colour or form.

IT'S JUST FUN TO MAKE SOMETHING TANGIBLE.

INTERVIEW WITH ANDREAS RIEDLER (OFFICER FOR APPRENTICES AND TRAINER AT THE APPRENTICE WORKSHOP)

WHY SHOULD ANYONE BECOME A JOINER OR CARPENTRY TECHNICIAN?

There are lots of reasons! Wood is a natural and warm material that is fun to work with and that can be used to make something tangible. A career as a joiner or carpentry technician is full of variety. Craftsmanship skills are required just as much as technical understanding, and creativity is just as important as working with care. As a career, joinery also provides very good opportunities for further and advanced training, including here in the company.

WHY SHOULD ONE WANT TO TRAIN AT BENE IN PARTICULAR?

Following a defined training schedule, the apprentices switch to a different work area every five weeks and learn the business from delivery of materials and furniture production to external assembly at the customer site. We don't just work with wooden material by the way, but also with glass, steel, aluminium, plastics, fabric and leather. Then there's also finishing surfaces and veneering.

And so anyone who trains as a joiner or carpentry technician at Bene won't be bored. But we do expect a few things from our apprentices. That's why we complete an aptitude test with applicants along with an interview
and practical trial days.

WHAT IS A NORMAL WORKING DAY LIKE FOR A BENE JOINER APPRENTICE?

Apprentices have their own joiner's bench and tools in our fully equipped apprentice workshop. That's not possible elsewhere, particularly in small companies. All of the machinery required in the joinery sector is provided. This way we enable our apprentices to study at the vocational college, and they learn about industrial serial production in our production halls and in the apprentice workshop. Every apprentice is able to plan and produce workpieces and furniture in the apprentice workshop at a level of difficulty appropriate for their year.

Anyone who has trained with us is a real all-rounder and can work anywhere. But obviously we want to retain well-trained individuals at our own company. That's why in fact anyone who has trained with us gets the opportunity to prove themselves professionally. Whether they work in the different production departments or are studying for their school-leaving exam or a master craftsman's certificate: they all find something interesting to do.

WHY DO YOU WORK FOR BENE? WHAT DO YOU FIND EXCITING ABOUT BENE?

Because working with young people is fun and every day brings new challenges. It has been exciting to develop continuously at Bene since my training and to be able to pass my knowledge onto our apprentices.

2.4.3 APPRENTICESHIP TRAINING

Training prevents shortages of expert staff.

Apprenticeship training is a major strategic factor of success for medium and long-term personnel planning. More than 100 apprentices have successfully completed their training in recent years.

After finishing their apprenticeship, the vast majority of these apprentices are employed on a permanent basis.

Image 20 – Apprentices' excursion to Lenzing AG in Upper Austria and to Hangar 7 at Red Bull in Salzburg

In economically challenging times, Bene is investing in the future. Trainees have made up around two to three per cent of the total workforce for several years. There are currently 38 former Bene trainees now working at Bene.

COMMERCIAL PROFESSIONS
Industrial Business Manager
Office Administrator
Supply Chain Specialist
Financial and Accounting Assistant Sales Management Assistant and Wholesale and External Trade

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TECHNICAL PROFESSIONS
Technical Designer
IT Engineer

COMBINED PROFESSION
Industrial Business Manager
Technical Designer

INDUSTRIAL PROFESSIONS
Joiner, Carpentry Technician

Table 6 – Professions offered as apprenticeship at Bene

Bene teaches commercial and technical professions, as well as the combined profession of Industrial Business Manager / Technical Designer. One employee successfully completed the Media Specialist/ Media Engineering training in 2014.

Bene provides impetus for trainee recruitment by taking part in initiatives such as the Amstetten-Scheibbs "Bildungsmeile" educational programme ("Karriere mit Lehre" – Career with teaching) and the "Schule and Beruf" (School and Career) fair (business fair for further and advanced training in Wieselburg, Lower Austria), and "Karriere-Clubbing" (business fair for professions in Ybbstal).

Since 2009, Bene has had a well-established, internal continuous training programme for apprentices, As such trainees also receive training on topics such as communication, presentation and project management.

Moreover, we offer two apprenticeship projects per year to support the independent, linked and trans-sectoral working approach of our apprentices. The trainees provide an introduction to the company on parents' evening and social exchange is encouraged at the annual trainee excursion.

In addition to international awards (see Info Box), Bene trainees constantly perform very well at the Lower Austrian and Austrian trainee competitions for joiners and carpentry technicians.

2017
Joinery technician / planning
Jennifer Grubner (4th year of apprenticeship)
1st place state competition
Joiner
Miriam Auer (1st year of appr.)
1st place state competition

Image 23 – Apprentices Jennifer Grubner and Miriam Auer (with Jörg Schuschnig, Bernhardt Kronnerwetter, Josef Riesinger, Andreas Riedler)

Image 22 – Apprentices recognised in 2016

2016
Joiner
Matthias Ritt (2nd year of appr.)
2nd place state competition
Mathias Maderthaner (3rd year of appr.)
1st place state competition
1st place national competition

Image 21 – Apprentices Matthias Ritt and Mathias Maderthaner with trainer Andreas Riedler

"Anyone who has trained with us is a real all-rounder and can work anywhere."

(ANDREAS RIEDLER)

2015
Joinery technician / planning
Lukas Fromhund (4th year of appr.)
1st place state competition
3rd place national competition
Jürgen Ledersteger (4th year of appr.)
2nd place state competition
Bianca Schachinger (4th year of appr.)
3rd place state competition
Mathias Maderthaner (2nd year of appr.)
4th place national competition

Joinery technician / Production
Jakob Prüller (4th year of appr.)
3rd place state competition

2014
Joiner
Lukas Fromhund (3rd year of appr.)
1st place state competition
3rd place national competition
Mathias Maderthaner (1st year of appr.)
2nd place state competition
1st place national competition

Carpentry technician – planning
Sophia Stockner (4th year of appr.)
1st place state competition
4th place national competition

Bene was honoured as a top training company in the Trainer Trophy in 2012 for its efforts in apprenticeship training in a special award for particular services in training apprentices.

Mathias Maderthaner was among those who benefitted from this positive working environment last year. The Bene apprentice in Technical production carpentry won both the state and national competitions for Joiner and Carpentry Technicial in 2016, and as winner of the Austrian Professional Skills Championships in the Furniture Carpentry category, he has also qualified for the 2017 WorldSkills championships, to be held in Abu Dhabi from 14 to 19 October.

This is the first time the competition has been held in the Middle East, where over 1200 competitors will represent more than 70 nations in 50 professions.

Image 24 – Best of Talents award (Jörg Schuschnig, Mathias Maderthaner, Andreas Riedler, Bernhardt Kronnerwetter)

	Employees (male)	Employees (female)	Workers (male)	Wage-earners (female)	Total
Bene Group	4	3	6	2	15

Table 7 – Number of apprentices (as at 31 January 2016)

At the "Best of Talents" event, the Austrian Federal Economic Chamber celebrated the country's best training companies. Bene won the coveted title of "Austria's best training company" in the category "Joinery apprenticeship (third year)" thanks to Mathias Maderthaner's strong performance.

Image 25 – Jakob Ofenberger working at World Wood Day in Nepal

Jakob Ofenberger who trained in joinery and has now become a master joiner was able to demonstrate his skills acquired at Bene as part of the World Wood Day[4] 2016 in Kathmandu (Nepal) – see Info Box – and the World Wood Day 2017 in Los Angeles (USA).

Image 26 – Jakob Ofenberger (left of picture) at the World Wood Day in the United States

[4] http://worldwoodday.org/

Image 27 – Bene apprentices with their workpieces (Michael Hirtenlehner, Jürgen Ledersteger, Jakob Prüller, Mathias Maderthaner, Stefan Schallauer, Jennifer Grubner, Alexander Hoffmann).

INFO BOX

AWARD IN NEPAL

Our apprentices consistently perform very well at national and international competitions. We are particularly proud of master joiner Jakob Ofenberger who won an award at the "World Wood Day" competition in Kathmandu Nepal.

Young carpenters produce desks and chairs for school children as part of World Wood Day. The award is given for the workpiece, design, technical capabilities and production time.

Jakob Ofenberger was Austria's only representative at the international contest and he won the Best Design and Best Performance awards for his workpieces.

Congratulations Jakob!

2.5. EQUAL OPPORTUNITY

At Bene, every single person is treated fairly and equally on principle, regardless of gender, race, nationality, disability, sexual orientation, membership in a trade union, marital status, religion or political orientation. Decisions on employment, dismissal, promotion, training, salary and compensation payment are all based on objective criteria and on the performance of the individual employee. Any violation of our principle of equal opportunity leads to disciplinary proceedings or has consequences under employment legislation.

As we are internationally active and aim to cater for various target groups, cultural diversity is an important part of our business model. This requires respect for other cultures.

Bene remains neutral on the subject of political orientation of its employees and customers. Freedom of expression within the company is a given. However, political activities at work are not accepted.

In addition to this, Bene does not tolerate working conditions which are in conflict with operational international laws and regulations. This attitude shows its effect: in the reporting period, no cases of discrimination have been reported.

2.5.1. GENDER

At the turn of the year 2016/17, the Bene Group employed 250 women and 496 men. The percentage of women employed has been more or less steady since 2008 and makes up roughly one third of the workforce.
15% of Bene managers are women.

	2014	2015	2016
Salaried employees	43.5	42.6	43.1
Apprentices	46.7	44	33.3
Total	33.6	32.8	32.9

Table 8 – Percentage of women (as at 31 January)

	Employees (male)	Employees (female)	Workers (male)	Workers (female)	Total
< 10 years	146	147	68	22	383
11-20 years	69	46	89	8	212
21–30 years	48	17	46	7	118
> 30 years	9	2	21	1	33

Table 9 – Number of employees according to length of service with Bene (as at end of 2016)

2.5.2. PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

At present, Bene employs 20 people with disabilities (including 17 in Austria). This is why we are also fully committed to fostering social partnerships with various social institutions.

The Bene disabled trust council is the contact and representative for these 20 employees. This was first launched in 2014 as a result of a vote.

2.5.3. SERVICE WITH BENE AND RETIREMENT PROVISION

The average period of service with Bene roughly amounts to 11 years. Being a company with a long tradition, the transfer of experience and expertise are of utmost importance to Bene.

A question of appreciation: Bene supports employees who are planning their retirement and offers advice and training regarding pre-retirement planning and the interim period.

Image 28 – Employee recognition 2016 – 35 years at Bene: Engelbert Brenn and Manfred Köppl

All Bene employees in Austria enjoy statutory severance payment system coverage, which is either the old severance payment system or the employee provision fund, depending on the employee's start date. The Bene Group has no further financial commitments.

According to collective contractual agreements, all Austrian employees additionally receive an anniversary bonus payment after 25 years' service with Bene. Provisions have been created to cover these obligations.

"The most rewarding times are when I can help to solve a colleague's problem as a member of the workers' council."

(REINHARD GLEISS)

The following employees celebrated Bene anniversaries over the last two years:

40 years at Bene
- Fichtinger Franz
- Hauenschild Alfred
- Übellacker Franz

35 years at Bene
- Benischek Werner
- Brenn Engelbert
- Köppl Manfred
- Längauer Ernst
- Teufel Edmund
- Zach Christian

30 years at Bene
- Emmerling Norbert
- Essletzbichler Christian
- Fuchslueger Herbert
- Gstrein Dietmar
- Hönickl Martin
- Höritzauer Klaus
- Hörndler Franz
- Hörndler Hermann
- Käferböck Andreas
- Krendl Leopold
- Mohor Anita
- Obermüller Herbert
- Schörghuber Franz
- Schwein Richard
- Stockinger Robert

We would also like to take this opportunity to thank all these employees for their many years of service.

Image 32 – Employee recognition 2016 - 30 years at Bene: Martin Hönickl, Franz Schörghuber and Leopold Krendl

Image 29 – Employee recognition 2016 - 25 years at Bene: Manfred Matzenberger, Josef Riesinger, Leopold Hochstrasser, Christian Pechgraber and Elisabeth Esletzbichler

	Employees (male)	Employees (female)	Workers (male)	Workers (female)	Total
Apprentices	4	3	6	2	15
< 30 years	33	57	21	3	114
≥ 30 < 40 years	69	78	54	6	207
≥ 40 < 50 years	104	54	67	13	238
≥ 50 years	62	20	76	14	172

Table 10 – Number of employees according to their age (as at 31 January 2016)

2.5.4. REMUNERATION AND SHARE HOLDING

A salary scale is used for salaries for all employees in Austria. The wages/salaries of Bene's employees/workers correspond to or exceed the levels of collective agreements of the Austrian wood-processing industry.

Image 30 – Hans-Peter-Wunsch and Anna Berger at the "Raum für das Neue" event in Vienna

As Bene exclusively manufactures in Austria, one collective agreement applies for all workers. In total, collective agreements exist for more than 80% of the Bene Group staff.

The international remuneration policy is agreed between Bene and its subsidiaries. External consultants are in charge of the payment.

Image 31 – Daniela Sitz at the "Raum für das Neue" ("Space for something new") event in Vienna

Image 33 – Monika Holzer, Irina Konrath, Franz Gassler, Birgit Juri at Bene Fit 2017

Image 34 – Michaela Hammerschmid at the Creative Industries Forum

I ALWAYS HAVE BEEN AND STILL AM INSPIRED BY THE "BENE SPIRIT"

INTERVIEW WITH REINHARD GLEISS (MEMBER OF THE EMPLOYEE WORKERS' COUNCIL AT BENE)

WHAT TASKS DOES THE WORKERS' COUNCIL FULFIL AT BENE?

The tasks are generally set out in the Austrian Labour Constitution Act and cover a wide area of activities. The requirements always depend on the current legal position and the ownership situation. Responsibilities also change in line with the objectives derived from the corporate strategy.

WHAT DO YOU ENJOY MOST ABOUT YOUR WORK? AND WHAT IS THE MOST DIFFICULT THING?

The most rewarding times are when I can help to solve a colleague's problem as a member of the workers' council. Or when existing rights are clarified and made available based on information.

Anything for the sake of the common good that has downsides for a section of the workforce is always difficult. In spite of everything, there are some initiatives where the workers' council only has an advisory role and each individual has to make his or her own decision.

HOW SIGNIFICANT IS A WORKERS' COUNCIL THESE DAYS IN A COMPANY SUCH AS BENE, PARTICULARLY DURING TIMES OF CHANGE?

As already mentioned, the workers' council, as the link between employee and employer interests, sometimes finds itself torn between two positions. But it is precisely this opportunity to bring employee interests up for discussion and to draw attention to them in the decision-making process that is important at times of change. This is because decisions that are balanced and are in line with the corporate strategy will be understood and implemented with conviction by the workforce.

It's important for me to be able to make my strategic contribution to ensuring good framework conditions for the workers and for potential employees from the regional labour market. There is still potential in this area.

WHY DO YOU WORK FOR BENE? WHAT DO YOU FIND EXCITING ABOUT BENE?

Bene has always been known as a secure and interesting employer in the Ybbstal. That's why I applied. Its image has suffered as a result of the financial problems and some of management decisions. That's why it's worth working on this on a daily basis so as to allow a "Bene spirit" to re-emerge and provide some inspiration.

My motto: "If you enjoy doing something then you will do it well"

2.6. COMMUNICATION AND WORKING ATMOSPHERE

Open communication and dialog are integral components of the Bene corporate culture. The focus is on networking, teamwork and partnership.

2.6.1. WORKPLACE DESIGN

Design of the workplace is especially important at Bene as we put our products and concepts into practice. This is why we also design our own office environment in line with our convictions. We want to provide optimum and ergonomically perfect workstations for our own employees. The current reorganisation of the Vienna showroom from autumn 2016 and of the office building in Waidhofen/Ybbs in spring 2017 takes account of this aspiration. At the head office in Waidhofen/Ybbs, around 90% of all workstations are equipped with motorised height-adjustable desks that allow work in a sitting or standing position.

All employees have temporary ergonomically-balanced communication zones at their disposal, either in the central zones or in the central "coffice" area.

There is also major emphasis placed on ergonomic workstations in the plant. In addition to the safety officers and company doctor, employees involved in the planning process are also involved in optimising the workstations.

2.6.2. STAFF APPRAISALS

We conduct individual staff appraisals to guarantee the personal development of our employees and to pursue target agreements. The frequency differs with this: workers twice a year, employees at least once a year, sales representatives quarterly. Frequent structured staff appraisals ensure close contact between employees and line managers, which has a positive effect on our company.

In order to pursue our mission statement and achieve our company goals, we need to optimise our strengths and the contribution of every single employee. The management by objectives (MbO) strategy is part of Bene's understanding of leadership, which is based on the key tools of "staff appraisal" and "target agreement".

2.6.3. STAFF MAGAZINE

Bene has published a staff magazine at intermittent intervals for many years in order to step up communication efforts with employees. The current magazine has been published as "Bene Inside" since 2014.

Articles on the market, sales success stories and events are included in this along with the latest news on product development and staff information.

Image 35 – Current employee magazine "Bene Inside"

Image 37 – Employee magazine "va bene" from 1992

2.6.4. FREEDOM OF ASSEMBLY

At all subsidiaries of the Bene Group, employees come together and share opinions and experiences as a matter of course. The exceptionally good quality of meetings and conversation within the Bene Group is an important aspect and is therefore encouraged through a wide range of measures, including spatial ones.

2.6.5. WORKERS' COUNCIL

All workers and employees in Austria are represented by an elected workers' council (there are three panels in place).

No other country branches have elected workers' councils yet for various reasons.

The main responsibilities of the workers' council include:

- Advice and support on employee matters
- Negotiating employee agreements
- Proposals aimed at improving working conditions and safety
- A right of consultation on staff and business matters
- A right to give an opinion on redundancies and dismissals
- Representation of employee interests on the Supervisory Board

The Austrian workers' council members are notified of organisational changes such as redundancies one week before execution. Separate statutory regulations and an advance notice period of one month apply if more than 29 employees are made redundant.

Image 36 – The Bene manual workers' council representative Martin Hönikl and clerical employee representative Reinhard Gleiß handing out ice cream

Young employees are also represented by the youth trust council which, like a workers' council, was installed by the under 21-year olds following a democratic vote, and deals with issues that are of particular interest and importance to this age group.

A disabled trust council was also elected as already stated in section „2.5.2. People with disabilities“ on page 26.

2.6.6. BENE COMMUNITY

Both Bene as a company as well as the Bene workers' council actively promote the community through various events and incentives.

This includes Christmas parties, advent celebrations, barbecues, skiing days, excursions and general sporting activities.

Image 38 – Bene ski race 2015 at Königsberg in Hollenstein an der Ybbs

Image 39 – The Bene Mixed Team at a charity football tournament in Vienna

Image 40 – Vienna Business Run 2017

Image 41 – The Bene Linz Team hike to the peak of the Schafberg mountain

Image 44 – Bene India Team Meeting 2016

Image 42 – Bene Far East Australia Team 2015 in Sydney

Image 43 – Bene Dubai Team in front of the Office of the Future in Dubai 10-16

Image 46 – Vienna Sales team excursion to the production plant in Waidhofen/Ybbs

Image 47 – Katja Wöhler and Jasmin Mettler at the Euro 2016 football championship

Image 45 – The Bene Poland Team before the Polish national team game at Euro 2016

2.7. DONATIONS AND SPONSORING

As a traditional company, Bene strongly emphasises its regional responsibility as a commercial company, an employer and also as part of wider society.

Knowledge transfer, sustainability and the aim to improve cultural actions within the office environment are the basis of the sponsorship and donation strategy in the area of "social responsibility". Bene supports associations like the fire brigade and charitable organisations by offering individual pieces of furniture or donations in kind. Public facilities or parties are not covered by donations.

2.7.1. VOLKSHILFE

Bene donated 200 desks to families at risk of poverty at the end of 2014 as part of Volkshilfe Austria's "1,000 desks – 1,000 places for the future" campaign.

The charity Volkshilfe[5] organised desks for children from families at risk of poverty in collaboration with radio station Hitradio Ö3. Around 304,000 children and young people are in this position in Austria. However, a good place for learning and studying is crucial in terms of giving them the option of a sustainable education and therefore a way out of poverty.

2.7.2. SOCIAL COMPUTER-KREISLAUF[6]

In the "Sozialer Computer-Kreislauf" (Social computing circuit) project, functioning second-hand computers and IT equipment are donated by companies. Once the data on these 2nd life devices has been professionally deleted, they are passed on to social institutions in the region.

This project boosts sustainability in the region on two fronts, i.e. by focussing on environmental and social awareness. Bene supported the campaign by donating 65 PCs.

2.7.3. SOCIAL WASTE RECYCLING

Since waste is not necessarily rubbish and we want to show responsibility by sparing our existing resources, we decided several years ago not simply to dispose of recyclables, but rather to put them to further use wherever this makes sense.

Around 10,000 m² of residual fabric material rolls have been given away over the last few years for instance. Nurseries and community organisation Komunitas OG[7] were given around 2,500 m² each, around 1,000 m² were given to regional elementary schools. Various community groups for the young[8], Lebenshilfe[9], special school Landessonderschule Reichenauerhof[10] and Unida Services[11] all received 500 m² each.

More went to ice sport clubs, leisure clubs, music clubs, scouts, sports clubs, etc.

Image 50 – Sample product made from surplus Bene felt fabric © Lebenshilfe

Around 500 m² of surplus compact boards were given to Komunitas OG (~ 250m²), as well as to sports clubs, ice sports clubs, football clubs, model aircraft clubs, nurseries, leisure clubs, village regeneration clubs, etc.

Image 51 – Bene compact board waste was used for social production purposes for the Trigos Award 2013 as it was in 2011 © goodworks

300 m² of surplus leather was also give away, including ~ 100 m² each to Caritas Amstetten (Caritas Laden)[12] and the scouts, and the rest went to various community groups for the young and to nurseries. Surplus acoustic foam, glass panels, seat upholstery and mirror glass were also given away for free.

Image 49 – Sample product made from surplus Bene fabric (Kunstsinnig Association)

2.7.4. SUPPORT FOR THE REFUGEE HOSTEL IN HIMBERG

As part of the "Licht ins Dunkel" (Light in the dark) project[13], Bene supplied 14 swivel chairs and two second-hand desks (200 x 100 cm) to the refugee hostel in Himberg in Lower Austria.

2.7.5. SOCIAL AFTERNOON AT BENE BREGENZ

The Bene Bregenz team decided to dedicate itself in April to a good cause and spent an afternoon sorting clothes and packing boxes for the children's charity "Rolling Doctors"[14] for an emergency shipment destined for Ukraine. A total of 78 boxes were packed and made ready for shipment by the Bene Bregenz team.

Image 48 – Sample product made from Bene compact board waste © goodworks

[5] http://www.volkshilfe.at/cms/cms.php
[6] http://www.sozialproduziert.at/index.php?article_id=229&clang=0
[7] http://www.komunitas.at
[8] http://www.jungschar.at/
[9] http://www.noe.lebenshilfe.at/index.php?id=1
[10] http://www.lsswaidhofen-ybbs.ac.at
[11] http://www.unida.at/
[12] https://www.caritas.at/
[13] http://lichtinsdunkel.orf.at/
[14] https://www.kleineherzen.or.at/rolling-doctors/

3. PRODUCT RESPONSIBILITY

Sustainability is an extensive thought-process at Bene. This is why selling high-quality products that feature an outstanding life cycle assessment is particularly important, as our products support people for many years in their everyday working lives.

BENE

MANAGEMENT

Free-Desk

Al-Management

PARTITIONING

RP-Wall

RP-Wall

WOR

T-Pla

W

F

MEETING, CONFERENC & MEDIA

Filo-Conference

T-Meeting

P2-Conference

Filo 4-Star

PRODUCTS

RKSTATION

atform

Vorkbench

Frame_S

STORAGE

Cube_S Setting

Lockers

SEATING

Filo

Club Chair

Bay Chair

COLLABORATION

Dock-In-Bay

Timba

Idea Wall

Causeways

Wing Chair

Toguna

3.1. SUSTAINABLE PRODUCTS

The challenges are many: environmental protection begins with the design and selection of the right raw materials, continues into the production stage and is evaluated over the entire product life cycle. Optimised ergonomics and safe design principles make sustainable use of our products possible.

The results of the measures implemented at Bene can be seen in the certificates and awards it has received.

INFO BOX

The average life cycle for office furniture lasts approximately 15 years. Thanks to its excellent construction quality, some Bene office furniture is still in use after 25 or 30 years. Even after that, Bene tables and storage furniture often have a second or third life of use, for example in private homes or clubs.

3.1.1. SUSTAINABLE RAW-MATERIALS

A responsible industrial enterprise has to know the origin of each raw material that it uses. We emphasise the use of environmentally-friendly material right from the product development stage. Thanks to our close collaboration with suppliers, („4.1. Supply Chain“ on page 58), we guarantee the protection of the environment even in upstream and outsourced production stages.

We ensure that the materials we purchase meet the statutory conditions and our own conditions by means of procurement policies and certificates. We analyse our products and the materials used on a continuous basis.

At Bene, the following materials are used as a matter of course:

- chipboards low in formaldehyde
- glues low in formaldehyde
- water-based varnish systems
- recyclable materials
- materials with high recycling content
- PVC-free synthetics[1]

Bene guarantees products free from:

- CMR substances[2]
- halogenated[3] solvents in synthetics
- chlorinated hydrocarbons[4]
- Heavy metal pigments[5]
- Materials with azo pigments[6]
- Coatings with biocidal effects[7] (e.g. wood preservative[8], pesticides[9]).

Image 52 – Christoph Aigner (panel-cutting/ edging team)

We have defined comprehensive material requirements for raw materials and semi-finished parts. Our suppliers must comply with our demands.

3.1.1.1. SUSTAINABLE FORESTRY

Contrary to the widely-held belief that there is a direct causal link between using wood and the destruction of forests, increasing the use of wood makes a positive contribution to maintaining and increasing forests.[10]

Wood is an extraordinary material. It automatically regenerates in a natural process and is growing in increasingly abundant quantities in Europe[11]. It is beautiful, light and strong at the same time, as well as warm and cosy. It also provides an easy way of reducing the main cause of climate change, i.e. CO_2 emissions, through:

- the effect of the forests in reducing carbons[12]
- the carbon-storage effect of wood products[13]
- replacing carbon-intensive materials.

The European Timber Regulation (EUTR[14]) has been in force since 3 March 2013 based on the EU Timber Regulation no. 995/2010. The Regulation is aimed at ensuring only wood from trustworthy sources enter the EU market. Marketing of wood from illegal harvesting is prohibited. Compliance with this regulation is ensured by our suppliers since Bene does not import any wood-based materials.

[1] Polyvinylchloride (PVC) has not been used since 1995 because of environmental concerns. Instead of PVC, Bene uses mainly Acrylonitrile Butadiene Styrene (ABS). This synthetic material is similar to PVC but more environmentally-friendly with regards to production and disposal. Polypropylene (PP) is also used in some cases. This material is relatively harmless to the environment and easily recyclable.

[2] CMR substances are designated as carcinogenic, mutagenic and toxic to reproduction.

[3] Halogenation is a chemical reaction that introduces a halogen into a molecule. There are four types of halogenation: fluorination, chlorination, bromination, and iodination.

[4] Chlorinated hydrocarbons (CHCs) are amongst the most harmful poisons for the environment. They are very persistent and contribute to the ozone problem (e.g. PCP, lindane, PCB).

[5] The most important potentially hazardous heavy metals are: Mercury (Hg), cadmium (Cd), lead (Pb) and chromium (Cr) in its hexavalent form, Cr (VI).

[6] Azo pigments are synthetic pigments classified toxic or highly carcinogenic.

[7] A biocide is a chemical substance, an agent or a microorganism used in pest control in non-agricultural contexts against harmful organisms (e.g. rats, insects, fungi or microbes). B.:

[8] Wood preservatives are agents or preparations containing active substances which prevent or control the infection of wood or wood-based material by wood-destroying or wood-colouring organisms.

[9] Pesticides are part of plant protection agents (e.g. fungicides, insecticides).

[10] Book "Dem Klimawandel mit Holz entgegnen" (Combating climate change with wood), CEI-Bois Roadmap 2000 http://www.roadmap2010.eu/wisd/pdfs/German%20book%20complete.pdf

[11] "According to estimates an annual growth of 4% in European wood consumption by 2010 would save an additional 150 million tonnes of CO_2 per year, with the market value of this contribution to the environment amounting to approx. 1.8 billion euros per year." CEI-Bois, Roadmap 2010, Executive Summary, 2004

[12] Carbon sinks (also carbon dioxide sinks or CO_2 sinks) is the name given by geoscientists to a reservoir that absorbs and stores carbon on an intermittent or continuous basis. Carbon sinks are important currently in the context of global warming. They absorb the greenhouse gas carbon dioxide (CO_2) from the atmosphere, thereby counteracting global warming.

[13] For example 1 m³ of spruce wood binds 825 kg CO_2, 1 m³ of chipboard 745 kg CO_2 and 1 m³ of MDF board binds 505 kg CO_2 (amounts stated by Fritz Egger GmbH & Co. OG)

[14] The EU Timber Regulation (EUTR (EU) No. 995/2010[1]) is a Regulation of the European Union from 20 October 2010 aimed at prohibiting trade in illegally harvested timber and products derived from such timber. It prohibits the placing on the EU market of illegally harvested timber and products derived from such timber. The Regulation also contains the duties of the market participants. The Regulation came into force in all EU Member States on 3 March 2013.

Wood accounts for 60 per cent of the raw materials that Bene uses and as such, it is the most important raw material in Bene's production process. Therefore, the use of wood exclusively from sustainable forestry is a given.

Chart 7 – Amount of raw and melamine chipboard used in 1,000 tonnes

Melamine and raw chipboard represent the largest share of wood-based materials processed at Bene (see Chart 7), followed by MDF boards and veneers (see Chart 8).

Chart 8 – Amount of other wood-based materials used in 1,000 tonnes

Aside from the wood-based materials outlined in Chart 8, small quantities of hard fibre and around 15 tonnes of packaging wood are processed in the form of pallets and wooden battens.

Raw chipboard consists of 84–86% wood substance[15], 4–7% water, 8–10% UF glue[16] and < 1% paraffin wax emulsion as hydrophobing agent (improved moisture resistance).[17]

The category E1 means that these boards are categorised in the low E1 class for formaldehyde stated and thereby meet the current requirements across Europe.

PEFC™

Bene has had the right to label its furniture that contains components made from wood or wood-based materials with the PEFC logo since September 2009.

PEFC stands for "Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification Schemes".

Image 53 – PEFC certified forest in Austria © PEFC Austria

PEFC is the largest non-governmental organisation for forest certification in the world. PEFC certification focuses on the certified product chain, from the forest resource to the end product.

Image 54 – PEFC certified wood © PEFC Austria

FSC®

Bene has also been certified in accordance with the Chain of Custody Standard FSC (Forest Stewardship Council®) since 2013. As full FSC certification is not currently possible for all wood material parts purchased[18], FSC certification is only offered for projects and only upon request and subject to availability.

Our wood suppliers are also FSC and/or PEFC certified. Small suppliers who are not certified have all confirmed their legal compliance with these standards in writing, in the form of self-declaration.

This is also evident in the certification of Bene products. Thanks to the calculation method, (quantity balance), 100 % of Bene in-house products are certified PEFC. It is the client's decision whether or not to declare this on products.

INFO BOX

Due to the annual processed volume of chipboards and MDF boards, around 8,000 tonnes of CO_2 are bound in the products for a further 15 to 20 years. This quantity corresponds to the annual CO_2 emissions of around 1,800 households.

[15] Fresh wood from thinning measures and leftover wood from sawmills (e.g. non-returnable pallets, solid wood, chipboard residue and leftover wood chips) are used to produce chipboard, primarily from spruce and pine. Up to 30% of raw materials are covered by wood for recycling with the associated material recycled.

[16] consisting of urea formaldehyde resin. The amino plastic adhesive hardens completely in the press process through polycondensation.

[17] Environmental declaration EUROSPAN® raw chipboard Fritz EGGER GmbH & Co. OG, EPD-EGG-20140003-IBD1-DE

[18] Only a small proportion of the forest area is certified in accordance with the FSC® standard in Austria and the surrounding environment, as PEFC™ certification dominates here. FSC® wood is widely available in Russia, Poland, the UK and Romania.

* In order to calculate the CO_2 storage capacity, we used the values indicated in the environmental product declaration of Egger. An average European household with three people uses approximately 4.5 tonnes of CO_2 per year according to EUROSTAT 08/2008

Veneers
Because of the high quality standard set by Bene, only 1-5% of the veneers on the marketplace can be considered for processing. Our creed: Only the best raw material guarantees the best quality for the finished product.

This is why we accept no compromises when purchasing veneers. Our years of experience and our purchasing volumes allow us to acquire top quality at good prices, thereby benefiting our customers.

Chart 9 – Amount of veneers used in 1,000 m²

Thanks to careful selection of our standard veneers, their share in the total amount of veneers used has been steadily rising over the past few years. At present, more than 97 per cent of the veneers used at Bene are standard veneers. These veneers are predominantly derived from sustainable forestry too.

In 2016 Bene processed around 55,000 m² of veneers. They are certified either PEFC™ or FSC®, or their legal compliance has been confirmed in writing, in the form of supplier self-declaration.

Spliced veneers are used mainly[19] on Bene furniture and[20] peeled veneers on Bene chairs.

Image 55 – Veneer package oak

The Bene standard veneer product range currently has seven different types of veneer. Tropical veneers or veneers from wood on the "Red List"[21] of threatened species from the IUCN[22] have not been used at all for some years.

The considerable surplus of walnut veneer in 2014 is based on a major order in which only wall panels with walnut veneer were used (around 200,000 m²).

Beech, American cherry, Canadian maple, oak, American walnut and ash are used as veneers for serial products. Bamboo was also used as a veneer until the end of 2016[23]. In addition, we also occasionally use special veneers or veneers provided by the client, for example Birch or Pear.

Image 56 – Bernhard Korntheuer (veneer workshop team)

3.1.1.2. COVERINGS

When selecting coverings, Bene ensures that they are not just visually appealing and of high quality (abrasion and light resistant, etc.) but that they are also sustainable.

We procure our fabrics therefore primarily from well-known manufacturers that develop and produce innovative ecological fabrics. Our biggest suppliers are:

- Kvadrat
  http://kvadrat.de/
- Camira
  https://www.camirafabrics.com/de
- Gerns Gahler - Müller Zell GmbH
  http://muellerzell.com/index.php
- Gabriel A/S
  https://www.gabriel.dk/en/

Nylon, viscose and polyester fibre are also used in addition to fabrics from new wool and cotton.

Oeko-Tex® Standard 100
The Oeko-Tex Standard 100 is a uniform global test and certification system for textile raw, semi-finished and end-products at all stages of processing.[24]
https://www.oeko-tex.com/de/business/business_home/business_home.xhtml
The Europost and Step fabrics from Bene's standard range are certified in accordance with the Oeko-Tex Standard

EU Flower
The EU ecolabel (EU Flower) has been awarded in all Member States of the European Community since 1992.

The criteria for awarding this include e.g. energy consumption, water and air pollution, waste, sustainable forestry as well as noise and soil pollution.
http://ec.europa.eu/environment/ecolabel/

Image 57 – Johannes Sonnleitner and Manfred Hintsteiner (product engineering team)

[19] The log is fed in the vertical direction against a static cutter, whereby the cutter and pressure bar move forward by the required veneer thickness after every movement. The pressure bar generally prevents tearing of the wood when separating off veneer. Differently marked veneers result depending on cut type. This natural grain effect is the benefit of spliced veneers.

[20] The most efficient method is peeling. A clamped log is rotated and is fed against the cutter. The pressure bar should prevent tearing. Peeling creates a continuous strip of veneer. This is rolled up behind the peeling machine or cut into smaller pieces with veneer cutters. Since the cut runs along the annual rings during round peeling, this method produces an irregular, rugged grain.

[21] The Red List of Threatened Species or just Red List in the original Red Data Book is the list published globally by the International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN) at intermittent intervals of species of animals and plants at risk of extinction.

[22] The IUCN (International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources), also known as the World Conservation Union, is an international non-governmental organisation.

[23] Strictly speaking, bamboo is not wood but is one of the twelve sub-families of the grass family.

[24] The tests for harmful substances cover substances prohibited and regulated by statute, chemicals known to have potential negative effects for health, and parameters for health provision.

"Bene is a pioneer in the industry – we are always on the lookout for something better; our actions are defined by innovation and inspiration rather than tradition and convention."

(EXTRACT FROM CORPORATE PRINCIPLES)

The coverings Clara, Europost, Hallingdal 65, Remix, Patina, Steelcut 2, Steelcut Trio 2, Step, Urban Plus and Xtreme Plus from Bene's standard range are certified in accordance with the EU Flower standard

Recycled materials

Some coverings in Bene's standard range (Urban Plus, Marvel, Xtreme Plus) are made from 100% recycled polyester (e.g. PET bottles) so that less waste ends up in landfill sites and fewer raw materials are used.

Trevira CS

Bene uses textile fabrics made of synthetic fibre in order to achieve the fire retardant levels required in many projects (flame-retardant). This synthetic fibre has been available on the market for years as Trevira CS[25]. Trevira CS also meets the Oeko Tex Standard 100.
http://www.trevira.de/de/trevira-polyester-fasern-garne.html

The Step fabric is woven from a Trevira CS fibre.

3.1.1.3. METALLIC COMPONENTS

Bene processes primarily aluminium and steel components on site.

Aluminium materials[26] at Bene are used in the form of anodised extruder profiles and individually worked parts and are used in various installation scenarios, such as room partitioning systems and management-level ranges. Bene also uses aluminium in the form of diecast components such as on the foot bracket of the T platform.

Steel[27] is mainly used to produce table supports and base frames of room partitioning systems. Many fixings such as screws, pins and nuts are also made of steel. Visible/concealed hinges and locks are generally made of diecast zinc.

Many metallic components (e.g.: profiles, sheet metals) are powder-coated in order to achieve different colours and surface effects.

3.1.1.4. GLASS COMPONENTS

Bene uses TSG[28] and LSG[29] glass for room structuring systems, table tops and furniture doors.

Float glass is used at times in the form of mirrors and Satinato glass.

Image 58 – Hermann Mayerhofer (profile machining team)

3.1.1.5. PLASTIC COMPONENTS

Bene uses synthetic profiles and components in many areas, such as for edges, contour, sealing and handle profiles and shutters and synthetic diecast parts as cover caps.

Polyvinylchloride (PVC) has not been used since 1995. Instead of PVC, Bene uses mainly Acrylonitrile Butadiene Styrene (ABS). Other synthetic materials are also used, such as polypropylene (PP), polyamide (PA), polyethylene (PE), polymethylmethacrylate (PMMA), polycarbonate (PC) and rubber (ethylene propylene diene monomer rubber or EPDM).

Image 59 – Josef Korntheuer (team representative, panel-cutting/edging)

Image 61 – Karl Fehringer (materials receiving team)

3.1.1.6. COMPACT BOARDS[30]

In accordance with EN 438-1, compact boards are treated rough or with a melamine resin top coat as decoration. These are comprised mainly of paper sheets saturated with hardened synthetic resins. Paper content makes up more than 60% of their weight. The remaining 30-40% by weight is made up of phenol/formaldehyde resin for the core and melamine/formaldehyde resin for the decorative top layer. Both resins are thermosetting materials. They are irreversibly linked chemically and form a stabile material.

Image 60 – Thomas Fröhlich and Hans Werner Rothaar (room walls team)

Compact boards are used at Bene predominantly as work surfaces for tables. For products aimed at management level, sanded compact boards are coated and varnished with genuine wood veneers.

Image 62 – Günter Muck (profile machining team)

[25] CS = Comfort and Safety

[26] Aluminium is an important material at Bene on account of its light weight, surface characteristics, diverse usage options and easy recycling.

[27] Because of its durability and strength, steel is the most important design material in virtually all areas of engineering . All metal components can be separated unmixed and are completely recyclable.

[28] TSG = Toughened safety glass

[29] LSG = Laminated safety glass (a special form of laminated glass. It is comprised of at least two glass panes and an intermediate layer, usually made of a tear-resistant polyvinylbutyral foil.)

[30] High pressure laminate (HPL)

3.1.2. RECYCLING CONTENT

Bene is constantly increasing the recycled content of used materials. This was at around 60% on average in 2015. This is an increase of approximately 100 per cent compared to the last reporting period.

Raw and melamine chipboard	50 - 75%
MDF board	10 - 25%
Soft fibre boards	50 - 100%
Aluminium components	0 - 50%
Steel components	0 - 50%
Synthetic components	0 - 50%
Glass components	0 - 50%
Coverings	0 - 100%

Table 13 – Percentage of recycling content (pre- and post-consumer)

The proportion of recycled material in the raw materials used varies considerably in some cases in accordance with the calculation method, components and the different manufacturers/suppliers[31].

Image 63 – Frame_S Board with ten Pixel boxes

Our products can be sorted into separate waste streams, dismantled into individual parts and fully recycled or recycled thermally.

New material	212.62 kg	84.34%
post-consumer material	33.43 kg	13.26%
pre-consumer material	6.05 kg	2.40%

Table 12 – Recycling content of Frame_S Board with 10 Pixel boxes (see Image 63, Image 64)

INFO BOX

Around 60% of the raw materials used by Bene have already been part of another product's life cycle. That is to say, this 60% consists of recycled materials.

[31] Data according to manufacturer/supplier declarations

Wood (raw chipboard, plywood)	171.36 kg	377.77 lb	67.96%
Steel	63.90 kg	140.86 lb	25.34%
aluminium	8.51 kg	18.77 lb	3.38%
Synthetics (PA, ABS, PE, POM, EPDM)	3.38 kg	7.44 lb	1.34%
Compact	2.09 kg	4.60 lb	0.83%
Zinc	1.94 kg	4.29 lb	0.77%
Glass	0.93 kg	2.05 lb	0.37%
Leather	0.04 kg	0.08 lb	0.01%
Total	252.1 kg	555.9 lb	100.0%

Table 11 – Percentage of materials/composition Frame_S Board with ten Pixel boxes (see Image 63, Image 64)

Over 90% of all by-products accumulated in the Bene plant are recycled. The example of the Frame_S Boards with Pixel boxes[32] illustrates the composition of Bene products (see Table 11).

Image 64 – Frame_S Board with 10 Pixel boxes, showing all individual elements (exploded view)

The ability to recycle materials is important for Bene and has been taken into account right from the design stage of this board. The product can be dismantled into individual parts which can then be reused.

This Frame_S Board plus Pixel boxes[33] contains 13.26% post-consumer[34] and 2.40% pre-consumer recycled material[35].

[32] Product example: Frame_S Board with seven closed and three open Pixel boxes made of natural pine plywood (dimensions 360 mm x 360 mm x 381 mm) plus Pixel Top 180; Frame_S Board type H with frame and castors (1821 mm x 1735 mm x 860 mm); decorative elastic cord, pinboard and Pixel carrier (see Image 63 and Image 64)

[33] Pixel is not a good example for the purposes of illustrating recycled parts as it consists of more than 95% plywood which does not contain any recycled material (plywood is made from peeled and glued veneer).

[34] Post-consumer recycling material is material from households, commercial and industrial institutions (that are end consumers of the product), that cannot be used any longer for the planned purposes. This includes return of material from the distribution chain (definition according to ISO 14021).

[35] Pre-consumer material: Material diverted from the waste stream during a manufacturing process. Excluded is reutilisation of materials such as rework, regrind or scrap generated in a process and capable of being reclaimed within the same process that generated it (definition according to ISO 14021).

3.1.3. ENERGY CONSUMPTION OF BENE PRODUCTS

Generally speaking, Bene products do not consume energy during their use. Only a few of our in-house products use electricity. These include the Bene T-Lift Desk and other storage or executive furniture equipped with monitor or screen lifts.

The T-Lift Desk achieves the largest production quantities among these products. The Bene Lift Desk is both a working surface and desk which allows can be raised and lowered as required. This enables ergonomic work in the office with the employee able to carry out their work either seated or standing up. This product makes office life more diverse and healthier.

In order to raise and lower the surface, a small electronic motor is necessary. On standby, energy consumption is around 0.44 watt-hours. With a 20 kg load (monitor, computer, etc.), lifting and lowering the surface once consumes around 188 watt-hours.

Image 65 – Bene T-Plattform Lift Desk

Assuming that the desk is lifted and lowered on average once a day, the annual energy consumption of the T-Lift Desk is around 4.2 kWh per annum. Over 90% (3.85 kWh) of this energy is used in standby mode.

Image 68 – Bene Belgium

Concerning our commodity goods (e.g. multimedia components), we consider ecological criteria (e.g. power consumption) right from the selection of our partners.

3.1.4. ERGONOMIC PRODUCTS

Sitting has always been a basic human activity. It is characteristic of the Information Age that more and more people sit for prolonged periods of time, often in a bad chair and/or posture. Despite the fact that the human body is made for movement.

Image 66 – Ergonomic seating posture (EN 1335-1)

Ergonomics is the science of designing the job, equipment and workplace to fit the worker. The core aim of ergonomics is the creation of suitable conditions for people to work and the use of technical facilities and tools.[36]

Image 67 – Thomas Gschöpf and Josef Grill (production planning team)

It is a well-known fact that regular standing is good for the individual's health and that movement promotes creativity.

A study by the Texas A&M Health Science Center also shows that using furniture for sitting/standing work has a positive effect on productivity.[37]

Products from Bene are ergonomically designed. They make daily work easier, take into account the individual needs of employees and their physical dimensions, and offer optimal latitude for movement.

[36] Source: Wikipedia

[37] Call Center Productivity Over 6 Months Following a Standing Desk Intervention by Gregory Garrett, Mark Benden, Ranjana Mehta, Adam Pickens, S. Camille Peres and Hongwei Zhao http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/21577323.2016.1183534

3.1.5. SOUND PROTECTION

A noise is characterised by both its volume (acoustic pressure) and its pitch level (frequency). Noises in a frequency range of between 1000 and 5000 Hz with the same acoustic pressure are subjectively perceived to be considerably louder than noises below or above this frequency range.

Background noise outdoors is between 30 – 40 dB. Normal speech at a distance of one metre: 55 – 60 dB. Continuous strain above 65 dB interferes with the vegetative nerve system; continuous strain above 90 dB results in damage to hearing.

Telephones, printers, copiers, air-conditioning systems, etc. in offices create background noise that is often perceived as unpleasant. Conversations between others in turn are the most disruptive sources of noise in the office for those not involved in the conversations. However, health risks are not associated solely with the intensity of the noise itself, but also with its composition, frequency and bandwidth.

American psychologists at Cornell University[38] in Ithaca have found that even relatively low levels of noise can cause stress and impair performance capability. Gary Evans, Professor of Environmental Psychology, found in his studies that employees in loud offices were 40 per cent less likely to attempt to solve technical or professional problems themselves. They also make just half as many ergonomic adjustments to their furniture or their computers as the comparison group in quieter spaces. Gary Evans describes stress as a manifestation that can have very serious consequences over the longer term, such as cardiac complaints and muscular and bone problems.

$$\Delta L = 10 * \lg \frac{A_2}{A_1} \qquad A = \sum_i \alpha_{s,\,j,i} * S_i \qquad R_{res,\,w} = -10 * \lg \left[\frac{1}{S_g} * \sum_i S_i * 10^{-\frac{R_{w,i}}{10}} \right]$$

Chart 10 – Formulae for noise reduction (deltaL), equivalent sound absorption area (A) and resulting sound insulation value (Rres,w)

Good room acoustics can increase employee performance by up to 52%. Bene offers a wide selection of sound-absorbing and soundproofing products that greatly improve the quality of the acoustics in the office environment.

Thanks to acoustic elements, many Bene products (e.g. wall elements) contribute to sound absorption and insulation. Further information is available on the Bene website.

[38] http://www.cornell.edu

3.1.6. PRODUCT EMISSIONS

The emissions of Bene furniture have a sizeable impact on the interior air quality and consequently the health of its users. Bene is constantly improving its production processes to further decrease product emissions. For surface finishing, for example, we now use exclusively water-based varnishes and stains (see 4.2.3 on page 64). Thanks to our close collaboration with suppliers, we have achieved a reduction of the VOC solvent content[39] of this water-based varnish to 3.5 per cent.

Image 69 – Martin Kronsteiner (paint shop team)

Low quantities of varnishes containing solvents are used in the form of spray varnishes, correctors or special varnishes for maintenance. These materials contain an average VOC content of around 70 per cent. Aside from VOC emissions from surface finishing, we are also focusing on reducing the formaldehyde from the production process for the wood-based materials (e.g. chipboard). Formaldehyde also occurs naturally in wood with an equilibrium concentration of 0.01 ppm (parts per million).

However, as part of the board manufacturer's production process 8–10 % UF glue (consisting of urea formaldehyde resin) is mixed in as adhesive. The proportion of formaldehyde in these UF glues has been reduced as far as technically possible.

Alternative technically sophisticated formaldehyde-free glues, such as polymeric diphenylmethane diisocyanate (PMDI) with limited availability require much effort in terms of occupational safety, as these contain isocyanates[40], and as such the problem is shifted to the board manufacturer's production facilities and the employees there.

Image 70 – Hubert Hagler (panel-cutting team)

Bene processes only wood-based materials with emission class E1[41]. This equates to < 0.1 ppm formaldehyde pursuant to the European chamber test in accordance with EN 717-1.

The World Health Organisation (WHO)[42] confirmed this guideline value as a "Safe Level" in 2010 based on its risk assessment.[43] As such all products that contain the value 0.1 ppm are absolutely safe in accordance with the latest findings.

Image 71 – Christian Altenhofer (team representative, room walls)

3.2. LABELS AND CERTIFICATES

As well as adhering to legal requirements, Bene products also fulfil voluntary safety and ecological standards that partially exceed what is legally mandatory (e.g.: 0.05 ppm formaldehyde). Toxic emissions form part of the assessment criteria for the "Blue Angel" award, the "LGA tested for toxins" label and the "Austrian Eco-Label".[44]

The product certifications that are most important for Bene are outlined briefly below. Principles, test reports and any certificates can be provided upon request or if needed.

3.2.1. PRODUCT ECOLOGY

Proving that products are ecological is not always easy. Bene wants to show the ecological compatibility of its products through certification in accordance with different standards.

3.2.1.1. AUSTRIAN ECOLABEL

The Austrian Ecolabel[45] is awarded to products that are exceptionally good in terms of environment, health and usability by the Austrian Consumer Information Association (VKI) on behalf of the Austrian Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Management.
http://www.umweltzeichen.at

All products manufactured at the Waidhofen plant which have a content weight percentage of wood of more than 50% have been certified in accordance with the Austrian Ecolabel since 2010.

Around 60% of the items sold in 2016 were thereby certified, including items such as desks and storage furniture.[46]

[39] VOC (Volatile Organic Compounds) is the collective term for organic substances containing carbon that easily evaporate (are volatile) or exist as gas at low temperatures (e.g. room temperature).

[40] Isocyanates are toxic and harm the cell membranes in human cells through a reaction with NH_2 and OH groups. Inhaling vapours containing isocyanates causes irritation to the skin (e.g. dermatitis) and mucous membrane. This can result in damage to the cornea of the eye.

[41] Formaldehyde Class E1 pursuant to EN 13986 "Wood-based materials for use in construction – Characteristics, evaluation of conformity and marking"

[42] http://www.who.int/en/

[43] http://www.euro.who.int/__data/assets/pdf_file/0009/128169/e94535.pdf

[44] See also the book Green Office–Ökonomische und ökologische Potenziale nachhaltiger Arbeits- und Bürogestaltung; D. Spath / W. Bauer / S. Rief

[45] The Ecolabel's graphical design originates from well-known Austrian artist Friedensreich Hundertwasser.

[46] Calculation basis: The number of items sold with the relevant certification divided by the total number of items sold not including special designs and spare parts

REPUBLIK ÖSTERREICH
BUNDESMINISTERIUM FÜR LAND- UND FORSTWIRTSCHAFT, UMWELT UND WASSERWIRTSCHAFT

Der Firma
BENE GMBH
Schwarzwiesenstraße 3, 3340 Waidhofen/Ybbs

wurde unter der Registrier-Nr. UW 738 das

ÖSTERREICHISCHE UMWELTZEICHEN

UZ 06 MÖBEL

verliehen.

Die Firma hat nach erfolgter Prüfung lt. Prüfakt-Nr. VK1 738 gemäß der Satzung für die Verbandsmarke Umweltzeichen das Recht erworben, bis 26. November 2020 die Produkte

Büromöbel der Programme:
Arbeitstische, Stauraum, Collaboration, Management, Besprechung, Konferenz & Media, Sitzmöbel, Raumsysteme
die zu über 50% aus Holz oder Holzwerkstoffen bestehen

mit dem Österreichischen Umweltzeichen zu kennzeichnen.

ANDRÄ RÜDPRICHTER
BUNDESMINISTER

WIEN, IM FEBRUAR 2017

Image 73 – Austrian ecolabel certificate

3.2.1.2. BLUE ANGEL

The Blue Angel is the first and oldest (since 1978) environmental label in the world for products and services. The Blue Angel promotes both the issue of environmental protection as well as that of consumer protection.

Products and services that are considered to be particularly environmentally friendly when viewed holistically are honoured with this.

www.blauer-engel.de/uz38
- emissionsarm
- Holz aus nachhaltiger Forstwirtschaft
- in der Wohnumwelt gesundheitlich unbedenklich

The label owner is the German Federal Ministry for Environment, Environmental protection and Reactor Safety. The RAL gGmbH awards the label. Similar to the requirements of the Austrian Ecolabel, the wood products that receive awards must consist of more than 50% wood by weight.
http://www.blauer-engel.de/

Around 60% of the items sold in 2016 were thereby certified.

3.2.1.3. LGA TESTED FOR CONTAMINANTS

"LGA tested for contaminants" is awarded to products that give off minimal toxic emissions, often falling well below the legally defined limits.
The requirements essentially correspond with those for the "Blue Angel" (RAL-UZ 38). http://www.tuv.com/de/deutschland/gk/produktpruefung/haus_garten/moebel/moebel.html

As Bene's wall systems were not included in the scope of the certification in 2015, around 35% of the items sold in 2016 were LGA tested for toxins. This certification was replaced as of the end of 2016 due to the strong similarity with the Blue Angel.

3.2.1.4. GREENGUARD

The Greenguard Label which is known primarily in North America but has now also become internationally widespread was developed in 2001 by the "Greenguard Environmental Institute" with the aim of protecting human health and quality of life by reducing harmful substances and improving indoor air quality.

CERTIFICATE
OF COMPLIANCE

GREENGUARD
PRODUCT CERTIFIED FOR LOW CHEMICAL EMISSIONS
UL.COM/GG
UL 2818

BENE GmbH
RIYA

44473-410
Certificate Number

12/8/2013 - 12/8/2017
Certificate Period

Certified
Status

UL 2818 - 2013 Standard for Chemical Emissions for Building Materials, Finishes and Furnishings

Commercial furniture and furnishings are tested in accordance with ANSI/BIFMA X7.1 - 2011(Tested) and determined to comply with ANSI/BIFMA X7.1-2011(Tested) and ANSI/BIFMA e3-2014 or Credit 7.6.1. Seating products are modeled in the seating environment with a ventilation rate of 0.42 liter/liter.
Products tested in accordance with UL 2818 test method to show compliance to emission limits in UL 2818, Section 7.1.

Environment

Image 72 – Greenguard certificate for Bene swivel chair RIYA

Emissions of harmful substances are examined in spaces for this in a similar way as the European labels. The most significant difference is in the departure from a site-specific emission calculation in favour of a volume/space-related calculation. The product composition on the other hand plays a subordinate role with this.
http://greenguard.org/en/index.aspx

Bene carries the Greenguard Label for most of its product groups. This also includes OEM products such as PARCS, Docklands and many of the ranges of chairs.

Around 90% of the items sold in 2016 were thereby certified in accordance with the Greenguard standard.

3.2.1.5. CHAIN OF CUSTODY (PEFC™, FSC®)

Unlike the product certifications stated above, the Chain of Custody certificates are corporate certificates that allow the products to be sold as PEFC or FSC-certified if certain criteria are met. Bene is certified in accordance with both standards (see also „3.1.1.1. Sustainable forestry“ on page 36).

Around 65% of the items sold in 2016 were entitled to be declared PEFC-certified.

3.2.2. SAFETY AND QUALITY

As part of the development process, all Bene product groups are subject to an extensive safety inspection internally or externally by accredited testing institutes.

Usability is a major client demand for Bene products. As well as the durability aspect, the safety of the product in everyday use plays an essential role.

Bene also indicates possible dangers during the use of specific products in comprehensive operating, assembling and cleaning instructions. These instructions are either attached to the product or can be downloaded from the Bene website.
(http://bene.com/bueromoebel/produkte/)

Many products have been certified in accordance with national and international safety and quality labels in order to demonstrate the steps taken in relation to product safety and high quality to customers.

INFO BOX

BENE GmbH offers a voluntary warranty for the professional workmanship and functionality of the products sold and distributed under the Bene brand. The warranty period is five years for Bene PARCS® as well as for Bene seating and upholstered furniture, and ten years for all other furniture and walls.

For warranty details and any limitations see warranty policy document number DB-ZFP-400: “Bene product warranty”.

3.2.2.1. APPROVED SAFETY (GS)

The GS mark (GS = approved safety) is the only quality certificate governed by statute in Europe for product safety. In terms of consumer and worker health and protection, this quality stamp guarantees that the relevant safety requirements have been satisfied and that the products are checked and regularly monitored by an independent approved body. Award of the certificate is governed in sections 20/21 of the German Product Safety Act (ProdSG).
http://www.zls-muenchen.de/de/left/zustaendigkeitsbereich/gs-zeichen/gs-zeichen-ix.htm

Around 55% of the items sold in 2016 were GS certified.

Polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAH)[47]
Since 2008, the adherence to particular PAH thresholds in regard to the awarding of the GS symbol has been tested and assessed by The test and assessment take place in accordance with ZEK[48] 01.4.08 (2011-11) or AfPS GS [49]2014:01 (2014-08).

Bene also has plastic components in products that are not GS certified tested regularly.

3.2.2.2. QUALITY OFFICE

Quality Office is based on the experience of five renowned institutions (DIN, VBG, BSO, BAuA and INQA-Büro) that issued the joint guideline related to the quality criteria for office workstations L-Q 01-06. The criteria are based on those in the GS mark.
http://www.quality-office.org

Some Bene chairs currently bear the Quality Office mark.

3.2.2.3. AUSTRIAN QUALITY SEAL

The Austrian Quality Seal is a distinctive mark and – thanks to continuous quality monitoring – a guarantee for Austrian quality. It identifies products that meet high quality standards and for which at least 50 per cent of the value creation takes place in Austria.
http://www.qualityaustria.com/

Around 70% of the items sold in 2016 were thereby certified in accordance with the Austrian Quality Seal.

Image 76 – Product example: The Bene CUBE_S tower unit is GS safety approved, and certified by Greenguard, the Austrian ecolabel, the Blue Angel and the Austrian quality mark. It is manufactured using PEFC certified wood materials.

3.2.2.4. STRUCTURE

Bene dividing wall systems such as the R-Platform, RG glass wall and RF corridor wall are internal partition kits for use as non-loadbearing walls in accordance with the definition in Guidance Paper C from the European Commission and must therefore be tested in accordance with ETAG 003[50].

Bene fulfils these responsibilities and has had all non-loadbearing dividing wall systems successfully tested in accordance with ETAG 003.

3.2.2.5. ACOUSTICS

Acoustics are also important criteria for many types of furniture and wall systems (see 3.1.5 Sound protection). This is the reason why many products have also been tested by the state testing institution TGM[51] with respect to sound absorption and insulation qualities.

3.2.2.6. EC DECLARATIONS OF CONFORMITY (CE MARK)

Products with electric motors such as Electric, height-adjustable desks (lift desks) are subject to the provisions of the Machinery Directive[52]. In all cases, standards are met.

EC Declarations of Conformity ("CE Declarations") have been prepared for all these products.

EG-Konformitätserklärung T-Plattform Lift Desk (EC-Declaration of Conformity)

Hiermit erklären wir, der Hersteller
We, the manufacturer

BENE GmbH
Schwarzwiesenstrasse 3
A-3340 Waidhofen/Ybbs

in alleiniger Verantwortung, dass folgendes Produkt (Bezeichnung, Type, Artikel-Nr., Ausführung, Sonderausstattung):
declare under our sole responsibility that the following product (name, type, No., special equipment):

T-Plattform Lift Desk traversenlos; Sitz-/Steharbeitsplatz (TL/TM); elektromotorisch höhenverstellbar
T-Platform Lift Desk without cross bar; Sit-stand desk (TL/TM); continuously electronic height-adjustable
in Varianten bzw. Zusatzausstattung gemäß Preisliste
in variations and supplementary equipment referred to the price list

mit folgenden EU-Richtlinien bzw. Normen übereinstimmt:
meets the requirements of the following EC-directives and standard(s):

Maschinenrichtlinie 2006/42/EG mit Änderungen *(Machinery directive 2006/42/EG including amendments)*
Richtlinie elektromagnetische Verträglichkeit 2004/108/EG mit Änderungen *(EMC directive 2004/108/EG including amendments)*
Niederspannungsrichtlinie 2006/95/EG mit Änderungen *(Low voltage directive 2004/95/EG including amendments)*

sowie diesen europäische Normen inklusive zutreffende Änderungen:
and this european standards including relevant amendments:

DIN EN 14073-2/-3:2004; DIN EN 14074:2004; DIN Fachbericht 147:2006; DIN EN 349; ÖNORM EN ISO 12100; DIN EN 527-1:2011; DIN EN 527-2/-3:2003; ZEK 01.4-08; (EK)5/(AK)3; DIN EN 60335-1:2012; EN 61000-6-2:2005; EN 61000-6-3:2007 +A1; EN 61000-3-2:2006+A1+A2; EN 61000-3-3:2008; EN 62233:2008; EN50581:2012

Die oben genannte Firma hält Dokumentationen als Nachweis der Erfüllung der Sicherheits-ziele und die wesentlichen Schutzanforderungen zur Einsicht bereit.
Documentation evidencing conformity with the requirements of the directives is kept available for inspection at the above manufacturer.

Dokumentationsbevollmächtigter:
Authorized documentation representative:

Koettl, Fritz; Teamleader Product Engineering
Bene GmbH, Schwarzwiesenstrasse 3, A-3340 Waidhofen/Ybbs

CE 2016

Dieses Dokument wurde elektronisch erstellt und gezeichnet
This document was created and signed digitally

Kronnerwetter, Bernhardt
Head of Production & Engineering

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Image 75 – EC declaration of conformity for Bene T-Platform Lift Desk

Image 74 – Logos for some of the organisations involved in testing and certification for Bene products

[47] PAHs are components of fossil fuels and their products, such as coal tar, mastic asphalt, fuel, diesel and heating oil. In addition, PAHs are created everywhere where there is an incomplete burning process. PAHs dry the skin, cause skin infections and can bring about cornea damage as well as irritate airways, eyes and the digestion tract.

[48] Zentralstelle der Länder für Sicherheitstechnik (Central Body of the German Federal States for Safety) http://www.zls-muenchen.de/

[49] Ausschuss für Produktsicherheit – AfPS (Committee for Product Safety) GS specification test and assessment of polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAH) upon award of the GS mark – Specification in accordance with section 21 sub-section 1 No. 3 of the Product Safety Act (ProdSG)

[50] European Technical Approval Guidelines for Internal partition kits for use as non-loadbearing walls (2012 version).

[51] https://www.tgm.ac.at/index.php/versuchsanstalt/va

[52] The Machinery Directive 2006/42/EG is applicable to the marketing- and operation of machines. It also relates to individual safety components for machines. It also relates to individual safety components for machines. A machine is defined as all connected parts or devices (at least one of which is moveable). In some cases, machines are equipped with control elements, or control and power circuits for a particular purpose, e.g. the processing, treatment or movement of a material.

3.6. TECHNICAL PRODUCT DOCUMENTATION

In addition to the test reports and certificates under various labelling/topic-based schemes in chapter 3.2 on page 42f, the building certification data sheets (chapter 3.4 on page 48ff) and the product-specific life cycle assessment information (chapter 3.3 on page 46), we provide various other product information documents for our customers.

3.6.1. OPERATING INSTRUCTIONS

Image 77 – Assembly instructions for PIXEL setting and FRAME_S board

3.6.2. COMBINED ASSEMBLY AND OPERATING INSTRUCTIONS

Image 80 – Assembly instructions for PIXEL setting and FRAME_S board

3.6.3. OPERATING INSTRUCTIONS/USER INFORMATION

Image 81 – Operating instructions / user information for B_Run, Riya, Bay Chair, Coffice, Rondo and Settle

3.6.4. TECHNICAL BROCHURES

Image 82 – Technical leaflet for T-Platform

3.6.5. PRODUCT DATASHEETS

Image 79 – Product datasheets for FRAME_S and Pixel

3.6.6. ENVIRONMENTAL DATA SHEETS

Image 78 – Environmental data sheet for FRAME_S board with 10 Pixel boxes

3.3. PRODUCT-RELATED LIFE CYCLE ASSESSMENT

The Life Cycle Assessment (LCA) ascertains the environmental effects of products. It covers all stages in a life cycle, from extracting the raw materials and producing the product through to recycling and disposal. The total amount of resources and emissions required ("life cycle inventory analysis") can be converted into a comprehensive life cycle impact assessment based on indicators. The standards ISO 14040 and ISO 14044 govern the process for the life cycle assessment.

Bene creates product-related life cycle assessment sheets, referred to as EPDs (Environmental Product Declarations) for its products. As product-related life cycle assessments from Bene are not certified or prepared externally, they are not called EPD but as LCDS (Life Cycle Data Sheets or Life Cycle Assessment Data Sheets).

The environmental impact of our own products is examined here from the entire production chain from cradle to grave. The impact ascertained in the operational life cycle assessment is also allocated to the individual products based on their effect in accordance with the backpack principle.

A specially developed Excel tool allows a project-specific life cycle assessment to be generated for any product type. The procedure was developed in conjunction with Roland Fehringer from Denkstatt GmbH[53].
The environmental impact factors for each impact category were provided by Denkstatt. The data predominantly originate from the relevant latest version of the Ecoinvent database[54].

The documents generated meet the requirements of a Type III Declaration in accordance with ISO 14025. There are currently more than 5,000 ready-made/pre-calculated LCDS available for the most common product versions. We are happy to provide these to our existing and prospective customers upon request as a criterion for their purchasing decision. Any additional configuration can be created in just a few days as needed.

3.3.1. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT CATEGORIES[55]

The following environmental impact categories were ascertained when the product-related life cycle assessments were introduced in 2009[56] in accordance with similar Product Category Rules (PCRs)[57] in place at the time, and have been taken into account in Bene LCDS documents since then (Ecoinvent database version 3.01):

- **Global Warming Potential (GWP)**
  Greenhouse gas potential, carbon footprint in kg CO_2 equ./kg
- **Primary Energy Requirement (PER)**
  Primary energy consumption, broken down into renewable and non-renewable primary energy consumption kWh/kg
- **Acidification Potential (AP)**
  Acidification potential, penetration of acid-forming substances in soil and water, "acid rain" in kg SO_2 equ./kg
- **Photochemical Ozone Creation Potential (POCP)**
  Photo-oxidant formation potential, summer smog potential, formation of ground-level ozone; photochemical oxidation formation in kg C_2H_4 equ./kg
- **Nutrification Potential (NP)**
  Eutrophication potential, over-fertilisation, increased penetration of nutrients in soil and water in kg PO_4 equ./kg
- **Ozone Depletion Potential (ODP)**
  Ozone destruction potential, ozone depletion potential, depletion of the stratospheric ozone layer in kg CCl_3Fe/kg
- **Abiotic Resource Depletion (ARD), Abiotic Depletion Factor**
  Abiotic resource consumption, exhaustion of abiotic resources (air and air components, water, mineral raw materials, metal ores and fossil fuels. Depletion of non-renewable raw materials in kg Sb equ./kg

Bene is currently working on incorporating the following environmental impact categories into the Bene LCDS documents in accordance with Product Category Rules UN CPC 381258 and UN CPC 381459 of Swedish programme owner Environdec[60] ("The International EPD System") and on migrating completely to Ecoinvent database factors in version 3.3 (see „5.3.2. Sustainability Programme“ on page 84):

- **Non-hazardous waste (NHW)**
  Non-hazardous waste (incl. slag, ash and debris) in kg/kg
- **Hazardous waste (HW)**
  Hazardous waste (incl. radioactive) in kg/kg
- **Water use (WU)**
  Physical water demands ("blue water" in accordance with Water Footprint method) in m^3/kg
- **USEtox:human toxicity:non-carcinogenic, Human Toxicity Classification Factor (HXNC)**
  Human toxicity (non-carcinogenic) in CTUh/kg
- **USEtox:human toxicity:carcinogenic, Human Toxicity Classification Factor (HXC)**
  Human toxicity (carcinogenic) in CTUh/kg
- **USEtox:ecotoxicity:total, Ecological Classification Factor (EX)**
  Ecotoxicity in CTUe/kg
- **Land use, according to.the Recipe method (LU)**
  Land use (ReCiPe Endpoint (H)/European ReCiPe H/A, sum of agricultural land occupation, urban land occupation and natural land transformation) [species.yr]

A more detailed explanation of the environmental impact categories can be found in section „4.6.2. Other environmental impact categories“ on page 72.

[53] http://denkstatt.at/
[54] http://www.ecoinvent.org/database/database.html

[55] The abbreviations used in brackets are in some cases standard international abbreviations for the impact category (e.g. GWP) and in some cases have been selected by us (e.g. WU) in order to make the data in the LCDS documents easy to identify (e.g. with chart captions)
[56] The process began in 2009 with data from Ecoinvent database version 2.2
[57] In accordance with DIN EN ISO 14025, product category rules are the set of specific rules, requirements or guidelines for creating an environmental product declaration for one of more product categories.
[58] UN CPC 3812 – Other furniture, of a kind used in offices
[59] UN CPC 3814 – Other furniture n.e.c. (not elsewhere classified)
[60] www.environdec.com

The precise product-specific data (e.g.: power consumption) cannot currently be ascertained in production and as such, the values for production have been calculated from the value for the entire production in the last financial year[61].

INFO BOX

EPDs and LCAs are issued for our products in accordance with the regulations for the relevant product groups to allow comparison of the environmental effects of different products.

However if varying product group regulations or other assessment values are applied, it is difficult to make comparisons!

The underlying transportation routes from Bene as manufacturer to the relevant customer correspond with the actual distances in Europe and are determined using route planner software. The means of transportation assumed is a lorry with two swap bodies.

The linear distance was used if it was not possible to determine the distance or if road transportation was not possible. In both cases, the data are assumed for fuel consumption for transportation by lorry via road.

A default project location in Prague in the Czech Republic is used for the calculation for any datasheets that have no specific customer project location.

No repairs are to be expected during the usage time for the Bene products because of their sturdy product design and quality, provided that they are used as intended.

In some cases with motorised products (e.g.: Lift Desks) the standby and motion energy consumption[62] are taken into account during the usage phase[63]. A split of 90% standby power consumption and 10% motion power consumption is assumed with this.

Additional electronic components that are not fixed components in the product, such as projectors, are not taken into account in this calculation.

European laws on recycling and waste disposal processes (waste separation into recyclable materials and residual waste) were taken into account in calculating the impact in the disposal area.

Recyclable materials undergo the relevant recycling process and residual waste is disposed of in a waste incineration plant. The average distance assumed between the end user and waste disposal company is 50 km.

The planned updates to the LCDS (see „5.3.2. Sustainability Programme“ on page 84) also include plans to differentiate between different types of disposal (recycling, incineration and landfill) in order to account for specific country requirements.

Since the LC factors in the different Ecoinvent database versions (2.2, 3.01, 3.3) differ significantly in some cases, LCDS from Bene can also only be compared in part over the various years / versions.

The example of the Frame_S Board with 10 Pixel boxes selected under 3.1.2 on page 40 results in calculation of the following example (Image 83).

LIFE CYCLE ASSESSMENT DATA SHEET

bene

Created on the basis of EN ISO 14025, EN ISO 14040, EN ISO 14044 and the applicable Product Category Rule of the International EPD® System UN CPC 3811, 3812 or 3814 — 17.08.2017

MODELS:	AD | FL | PG		
PRODUCTNAME:	**FRAME_S Board with 10 Pixel-Boxes**		
PRODUCT TYPE:	VARIOUS PRODUCTS		
DATA ORIGIN:	All data in this declaration are based on the results of the internal ecobalance of the Bene GmbH fiscal year 2015 The ecobalance data are coming from the Ecoinvent database (Version 3), other typical databases and EPD's from raw materials of our suppliers. The life cycle analysis are created under assistance of Denkstatt GmbH.		
MANUFACTURER:	Bene GmbH, 3340 Waidhofen/Ybbs, Austria		
CUSTOMER PROJECT SITE:	Default (Praha City) Distance to the customer project site: (on the road) 300 km (186,4 miles)		
ORIGINATOR / CREATOR:	Ing. Thomas Riegler, Master Of Science, Environmental Management		
SCOPING STUDY:	The life cycle analyse of this product enfolded the whole life cycle from extraction to disposal (cradle to grave) including the transportation from the supplier to the manufacturer and from the manufacturer to the customer.		
FUNCTIONAL UNIT:	The information of this life cycle analysis refer to manufacturing, using and the disposal of listed product.	**ANTICIPATED AVERAGE LIFE:**	10 years
DECOMPOSABILITY:	98,8% into seperate waste streams	**RECYCLABILITY:**	97,2% thanks to sortable / decomposable materials

	PRIMARY ENERGY CONSUMPTION			ECOBALANCE POTENTIALS					
	non renewable	renewable	total	Global Warming	Acidification	Photooxidation Creation	Nutrification	Ozone Depletion	Abiotic Resource Depletion
	PEB_{nr} kWh	PEB_{r} kWh	PEB kWh	GWP (TGP) kg	AP (VSP) g	POCP (POP) g	NP (EUP) g	ODP (OZP) g	ARD (ARV) g
RAW MATERIAL CRADLE TO GATE	3.202,7	2.086,8	5.289,4	248,5	1.265,2	96,6	395,8	0,1	2.505,1
PRODUCTION GATE TO GATE **PER UNIT**	20,854	6,137	-1,775	-4,662	608,043	399,956	208,086	0,049	3,040
TRANSPORTATION TO CUSTOMER ON THE ROAD	59,383	1,562	60,946	3,932	15,897	0,780	4,722	0,001	27,218
USAGE DURING THE ANTICIPATED AVERAGE LIFE	0,00	0,00	0,00	0,00	0,00	0,00	0,00	0,00	0,00
RECYCLING / DISPOSAL END OF LIFE	-1.533,57	-146,38	-1.679,95	-159,19	-641,91	-72,19	-142,28	-0,01	-864,34
TOTAL	**1.749,3**	**1.948,1**	**3.668,7**	**88,6**	**1.247,3**	**425,2**	**466,4**	**0,1**	**1.671,0**

SCOPING STUDY DETAILS:	Since it is not possible to issue the exact product-specific certification standards by using current production-data technology, the values has been calculated out of respective total production value from the last fiscal year. That means that the total value of production in a fiscal year has been divided by the volume of processed materials and multiplied by weight of the product.The underlying transportation routes from manufacturer to client correspond the real distances in Europe and they are determined by route planner software. The adopted transportation mean is a truck with two swap bodies. If the distance cannot be determined or transportation on the road is not possible, it's calculated with distance in bee line. For representative samples a default project site in Praha/Czech Republic is used for the calculation. During the usage time of this product and in case of intended use, no reparation is expected due to the solid product design and quality. If applicable the standby and moving energy consumption is considered during usage phase. The European standards have been considered for recycling and waste disposal processes (waste segregation to reusable materials and residual waste). Reusable materials are supplied to respective recycling process and residual waste is disposed in a waste incineration plant. The adopted average distance between end user and waste disposal company is 50 km.
DISCLAIMER:	The product category rule (PCR) this EPD is based on was not written to support comparative assertions. EPDs based on different PCRs or different calculation models may not be comparable. When attempting to compare EPDs or life cycle impacts of products from different companies, the user should be aware of the uncertainty in the final results due to and not limited to the practitioner's assumptions, the source of the data used in the study, and the specifics of the product modeled.

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Image 83 – Example of LCD sheet for Frame_S Board with 10 Pixel boxes

[61] The relevant corporate factor for production in a financial year is divided by the total mass of the material processed (results in factor/kg). This value has been multiplied by the mass of the product.

[62] e.g. raising and lowering the table top

[63] The Bene energy mix (composition of the power) in Waidhofen/Ybbs is assumed as the energy mix at the relevant customer site / project location is not known.

3.4. CONTRIBUTION TO BUILDING CERTIFICATIONS

Like the related market in products and services, the issue of building certification is also a complex one. Different standards and regulations according to which a built structure obtains a recognised certificate for quality criteria such as sustainability, health and energy efficiency apply in almost every country and region. Builders are able to show that a building meets the desired requirements related to energy efficiency and sustainability based on a certificate.

The established certificates include those awarded by the German Sustainable Building Council (Deutsche Gesellschaft für Nachhaltiges Bauen – DGNB), the American Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) and the British Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method (Breeam).

Yet there are many more assessment standards which we come across time and time again within projects (e.g.: Greenstar, SKA Rating, BCA Green Mark, HQE, Well Building Standard, Living Building Challenge, Al Safat).

Details on the relevant standards can be found on the associated website. Hyperlinks to these are provided with the relevant standard.

In the context of ecological building certification, furniture and dividing walls help to achieve a good result for certain standards. These types of certifications are becoming increasingly significant on an international scale.

Image 84 – Martin Henikl, Andreas Tatzreiter and Hans-Peter Wunsch at the PIXEL product presentation

The following items outline the different criteria and Bene's potential contribution to selected certification standards using the example selected of FRAME_S with 10 Pixel boxes.[64]

Criteria with a grey background are project-dependent and only relevant for the purposes of achieving a higher point score under certain circumstances.

[64] Not all of the criteria represent hard facts but are also dependent, for example, on good spatial planning with our products. Examples include natural light availability and quality views outside.

3.4.1. LEED

Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) is used as a standard almost all over the world. It is the standard that we currently come across most frequently in projects / tenders. LEED has been around since 1995 and is currently on the market in its 4th version. However, version 3 from 2009 is also still used very frequently.

There are different forms of LEED as there are in many of the other standards. The most significant for us are LEED-CI for commercial interiors and LEED-NC for new constructions and renovations

3.4.1.1. LEED 2009

https://www.usgbc.org/

	Criterion / Requirement	Points
MR 2.1	Construction waste ≥ 50%	- (1)
MR 2.2	Construction waste ≥ 75%	- (1)
MR 3	Recycled materials ≥ 30%	- (1)
MR 4.1	Percentage of recyclables ≥ 10%	1 of 1
MR 4.2	Percentage of recyclables ≥ 20%	1 of 1
MR 5.1	Regional production ≥ 20%	1 of 1
MR 5.2	Regional production ≥ 10%	1 of 1
MR 6	Rapidly renewable materials ≥ 5% or ≥ 2.5%	0 of 1
MR 7	Certified Wood ≥ 50% (FSC®)	1 of 1
IEQ 4.5	Low emitting materials	1 of 1
IEQ 8.1	Natural daylight incidence ≥ 75% (work stations with natural daylight)	- (1)
IEQ 8.2	Natural daylight incidence ≥ 90% (work stations with natural daylight)	- (1)
ID 1	Innovation and Design	- (1)

Table 14 – LEED 2009 criteria

3.4.1.2. LEED V4

https://www.usgbc.org/

	Criterion / Requirement	Points
MR	Life cycle impact reduction for interiors	- (4)
MR	Environmental declarations	1 of 1
MR	Procurement of raw materials	1 of 1
MR	Component materials (substances included)	0 of 1
EQ	Low emitting materials	- (3)
EQ	Natural light availability	- (3)
EQ	Quality views	- (1)
EQ	Acoustics	- (2)

Table 15 – LEED V4 criteria

3.4.2. BREEAM

http://www.breeam.com/

The Building Research Environmental Assessment Method (BREEAM) is a British standard that was launched in 1990. The most crucial standard for us is BREEAM:Offices[65]

	Criterion / Requirement	Points
Mat 5	Responsible sourcing of materials (interior walls)	0 of 3
Mat 5	Responsible sourcing of materials (doors and furniture)	0 of 2
Hea 9	Volatile Organic Compounds (VOC)	1 of 1
Hea 13	Sound insulation	- (1)

Table 16 – BREEAM criteria

[65] BREEAM OFFICES 2008; SD 5055; ISSUE 4.1

3.4.3. DGNB

http://www.dgnb.de/de/

The DGNB seal of approval was established by the German Sustainable Building Council (DGNB) in 2008. Unlike all other standards, it is not based on a traditional points system and is instead based on a complex assessment model for buildings. Those criteria pursuant to the DGNB Manual for Sustainable Building Version 2012 (new office and administrative buildings) to which Bene products could contribute a higher assessment score are enclosed.

	Criterion / Requirement
08	Other impact on the global environment - no wood from tropical, subtropical or boreal forests
08	Other impact on the global environment - PEFC / FSC certified wood >20%
08	Other impact on the global environment - PEFC / FSC certified wood >50%
20	Healthy building interiors – volatile organic compounds (VOC)
28	Convertibility – spatial structure
34	Sound insulation between workspaces and individual work areas
42	Ease of deconstruction, recycling and disassembly – technical building equipment
42	Ease of deconstruction, recycling and disassembly – non-load-bearing shell construction

Table 17 – DGNB Criteria (German Sustainable Building Council)

3.4.4. GREENSTAR

http://new.gbca.org.au/

Greenstar was established in 2002 by GBCA (Green Building Council of Australia). There are three standards that are significant for office furniture (Office Interiors, Office Design and Office as Built), with the Office Interiors Standard used for the following list.

	Criterion / Requirement	Points
Mat-1	Workstations	6 of 7
Mat-3	Walls and partition walls	0 (5)
Mat-4	Seating	0 (3)
Mat-5	Tables	0 (1)
Mat-6	Cabinets	0 (1)
Mat-7	Carpentry (network partners)	0 (1)
Mat-10	Minimum use of PVC	- (2)
Mat-11	Wood	2 of 2
IEQ-3	Natural light availability	- (3)
IEQ-7	Quality views	- (2)
IEQ-10	Indoor noise level	- (1)
IEQ-11	Volatile Organic Compounds (VOC)	6 of 6
IEQ-12	Minimum use of formaldehyde	1 of 2

Table 18 – Greenstar criteria

3.4.5. BCA GREEN MARK

https://www.bca.gov.sg/GreenMark/green_mark_buildings.html

The BCA Green Mark was launched in 2005 by the Singapore Building & Construction Authority.

	Criterion / Requirement	Points
3-1	Sustainable office design	- (3)
3-2	Sustainable choice of materials	2 of 2
4-2	Interior air quality	4 of 4
4-5	Sound insulation	- (2)
5-1	Green features and innovations	- (5)

Table 19 – BCA Green Mark criteria

Image 85 – Leopold Krendl, Richard Schwein and Franz Mayrhofer in the production development workshop

Image 86 – Gernot Theuermann (Vienna sales team)

INFO BOX

Bene products, office furniture and walls cannot be certified in terms of LEED or other building certification standards!

This is purely an indication of how our products could be assessed in terms of the standards criteria.

Image 87 – Manfred Köppl (table assembly team)

Image 88 – Markus Köberl (Vienna sales team)

3.4.6. SKA RATING

http://www.rics.org/uk/knowledge/ska-rating-/

The SKA Rating was launched in 2005. Unlike LEED and BREEAM, it does not focus on the entire building and instead involves a pure assessment of the fittings and furnishings. The rating is based on 99 different criteria. Bene products can aid in achieving a better rating in thirteen of the criteria.

	Criterion	Requirement	
D20	Wood	100% Chain of Custody (certified)	✓
D29	Sound insulation	-	-
D63	Low-VOC coatings	Ecolabel certification (e.g. Blue Angel)	✓
M05	Hardwood	100% Chain of Custody (certified)	✓
M06	Joinery	100% Chain of Custody (certified) and low-VOC adhesives	-
M08	Partition walls	Percentage of recycling material >90% and percentage of recyclable material 100% or environmental declaration	-
M09	Coated partition walls	Environmental declaration	✓
M19	Workstations and tables	Percentage of recycling material >90% and percentage of recyclable material 100% or environmental declaration or FISP certified company	-
M20	Chairs	Percentage of recycling material >40% and percentage of recyclable material 90% or environmental declaration or FISP certified company	-
M21	Storage furniture	Percentage of recycling material >40% and percentage of recyclable material 90% or environmental declaration or FISP certified company	✓
M22	Other loose furniture items	Percentage of recycling material >40% and percentage of recyclable material 90% or environmental declaration or FISP certified company	✓

Table 20 – SKA Criteria – Offices 1.2

Image 90 – Thomas Schuller (materials receiving team)

Image 91 – Erwin Bachner (storage furniture assembly team)

Image 89 – Example of BCD sheet for Frame_S Board with 10 Pixel boxes

Image 92 – Imke Fratzke and Marija Sollerer (Bene Vienna)

Image 93 – Daniela Atschreiter (Corporate Finance and Group Treasury)

Image 95 – Manuel Haas (Manager, Procurement), Anna Matzenberger and Bettina Schönegger (OEM and Trading Goods Management team)

Image 94 – Roland Hirtenlehner and Michael Pils (Sales Data team)

3.4.7. ÖGNB (TQB RATING)

https://www.oegnb.net/

The Austrian Society for Sustainable Building (ÖGNB) was established in January 2009 upon the initiative of independent institutions involved in sustainable building in Austria. The TQB Tool is used for ratings.

The example selected does not score any points as this rating tool only covers walls and dividing walls.

	Criterion / Requirement	Points
B.1.4	Flexibility and durability – basic structure contains subsystems that are easy to exchange (for non-load-bearing elements)	- (3)
D.2.2	Indoor air quality – low-emission construction materials for interiors – wood-based materials	- (7)
D.3.2	Soundproofing – room acoustics	- (15)
D.3.3	Soundproofing – airborne sound insulation in partition elements between functional units	- (15)
D.4.3	Sun and glare shielding	- (10)
E.2.1	Regional content, recycled content, products with environmental certification – use of regional products	- (20)
E.2.3	Regional content, recycled content, products with environmental certification – environmentally certified products used in interior / partition walls	- (8)

Table 21 – TQB Tool criteria

3.4.8. WELL BUILDING STANDARD

https://www.wellcertified.com/

	Criterion / Requirement	Points
01	Interior air quality: Formaldehyde, VOC, CO, $PM_{2.5}$, PM_{10}, ozone, radon	✓
04	VOC reduction: Furniture for	✓
11	Basic materials safety: Asbestos, lead and mercury, lead, asbestos and polychlorinated biphenyls	✓
25	Reduction of toxic materials: Perfluorinated compounds, flame retardants, phthalates, urea-formaldehydes	✓
26	Extended materials safety:	✓
28	Cleanable work environment: Surfaces and flexible workstations	✓
59	Surface properties: Surface reflection	✓
71	Active furnishings: Primarily high tables	-
73	Ergonomics: height adjustable tables, flexible seating	-
80	Noise-reducing wall surfaces	-
81	Sound barriers	-
87	Attractiveness and design	-
89	Adaptable spaces	-
97	Transparency about materials Environmental declarations	✓

Table 22 – Well Building Standard criteria

3.4.9. LIVING BUILDING CHALLENGE

https://living-future.org/lbc/

3.4.10. GREEN GLOBES

http://www.greenglobes.com/home.asp

Dozens of building assessment and certification standards have now become established on the market. Office furniture and similar products are not covered in many of these. So far, Bene has only dealt with these in the context of contract tenders and projects.

3.5. PRODUCT INNOVATION AND DESIGN

From the specifications stage through to series production, ecological requirements are an important factor in the development process. This includes choosing environmentally sound materials, such as PEFC™ or FSC® certified timbers from sustainably managed forests, using recycled materials or increasing our use of renewable raw materials. In order to guarantee high recyclability standard for our products, we avoid composites as much as possible and we are developing construction methods that allow for disassembly.

Labelling of materials, their ability to be repaired, and similar length of service life for the components used, are other important requirements for product design. The scope for disassembly and recycling at the end of the product life are also important criteria.

INFO BOX

Bene furnished the world's first ever 3D office in Dubai.

The world's first ever office building produced using a 3D printing process was opened in early 2016 in Dubai. Bene was responsible for the interior design and furnishing of the "Office of the Future". On invitation from the Dubai government, Bene equipped the building with innovative furnishings and a future-oriented innovation space, the Bene IDEA LAB.

3.5.1. RESEARCH

Continuous development and optimisation are part of the company culture at Bene. The development of expertise is a key driver of our business. Know-how creates the conditions for organic growth and at the same time is the basis for market success. At Bene, questions regarding the office trends and developments of tomorrow are asked and analysed throughout all areas of the company and are discussed and answered in quarterly meetings.

It is primarily the senior staff from the areas of research and design, marketing, product management, technology and sales who survey important market developments. This includes office design, office concepts, office furnishing, corporate culture and other influences that shape the working environment.

In this context we are particularly keen to pass on the knowledge we have garnered, not only to our customers and partners, but also very specifically to all employees.

Image 98 – Martin Stauch tests VR-glasses for virtual walk-throughs of office designs

3.5.1.1. BENE RESEARCH BLOG AND NOTABENE

The articles that appear once a fortnight in the internally published Bene Research Blog serve to keep Bene staff up to date on developments in the organisation of work, design, technology and in business and society more generally. A forum function within the blog also enables colleagues to give their own input, raise questions and to exchange ideas.

In autumn 2017 the next edition of our quarterly report "Notabene" will appear, focusing on a particular theme. While the research blog presents selective insights into trends and the competition, Notabene looks ahead to the future, examining one issue in depth that will affect the working environment and in the long-term demand adaptation in our product ranges.

3.5.1.2. BENE FUTURE REPORT: THE FUTURE OF WORK

The Bene Future Report explores two topics in detail that are of vital importance and much discussed in the business world: leadership; and digitalisation.

What do these keywords really mean for the working environment of the future? How do we respond to the challenges of digitalisation, how will it change our management culture, and what will work be like in five, ten, twenty and thirty years?

These were some of the questions explored in the course of about 25 interviews with experts from commerce and academia, and three round table discussions, in Berlin, London and Vienna[66], with experts from every corner of the world.

Image 97 – Round table discussion in Vienna

The Bene Future Report will be published for the wider public for the first time at the end of September 2017, as part of "Darwin's Circle", the first digital conference in Vienna where prestigious guests from universities and well-known companies such as Google, Facebook, Amazon, IBM, Alibaba Group, Uber and others will discuss current technological challenges. Afterward the conference, the Future Report will be made available to all our customers and partners.

Image 96 – Bene Future Report

[66] Image 97: In the Idea Lab in Vienna, with Markus Petzl (Rebranding), Michael Bartz (Prof. for the New World of Work at IMC Krems), Julia Bock-Schappelwein (WIFO – Austrian Institute of Economic Research), Axel Bachmeier (Head of HR, Erste Group IT), Dietmar Dahmen (Innovation consultant, futurologist, international keynote speaker, Chief Innovation Officer at exc.io), Jeremy Myerson (WORKTECH Academy, Professor at the Royal College of Art, holder of the Helen Hamlyn Chair of Design, Director of the WORKTECH Academy), Petra Hauser (Founder, Exponential Business Hub; Ambassador of Singularity University), Martin Pongratz (CBRE, Head of Workplace Strategy CEE), Martina Schöggl (University of Applied Arts, Vienna; assistant curator for the Vienna Biennale 2017 on the theme "How will we work").

WE HAVE BEEN SETTING TRENDS IN THE OFFICE FOR A LONG TIME NOW

INTERVIEW WITH MICHAEL FRIED (MANAGING DIRECTOR FOR SALES, MARKETING AND INNOVATION)

WHAT DOES SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC ACTIVITY MEAN TO YOU?

Sustainable thinking and action have a long tradition at Bene – from product and concept development to sales and production at the regional location in Waidhofen/ Ybbs. As an internationally active company, Bene is responsible to a large number of stakeholders. The company works in harmony with the environment, thereby protecting the interests of the next generation.

Bene strives to maintain a responsible balance between the environment and economics. Constant improvement in the quality of our processes, products and services remains an ongoing goal. Bene has ambitious goals for conserving resources and places value in improving energy efficiency, increasing recovery and recyclability, and minimising emissions and waste.

HOW DOES BENE INSPIRE AND EXCITE POTENTIAL CUSTOMERS ABOUT SUSTAINABLE PRODUCTS/SOLUTIONS?

Sustainable concepts, products and services have been integral to our trendsetting office designs for many decades, and so actually shaping the modern work environment. Bene combines a 225-year tradition of quality with innovation, award-winning design and sustainable product solutions. Together with our clients and partners all over the world, we develop office solutions that make the work processes, culture, and identity of a company a tangible reality. Our success in this reaches from Vienna, Berlin and London across the world to Dubai and Sydney.

WHAT IS YOUR FAVOURITE BENE PRODUCT, AND WHY?

One of my favourites is the Bay Chair, because it is so unique in form and style, as well as to the touch. This swivelling office chair stands for individuality and comfort, and stands out distinctively from other comparable products. Another is the Idea Wall. This is the heart of the Bene Idea Lab. It's an interactive, digital media wall, that does more than just facilitate creative working practices – it actually promotes this: up to seven people can work on it at the same time.

WHY DO YOU WORK FOR BENE? WHAT DO YOU FIND EXCITING ABOUT BENE?

I love working at the interface of this 225-year tradition of quality on the one hand, and the constant innovation and award-winning design on the other. That's a big part of the attraction for me. Then there's the strong connection between design and architecture, between form and function, which is a major component of Bene's company and product philosophy: working with the fantastic team at Bene gives me the chance to make an active contribution to the nature of our modern working environment.

3.5.2. PRODUCT INNOVATIONS

We particularly value our close cooperation with external expert bodies such as the Royal College of Art, Zukunftsinstitut (Institute of the Future) and various design agencies.

Image 103 – Product innovation in the 1950's

This external perspective augments the pool of ideas that secures the future of Bene as an innovative company and increases competitiveness. Products resulting from our wide-ranging work in research and development include the Bene IDEA LAB and our latest innovation, PIXEL.

Image 104 – Side event at Orgatec 2016 in Cologne

3.5.2.1. BENE'S IDEA LAB

The IDEA LAB opened in 2015 in the Bene flagship store in Vienna, and in 2017 was relocated to an even more attractive location. Renting out the IDEA LAB to customers enables Bene to offer a modern creative space for meetings, workshops and presentations, as an extension of our business model.

The IDEA LAB extends across two levels with a total of 150 m², offering plenty of room for several groups of up to 50 people to work simultaneously. The redesign has extended the space available to users of the IDEA LAB, and included a complete update of the furnishings.

Image 99 – Bene Idea Lab in Vienna

The latest addition is Bene's new PIXEL range, launched in spring 2017, which allows practically any conceivable format to be set up in a few simple moves, enabling maximum variety for event programming.

Image 100 – Inside the Bene Idea Lab in Vienna

At the heart of the space is the multimedia Bene IDEA WALL, where the findings of parallel small group activities can be collated and developed further. This interactive digital four-metre-wide media wall allows up to seven people to work on it simultaneously, projecting digitised content to a large screen which enables everyone to see it all together.

Elaborate documentation on flip charts and post-it walls is no longer necessary, as all the findings are saved directly in digital form and are instantly available for further editing, and for export in pdf format. Bene has an IDEA LAB in Munich that is available for booking.

3.5.2.2. PIXEL – BUILD YOUR IDEAS

PIXEL, Bene's latest innovation, was launched in spring 2017. PIXEL may just look like a box, but it's so much more than that. PIXEL is a table, a bench, a stool, a platform or all of these things at once. PIXEL is a flexible building block that creates possibilities for a new kind of team work.

Image 101 – Pixel by Bene at the "Salone del Mobile" design show in Milan

This modular furniture allows users to modify it themselves in just a few simple moves, creating a completely new culture for all kinds of meetings and get-togethers. PIXEL consists of three main elements: the 36x36 cm PIXEL Box, PIXEL Top and the PIXEL Pad. The square box made of pine plywood can be used individually or in stacks. Convenient handles make it easy to carry. Folded over, they form a lateral connection between two boxes.

PIXEL's charm lies in its workshop aesthetic, which turns idea labs, project spaces and team areas into start-up zones. Free thinking, great ideas and successful business models are created wherever PIXEL is.

Image 102 – Pixel by Bene at the "Salone del Mobile" design show in Milan

PIXEL was the star attraction at Bene's exhibition stand this year at the Salone del Mobile, the largest and most important design show in Milan; it was also the first time that we have taken a stand of our own.

INFO BOX

Sustainable and innovative product design has enabled Bene to establish an enduring market position for many products. The Kizz and Bug seating ranges, for example, as well as the executive furniture classic AL, were introduced to the market in 1996 and have remained ever since. In 1997 this was followed by the XT side table and folding table, the M_COM in 2001, and in 2002 the K2 cabinet range and Coffice. Our KX and CG furniture ranges, the RG and RF wall systems and the Rondo, Mezzo, Dexter and Filo chairs have all been on the market for over ten years too.

3.5.3. DESIGN AWARDS

Several Bene products were either awarded or nominated for internationally recognised design awards in recent years:

3.5.3.1. FRAME_S

Design: Christian Horner

The new workplace programme combines workspace and team space. FRAME_S is an intelligent system made of frames and storage elements that can be merged with Bene workplace desks (T-Workstation) to form well-organised workstations.

Iconic Award Winner 2017
http://www.iconic-architecture.com/iconic-awards-interior-innovation.html

Image 105 – FRAME_S

3.5.3.2. NOOXS THINK TANK

Design: PearsonLloyd

The homey mini-rooms in four sizes offer a simple building technology solution for setting up acoustically screened spaces for temporary use.

German Design Award Winner 2017
http://www.german-design-award.com/

Image 106 – NOOXS Think Tank

Image 109 – German Design Award presentations

3.5.3.3. PIXEL

Design: Christian Horner
Concept: Didi Lenz

PIXEL may just look like a box, but it's much more than that: it's a table, a bench, a platform or all of these things at once. PIXEL is a flexible building block that offers endless possibilities for individual space configurations for different team activities.

Focus Open Winner Gold 2017
http://design-center.de/de/focus-open-66.html

Image 107 – Pixel

3.5.3.4. SETTLE

Design: PearsonLloyd

With SETTLE, the London design studio PearsonLloyd created a concept for Bene that allows teamwork and relaxation to be combined in an ideal way.

IF Design 2017
http://ifworlddesignguide.com/
German Design Award 2017 - Special Mention (Silver)
http://www.german-design-award.com/

Image 108 – Settle

Image 110 – IF Design Award presentations

4. SUPPLY CHAIN, PRODUCTION & LOGISTICS

The location of the production site in Austria places Bene in the heart of Europe. Thus Bene is linked to numerous European suppliers.

4.1. SUPPLY CHAIN

4.1.1. PURCHASING POLICY

Our policy[1] applies to the entire supply chain. We expect our suppliers to adhere to this policy and to require their own suppliers to adhere to this policy in their procurement chain.

Bene's suppliers[2] and contractors (service providers) are integral components of Bene's success. Every day, Bene and its suppliers take decisions that influence the degree to which Bene can deliver high-quality products, at competitive prices, in a timely fashion, to its customers.

Together with the guidelines laid out below, this policy documents the basic principles, practices, and expectations for the development and cultivation of a business relationship with Bene. Bene operates within the applicable legal and customary requirements and standards, and is committed to working together with suppliers who share our company's dedication to doing business in a legal and ethical way. We view our commitment not just as our commercial responsibility, but also as an opportunity to improve living conditions for people around the world. Beyond our own business activities, we also expect this attitude from our suppliers and partners.

INFO BOX

Around 60 per cent of our suppliers are based in Austria and a further 25 per cent in Germany. 98 per cent of all suppliers are based in Europe.

Bene is aware of cultural differences and the challenges presented by the design and implementation of these basic principles worldwide.

Bene remains convinced however that these basic principles are universal in character; the company understands, however, that the methods for meeting these expectations can be different. Such methods must however comply with the laws, values, and cultural expectations of different societies around the globe.

If suppliers have questions, they should approach a Bene procurement representative.

You can also contact Bene procurement for questions related to whether certain processes or contracts are allowed. Procurement employees can offer an overview and advice about the relevant Bene guidelines.

We require our suppliers and contractors to comply with the applicable statutory provisions and regulations in the relevant country of origin and the International Charter of Human Rights.
The following codes also serve as a basis for this policy:

- The ten principles of the UN Global Compact (see "The ten principles")[3]
- Labour standards of the International Labour Organization (ILO)[4]
- ILO Code of Practice on safety and health

Image 113 – The Bene Salzburg team at Arper headquarters in Treviso, Italy

Bene reserves the right to review suppliers' compliance with these guidelines and to take action in the event of any deviation. Bene procurement is responsible for the management of supplier and service provider relationships. Correspondence and questions regarding materials or services should be directed to the relevant person in procurement.

Bene is grateful for the contribution that suppliers make to the company's success and hopes to continue cultivating business relationships with suppliers that are equally satisfactory for both parties.

4.1.2. REGIONAL SUPPLIERS

The location of the production site in Austria places Bene in the heart of Europe. Thus Bene is linked to numerous European suppliers. Being international is also an important aspect in this context. Nevertheless, many suppliers are located close to the production site. This is an important economic regional impetus. In also helps Bene cut transport costs.

Bene furniture contributes to the sustainability of office buildings. The LEED sustainability certification for instance assesses what proportion of the materials used in a building come from a radius of 500 miles around it.

Image 111 – 500 mile radius and 500 km radius around the Bene headquarters in Waidhofen/Ybbs

More than 90 per cent of our overall purchasing comes from suppliers located within a 500 mile-radius[5] from Waidhofen/Ybbs. Around 80 per cent of this purchasing volume comes from suppliers within 500 kilometres of Waidhofen/Ybbs.

Image 112 – Klaus Höritzauer in the Bene test laboratory

[1] Available for download from www.bene.com (http://bene.com/pics/misc/DB-LPZ-8-DE.pdf)

[2] Suppliers are vendors, service providers, or contractors of any kind.

[3] http://www.unglobalcompact.at or http://www.unglobalcompact.com

[4] http://www.ilo.org/global/lang--en/index.htm

[5] 1 mile is equal to 1.609km; 500 miles are thus 804.5km, and 500 km are 310.7 miles.

4.1.3. ECO-SOCIAL MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS FOR SUPPLIERS[6]

Almost all Bene products are from Europe, where respect for human rights is legally secured. The risk of child or forced labour is thus excluded. Basic labour laws are guaranteed. Additionally, suppliers are evaluated according to whether or not they use quality and environmental management systems. We prefer to use suppliers with a certified environmental management system.

Image 114 – Silvia Behr (room walls team)

Different suppliers are checked each time in our ongoing supplier audits. This showed potential for improvements, which led to a concrete plan of measures. We work with our suppliers to implement this plan.

Image 115 – Heinz Teurezbacher (production planning team)

4.1.4. OEM SUPPLIERS

Many products in the Bene PARCS and Docklands family, and the majority of our chairs, are not produced at Waidhofen/Ybbs, but come from OEM suppliers[7]. These suppliers manufacture in Austria, Germany or Poland.

Image 116 – Karl Käferbäck (quality inspector for seating products)

To ensure that the quality of these products matches the high standards of those from Waidhofen/Ybbs, these suppliers are checked/audited on a regular basis.

Image 117 – Thomas Prack (receiving team for products from trade partners)

Image 118 – Fritz Köttl (Team Leader, product engineering) and Claus Scholler (Manager, product management)

4.1.5. MATERIAL INPUT TOTALS

The following tables and graphics present an overview of the material input totals at our Waidhofen/Ybbs site. Raw materials for products from our OEM suppliers (e.g. PARCS or Seating) are not included in this analysis.

Chart 11 – Material input structure (main material) in 1,000 tonnes

This overview also includes a large walling contract in 2014, which resulted in higher than normal consumption of veneers and glass.

Chart 12 – Quantities of other input materials in tonnes

[6] Bene purchasing conditions are available for download from www.bene.com (http://bene.com/pics/misc/DB-BEP-17-DE.pdf)

[7] OEM = Original Equipment Manufacturer

4.2. PRODUCTION

Our company policies are committed to the production of environmentally friendly products and to the economic use of resources.

Image 120 – Christian Eszletzbichler (Coach, wall production section)

Environmental protection is more than just compliance with laws. We consider environmental protection an opportunity to design the market and to create added-value.

At our only production site in Waidhofen/Ybbs, we carry out the following production steps:

Receipt of material	Delivery of raw and purchased material (e.g. chipboards, solid wood, profiles and frame parts).
Cutting	Cutting of solid wood, melamine chipboards and raw chipboards, as well as metal and synthetic profiles. The majority of metal parts is already mechanically treated and coated when purchased. Aluminium and steel profiles are finished by machine.
Veneering	The veneer sheets are selected, put together and glued with the raw chipboard.
Treatment of edges	The boards have wooden or synthetic edges.
Sanding	Veneered boards are sanded before being varnished.
Drilling/milling	During this process, the boards are given their final form and dimension (e.g. curves, blanks). In addition, holes are drilled for joints and fittings.
Varnishing	Final finishing of surfaces through stains and varnishes. For the final finishing process we use almost exclusively water-based varnishes and stains (> 98 per cent).
Coating	Coating of pinnable and acoustically effective materials with different fabrics.
Provision of components	Arrangement of different furniture components in factory trolleys for further production steps.
Assembling	Assembling, final quality check and packaging of the furniture.
Packaging / Loading	Composition of furniture from different segments according to the order. Loading of the components according to the delivery sequence. Depending on the requirement, Bene delivers by ship, using a freight forwarder or with our own vehicle fleet.

Table 23 – Production processes

As a manufacturing company in the furniture industry, we take responsibility for our impact on the environment. Energy consumption and emissions are fundamental issues here, as well as the following additional factors:

- **Cutting** (chapter 4.2.2 on page 62)
- **Coating** (chapter 4.2.3 on page 64)
- **Product packaging** (chapter 4.2.8 on page 66)

Image 119 – Bene headquarters in Waidhofen/Ybbs

4.2.1. ENERGY CONSUMPTION

4.2.1.1. ELECTRICITY

After the environmental impact of purchased materials, energy consumption is the most important factor in our operational life cycle assessment. In the last few years, this has been falling steadily. In the period covered by the previous sustainability report in 2011, it reached around 7 million kWh, while in 2016 it was 5.4 million kWh.

Bene's energy consumption is directly influenced by the amount of demanded and manufactured goods. This explains the significant fall in our electricity consumption.

INFO BOX

Since 2010, Bene has used an electricity mix which excludes electricity generated by nuclear power.

Bene Austria is nuclear-free!

In 2016 our electricity mix consisted of around 50% renewable energy (e.g. 35% hydropower) and 50% fossil fuels (natural gas).

Chart 13 – Electricity consumption in GWh compared with emissions in 1,000 tonnes of CO_2e

Chart 13 shows the emissions resulting from our consumption of electricity. The low emission levels of 2014 and 2015 can be attributed to a different electricity mix, with around 85% renewable energy.

We align our customised solutions towards the needs and identities of our national and international customers as well as market requirements.

(EXTRACT FROM CORPORATE PRINCIPLES)

In addition to electricity consumption of around 5.4 GWh at our Waidhofen/Ybbs site, we also measure usage at the Bene retail branches and service centres in Austria (7 of each). This has remained steady in recent years at around 0.4 GWh.

Electricity consumption at the Waidhofen/Ybbs site consists of around 50% by machinery (including base load), 20% lighting, 10% air conditioning, 10% IT equipment and 10% compressed air and other consumption.

Image 122 – Hubert Teufel and Friedrich Freundl with the KFR machine

A key part of our electricity consumption is producing compressed air. In 2016, four compressors at the Kreilhof site produced a total of 3.8 million m^3 of compressed air for use in pneumatic machinery, lifting platforms, screwdrivers and tackers. This comprises around 7% of our total electricity consumption.

After a new air compressor was installed in 2011, the priority for maintenance and production has been to avoid the loss of compressed air through leakages or mishandling during cleaning.

In order to reduce the amount of electricity used for lighting, a fully automated lighting control system was installed in the roof of the production hall in 2000. The system's daylight measuring device reads the current light values and centrally controls the lighting levels in the production hall. This enables dimming of the main hall lighting and individual workplace lights, depending on daylight levels.

Image 121 – Lighting in the production hall, building section 2001.

Even after the installation of this system, Bene recognised that further savings could still be made on lighting in the production hall. We are currently testing full transition to LED technology in the production hall.

The large number of lights involved – currently over 4,000 fittings with over 6,500 light tubes – means this is a very costly and time-consuming process.[8] However, new, more computer-intensive systems, additional buildings and more IT equipment consume more power. Bene strives consistently to reduce consumption.

[8] See eMission Zero – Developing a catalogue of measures to reduce CO_{2e} and achieve CO_{2e} neutrality for the Bene GmbH production site in Waidhofen an der Ybbs by 2020.

4.2.1.2. HEATING

Bene needs heat for offices and for the production site. The amount of energy we use for heating is almost entirely dependent on external temperatures. Hot summers and more particularly, long, cold winters increase the amount of energy we use for heating. This means the climatic conditions are clearly reflected in our consumption levels.

At Bene we use two kinds of fuel: conventional heating oil and waste material from our production site (wood chips, saw dust and off-cuts). One oil-fired boiler and one biomass boiler are used to heat the production areas and offices in Waidhofen/Ybbs. When the biomass boiler is used to maximum capacity, it covers about 90 % of the total heat energy requirement. This saves Bene approximately 1,000,000 litres of heating oil every year and 3,000 tonnes of CO_2 emissions.

Emissions from the heating systems are strictly monitored. Regular checking ensures that they always operate within the permitted limits.

The entire air-conditioning system in the new office building uses a recently-installed absorption cooler. This means that wood chips are being used even more efficiently. The absorption cooler transforms the heat produced by woodchip combustion into cooling energy that is used to cool the office spaces.

Furthermore, the installation of a 100,000 litre thermal water storage system increases the availability of heating energy via the biomass system in order to better deal with peak cold periods in winter. This additional heating energy requirement was previously always covered with extra light heating oil.

Chart 14 – Heat energy requirements in GWh

Heating for the Bene premises at Waidhofen/Ybbs in 2016 used around 12 GWh of energy (see Chart 14). Chart 15 shows the resulting CO_{2e} emissions.

Chart 15 – Emissions in tonnes of CO_2e

The heating system in Waidhofen/Ybbs is fitted with exhaust gas cleaning systems that dramatically reduce the pollutant content in exhaust gasses. The emission thresholds are observed at all times with continual monitoring and regular servicing of the system by maintenance personnel.

Image 123 – Edge profiling machine

In addition, the emissions of the 1.7 MW biological boiler plant are checked every four years by a state-accredited monitoring institute.

All of the thresholds specified in the licensing notice (dust concentration, carbon monoxide (CO), nitrogen oxide (NOx) as well as organic carbon (org. C)) are observed.

4.2.2. CUTTING (PROCESSING OF WOOD AND METAL)

4.2.2.1. WOOD PANEL CUTTING

To preserve resources and for optimal use of residual boards, cuts from whole boards (e.g. raw chipboard, melamine chipboard, MDF or compact board) are optimised with computer-aided processes ("cut optimisation").

Despite this optimisation of cutting plans, the amount of offcuts produced still varies according to the finish and type of the board panel elements required, as well as the batch volume. For single colour boards (e.g. melamine white) less waste is produced than for boards with a wood finish (e.g. melamine maple) and for larger batch sizes in the same finish there is less waste than for single items.

Special shapes such as round or boat-shaped tabletops naturally produce more waste board than rectangular forms.

As a result, the proportion of waste ranges from 20% to 40% depending on the tabletop type: this is therefore something we monitor constantly.

50% of offcuts are returned to the chipboard manufacturer and fed back into their production process. The remaining 50% are used as fuel for Bene's heat recovery system (see also chapter 4.2.1.2).

4.2.2.2. METALWORKING

The majority of metal parts is already mechanically treated and coated when purchased. Aluminium and steel profiles are only machine finished (e.g. cutting, drilling and milling) at the Bene production facility.

Cuttings optimisation takes place here too: Production planning includes defining in advance what the ideal length is for metal profile materials, to ensure minimum wastage during production.

Image 124 – Metals processing centre

Precise separation of the shavings and offcuts allows external recycling of scrap metal.

BENE IS STILL THE MOST INNOVATIVE COMPANY IN THIS SECTOR

INTERVIEW WITH JOSEF RIESINGER (PRODUCTION MANAGER FOR BENE)

HOW DO SUSTAINABILITY ISSUES AFFECT BENE'S PRODUCTION PROCESS?

The key obstacle for companies trying to improve sustainability is increasingly the constant drive for more. As I see it, one kind of sustainability is to invest earnings in company renewal, which then also secures the future for our production sites.

IS IT STILL POSSIBLE FOR ECOLOGICALLY RESPONSIBLE PRODUCTION TO ALSO BE COMMERCIALLY COMPETITIVE?

Awareness of our ecological responsibilities has to be emphasised throughout the whole company, and then also seen by Bene customers as a USP. That's the only way sustainability can be commercially viable.

CAN SUSTAINABILITY BE IMPROVED BY USING MORE MODERN PRODUCTION TECHNOLOGY?

Well, modern production facilities are definitely less wasteful of resources (fewer additives, high-performance motors, more effective control of wood shavings – meaning less energy is spent on extraction, less waste).

As well as the actual machinery, the production strategy also makes a significant difference: "just in time" manufacturing reduces warehousing and overstocks, and the "zero defect" principle means fewer resources are used.

WHY DO YOU WORK FOR BENE? WHAT DO YOU FIND EXCITING ABOUT BENE?

Bene is still the most innovative company in the sector, and we have a certain amount of freedom in creating both the product and the processes. My role is a great combination of team management and manufacturing, and includes an element of "research". What I value the most is working with highly talented people in a close-knit team.

When people feel it's worth their while to compete for projects and work hard for them, that inspires an amazing amount of energy and innovative strength. That is what makes the Bene team as unbeatable as ever – and I'm part of that team.

4.2.3. VARNISHING (SURFACE FINISHING)

We use predominantly wood for the manufacturing of our products. This means that for veneered components varnish must be applied as a surface finish during the production process. We only use UV-hardening water-based varnishes[9], water-soluble acrylic coloured varnishes and water-based stains. We switched to this new method in 1998.

This has reduced our use of solvents by around 95 percent (approx. 15 tonnes) per year, as well as significantly improving the quality of the surface finish.

Low-atomised spray pistols and the optimum preparation of varnish ensure an even surface coverage and prevent varnish dust. After coating, the varnish is put in a vertical drier and hardened using UV equipment (see also chapter „3.1.6. Product emissions“ on page 42).

Image 126 – SEPAS extraction system

The spray gun is equipped with a varnish recovery unit. Any excess varnish that falls beyond the edges onto the conveyor belt is removed using a ring blade and prepared for re-use at the cleaning and filter stations. Bene achieves a recovered utilisation rate of more than 95 per cent.

Emissions from the varnishing systems are monitored every three years by a state-accredited monitoring institute.

A solvent management plan is prepared annually for the varnishing systems in accordance with VOC regulations under Federal Law Gazette II no. 301/2002 (EU Directive 1999/13) and submitted to the local authorities in Waidhofen.

4.2.4. ADHESIVES

Bene uses a variety of different adhesives. The following are used in significant quantities:

Glues	These are used to glue the veneer sheets to the desired backing material (e.g. chipboards). Bene uses exclusively Class E1 urea-based glues which are low in formaldehyde.
Hot-melt adhesive	Bene uses hot-melt adhesives to glue synthetic borders to backing material.
Adhesive tapes	Because of their quick and simple application, Bene uses mainly double-sided adhesive tapes for a wide range of wall systems (e.g. for bonding glass with aluminium) and for the third level (e.g. bonding chipboard with soft fibre). Single-sided adhesive tapes are used for product packaging and labelling.

Table 24 – Adhesives

Occasionally, Bene also uses other adhesives (e.g. two-component adhesive or super glue).

4.2.5. EMISSIONS

Apart from the emissions stated above, resulting from the production process (heating and finishing plants) and the emissions from the upstream chains of purchased materials (see chapter „4.6. Corporate life cycle balance sheet“ on page 71), there are no further significant emissions to record other than the dust, noise and waste heat listed below.

4.2.5.1. WOOD DUST

The wood industry is confronted with ever-increasing demands for wood chip extraction. Individual production steps require a large number of different machines and systems.

In conventional extraction systems with several extraction groups, all ventilators generally run at the same time, even if only one part of the machinery is in operation. This leads to unnecessary power consumption.

Image 125 – Chip silo at the site Waidhofen/Ybbs

Bene therefore exclusively relies on energy-saving extraction and filter systems. Both the long-standing, patented SEPAS[10] extraction system and the RIPPERT system, installed in 2008, form the basis of our extraction methods. Both large-scale systems regulate extractor performance independently, according to production load, and adjust air volume automatically to real-time requirements. In total, both systems have a filter surface area of approximately 4,500 m² and a flow volume capacity of over 500,000 m³ per hour. The legally required clean gas dust content of < 0.1 mg/m³ is met at all times.

Bene guarantees to conform to guidelines for wood dust and the reduction of fluidic pressure losses.

After dust and chippings have been removed by filtering (to < 0,02 mg/m³ dust content) the air is re-introduced to the room. This also prevents heat loss and low pressure in the production hall.

4.2.5.2. NOISE

The Bene production site in Waidhofen/Ybbs lies in a mixed-use zone, directly neighbouring a housing development area. Bene has subsequently invested considerably in noise protection. All openings to the housing area have been proofed with noise control measures.

The prescribed emission threshold of 40dB is conformed to at night. Material deliveries have been coordinated such that noise pollution for residents is kept down to a minimum.

During the construction of the new extraction system, noise testing was conducted by an engineering firm in December 2008. The results showed that noise did not exceed 35dB at any point.

The production site is divided into different noise zones. In areas with a noise level exceeding 85dB where no[11] measure for noise reduction is available, workers are offered personal protective equipment (ear protection).

[9] Even water-based varnishes contain a small amount of solvents.

[10] The SEPAS system comprises two individual components: SEPAS 1 (built in 1998) and SEPAS 2 (built in 2002).

[11] The Austrian employee protection act – AschG and the law for the protection of employees from noise and vibrations – VOLV (Austrian Federal Law Gazette II No. 22/2006).

4.2.5.3. WASTE HEAT

At Bene, waste heat is produced primarily by the air compressors, the varnishing system and the cooling units and climate control system.

The waste heat from the air compressors is also used sensibly. In the paint shop, this waste heat is used to heat the drying plant. This has enabled Bene to further reduce the need for heating oil. Hot water is provided throughout the year with a heat recovery system.

The exhaust air temperature in the varnishing systems is between 17° and 77 °C.

Image 127 – Fountain in front of the head office in Waidhofen/Ybbs

4.2.6. WATER

Bene uses water as follows:

in the veneer workshop (mixing glues)	diluent agent
in the veneer workshop (air humidification)	humectant agents
in the varnishing workshop (mixing varnishes and stains)	diluent agent
in the varnishing workshop (for cleaning purposes)	Cleaning agents
in fire-protection equipment	extinguishing agent
in thermal water storage	storage medium
in the absorption cooling unit	cooling medium
in the screw compressor	cooling medium
in sanitary facilities	detergent and cleaning agent
in cafeterias and kitchenettes	beverages
in all areas (cleaning staff)	Cleaning agents
in the fountain	operating material

Table 25 – Water use

Bene only uses water from the local water network. All wastewater is transported to the large wastewater treatment plant run by the municipality of Waidhofen/Ybbs via the public sewerage system.

Image 129 – Sebastian Haselsteiner (panel-cutting / edging team)

Operational wastewater also accumulates in the in-house diesel filling station. This wastewater is transported through mineral oil separators, which are emptied and cleaned regularly.

Annual checks ensure adherence to strict limits.

Water consumption per employee at Waidhofen/Ybbs has levelled out in recent years to around 11 m³ per employee.

Chart 16 – Water consumption at Bene Waidhofen/Ybbs in 1,000 m³

4.2.7. GROUND CONTAMINATION

The Bene production facility was constructed in the 1970s on what was then a "green" site, and has been extended since then.

There was no known existing contamination on the site and as there had been no previous building development there, this can be ruled out. See also the register of hazardous sites (Altlastenatlas) published by the Austrian Federal Environment Agency[12].

Image 128 – Roland Holm (Manager, materials management)

Ground contamination since the factory was built on this site can also be ruled out due to the clean working practices (e.g. use of collecting trays, oil separators and other specialised containment). In spite of this, the Bene land parcel 842/1, on which the production hall stands, has been included by the Lower Austrian state government in their register of potentially hazardous sites, under the terms of the Act on the Remediation of Contaminated Sites (Altlastensanierungsgesetz – ALSAG), Federal Law Gazette no. 299/1989, as currently amended)[13]. Inspection by the Federal Environment Agency is due by the end of 2017.

[12] http://www.umweltbundesamt.at/umweltsituation/altlasten/verzeichnisse/
[13] http://www.umweltbundesamt.at/umweltsituation/altlasten/vfka/

4.2.8. PRODUCT PACKAGING

Bene's production system allows a wide variety of product versions, with customised packaging sized to match the products. Machines adapt packaging to the size of products. This minimises empty space and increases transport volumes per container.

Bene uses a wide variety of different packaging materials for specific purposes:

The packaging used by Bene is selected not only on the basis of criteria such as protection and stability, but also on ecological grounds.

Our packaging process also ensures that any volatile substances still present are removed. We also attach great importance to separable and recyclable packaging (see chapter „4.4.3. Disposal of Bene product packaging“ on page 69).

Cardboard packaging	General protection for furniture
Boxes	general protection for furniture
Cardboard honeycombs	To prevent individual furniture components from damaging each other
Plastic wrap	Protection of surfaces and fixing of outer packaging
Bubble wrap	Protection against impact
Plastic envelopes	Packaging of small parts like screws, fittings, etc.
Non-woven material	For protecting veneered surfaces such as tabletop work surfaces
Synthetic straps	Tying cardboard packaging onto pallets
Wood, pallets, boxes	Packing frames for high-quality furniture
Adhesive tapes	To secure accompanying documents and for sealing cardboard packaging
Labels	Labelling of packaging units
Air cushions	For filling gaps to secure packages
Polystyrene	To prevent individual glass components from damaging each other

Table 26 – Packaging materials and how they are used

The packaging of Bene products has been and continues to be carefully scrutinised and reviewed to ensure the necessary protection is provided during transport, with the minimum of packaging materials. For repeat consignments from regular suppliers, robust returnable cardboard or synthetic packaging is used.

In 2016, in addition to purchased packaging materials, Bene produced around 242,000 packaging units using the in-house packaging machine.

In order to protect domestic forest from exposure to wood pests, many countries have quarantine regulations.

Image 130 – Temporary storage of seating furniture and commodities at the production site

Image 131 – Michaela Eszletzbichler (veneer workshop team)

The International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC) has issued the ISPM 15 regulation, (International Standards for Phytosanitary Measures),[14] for the international shipping of packaging made of solid wood.

Image 132 – Julian Almer (corridor walls/3rd level team)

To avoid introducing pests, Bene buys only wood-based packaging that has been heat-treated by oven drying (core temperature 56°C, for 30 minutes).

Image 133 – Josef Riesinger (Production Manager) and Tea Hubegger (Manager, Sales and Technical Support)

[14] The International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC) is an international treaty on the protection of plants from pests. The convention aims to control and as far as possible prevent the importing and spreading of diseases among plants and plant products (quarantine pests).

4.2.9. SOCIALLY RESPONSIBLE PRODUCTION

Bene's social commitment has grown in the last few years. An important aspect of this has been the intensive cooperation with Komunitas OG and the "goodworks" innovation agency[15], which has resulted in links with many social enterprises.[16]

As part of this, Bene was introduced to the social rehabilitation enterprise GESA (Gemeinnützige Sanierungs- und Beschäftigungs-GmbH)[17], based in St. Pölten, Lower Austria. GESA offers a wide range of jobs, for people who have already been seeking work for a long time, or whose ability to work is limited for health reasons, or who have a disability that prevents them finding work. Jobs are found in various sectors that take account of people's individual ability to work.

In recent years, Bene has arranged many contracts through GESA. In 2015 a large production contract was agreed for colour samples, to the value of EUR 40,000. A total of 31,400 giveaway samples was ordered:

- 8,000 giveaway veneer samples
- 23,400 giveaway melamine samples

Image 134 – Scenes from the production area at the GESA social project

4.3. IN-HOUSE FIREFIGHTERS:

Protection for the production site and the region

Help whenever help is needed: In-house firefighters put their know-how to good use. The members, all of whom are volunteers, are available 365 days a year for disaster relief within the region. In the event of an emergency, these in-house firefighters also help other companies and residents in the [18]surrounding area.

Image 136 – Firefighting water tanker TLFA 2000

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Operating hours	943	583	624	875	716

Table 27 – Operating hours of the in-house firefighters spent on exercises, training and incidents

The Bene in-house fire brigade currently comprises 29 active members, all of whom also work at Bene. They are prepared for all kinds of emergencies through regular exercises. Those who work as firefighters in their own time are authorised to leave their workplace at any time to help in an emergency. In the event of an incident, all of these people, in collaboration with external workers, are available immediately to prevent potential environmental harm.

In the calendar year 2016 there were no actual emergency call-outs. In 2015 there were eight call-outs[19].

There have been no major incidents in the last few years. Most of the call-outs concerned fire safety interventions after hot work incidents (e.g. welding), containment of spilt fuel or lubricants from trucks.

Image 135 – In-house firefighters on a training exercise

Call-outs are accounted as working time at Bene for all in-house firefighters.

In 2016 the time spent on exercises, training and call-outs amounted to around 700 operating hours. This varies somewhat from year to year (see Table 27). These 700 hours comprised around 50% technical fire training and 50% call-out exercises.

The last large-scale fire-fighting call-out was in 2007. That was a fire in a 40 m³ rubbish container. The fire was quickly extinguished and no further damage occurred.

[15] http://www.komunitas.at/#home
[16] http://www.sozialproduziert.at/files/produktfolder_bene_sopro_web.pdf
[17] http://www.gesa-noe.at/

[18] Lower Austria Fire Brigades (Landesfeuerwehrverband) https://www.noe122.at/

[19] three (false) fire alarms, three technical call-outs (containment of oil leaks), two fire stations

4.4. WASTE MANAGEMENT

4.4.1. DISPOSAL OF MANUFACTURING WASTE

Through continual optimisation of sourcing and production processes, Bene attempts to avoid waste as much as possible. Non-avoidable waste is recycled according to legal requirements or reused for the production of energy (see chapter „4.2.1.2. Heating“ on page 62).

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Non-hazardous waste (non potential recyclables)	177	124	161	149	189
Non-hazardous waste (potentially recyclable)	6,917	5,674	5,644	4,439	4,812
Hazardous waste	37	23	20	19	12
Total volume of waste	7,131	5,821	5,825	4,607	5,013

Table 28 – Waste quantity trend indicated in tonnes.

Most of the volume of Bene's waste is potentially recyclable. Waste like steel, aluminium, plastic film, chipboard waste, cardboard and paper is sorted in the production site and passed on to waste specialists or suppliers for recycling.

Image 137 – Specialist handlers for Bene's recyclable waste

During the installation and assembly of our products at a client's premises, screws, fittings and other small parts are often left over. These are returned to Waidhofen/ Ybbs with the packaging material.

Because reintegration into the production process is not currently economically viable, we have for many years now donated these screws and small parts to the Lebenshilfe Hiesbach (assistance for disabled people)[23].

For other waste recycling strategies see chapter „2.7.3. Social waste recycling“ on page 31.

4.4.2. DISPOSAL OF BENE PRODUCTS

Our products comply with the requirements of all European and Austrian standards for furniture. Over and above this, a large number of our products have additional certifications, such as the GS safety test mark, the PEFC™ product chain certificate and the Austria quality mark (certified quality).

All these labels confirm the high quality of our processes and products. This results in a high level of product performance throughout our range. It also means our products have a high life expectancy (over fifteen years on average).

Despite this long product life cycle and durability, eventually even Bene products reach a point where they are no longer used or are replaced by new products. For this reason, in manufacturing and construction we consider how our products can be disassembled and recycled.

	Code number		Waste treatment in compliance with ÖNORM S 2100
Commercial waste (residual waste)	91101	C/P; HT	Sorting — Recycling — Combustion for Energy Recovery
Wooden board waste	17115	C/P; HT	Recycling — Wood industry or In-house Combustion for Energy Recovery
Paper/cardboard	18718	C/P; HT	Recycling — Paper industry
Plastic film	57119	C/P; HT	Recycling — Plastics industry
Iron/steel	35103	C/P	Recycling — Steel industry
aluminium	35304	C/P	Recycling — Aluminium industry
Glass	31408	C/P	Recycling — Glass industry
Compact boards	57101	TB	Burning for the production of energy
Solvent-water mixtures	55374	TB	Burning for the production of energy
Waste oil	54102	TB	Burning for the production of energy
Workshop waste	54930	TB	Preparatory processing – incineration for energy recovery

Table 29 – Waste fractions and disposal methods

Table 29 shows the amount of all three types of waste, their treatment (C/P[20] or HT[21]) and disposal in accordance with the Waste Reporting Regulation (Abfallverzeichnisverordnung)[22] and the Austrian standard ÖNORM S 2100.

Chart 17 – Waste quantity trend indicated in 1,000 tonnes.

At the end of their useful life, they can be deconstructed and separated into different categories of component materials. These separated materials can then be subsequently reused or recycled.

Generally speaking, all product components are to be disposed of or recycled in accordance with legal regulations in that particular country/region.

Table 30 shows the materials most commonly used in our products and the usual recycling routes in central Europe. In other countries, these may vary, depending on the local regulatory conditions. The waste treatment processes listed are carried out by licensed disposal companies or by the processors/producers of the raw materials themselves.

An alternative to either recycling or incineration for energy recovery is to donate the disposal products for further use by staff members, needy families or social institutions. There are even some parts of products (e.g. wall coverings) which are suitable for further use.

[20] Chemical-physical treatment (C/P): Chemical and/or physical methods are used to change the chemical, physical or biological characteristics of waste, e.g. neutralisation, extraction, reduction, oxidation, hardening, disinfection, sorting, vaporising, drying, distillation, sintering, melting or glazing.

[21] Heat treatment (HT): Using thermal methods to treat waste and recover energy.

[22] https://www.bmlfuw.gv.at/dam/jcr:569c93ab-45b1-4760-a46d-3fa70ec8b2c2/abfallverzeichnisvo_idf_498_2008.pdf

[23] http://www.noe.lebenshilfe.at/index.php?id=1

I SOMETIMES WISH DISABLED WORKERS WERE LISTENED TO A BIT MORE.

INTERVIEW WITH OLIVER PRINZ (BENE'S DISABLED WORKERS' REPRESENTATIVE)

HOW WAS IT WHEN YOU JOINED BENE – WHAT WAS THE REACTION FROM YOUR NEW COLLEAGUES?

There is another member of this team who has hearing difficulties, as I do. That made it easier for me to be accepted and integrated very quickly. So joining the company was very positive for me, and I felt well supported.

HOW DO YOU FIND BENE'S SUPPORT IN YOUR DAY-TO-DAY WORK?

I sometimes wish disabled workers were listened to a bit more. And there should be more recognition for the disabled workers' representative – with invitations to meetings, for instance, and a room for confidential discussions etc.

WHY DO YOU WORK FOR BENE? WHAT DO YOU FIND EXCITING ABOUT BENE?

I've always seen Bene – and its production site in Waidhofen/Ybbs – as successful and forward-looking. I am happy to be part of the Bene team.

Wood board (chipboard/MDF)	Recycling — Wood industry or In-house Combustion for Energy Recovery
Iron/steel	Recycling — Steel industry
aluminium	Recycling — Aluminium industry
Glass (TSG/LSG)	Recycling — Glass industry
Compact boards	Incineration for energy recovery (needs specialised facilities)
Coverings	Burning for the production of energy
Paper/cardboard	Recycling — Paper industry
Plastics	Recycling — Plastics industry

Table 30 – Disposal of product components

This kind of social reuse of Bene products and waste materials (see also chapter „2.7.3. Social waste recycling" on page 31) has worked very well.
Together with the "good works" initiative[24] (see also chapter „4.2.9. Socially responsible production" on page 67), Bene has also come up with a plan for customers' used office furniture.

For a small flat-rate fee, a social enterprise company will collect used furniture items from anywhere in Austria and deliver them as donations to welfare organisations. Sustainable practice made easy!

4.4.3. DISPOSAL OF BENE PRODUCT PACKAGING

For many years now, Bene's company philosophy and strategies have included eco-friendly processes and conservation of resources as a priority. Consequently, in implementing the requirements of the Austrian Packaging Ordinance we attach great importance to reusable and easily recyclable packaging materials.

That means that after assembly and installation of our products at the customer site, Bene's fitters return all packaging materials and containers to Bene (for deliveries within Austria) or to licensed disposal agents for expert recycling (if outside Austria).

Bene therefore has no connection to ARA (Altstoff Recycling Austria AG)® or any other similar collection systems![25]

Our production site at Waidhofen/Ybbs includes an area where we recover cardboard and wood-based materials from our packaging and prepare them for reuse. Returned packaging materials are reprocessed as far as possible and sent back to the production finishing area for reuse.

If reuse is not possible, for example due to damage, then these materials are collected up with other types of packaging (e.g. foils), sorted and disposed of by licensed disposal companies.

This means Bene is not required to pay any licensing fee for the packaging we send out.

In 2016, approximately 250 tonnes of packaging materials were processed in this way by Bene.

[24] http://www.goodworks.social/

[25] ARA = Altstoff Recycling Austria AG http://www.ara.at/

4.5. LOGISTICS

4.5.1. TRANSPORT OF GOODS

Route planning, distances and ecological effects determine the choice of transport means. Ships, lorries, airplanes and our own vehicle fleet are available.
Rail transport is not an option for Bene, since Austrian Federal Railways (ÖBB)[26] closed the goods terminal at Waidhofen/Ybbs at the beginning of 2010.

In our own company fleet, all new vehicles conform to the limits of the EURO 5 emissions standard. Both with external freight forwarders and with our own transport fleet, we take care to continually optimise route planning and avoid empty runs as far as possible.

As a result of contracting out to freight forwarders, our data concerning the transportation of goods is limited.

Image 138 – Bene interchangeable containers (swap bodies) on the factory site at Waidhofen/Ybbs

In 2016, around 2,500 truck containers and "swap bodies"[27] were loaded with Bene products at the factory gates. This included over 500 air and sea freight consignments.

Airfreight shipments have increased steadily in recent years. Similar development can be seen in shipments by sea, with an increase in consignments from 60 sea freight containers in the calendar year 2011 to around 300 in 2016.

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Road freight swap bodies (approx. 40 m³ each)	3,990	2,766	2,463	2,412	2,110
Road freight semi-trailers (approx. 80 m³ each)	289	174	126	126	122
Sea freight containers (approx. 20 or 40 m³ each)	85	160	162	237	298
Air freight shipments	180	176	237	270	188

Table 31 – Number of containers and swap bodies

Image 140 – Johannes Heigl (product engineering team)

Image 139 – Scenes from Bene's London warehouse

4.5.2. EMPLOYEE MOBILITY

In the framework of their business operations, Bene employees work all over the world. Altogether during the last year, they covered a distance of around 5.4 million miles.

This distance includes flying[28] and driving[29] routes. There is no data available for train journeys[30].

Table 32 shows the decrease in staffing levels and the withdrawal of our own locations in various markets. One consequence of this consolidation of the Bene Group was a significant increase in 2014 and 2015 in the amount of business travel by company members, particularly air travel.

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Street	4.90	3.56	3.83	3.29	2.57
Flights	7.06	3.30	6.71	5.02	2.86

Table 32 – Distance travelled by employees in millions of kilometres

[26] Österreichische Bundesbahnen (Austrian Federal Railways)

[27] A swap body (also swap container, swap pallet) is a standard removable freight container for road and rail transport. Similar to the ISO containers, they can be easily separated from the carrier vehicle (truck).

[28] All flights booked via the head office in Waidhofen/Ybbs are included.

[29] Data is only available for the Bene vehicle fleet in Austria and Germany. The data is collected via the in-house petrol station at Waidhofen/Ybbs or fuel card bills.

[30] Neither the German (Deutsche Bahn) nor the Austrian Federal Railways (ÖBB) are currently able to provide cumulative distance data.

4.6. CORPORATE LIFE CYCLE BALANCE SHEET

4.6.1. CORPORATE CARBON FOOTPRINT

Bene strives constantly to increase production efficiency, which is good for the environment and the climate. Effects on the climate are measured by direct and indirect emission levels. The "Carbon Footprint" has been defined as appropriate indicator, which Bene started using in 2005.

The carbon footprint, also known as CO_2 balance, is a measure of the total greenhouse gas emissions[31] (measured in CO_2) caused directly and indirectly by any activity or during the various stages of a product's life cycle.

A distinction is made between the Product Carbon Footprint (PCF)[32] and the Corporate Carbon Footprint (CCF).

Carbon Footprint calculation

To improve comparability, the global warming potential of a gas is converted into CO_2 equivalents (CO_2e). The International Panel on Climate Change[33] (IPCC) has published set values for greenhouse gases and their CO_2 equivalents (based on a time frame of 100 years):

Methane (CH_4)	25
Nitrous oxide (N_2O)	298
Chlorofluorocarbon (CFC)	14,800
Hydrofluorocarbon (HFC)	1,430
Sulphur hexafluoride (SF_6)	22,800

Table 33 – Impact in terms of carbon dioxide (according to IPCC 2007, 4th assessment report)

1 kg of the listed gas has the same impact on climate change as ...kg of CO_2.

Fuels and heating oil produce direct emissions.

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Scope 1	1,971	1,659	1,578	1,361	1,036
Scope 2	2,486	3,420	926	754	2,672
Scope 3	41,053	31,617	35,630	27,045	26,850
Total	45,511	36,696	38,134	29,160	30,559

Table 34 – Bene's inventory of greenhouse gases by scope in tonnes of CO_2e, according to the Greenhouse Gas Protocol

Indirect emissions come from the areas of power, waste and materials. In accordance with the Greenhouse Gas Protocol[34] (GHG), the Bene Corporate Carbon Footprint incorporates Scopes[35] 1 and 2 as well as elements of Scope 3.

Bene's Corporate Carbon Footprint has shrunk significantly in the last two years. This reduction is attributable to difficult conditions in the economy as a whole: in the same period, both the number of units produced and the turnover also decreased.

Chart 18 – Bene's inventory of greenhouse gases by scope in 1,000 tonnes of CO_2e

As shown by „Chart 13 – Electricity consumption in GWh compared with emissions in 1,000 tonnes of CO2e" on page 61, the ecological electricity mix in 2014 and 2015 also affected Bene's Corporate Carbon Footprint.

Around 90 % of the carbon footprint is attributed to materials and approximately 1 % to production. The rest results from "mobility" (transport and travel) and electricity.

Chart 19 – Bene's inventory of greenhouse gases by segment in 1,000 tonnes of CO_2e

The following chart Chart 19 provides a clearer picture, showing further subdivisions within the three scopes. These subdivisions are based on the following definitions:

The carbon footprint from production has fallen steadily in recent years (from around 400 tonnes CO_2e in 2012 to around 250 tonnes CO_2e in 2016).

Production	Scope 1	Wood chips; heating oil (chapter „4.2.1.2. Heating" on page 62)
Traffic	Scope 1	Diesel; petrol; kerosene (chapter „4.5. Logistics" on page 70)
Electricity	Scope 2	Electricity (chapter „4.2.1.1. Electricity" on page 61)
Recycling	Scope 3	All types of waste (chapter „4.4. Waste management" on page 68)
Materials	Scope 3	All purchased materials (chapter „4.1. Supply Chain" on page 58); VOCs in varnishes and stains, as well as the upstream production chain of materials from Scope 1

Table 35 – Allocation of categories to the relevant scope

The analysis of scopes and their defined areas as they pertain to the carbon footprint is also valid for the impact categories described below.

[31] Greenhouse gases (GHG) are gaseous substances that affect thermal infrared radiation and so contribute to the greenhouse effect; they may be of natural or anthropogenic origin. They absorb some of the longwave infrared radiation from the earth's surface, which would otherwise escape into space.

[32] The Product Carbon Footprint is one of the key indicators that make up Bene's Product Life Cycle Assessments (see „3.3. Product-related Life Cycle Assessment" on page 46)

[33] IPCC = Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change http://ipcc.ch/home_languages_main.shtml

[34] The Greenhouse Gas Protocol defines rules for the organisational distinction of a greenhouse gas balance. The emissions are categorised into three scopes, which is of great relevance.http://www.ghgprotocol.org/

[35] Scope 1 includes all CO_2 emissions, which Bene can control directly (direct CO_2 emissions) Scope 2 refers to CO_2 emissions which are caused by the energy production of the relevant supplier (indirect CO_2 emissions). This means that the energy producer's CO_2 emissions in Scope 1 form the Scope 2 emissions of the consumer. All other CO_2 emissions which cannot directly be controlled by the company are classed as Scope 3 (other indirect CO_2 emissions).

Companies receive "credit" for their recycling procedures and the associated substitution of new materials, which leads to positive effects on the Corporate Carbon Footprint. (cf. Chart 19)

INFO BOX

The total area of forest in Austria is approximately 4 million hectares (around 47 per cent of Austria's land area is forested). A quarter of Austria's CO_2 emissions can be absorbed and converted by this amount of forest.

The goal of further reducing our production carbon footprint to 0 tonnes CO_2e by the year 2020, as announced in the 2010/11 Sustainability Report, is currently unrealistic without enormous carbon offsetting compensation; commercial decisions have resulted in the suspension of many of the strategies and programmes planned.

Image 142 – Tomas Hönickl (technical project management)

Around 400 hectares of mixed forest [36] are needed to absorb the Scope 1 and 2 CO_2e emissions produced by Bene and convert them into oxygen.[37] Absorption of the CO_2e emissions from production needs around 30 hectares of healthy forest.[38]

[36] One hectare of deciduous forest (such as beech, oak or ash) can bind approximately 8 tonnes of $_{CO2}$ per year.
[37] This would be about 650 hectares of coniferous forest.
[38] Data from the "Austrian Forest Report 2015" by the Austrian Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Management.

4.6.2. OTHER ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT CATEGORIES[39]

In addition to the Corporate Carbon Footprint, Bene's detailed ecological balance sheet enables us to report other impact categories (see chapter „3.3.1. Environmental impact categories" on page 46) at company level.

Image 143 – Raimund Loibl (panel-cutting/ edging team)

[39] For an explanation see https://www.bauforumstahl.de/nachhaltigkeits-glossar and http://gutebaustoffe.de/bibliothek/glossar/

Image 141 – The Bene site at Waidhofen/Ybbs and its surroundings

4.6.2.1. PRIMARY ENERGY CONSUMPTION

Primary sources of energy are those that occur naturally and have not yet been subject to any human-engineered conversion process. A distinction is made between non-renewable[40] and renewable primary energy sources[41].

Chart 20 – Bene's total primary energy consumption by scope in GWh

The increase in 2016 under Scope 3 is due to a change in LC factors between versions 3.01 and 3.3 of the Ecoinvent database, in the proportion of recycled materials used, as well as a similar increase within the materials we buy in.

	renewable	non-renewable
Production	25	487
Electricity	147	5,512
Traffic	3,773	12,217
Recycling	7,496	-2,133
Materials	123,745	157,670

Table 36 – 2016 primary energy consumption by division in MWh

There was no substantial change in the amount of materials used between 2015 and 2016 (see chapter 4.1.5 on page 59).

4.6.2.2. ACIDIFICATION POTENTIAL

The acidifying effect of a substance is measured in sulphur dioxide equivalents (SO_2e). This describes its ability to form and release H^+ ions. Acidifying emissions include for example sulphur dioxide (SO_2), nitrogen oxide (NO_X) and hydrogen sulphide (H_2S). Acidifying emissions cause reactions in the atmosphere that produce sulphuric acid and nitric acid, which then fall as "acid rain"[42].

Chart 21 – Bene's acidification potential by scope in tonnes of SO_2e

4.6.2.3. PHOTO-OXIDANT FORMATION POTENTIAL (OZONE FORMATION)

Too little ozone in the atmosphere causes environmental hazards (see chapter on ozone depletion potential 4.6.2.5), but too high concentration of ozone at ground level ("summer smog") can be harmful to animals and humans.[43]

Chart 22 – Bene's photo-oxidant formation potential by scope in tonnes of C_2H_4e

Ground-level ozone formation occurs when light and heat from the sun cause photochemical reactions between nitrogen oxides, hydrocarbons and volatile organic substances.

The Ozone Creation Potential describes the extent to which harmful trace gases (e.g. NO_x, hydrocarbons), when affected by UV radiation, contribute to the formation of ground-level (tropospheric) ozone.

Image 144 – Florian Bohrn, Luise Schwarzböck and Thomas Suchanek (Bene Vienna)

4.6.2.4. EUTROPHICATION POTENTIAL (OVER-FERTILISATION)

Eutrophication potential describes the contribution of a substance to the eutrophication (nutrient input, over-fertilisation) of water and soil.

It is expressed in so-called phosphate equivalents (PO_4e). This describes a substance's contribution to over-fertilisation relative to phosphate. Phosphorous and nitrogen compounds are the principal contributors to over-fertilisation.

Chart 23 – Bene's eutrophication potential by scope in tonnes of PO_4e

These are released into the environment during the production of building materials (e.g. synthetic materials, metals) and most significantly as deposits from combustion emissions.

[40] The level of demand for non-renewable primary energy shows the amount of fossil fuels (oil, natural gas, coal, lignite and uranium) consumed and the corresponding effect on shortages of these.

[41] Demand for renewable primary energy shows the consumption of energy from renewable sources (wind, water, biomass, solar and geothermal).

[42] Acid rain causes damage to forests, aquatic animals and historic buildings.

[43] Photochemical oxidant formation is expressed in so-called ethene equivalents (C_2H_4e)

4.6.2.5. OZONE DEPLETION POTENTIAL

The Ozone Depletion Potential (ODP) describes the extent to which a substance has a harmful effect on the ozone layer[44].

The ozone layer can be damaged by substances such as chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs), which destroy ozone in the atmosphere. Many production processes allow gases that are damaging to ozone to escape into the atmosphere.

Chart 24 – Bene's ozone depletion potential by scope in kg of CCl_3Fe

Image 147 – Franz Reiter, Axel Theisinger, Wolfgang Holland-Moritz and Kirsten Witt

Image 145 – Jan-Philip Flügel (Control Team)

4.6.2.6. ABIOTIC RESOURCE CONSUMPTION

This indicator measures the depletion of the global supply of non-renewable raw materials[45] (e.g. fossil fuels, uranium ores, mineral resources [sand, clay, gravel etc.], (fresh)water, air and its components).

Chart 25 – Bene's abiotic resource consumption by scope in tonnes of Sbe

Extraction and pollution both result in shortages of these resources; this may also be true for renewable resources such as wood or biomass (if consumption exceeds the rate of renewal).

Impact assessment is converted into units based on the rare element antimony (stibium), which is the agreed reference substance, and is thus expressed in antimony equivalents (Sbe).

Since the categories described below were only introduced in 2016, it is not possible to make a five-year comparison for these.

4.6.2.7. WASTE

Waste in terms of EDIP2003 methodology This only concerns waste that goes to landfill.

A distinction is made between non-hazardous waste (e.g. slag, ash and debris)[46] and hazardous waste (including radioactive waste)[47].

	Scope 1	Scope 2	Scope 3
hazardous waste	0.1	0.1	80.8
non-hazardous waste	265.5	73.6	6,227.8

Table 37 – 2016 waste by scope in tonnes

	non-hazardous	hazardous
Production	4.3	0.01
Electricity	264.7	0.15
Traffic	73.7	0,08
Recycling	37.4	8.18
Materials	6,187.0	72.63

Table 39 – 2016 waste by division in tonnes

4.6.2.8. WATER CONSUMPTION

Physical water demands – freshwater input ("blue water" in terms of Water Footprint methodology).[48]

	Scope 1	Scope 2	Scope 3
2016	57,448	8,969	208,347

Table 38 – 2016 fresh water consumption by scope in m³

	2016
Production	55,098
Electricity	3,016
Traffic	8,969
Recycling	-2,565
Materials	210,246

Table 40 – 2016 fresh water consumption by scope in m³

Image 146 – Gerhard Rohrhofer (Product manager)

[44] The ozone layer occurs in the stratosphere (15 to 50 km above the earth) when shortwave UV rays strike oxygen molecules. Ozone absorbs this shortwave UV radiation and emits it as longer wavelength radiation, so that only part of the more harmful shortwave radiation reaches the earth's surface.

[45] Non-renewable has been defined as not renewable within 500 years.

[46] defined by EDIP2003 as landfill: slag and ashes; landfill: bulk waste

[47] defined by EDIP2003 as landfill: hazardous waste; landfill: radioactive waste

[48] Cooling water and contaminated or evaporated water are not included.

4.6.2.9. HUMAN TOXICITY

This was measured using the USEtox method, which shows both human toxicity and ecotoxicity.

	Scope 1	Scope 2	Scope 3
non-carcinogenic	0.248	0.195	2,315,893
carcinogenic	0.057	0.038	5.435

Table 43 – 2016 human toxicity by scope in CTUh

Human toxicity is expressed in comparative toxic units (CTU)[49] and is divided into two subcategories: carcinogenic (cancer-causing) human toxicity and non-carcinogenic (non-cancer-causing).

	non-carcinogenic	carcinogenic
Production	0.015	0.008
Electricity	0.245	0.051
Traffic	0.195	0.038
Recycling	-175,005	0.660
Materials	2,490,899	4.772

Table 45 – 2016 human toxicity by division in CTUh

4.6.2.10. ECOTOXICITY

In the case of ecotoxicity (aquatic toxicity), CTU values show the potentially affected fraction (PAF) of species by water volume and time.[50]

	Scope 1	Scope 2	Scope 3
2016	11,646	2,290	200,735

Table 44 – 2016 ecotoxicity by scope in 1,000 CTUe

	2016
Production	177
Electricity	11,614
Traffic	2,290
Recycling	8,071
Materials	192,519

Table 46 – 2016 ecotoxicity by division in 1,000 CTUe

4.6.2.11. LAND USE

This was analysed using the ReCiPe endpoint method, which distinguishes between three subcategories:

- **agricultural land occupation**
- **urban land occupation**
- **natural land transformation**

In the ReCiPe midpoint method, the first two of these are expressed in m^2/year, and the third in m^2 – as land occupation continues year after year, while transformation from one form (e.g. forest) into another (e.g. industrial site) only occurs once.

The ReCiPe endpoint method measures all three categories in "points". This method has two advantages: firstly, it takes the quality of the occupied or transformed land into account (for example, if virgin forest is transformed into concreted industrial land, that accumulates more "points" than if forest is transformed into arable farmland), and secondly, it also allows all three categories to be summarised in a single category of "land use", as the same units are used in each case.

Here are a few examples to illustrate more clearly what individual points could mean in this kind of land use analysis:

Under "agricultural land occupation", one point may mean that …
- 24 m^2 of arable farmland is used for one year
- 50 m^2 of forest is used for one year
- 30 m^2 of bushland is used for one year

Under "urban land occupation", the same point may mean that …
- 23 m^2 of landfill area is used for one year
- 23 m^2 of industrial land is used for one year
- 23 m^2 of traffic zones are used for one year

Under "natural land transformation", one point may mean that …
- 0.24 m^2 of forest is transformed into a different type of land
- 0.0074 m^2 of topical rainforest is transformed into a different type of land

	Scope 1	Scope 2	Scope 3
2016	3	24	1,829

Table 41 – 2016 land use by scope in points

	2016
Production	0.4
Electricity	3.1
Traffic	24
Recycling	133
Materials	1,696

Table 42 – 2016 land use by division in points

Due to the complexity of this method and the wide range of weightings behind it, interpretation of the values is extremely difficult.

For instance the 1,856 points allocated to Bene's land use in 2016 could mean that 92,800 m^2 of forest land were used in one year, but this figure could also mean that 13.7 m^2 of rainforest were felled. Since Bene does not use any tropical woods, but only wood materials from Europe or North America, it can be assumed that the first of these two definitions is correct.

4.6.3. CONCLUSIONS FROM THE BENE LIFE CYCLE ASSESSMENT

The individual charts and tables show clearly that many different factors can cause the values to rise or fall. Improvement in one category may result in deterioration in a different category.

Bene's abiotic resource use, for example, has fallen steadily in recent years, but the ozone depletion potential has actually risen.

Different materials affect humans and nature in different ways. We have to understand this and raise awareness in order to drive improvement (in other areas as well as CO_2).

A comprehensive Life Cycle Assessment is a valuable instrument for this process. However, the most valuable information is in the details and cannot be generalised from a single figure.

[49] CTU values show the incidence of diseases caused by emissions of a given substance [CTUh per kg emitted] = [disease cases per kg emitted].

[50] [CTUe per kg emitted] = [PAF × m^3 × day per kg emitted]

5. MANAGING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

If a company does not meet customers' needs, or only partly meets them, then in the medium- to long-term it will cease to be of any interest to its stakeholder groups.

5.1. ORGANISATION OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AT BENE

5.1.1. WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR SUSTAINABILITY?

Sustainability issues are overseen by Jörg Schuschnig, Executive Board Member for Operations and Finance. Bene's long-standing engagement in product responsibility, environmental management and employee health and safety reflects the commitment of the executive board.

At Bene, monitoring sustainability performance at executive board level is achieved through regular information provided by environmental management, human resources management, safety management and the sustainability team.

Sustainability is important to Bene's owners (see „Interview with Michael Schur (Chairman of the Supervisory Board at Bene)“ on page 9).

5.1.1.1. SUSTAINABILITY TEAM

In 2009, Bene set up a sustainability working group and in 2016 this was transformed into a small interdisciplinary team. This team consists of the environmental management officer, who is also responsible for organising the group, the safety specialist, the works council, representatives from sales, product development, production, marketing and human resources.

Team meetings include discussion of ecological and social issues, goal-setting and strategies, and draft communications.

5.1.2. A CONTINUAL PROCESS OF IMPROVEMENT

Measures of correction, prevention and improvement are indispensable elements of the Bene management system. The integrated management system forms the basis of our continuous improvement process. The system is determined according to a PDCA-cycle (Plan-Do-Check-Act).

The continuous process of improvement as a key to success

In the “smart factory” (formerly the “compact factory”), ongoing development of the production process has been underway since 2004, based on the continuous improvement process (CIP). The suggestions for improvement developed in the team were implemented independently by the team after approval. Performance-based rewards for production teams are based not only on product quality, adherence to deadlines and productivity, but also reflect the number of submitted, approved and effective suggestions for improvement.

5.1.3. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

In economically challenging times, it is particularly important that Bene's environmental management help to reduce costs. We aim to avoid wasteful offcuts, reduce waste and energy costs and save on transport and equipment. Important cost areas include raw materials, transport, equipment and energy. These make up around 80 per cent of Bene's total operating costs.

We are aware of the dangers to humans and the environment caused by advancing climate change and are willing to accept responsibility for future generations.

But climate change doesn’t just affect humans and societies; it also impacts on our economy. We are currently concerned about the effects of climate change on our international business model. Advancing climate change could lead to higher costs for Bene e.g. by a further taxation on CO_2 or fuels in the following areas:

- Lorry logistics
- Power supply
- Wood as a raw material[1] and
- energy-intensive raw materials like aluminium

In the future we need to meet the challenges of production but also logistics to reduce our CO_2 emissions.

Image 148 – Party at Bene headquarters for the 200th anniversary in 1990

[1] Wood prices may increase in case of extreme weather and any shift in vegetation zones. On the other hand, an increase in fallen timber may result in a price reduction for chipboards.

5.2. BENE MANAGEMENT

5.2.1. HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

The Human Resources Management regards itself as a business and service partner of management, leadership and employees. It is responsible for the operative collaboration in all areas and departments of the Bene Group. As a core element of the corporate strategy, this area reports directly to the Executive Board.

The Bene Group has an excellent Human Resources Management strategy. The personnel recruitment, development and administration all meet the highest standards of internationally-operating companies. We have applied the necessary strategic and organisational measures to ensure the further growth of the company and to enable a responsible and target-oriented staffing policy, even when the economy is challenging.

Image 149 – "Sozial Produziert" (SoPro) kick-off event in 2012 at Bene in Waidhofen/Ybbs
© goodworks

The Bene Group management believe that competence in leadership and management is a central and strategic factor of business success. There is therefore a strong focus on the training and professional development of the leadership team.

As part of the central Bene training programme, all employees are able to take part in further training in the fields of basic skills, professional skills, method competence, expert competence and personal development.

5.2.2. MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS FOR QUALITY, SAFETY AND ENVIRONMENT

Bene GmbH has used a QSE (quality, safety, environment) management system for many years. As we only have one central production site, the QSE system covers all production activities.

Bene has been certified according to EN ISO 14001 (Environmental Management Systems) and EN ISO 9001 (Quality Management Systems) since 2006.

qualityaustria
SYSTEM CERTIFIED
ISO 14001:2004 No.02994/0
ISO 9001:2008 No.17100/0

In 2008, Bene was declared an "Austrian Model Business" (Österreichischer Musterbetrieb)[2]; in January 2009, we were awarded the PEFC™ Chain of Custody Standard[3], and in 2012 Bene achieved FSC® certification[4].

FSC www.fsc.org FSC® C119561 The mark of responsible forestry

PEFC PEFC/06-38-153 Promoting Sustainable Forest Management www.pefc.org

A safety management system has already been established and we will be working towards certification by the standard of OHSAS 18001 (Occupational Health and Safety Assessment Systems), once ISO 45001 has been published.

At the end of 2009, we achieved certification from the British Furniture Industry Sustainability Programme (FISP).[5]

The QSE management team, together with IT and the complaints management department, form the PSI (processes, systems and IT) management section, which reports directly to the Bene Group Executive Board.

5.2.3. EMERGENCY AND RISK MANAGEMENT

Occupational safety and environmental protection are closely related. High safety standards in the factory reduce environmental hazards. This is why emergency planning and hazard prevention are also taken into consideration as part of quality, environmental and safety management. The risk of fire is not underestimated at Bene.

Preventative fire protection not only contributes towards safety in the workplace, but also environmental protection. In addition to the automatic fire detection and extinguisher systems installed on the site, our in-house fire fighters also play a key role in helping to contain and prevent large fires (see „4.3. Betriebsfeuerwehr“ auf Seite 67).

Smoking is absolutely forbidden in all production and office areas.

Liquids which are hazardous to water are only stored in the appropriate storage rooms (VbF, German regulation for inflammable liquids). For this reason, we always use special collecting trays, thereby stopping harmful substances from getting into the sewerage system or groundwater.

The Austrian regulations on potentially explosive atmospheres (“VEXAT”: Federal Law Gazette 309/2004) have been in place at Bene since they were introduced in 2006 and 2007.

Every employee undergoes training from his/her superior in how to deal with emergency situations. Similarly, all employees receive safety training from the safety officer. (Training sessions are repeated at regular intervals.)

Safety specialists, fire protection appointees, first-aiders, safety representatives, occupational health physicians and the in-house fire fighters form a well-balanced team.

The entire production area, including the integrated offices, and the office building, have emergency generators in case of need. This enables the IT infrastructure to continue functioning for a short time in the event of interruption to the external power supply.

In the production area a strategy of “system redundancy” was introduced. This means that if unplanned downtime occurs in one production area, the work can be completed using alternative equipment instead, so that we can still meet delivery deadlines.

Information processing also plays a key role at Bene. All essential strategic and operative functions and tasks are well-supported through Information Technology (IT). We have established an IT security organisation to help avoid system failures and, if failure does occur, to be able to immediately compensate for it (IT “disaster recovery plan”).

We also attach great importance to the protection of data against unauthorised access or modification.

Image 150 – Bene Frankfurt donates EUR 1,000 to the "Zukunft Schenken" (“Giving a Future”) foundation

5.2.4. PREVENTING CORRUPTION

In joining the Global Compact of the United Nations, we are sending a clear signal of our commitment to actively preventing corruption in everyday business. Even before this, fair business practices were already of utmost importance to Bene. The old habit of sealing a deal with a handshake left its mark on our tradition, but Bene now relies on fairness and professional business practice. During the reporting period no cases of corruption occurred.

We have introduced treasury guidelines right across the Group to avoid the risk of corruption. By doing this, we have established a comprehensive ‘four-eyes principle’. Access to accounts is only ever possible in the presence of two people. We informed all sales representatives via e-mail about the requirements of this guideline.

The Executive Board has also developed an ethical code of conduct . All Bene employees are obliged to comply with this.

[2] http://www.qualityaustria.com/index.php?id=2734
[3] https://www.pefc.at/; http://www.pefc.org/
[4] http://www.fsc-deutschland.de/de-de; https://info.fsc.org/
[5] http://www.fispfurniture.com/

THE ADVANTAGES OF A WELL-ESTABLISHED REGIONAL BASE CLEARLY INCLUDE LOCAL COMMITMENT TO THE COMPANY

INTERVIEW WITH JÖRG SCHUSCHNIG (EXECUTIVE BOARD MEMBER FOR FINANCES AND PRODUCTION)

BENE MANUFACTURES THE MAJORITY OF ITS PRODUCTS IN WAIDHOFEN/YBBS. WHAT ROLE DOES THIS REGIONAL PRODUCTION BASE PLAY IN THE COMPANY? WHAT ADVANTAGES OR DISADVANTAGES ARE THERE TO THIS AUSTRIAN LOCATION?

Bene as a company has a rich tradition in this part of Austria and having our headquarters and production facilities in Waidhofen/Ybbs means we have a responsibility to contribute to the advancement and development of the Mostviertel region. Amongst other things, this includes a responsibility to our employees, their training and to maintaining the commercial strength of the region. The advantages of a well-established regional base clearly include local identification with the company, local commitment and cooperation with other companies in the region; but also the increased possibilities for long-term development of expertise and valuable experience, both of which are essential to the high quality standards of our products. On the other hand, the disadvantages of being embedded in this region include a shortage of specialist staff and the infrastructure, which is limited in comparison to the options available in more densely populated areas.

HOW IMPORTANT ARE ISSUES SUCH AS A SUSTAINABLE SUPPLY CHAIN AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION FOR BENE'S PRODUCTION?

Efficient use and responsible handling of resources are essential elements of our company culture; it is also part of our own sense of self-awareness to handle the resources available to us in a way that reflects our duty to our own and future generations. Sustainability is very important to Bene and as such, we use sustainable and environmentally-friendly materials and return as much as possible to the circular economy, thereby promoting the recycling of reusable materials.

WHAT DOES SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC ACTIVITY MEAN TO YOU?

Sustainable economic activity has a clear emphasis on fulfilling the needs of all stakeholders as far as possible, while aligning with ethical values. Of course this includes sustainable business success, which is then reflected in economic power and strong financial indicators for the region. If a company does not meet customers' needs, or only partly meets them, then in the medium- to long-term it will cease to be of any interest to its stakeholder groups. In this sense, sustainability also means striving constantly for innovation and product development to meet the demands of the market; it means continually improving productivity, pursuing cost leadership and optimising our internal processes – in a market environment where change is accelerating all the time. In this context, agility and the ability to adapt to changing influences are vital.

HOW DOES A FORMER FAMILY BUSINESS MANAGE TO DEVELOP INTO A MODERN, SUSTAINABLE AND SUCCESSFUL COMPANY? WHAT ARE THE CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES?

The basic requirements are: a high proportion of well-trained specialist staff with long experience in the sector, well-established processes, concentrating on the important things when making business decisions and keeping bureaucratic processes to a minimum. The challenges are consistent application of the business strategy, continually examining processes, and at the same time, maintaining tight, efficient and cost-effective structures. Only by following these requirements can competitiveness be sharpened and maintained sustainably.

WHEN WE TALK ABOUT SUSTAINABILITY, THAT INCLUDES NOT JUST ECOLOGY OR THE ECONOMY, BUT ALSO SOCIAL ISSUES. HOW DOES BENE MEET ITS SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITIES AS A COMPANY, IN TERMS OF ITS OWN EMPLOYEES AND ALSO TOWARDS OTHER STAKEHOLDERS?

Our commitment to ethical principles and professionalism also demands a high level of social responsibility. This latter aspect is not only reflected in topics such as gender diversity and participation in social activities, etc., but also in particular in terms of the responsibility towards employees. In this context we support efforts aimed at achieving a work/life balance, along with the compatibility of family life and career and maintaining jobs through sustainable economic activity. Yet sometimes jobs have to make way for technological development or efforts to safeguard the interests of all stakeholders, with corresponding actions required in these cases to cushion the impact on the individual.

WHY DO YOU WORK FOR BENE? WHAT DO YOU FIND EXCITING ABOUT BENE?

A positive feeling needs to be fostered every day in the company with a strong team spirit and solid owner combined with creativity, the force of innovation and product design. We are a good team with lots of energy – you can feel the sense of achievement when issues are tackled and moved forward. Together we will be able to develop Bene further and take it into a successful future.

5.2.5. DATA SECURITY

Our products are used in a wide range of companies, sectors and institutions. Trustworthiness and confidentiality are extremely important. This is particularly the case wherever customer data are handled. Bene's Chief Information Security Officer (CISO) is also responsible for data security, which includes protecting customer data from loss or misuse.

So far we have never received any complaints about breaches or loss of customer data. To ensure this remains the case in future, the CISO is always consulted on any investments relevant to data protection (e.g. new software) and any relevant activities.

5.2.6. LEGAL COMPLIANCE

Industrial manufacturing of Bene products complies with all environmental regulations. Continuous development of the management system is helping us to improve our environmental performance above and beyond the legal requirements.

Bene has established a comprehensive system to monitor all legal obligations and ensure that they are upheld. The Bene legislation register regulates the implementation of and conformity to all laws relevant to Bene sites as per Austrian federal law and EU law. It is updated quarterly in collaboration with legal experts.

The following areas of law are included:

- Waste law
- Industrial plant law
- Work protection law
- Hazardous substances law
- Energy management legislation
- Dangerous goods legislation
- Clean air act
- Environmental management
- Water legislation

Bene's communication strategy seeks to meet people in their working environment. We want to represent different cultures and genders beyond traditional clichés. Bene adheres to the code of conduct of the ICC (International Chamber of Commerce).

In compliance with different eco-labels used by Bene, we abstain from the use of certain advertising messages. The Blue Angel, for example, does not allow the use of the phrase "furniture for healthy living" (wohnbiologisch geprüft).

Bene endeavours to abide by these standards; no violations have knowingly been committed.

Image 151 – Bene India team excursion to southern India - Chikmagalur

Our system is working: In the current reporting period, company management has received no warnings or fines concerning environmental laws, product safety, product liability, violations of competition regulations, consumer protection laws or advertising campaigns.

Image 154 – Bene beers from each country with a Bene branch at Euro 2016 in France.

5.2.7. REACH (REGISTRATION, EVALUATION, AUTHORISATION OF CHEMICALS)

The EU Regulation EG 1907/2006 concerning the Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restriction of Chemicals (REACH) has been in force since the 1 June 2007.

REACH regulates the handling of all chemicals, whether or not they have dangerous properties. REACH lists specific requirements for all companies which are part of the substance supply chain.

According to REACH, Bene GmbH is not a manufacturer, importer or distributor of chemical products, but rather a downstream user.

Image 152 – Stefan Manko (Bene Vienna Sales)

As such, we must keep the security data sheets provided by our suppliers for at least ten years. We must also implement all of the recommended security measures. The chemical substances (e.g. water-based varnishes) supplied to Bene GmbH are registered by the relevant manufacturing companies within the pre-supply chain.

This means our customers do not need to implement any additional measures.

Image 153 – Martin Plank (Engineering Manager), Gerhard Fink (Customized Solutions team) and Tobias Harreither (IT Client Management)

5.2.8. ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS/ENVIRONMENTAL AUDIT

Direct environmental factors are impacts resulting from activities at our site, which we can influence directly. First and foremost these relate to our production processes, and we assess the relevance of their environmental impact. Outside the company, there are also environmentally relevant processes that are connected to our operations. These processes are described as indirect factors. We are only able to influence these processes in a limited way (see definition of scope in chapter „4.6.1. Corporate Carbon Footprint“ auf Seite 71).

In conclusion we can say that responsible and sparing use of our resources makes a

significant difference.

Environmentally-relevant data, such as resource and energy consumption, materials used and waste quantities are recorded and analysed periodically (annually) in the form of an input/output balance sheet.

This provides data on all purchased raw materials, additives, supplies and energy sources as well as manufactured products, by-products and waste.

After the acquisition of data, input and outputs are compared. This helps to identify weak spots and areas which could be improved; the results are then discussed in frequent audits.

In a further step, the environmentally-relevant activities of individual value-added processes are assessed according to the degree of their environmental relevance and presented in a clear and concise manner.

All this allows a clear overview of which areas of the company's activities have most impact on the environment and serves as a navigation tool for subsequent decision-making.

The following areas are examined:

- controlled and uncontrolled emissions into the atmosphere
- controlled and uncontrolled discharge into water or the sewerage system
- solid and other waste, in particular hazardous waste
- soil contamination
- Usage of soil, water, fuels and energy as well as other natural resources
- Release of heat, noise, odour, dust, vibration and visual effects
- Impact on specific part areas of the
- environment and ecosystems as well as people
- explosion protected areas

During the audit we concentrate not only on the effects under normal operational conditions, but also take into account possible or probable effects:

- under abnormal operational conditions (servicing, auditing, etc.)
- incidents, accidents and potential emergencies (fire, explosion, severe thunderstorms, etc.)
- as a result of previous on-going and planned activities (disposal, etc.)

Image 155 – Friedrich Pfaffeneder (Profile Machining team)

As the next step, identified potential for improvement is weighted and ranked according to its significance. The QSE team develops and implements the procedures and criteria for prioritisation; they also manage and update the list. It then goes to the executive board for approval. Classification considers not only normal operations but also extraordinary activities, and is carried out on the basis of the following criteria.

Individual criteria for assessment:

- current company policy
- legislation and current legal position; any respective valid decisions must also be consulted.
- endangering the environment and mankind; safety data sheets have to be used here.
- costs and quantities
- impact on process efficiency (regularity of incidents

Points are assigned according to assessment criteria.

Image 156 – Andreas Hönigl (Project Planning & Calculation team)

If the highest possible number of points is awarded for any assessment criteria, or if the sum of all the points of an assessed criteria reaches or exceeds a particular threshold, the QSE team is obliged to communicate this criteria at the next Management Review and to take on a binding commitment to include a solution to the problem in the action plan.

5.2.9. ENVIRONMENTAL AUDITS & REPORTING

The waste report and waste management strategy are compiled by appointed waste representatives. The environmental and the waste representatives are involved in the value-added processes to provide their knowledge and advice.

In order to instantly be able to recognise possible potential for improvement, our compliance with environmentally-relevant standards is audited. We monitor its implementation by means of an action plan.

The management representatives then also report periodically to the executive board of Bene GmbH with a management review.

5.3. SUSTAINABILITY GOALS AND PROGRAMME

5.3.1. SUSTAINABILITY GOALS

We have decided to focus on a small number of sustainability goals and actions based on our experiences from the last few years. Employees participated in the development of the following sustainability goals, which were evaluated by the sustainability working group and discussed and approved at the executive level. The resulting sustainability programme lists the concrete measures, responsibilities and deadlines for achieving these goals.

We have defined the following objectives for the coming business years:

I. Increase customer satisfaction
II. Reduce the CO_2 footprint of our products
III. Process wood-based materials from sustainable forestry
IV. Continue to develop expertise and make it sustainable
V. Promote a social community and health

5.3.2. SUSTAINABILITY PROGRAMME

The present Sustainability Programme specifies the Sustainability Goals (Foreword; Chapter 8.1) mentioned above and the respective measures, responsibilities and implementation dates. We consider sustainability and responsibility a continuous process. This list only represents our current goals and is constantly developed and modified.

Measure	Objective	Responsibility	Target date
Expansion of the carbon footprint calculation model to include further impact categories in order to fulfil all criteria in the applicable PCR.	I	Environmental representative	2017
Update of the life cycle factors for the life cycle assessment to Ecoinvent version 3.3	I	Environmental representative	2017
Update of the Bene environmental product declarations (LCDS) with the new impact categories and detailed specification of the disposal aspects	I	Environmental representative	2017/18
Completion of the water footprint in the life cycle assessment	I	Environmental representative	2018
Increased support for customers with change processes through adapting/updating their office concepts	I	Sales management	2018
Increase the share of certified materials (e.g. EU Flower) or fabrics from recycled or environmentally friendly materials.	II	Product Management	2018
Conversion of the hall lighting to new LED technology	II	Technical Director	2018
Increase the share of certified veneers.	III	Head of Procurement	2018
Organisation of the internal "Bene Fit" product training programme	IV	Human Resources management	2017
Further promotion of apprenticeship training - training more apprentices	IV	Human Resources management	2018
Organisation of regular joint activities (e.g.: company excursions, skiing days)	V	Members of works councils	ongoing
Recognise long-term Bene employees.	V	Executive Board	ongoing
Organisation of a family day (open house day) at Waidhofen/Ybbs production site.	V	Executive Board	2018
Certification of the existing health & safety management system in line with the new international safety management system standard ISO 45001	V	Executive Board Safety Manager	2018

Table 47 – Sustainability Programme

5.3.2.1. ACTIONS SUCCESSFULLY IMPLEMENTED OVER THE LAST FEW YEARS

The environment has always been important to us, long before the implementation of our management systems.
The following measures are some of the ones that have been successfully implemented in previous years:

1988-94	Reduction of the solvent content in the varnishing process from around 76% to around 7%, by gradual replacement of the percentage of primer containing solvent with water-based components and by switching from solvent-based to water-based top coats.
1995	Replacement of all PVC edges with environmentally-friendly PP or ABS edges.
1996	Bene products awarded Austrian ÖQA quality certificate.
1996	Installation of a heat recovery plant: usage of compressor waste heat to heat water.
1997	NÖ (Lower Austrian) Industry 1996 environmental prize for the “development, changeover to and application of an environmentally-friendly varnishing process“ project.
1998	Switchover of the varnishing process from solvent varnishes to water-soluble UV hardening varnishes.
1998	Launch of a new wood-chip fired heating system with associated cost savings of approx. 500 tons of heating oil.
1998-2002	Launch of the energy-saving SEPAS extraction system with optimum adjustment of the quantity of expelled air to suit current demand.
2000	Installation of a fully-automated lighting control system in all newly-constructed production hall sections -> daylight control.
2000	Relocation of the entire production section to the Kreilhof plant and, at the same time, closure of the Zell factory (resulting in a reduction in journeys between sites).

2005	Reduction of empty runs by switching from Bene's intra-factory transportation to freight forwarders.
2006	Switch from paper price lists to electronic price lists (saving approx. 1.5 million sheets of paper per year).
2007	Connection of the office building and the Western production hall to the public sewerage network and the Waidhofen/Ybbs wastewater treatment site.
2007	Construction of a waste management system, including a waste reduction system for chipboard residue.
2008	All in-house Bene manufacturing products distinguished with the"Austrian Quality Seal" and the "LGA mark", provingthat they have been tested for toxic substances.
2008-2010	Certification of all products manufactured in Waidhofen/Ybbs according to the ecological standard "Austrian Eco-Label" (Österreichisches Umweltzeichen).
2008	Installation of a new filtering system that has resulted in a significant reduction of the dust content in air that is returned to the hall (threshold 0.1 mg/m³). Increased air return in the hall during the heating period lowers energy consumption.
2008	A 150,000-litre thermal storage tank reduces the need for heating oil during the coldest periods and has led to an approximate 50 % reduction in heating oil consumption.
2009	PEFC™ certification at Bene
2010	Certification of all products manufactured in Waidhofen/Ybbs according to the ecological standard "Blue Angel".
2011	Publication of Bene's first Sustainability Report + Austrian Sustainability Reporting Award (ASRA)
2011	Expansion of the Carbon Footprint calculation model by including recycling content in the input and updating the lifecycle factors
2011	Creation of Bene environmental product declarations (Life Cycle Data Sheet = LCDS)
2011	No electricity generated by nuclear power
2012-2013	Certification of many product groups in accordance with the Greenguard environmental product standard
2012-2013	Bene Future Tree Programme, which innovatively incorporates employees into the company's sustainability activities.
2013	No tropical veneers used at all in Bene's standard range
2014	FSC® certification at Bene

Table 48 – Measures implemented successfully

5.3.2.2. GOALS THAT HAVE NOT BEEN ACHIEVED OR MEASURES NOT IMPLEMENTED

It was not possible to implement some of the goals and measures from the Sustainability Report 10/11 on account of the difficult economic situation in recent years, despite the best planning and some intense effort.

- Expand the existing lighting control system to the old hall areas in two phases.
- Achieve certification of the existing safety & health management system in line with international standard OHSAS 18001 : 2007
- Replacement of the emergency oil boiler with a wood chip boiler for power generation.
- Increase the share of certified fabrics (EU Flower, Nordic Swan).
- Increase the share of certified veneers.

6. APPENDIX

6.1. ABOUT THE REPORT

This is Bene's second Sustainability Report. The last Sustainability Report to be published was for Bene AG in summer 2011.

The Report was prepared in accordance with the Sustainability Reporting Standards ("Core" option) in the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI).

First of all this involved updating the figures reported in this based on the existing Sustainability Report. The next step was to gather additional new ecological and social issues which are seen to be especially relevant to the furniture industry and/or Bene. The topics identified were discussed and we then collectively determined which aspects are highly relevant for the environment and/or stakeholders and should therefore form part of the Report. We also checked which issues ought to be included in the report for their current economic relevance.

We are planning to publish a comprehensive sustainability report every 3 years. This Report has not been subject to any external review.
In order to identify the target groups for this Report the stakeholder overview prepared with the Sustainability team in 2011 was revised and the target groups that will be particularly interested in this Report were identified: Employees, clients, owners, trade partners, municipalities, communities.

The data given is based on the Bene management system's data. Only in exceptional cases were estimations made, and these are clearly stated in the report.

The male form has been used for many of the descriptions of people and roles for easier reading, but these do of course also cover the female form.

The original version of this Sustainability Report is in German.

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6.2. IMPRINT

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office@bene.com

VAT ID ATU70065136
FN 444783v
ÖNACE (NACE)[1]:
C 31.0.1 Manufacture of office and shop furniture;
C 31.0.9 Manufacture of other furniture;
G 46.4.7 Wholesale of furniture, carpets and lighting equipment;
G 46.6.5 Wholesale of office furniture
EAC: 6, 23, 29, 35
GLN[2]: 9008390154878

Geocoordinates:
Latitude: 47,94400; Longitude: 14,81300 (http://gpso.de/maps/Bene)

Year of establishment: 1790

Owner:
BGO Beteiligungsverwaltungs GmbH (100%)

Executive Board:
Jörg Schuschnig, Operations and Finance
Michael Fried, Sales and Marketing

Objectives	Jörg Schuschnig
Sustainability	Thomas Riegler
Environmental Management	Thomas Riegler
Waste management	Manuela Zebenholzer
Emergency management:	Kurt Eichhorn
Human Resources management	Martin Zehetgruber
CoC	Thomas Riegler

Table 49 – Contact(s)

Report contents	Jörg Schuschnig Thomas Riegler
Concept	Angelika Molk Birgit Rottermanner Thomas Riegler
Layout, images, tables	Birgit Rottermanner Thomas Riegler
Editorial team	Angelika Molk Birgit Rottermanner Manuela Zebenholzer Kurt Eichhorn Ulrike Pfiel Reinhard Gleiß Thomas Riegler
photos	Andrea Hirsch Various Bene employees

Table 50 – Responsibilities

[1] Statistical Classification of Economic Activities in the European Community (FR: Nomenclature statistique des activités économiques dans la Communauté européenne)
[2] Global Location Number

6.2.1. SYSTEM LIMITS

If not specified in the texts, tables or diagrams, this report is based on the following system limits: Economic and employee figures refer to the entire Bene Group (including subsidiaries).

Environmental data refers to the production site in Waidhofen/Ybbs. This covers 100% of production as this is the only production site.

Image 157 – Victoria Schodl, Michaela Rücker and Daniela Sitz (Bene Vienna employees)

6.2.2. REPORTING PERIOD

The reporting periods are the financial years of the former Bene AG (1 February to 31 January of the following year) or the calendar years (= Bene GmbH's financial years).

Figures are presented with a three or five-year trend and where possible are correlated with the figures from the last Sustainability Report 10/11. Any deviations from the reporting period are stated in the relevant chapter.

Image 158 – Verena Großauer (Sales Assistant)

Contact:
For questions on this report please contact:
Thomas Riegler
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office@bene.com

I SEE MYSELF AS A COORDINATOR BETWEEN THE DIVISIONS

INTERVIEW WITH KURT EICHHORN (SAFETY OFFICER AT BENE)

WHAT IS YOUR DAILY WORK DAY LIKE, AND HOW IS THE COOPERATION BETWEEN COLLEAGUES AND EXECUTIVE MANAGEMENT?

I try to be at the plant each day so that all employees have a contact available straight away if any potential hazard is identified. In principle I look to fix any problems as quickly as possible. My job is to seek out approaches to solutions and to develop these into a satisfactory solution for everyone with the employees. It's very important for me that measures which

relate to safety are implemented as soon as possible; I see myself as a coordinator between the divisions responsible here. Cooperation with my colleagues is very good as a result of my solution-based approach to problems. Not only do I have complete support in my activities from executive management, but I also get suggestions put forward continuously with the aim of making our company a safer place.

IS BENE A MODEL COMPANY WHEN IT COMES TO OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY?

In our region (Mostviertel) we have a circle of safety officers where the relevant safety representatives from the bigger companies can meet regularly and discuss their experiences. We also carry out benchmarking with these companies, and are among the companies with very low rates of occupational accidents here. Seen this way you could describe us as a
model company, but you need to keep on improving each and every day, especially when it comes to occupational safety.

WHAT SAFETY MEASURES ARE PLANNED OVER THE NEXT FEW YEARS?

On top of the daily challenges we are also going to have our safety management certified. We are striving to achieve ISO 45001 here.

WHY DO YOU WORK FOR BENE? WHAT DO YOU FIND EXCITING ABOUT BENE?

All employees are treated with a lot of respect at Bene and you never feel that you are just a number. Being able to collaborate on some interesting and highly varied tasks so that my work doesn't become routine is important for me. Being able to work in a company that provides innovative office solutions and thereby makes everyday working lives easier, safer and more appealing for its customers is particularly rewarding for anyone working as a safety officer.

6.3. GRI INDEX

The Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) cooperates[3] closely with companies, NGOs, state institutions and various stakeholders. GRI has developed guidelines for the reporting on sustainability which consider all important economic, ecological and social aspects. This standard has now been established worldwide, which makes comparison easier. However, the use of the GRI-index is voluntary.

[3] www.globalreporting.org

The following table shows the connection between this Sustainability Report and the guidelines of the GRI Index G4. The common features with the "Ten Principles" of the UN Global Compact[4] and with the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises[5] have also been outlined.

[4] The world's largest corporate sustainability initiative ww.unglobalcompact.org

[5] The objective of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) is to promote policy which improves the lives of people around the world from an economic and social perspective. http://www.oecd.org/berlin/

Key:
- extensively outlined in the Report
- partially reported
- not reported
- not relevant or not applicable

- UN Global Compact Principles
- OECD Guidelines

GRI	Description		Chapter / page	
Strategy and analysis				
G4-1	Statement from the most senior decision-maker of the organisation.	●	Foreword: 1.2	page 3; page 10
G4-2	Key impacts, risks, opportunities	●	1.1.4; 1.3; 5.1.2	page 8; page 12; page 78
Organisation profile				
G4-3	Name of the organisation	●	1.1; 6.2	page 6; page 88
G4-4	Key brands, products and services	●	1.1.2; 3	page 8; page 33
G4-5	Location of organisation's headquarters	●	1.1; 6.2	page 6; page 88
G4-6	Countries	●	1.5	page 16
G4-7	Ownership and legal form	●	1.1; 6.2	page 6; page 88
G4-8	Markets served	●	1.5	page 16
G4-9	Scale of the organisation (employees, operations, total capitalisation, quantity of products or services provided)	●	1.1.3; 1.5; 2.2	page 8; page 16; page 20
G4-10 ⬢	Employees by employment contract, employment type and gender; management	●	2.2	page 20
G4-11 ⬢⬢	Percentage of all employees covered by collective bargaining agreements	●	2.5	page 26
G4-12	Organisation's supply chain	●	4.1	page 58
G4-13	Significant changes during the reporting period	●	Foreword: 5.1	page 3; page 78
G4-14	Precautionary approach or principle	●	3.5; 4.6; 5.1	page 52; page 71; page 78
G4-15 to 16	Externally developed economic, environmental and social charters, principles, or other initiatives to which the organisation subscribes or which it endorses	●	2.7; 4.2.9; 6.4	page 31; page 67; page 92
G4-17	Consolid. decision, annual financial statements, balance sheet: report coverage	●	-	-
G4-18	Determination of the report content and the aspect boundaries	●	1.3; 6.1	page 12; page 88
G4-19 to 21	Material aspects	●	1.3; 4.2	page 12; page 60
G4-22 to 23	Effect of any restatements of information provided in previous reports, and the reasons for such restatements; changes from previous reporting periods	●	6.2.1	page 88
Stakeholder engagement				
G4-24 to 27	Stakeholder engagement	●	1.4	page 14
Report profile				
G4-28	Reporting period	●	6.2.2	page 79
G4-29	Date of previous report	●	6.2.2	page 79
G4-30	Reporting cycle	●	6.1	page 88
G4-31	Contact point for questions regarding the report or its contents	●	6.2	page 88
G4-32	Report option in accordance with GRI	●	-	-
G4-33	External quality assurance for the report	●	-	-
Corporate governance				
G4-34 to 55	Incorporation, tasks and decisions of the highest governance body	●	1.2	page 10
Ethics and integrity				
G4-56 to 58	Description of the organisation's principles, standards and norms	●	1.2; 2.5; 5.2	page 10; page 26; page 78

GRI	Description		Chapter / page	
Economic performance indicators				
G4-EC1 to 7	Direct economic value generated and distributed; financial implications for the organisation's activities due to climate change and the actions taken; pension plans; financial assistance from governments; standard entry level wages; local management; infrastructure investments; economic impacts	●	-	-
G4-EC9	Proportion of spending on local suppliers at significant locations of operation	●	4.1.2	page 58
Environmental performance indicators				
G4-EN1	Total materials used	●	4.1.5	page 59
G4-EN2	Secondary raw materials as a percentage of total materials used (recycled material)	●	3.1.2	page 40
G4-EN3	Energy consumption within the organisation	●	4.2.1; 4.6	page 61; page 71
G4-EN4	Energy consumption outside of the organisation	●	4.6	page 71
G4-EN5	Energy intensity (degree of energy used)	●	-	-
G4-EN6	Reduction of energy consumption (energy conservation measures)	●	5.3.2	page 84
G4-EN7	Reductions in energy requirements of products and services	●	-	-
G4-EN8 to 10	Total water withdrawal by source	●	4.2.6	page 65
G4-EN11 to 14	Operational sites managed in, or adjacent to, protected areas and areas of high biodiversity value outside protected areas; impacts	●	-	-
G4-EN15 to 17	Direct, indirect and other greenhouse gas emissions	●	4.6	page 71
G4-EN18	GHG emissions intensity	●	-	-
G4-EN19	Reduction of greenhouse gas emissions	●	5.3.2	page 84
G4-EN20	Emissions of ozone-depleting substances	●	4.6	page 71
G4-EN21	NOx, SOx, and other significant air emissions	●	4.2.1.2; 4.2.5	page 62; page 64
G4-EN22	Total water discharge	●	4.2.6	page 65
G4-EN23	Total weight of waste by type and disposal method	●	4.4	page 68
G4-EN24	Total number and volume of significant spills	●	no spills present	
G4-EN25	Weight of transported, imported, exported, or treated waste	●	no waste is treated or transported	
G4-EN26	Identity, size, protected status, and biodiversity value of water bodies and related habitats significantly affected by the organisation's discharges of water and runoff	●	no waste water is introduced directly into water bodies - introduction into the sewerage system	
G4-EN27	Extent of impact mitigation of environmental impacts of products and services	●	3.1	page 36
G4-EN28	Percentage of products sold and their packaging materials that are reclaimed by category	●	4.4.3	page 69
G4-EN29	Monetary value of significant fines and total number of non-monetary sanctions for non-compliance with environmental laws and regulations	●	no sanctions or fines were imposed	
G4-EN30	Significant environmental impacts of transporting items and people	●	4.5; 4.6	page 70; page 71
G4-EN31	Total environmental protection expenditures	●	-	-
G4-EN32	Percentage of suppliers that were screened using environmental criteria	●	4.1	page 58
G4-EN33	Significant actual and potential negative environmental impacts in the supply chain	●	1.3; 4.1	page 12; page 58
G4-EN34	Number of grievances about environmental impacts filed, addressed, and re-solved through formal grievance mechanisms	●	there were no grievances	
Social performance indicators				
G4-LA1	Employee turnover	●	2.2	page 20
G4-LA2	Benefits provided to full-time employees that are not provided to temporary or part-time employees	●	no distinction made	
G4-LA3	Parental leave and return to work and retention rates after parental leave	●	-	-
G4-LA4	Minimum notice periods regarding operational changes	●	2.6.5	page 29
G4-LA5	Percentage of total workforce represented in health and safety committees	●	2.3	page 21
G4-LA6	Type of injury and rates of injury, occupational diseases, lost days, and absentee-ism, and total number of work-related fatalities	●	2.2	page 20
G4-LA7	Workers with high incidence or high risk of diseases related to their occupation	●	2.3	page 21
G4-LA8	Health and safety topics covered in formal agreements with trade unions	●	No occupational safety topics dealt with via trade unions - regulated by statute	
G4-LA9	Annual training of employees	●	2.4	page 22
G4-LA10 to 11	Average hours of training per year per employee by gender, and by employee category; skills management	●	2.4	page 22
G4-LA12	Composition of governance bodies	●	-	-
G4-LA13	Ratio of basic salary and remuneration of women to basic salary and remunera-tion of men	●	-	-
G4-LA14 to 15	Percentage of new suppliers that were screened using labour practices criteria; negative impacts for labour practices in the supply chain	●	4.1	page 58
G4-LA16	Number of grievances about labour practices	●	there were no grievances	

GRI	Description		Chapter / page	
Human rights				
G4-HR1 to 2	Investment agreements and contracts that include human rights clauses or that underwent human rights screening; training	●	-	-
G4-HR3	Total number of incidents of discrimination and corrective actions taken	●	no incidents known/reported	
G4-HR4 to 6	Operations and suppliers identified in which the right to exercise freedom of association may be violated; child labour; forced or compulsory labour	●	4.1	page 58
G4-HR7	Percentage of security personnel trained in the organisation's human rights policies or procedures	●	-	-
G4-HR8	Total number of incidents of violations involving rights of indigenous peoples and actions taken	●	not applicable	
G4-HR9 to 12	Human rights or human rights impact assessments; reviews	●	2; 4.1	page 19; page 58
Society				
G4-SO1 to 2	Local communities	●	2.7; 4.1.2	page 31; page 58
G4-SO3 to 5	Risks related to corruption and anti-corruption measures	●	5.2.4	page 79
G4-SO6	Political contributions by country and recipient/beneficiary	●	We do not sponsor or financially support parties or politicians in any way, shape or form	
G4-SO7	Anti-competitive behaviour, anti-trust, and monopoly practices	●	there were no proceedings	
G4-SO8	Fines and total number of non-monetary sanctions for non-compliance with laws and regulations	●	there were no fines or non-monetary sanctions imposed	
G4-SO9 to 10	Suppliers that were screened using criteria for impacts on society and actions taken	●	-	-
G4-SO11	Number of grievances about impacts on society filed, addressed, and resolved through formal grievance mechanisms	●	there were no grievances	
Product responsibility				
G4-PR1 to 2	Assessment of the impacts of products	●	3.2; 3.3; 3.4	page 42; page 46; page 48
G4-PR3 to 4	Product and service labelling	●	3.6	page 45
G4-PR5	Results of surveys measuring customer satisfaction	●	5.3.2	page 84
G4-PR6	Sale of banned or disputed products	●	Bene does not produce or trade in products of this type	
G4-PR7	Non-compliance with regulations and voluntary codes concerning marketing communications, including advertising, promotion, and sponsorship	●	all regulations and codes of conduct are complied with	
G4-PR8	Protecting customer privacy	●	there were no grievances	
G4-PR9	Fines for non-compliance with laws and regulations concerning the provision and use of products and services	●	there were no grievances	

Table 51 – GRI Index

6.4. MEMBERSHIPS

Bene is part of society. Within this society, associations and organisations actively contribute to a strong exchange of knowledge.

We are members of the following associations or national and international interest groups, in which Bene or a Bene employee ...

- holds a leading office
- participates in projects or committees
- provides strong financial support exceeding the average membership fees
- attaches strategic importance to the membership.

Bene is a member of the following associations, clubs, companies or interest groups:

6.4.1. UN GLOBAL COMPACT[1]

The United Nations Global Compact is a strategic policy initiative for companies which demonstrate that their activities and strategies comply with the 10 universally accepted principles (covering human rights, labour standards, environmental protection and anti-corruption).

Bene has been a member of the UN Global Compact since 2010

6.4.2. FISP FURNITURE INDUSTRY SUSTAINABLE PROGRAMME[2]

In 2009, Bene was certified by FIRA (Furniture Industry Research Association) within the "Furniture Industry Sustainable Programme" and since then has been a full member of the FISP.

6.4.3. PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATION OF THE AUSTRIAN TIMBER INDUSTRY / AUSTRIAN FURNITURE INDUSTRY[3]

The professional industry represents the interests of around 1,500 companies in the Austrian timber industry. Its tasks include lobbying, European and international networking, education and training, negotiating collective bargaining agreements, standardisation as well as research and development.

In the areas of education, marketing and R&D in particular we support our members' interests as a sponsor of the private timber college Holztechnikum Kuchl and the marketing organisation proHolz, and also as a major sponsor of the timber research and testing institute Holzforschung Austria.

[1] www.unglobalcompact.org
[2] http://www.fira.co.uk/
[3] http://www.moebel.at/; www.holzindustrie.at

6.4.4. RESPACT AUSTRIAN BUSINESS COUNCIL FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT[4]

respACT(Austrian Business Council for Sustainable Development) is the leading company platform for Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and sustainable development in Austria.

6.4.5. PLATFORM FOR INNOVATION MANAGEMENT (PFI)[5]

The Platform for Innovation Management (PFI) is the leading innovation management organisation in Austria, with 184 members currently from industry, SMEs, research and science. Since 2003 the PFI has become the largest community for users, experts and parties interested in innovation management.

6.4.6. ZUKUNFTSAKADEMIE MOSTVIERTEL (ACADEMY FOR CONTINUED

Image 159 – Stefan Schulze (Product manager)

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN LOWER AUSTRIA)[6]

The Zukunftsakademie (Futures Academy) Mostviertel was founded in 2009 by leading companies in the region and is organised as a not-for-profit organisation. More than 100 members from industry as well as local communities and organisations close to industry support this initiative. The activities are aimed at boosting the economic region and promoting its development.

6.4.7. SOCIETY FOR THE PROMOTION AND MODERNISATION OF PRODUCTION TECHNOLOGIES IN AUSTRIA (VPTÖ)[7]

The Vereinigung zur Förderung der Modernisierung der Produktionstechnologie in Österreich (Society for the Promotion and Modernisation of Production Technologies in Austria) (VPTÖ) is a platform that operates across different industries. It includes industrial companies, research bodies, institutions and individuals (scientists, management staff).

[4] http://www.respact.at/
[5] http://www.pfi.or.at/
[6] http://www.zukunftsakademie.or.at/
[7] http://vptoe.at/

Image 161 – Roman Haider (Panel-cutting/edging team)

6.4.8. IBA INDUSTRIEVERBAND BÜRO UND ARBEITSWELT (INDUSTRIAL ASSOCIATION OF THE OFFICE AND WORKPLACE)[8]

(formerly the Association of the Office Furniture Industry in Germany (BSO)). The IBA represents the general, professional and economic interests of the member companies on a national (German) and international level.

6.4.9. FEMB[9]

Established in 1972 the FEMB is the European Federation and central point of communication for office furniture associations and manufacturers.

As a representative of the Austrian furniture industry, Bene is represented in the Technical Committee and the Board meetings.

6.4.10. AUSTRIAN STANDARDS INSTITUTE (ON)[10]

Bene is active in various Austrian standardisation bodies (e.g.: ON-K 072 furniture; ON-AG 072 03 furniture surfaces; ON-AG 072 08 upholstered furniture; ON-AG 072 12 office furniture).

6.4.11. REGIONAL INDUSTRIAL ORGANISATION OF LOWER AUSTRIA[11]

As an interest group, the Regional Industrial Organisation of Lower Austria aims to represent its members' concerns at the regional level and to boost Lower Austria as a place for business.

6.4.12. ICC AUSTRIA – AUSTRIA INTERNATIONAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE[12]

The ICC Austria represents Austria's international economy within the ICC (International Chamber of Commerce) and advises companies in their daily work.

[8] https://iba.online/
[9] http://femb.org/
[10] https://www.austrian-standards.at/home/
[11] https://niederoesterreich.iv.at/de/
[12] https://www.icc-austria.org/en/Home.htm

6.4.13. OTHER MEMBERSHIPS

- British Council of Offices (BCO)[13]
- British Institute of Facility Management (BIFM)[14]
- Netzwerk Unternehmen für Familien (Companies for families network)[15]
- Austrian Business Council UAE[16]
- AHK – Dansk-Tysk Handelskammer (German/Danish Chamber of Commerce)[17]
- Creative Industries Styria[18]
- Architonic + Designboom[19]

Image 160 – Franz Spreitzer (Drilling & milling team)

- FMN - Vereinigung Facility Management Nederland[20]
- Stylepark[21]
- Logistics Network Association[22]
- Innsbruck Technology and Commercial Park
- HandelSchweiz[23]
- Business Upper Austria[24]
- KSV 1870 (Kreditschutzverband von 1870)[25]
- IFMA (International Facility Management Association - Belgium Chapter)[26]
- AKV Europa (Alpine Credit Association)[27]
- Junge Wirtschaft[28]
- büroszene.ch[29]
- Headquarters Austria[30]
- Worktech Academy[31]
- Circle for Relations Austria (CIRA)[32]

[13] http://www.bco.org.uk/
[14] http://www.bifm.org.uk/bifm/home
[15] https://www.unternehmen-fuer-familien.at/
[16] http://austrianbc.ae/
[17] http://www.handelskammer.dk/
[18] http://cis.at/de
[19] https://www.architonic.com/de/microsite/designboom/5205920
[20] https://www.fmn.nl/home
[21] https://www.stylepark.com/de/
[22] http://www.vnl.at/
[23] http://handel-schweiz.com/de/
[24] https://www.biz-up.at/
[25] https://www.ksv.at/
[26] https://www.ifma.be/home
[27] https://www.akv.at/
[28] https://www.jungewirtschaft.at/
[29] http://www.bueroszene.ch/de
[30] http://www.headquarters-austria.at/
[31] http://www.worktechacademy.com/
[32] http://www.cira.at/

6.5. DIRECTORIES

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