



# ČSOB CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY REPORT 2024



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# About the Report

This report reflects the sustainability strategy of **ČSOB Financial Group**, and the activities intended to positively impact society and the communities in which it operates. It contains selected data on sustainability and is intended for anyone interested in this topic: investors, colleagues, clients, sustainability experts, business partners, and non-profit organisations.

For 2024, in addition to the **Corporate Social Responsibility Report**, ČSOB also issued a **Sustainability Statement in the ČSOB Annual Report** based on the Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive and in accordance with the European Sustainability Reporting Standards. The Corporate Social Responsibility Report primarily focuses on providing more detailed information than what is included in the Sustainability Statement and covers additional topics that have not been identified as material based on the double materiality approach.

For a comprehensive understanding of the implementation of sustainability in the ČSOB Financial Group, we recommend reading this report together with the Sustainability Statement.

Most of the data referenced in the report was collected between 1 October 2023 and 30 September 2024. For more data on the activities of the ČSOB Financial Group, please refer to the annual reports of the individual entities as well as the Sustainability Report of the KBC Group, of which ČSOB is a member, and the Sustainability Statement in the KBC Group Annual Report.



## OTHER REPORTS BY THE ČSOB FINANCIAL GROUP:

[Annual Reports of Individual Entities](#)

[KBC Sustainability Report](#)



## Introduction by **Daniel Kollár**



**DANIEL KOLLÁR**

CEO  
of ČSOB Financial Group

### **Dear readers,**

Our country, as well as Central Europe as a whole, has been going through strange times. The conflict unfolding east of our borders has carried on unabated. The statements by world leaders are steering the course of both economic performance and core values, and the entire world depends on them.

The challenges facing Slovakia are often very different from those we are used to in modern society. We see people questioning our democracy and the values on which it is based. The bending of facts, knowledge, and the very foundations we stand on has become a normal part of our everyday lives.

However, there is one significant caveat. Even if some opinions are louder than others, it doesn't necessarily mean they have the support of the majority. From what I've gathered in meetings with my colleagues, I can confidently state that we are a country full of people who strongly refuse to let Slovakia stagnate—culturally, environmentally and certainly not economically. We are not indifferent. And I, for one, am glad to live in a country where the citizens care about what is taking place around them. It makes me happy that they don't act like it's someone else's business; after all, they pay taxes and deductions so that the state can use these to take care of its responsibilities. On the contrary—they are also taking action where the state, for various reasons, has refrained.

This is also something we actively strive for at our company. We have placed social responsibility at the very top of our value ladder. I will mention, for instance, the Digital Smart Grant for increasing digital literacy. Last year alone, we allocated EUR 200,000 to projects that will help our citizens keep up with modern technology.

We are not apathetic toward climate issues, as these are challenges that neither our local communities nor the global population can escape. We want to lead by example, which is why we have set ourselves the goal of becoming carbon neutral by 2050. Today, we are already helping businesses with the transition to a more sustainable way of operation.

I believe these efforts are of great significance and that we can contribute, even with the smallest of steps, to making our country run more efficiently, to kick-starting its economy and driving innovation, but also to providing a more seamless customer service experience.

It is my hope, valued readers, that we continue to be engaged with what is happening in our surroundings and, ultimately, what is happening in Slovakia. You will discover our reasons for why it's important and how well we are succeeding in fulfilling our promises on the following pages of the ČSOB Financial Group CSR Report.



## Koloman Buzgó on Sustainability



**KOLOMAN BUZGÓ**

Local Sustainability General Manager

**Dear readers,**

We have become a little greener once again. It has been less than three years since KBC presented its first Climate Report. We have committed ourselves to challenging targets and to reducing emissions in sectors financed by our bank, whether in the energy sector, the steel industry, cement and aluminium production, the construction and building industry, as well as the automobile and agricultural sectors. These are all energy-intensive sectors with the largest carbon footprint.

When it comes to sustainability, we are ambitious. We want to increase our portfolio in the energy sector and promote renewable energies. We aim high with solutions such as heat pumps, energy storage and management systems, wind turbines, and photovoltaics. We are seeing a lot of interest from our clients, especially due to uncertain energy prices.

I can honestly say that we are succeeding on the path to social responsibility. We are the proud recipient of the Euromoney Award for Excellence 2024 in the category of Slovakia's Best Bank for Corporate Responsibility. We have partnered with GreenOmeter to launch a digital platform to calculate carbon footprints and offer other ESG services to help clients in their transition to sustainable business models. We started providing consumer loans for environmental purposes, with the opportunity to get a better interest rate when investing in energy-saving solutions. We continued our well-established programmes such as green lending, including initiatives financed under the InvestEU guarantee schemes, investing through Responsible Funds, ESG consultancy, energy-certified mortgages, and collision insurance coverage specifically for electric vehicles. We have expanded our insurance products to include insurance for increasingly popular photovoltaics.

I have been watching closely how other large businesses approach sustainability. Their methods are varied. We will have to wait and see what impact individual corporate decisions will have on our climate.

ČSOB is a group with the ambition to deliver solutions that make the lives of our clients smart every day. But we haven't stopped there. I am proud of my colleagues for embracing social responsibility at a European level.

# 2024 at a Glance



# Sustainability Targets

AS A MEMBER OF THE KBC GROUP, ČSOB FINANCIAL GROUP IS COMMITTED TO:

REDUCING THE DIRECT CARBON  
FOOTPRINT OF KBC GROUP BY 80%  
FROM 2015 TO 2030

**We achieved a 68%  
reduction in 2024**

100% USE OF ELECTRICITY  
FROM RENEWABLE SOURCES  
BY 2030

**We achieved this target in 2021**

ZERO DIRECT COAL  
FINANCING BY 2030

**We achieved this target  
in 2021 and have had  
no new exposure since**



# Euromoney Magazine Award

**ČSOB** cares about how Slovak society is doing. We strive to ensure that our daily activities contribute to the sustainable progress of our communities. Our efforts have been recognised by the renowned **Euromoney** magazine, which named ČSOB the best bank in Slovakia in corporate social responsibility for 2024.

As part of the award process, the Euromoney jury evaluated the bank's approach and activities in diversity inclusion, reducing the environmental impact of its own activities, creating a healthy work environment, initiatives to support local communities, and adherence to ethical principles in business.

In particular, Euromoney highlighted ČSOB's activities in support and development of local entrepreneurship, the promotion of science through our general partnership with the European Researchers' Night, and the launch of the Digital Smart Grant, designed to increase digital literacy.



# Transparent Corporate Foundation

In 2024, the **ČSOB Foundation** once again successfully retained its **Transparent Corporate Foundation Certificate from the Association of Corporate Foundations and Endowments (ASFIN)**. This is an informal platform that aims to connect corporate foundation entities and thus contribute to the development of philanthropy. The ČSOB Foundation was awarded the certificate for its open approach to disclosing information about its activities in accordance with the Transparent Corporate Foundation Code.





# Team Blue Volunteer Challenge

At ČSOB, 2024 was dedicated to **volunteering**. Our traditional activities, such as the cleaning of the Ružín reservoir, the volunteer day in the High Tatras, and the Naše mesto (Our City) initiative were accompanied by the **activities of the Team Blue Challenge**—a KBC Group initiative in which colleagues from Slovakia, the Czech Republic, Belgium, Hungary, and Bulgaria all lend a hand by volunteering. We have added one additional day to the annual DobroDeň volunteer day available to ČSOB employees.

Colleagues from all over the country can volunteer whenever it suits them. The most popular activities include assisting in the revitalisation of green spaces, spending time with clients, and walking shelter dogs.





An aerial photograph of a winding asphalt road cutting through a dense, lush green forest. Two white cars are visible on the road, one in the middle and one further ahead. The image is overlaid with several white, rounded rectangular frames of varying sizes, some of which are partially cut off by the edges. The title 'Sustainability Strategy' is centered in the upper portion of the image, within one of these frames.

# Sustainability Strategy



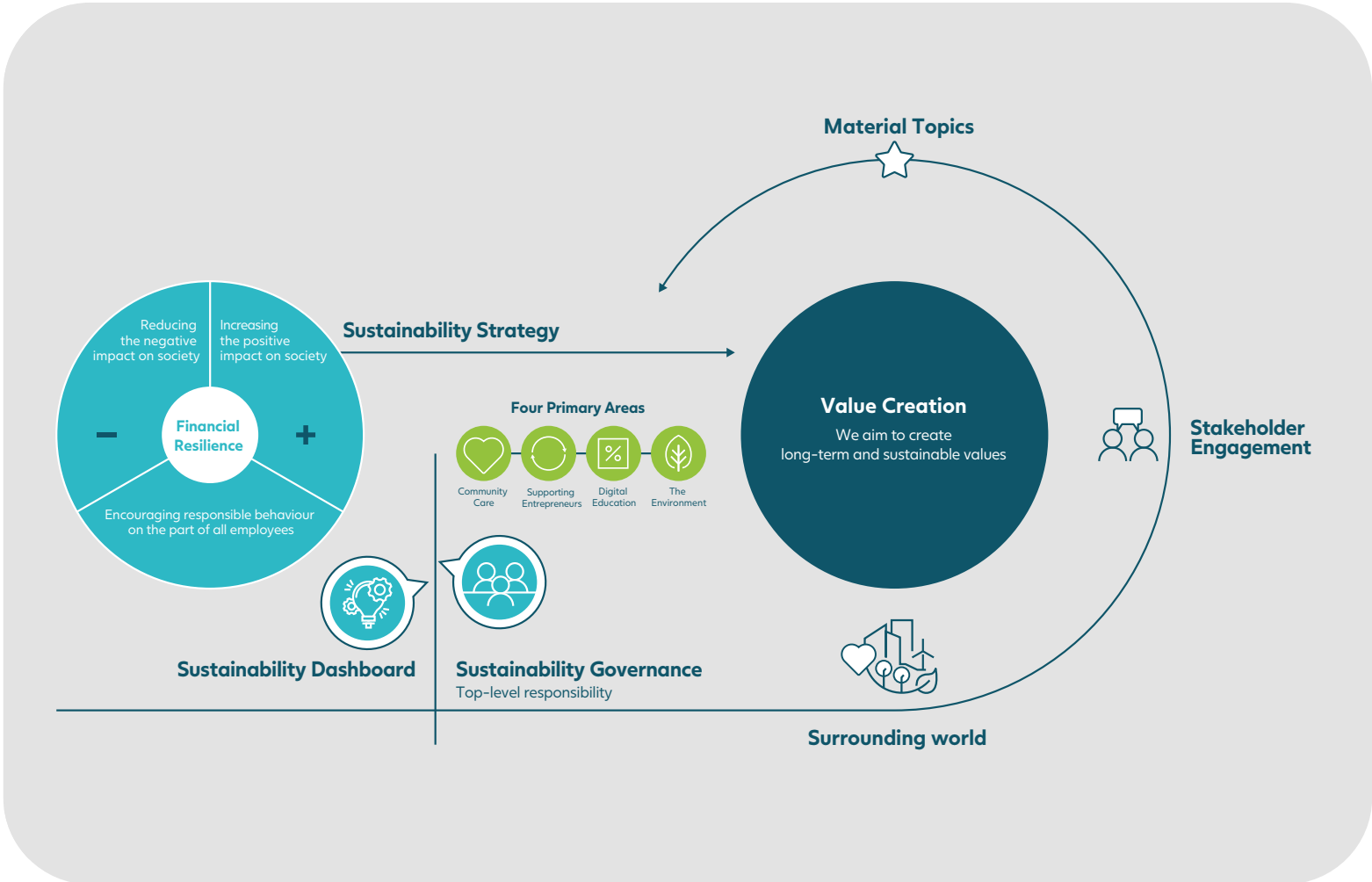
**ČSOB Financial Group** is aware of the societal importance of sustainability. That's why it is our goal to contribute to long-term value creation for the benefit of society, the Slovak economy, and all stakeholders.

Supporting the transition to a more sustainable and resilient society is therefore a key part of our corporate strategy and day-to-day operations. Our sustainability strategy defines our role in society both now and in the future. We want to work with our clients and other stakeholders not only in the short term, but especially in the long term, as change always takes time.

As a financial institution, we can create value through the financial services we provide. We support economic growth and job creation. To our employees, we offer fair remuneration, training, career development opportunities, and a safe, healthy and inclusive work environment. Achieving sustainable profits allows us to maintain stability and reinvest in our business.

At the same time, we recognise that our activities can also have a negative impact, both direct and indirect. We aim to limit the negative implications and in turn increase the positive impacts by providing more sustainable financing and supporting our clients in their sustainable transition.

The Sustainability Strategy outlines the role we want to play in society, our key pillars and objectives. Sustainability management is in place across the financial group to support the implementation of the strategy.



**ČSOB Financial Group** has implemented a sustainability strategy that emphasises our societal role and our commitment to creating value for society.

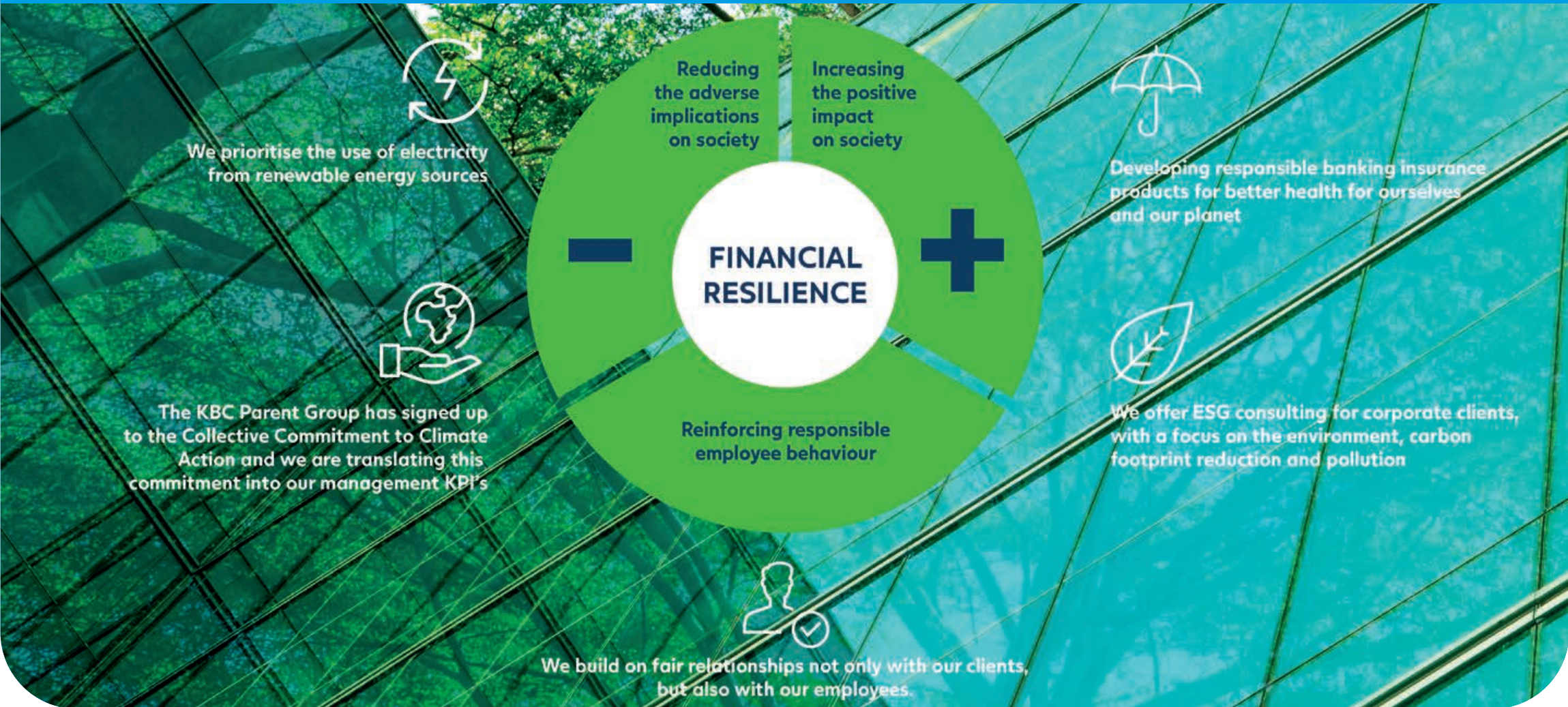
At the heart of our Sustainability Strategy is the responsibility to secure financial resilience and operate a rigorous risk management system. This ensures that we can continue to do business sustainably in the future.

**OUR STRATEGY CONSISTS OF THREE MAIN PILLARS:**

- **maximising the positive impact** of our products and services both on our society and the environment
- **minimising** or completely preventing any potential **negative consequences**
- ensuring **responsible behaviour** from all our employees

**THESE PRINCIPLES ARE EMBEDDED IN THE CORE ELEMENTS OF OUR STRATEGY:**

- **local communities and the economy:** we respect the unique context of each key market and seek to support local communities and the economy
- **people:** our sustainability strategy is driven by our colleagues, which is why we invest heavily in developing our employees' sustainability skills.





# Sustainability Management Structure

To ensure that our Sustainability Strategy is integrated across the entire ČSOB Financial Group and across all key activities, our management structure is in place across all entities. This includes top-level responsibility for the sustainability strategy, which encompasses all environmental, social and governance (ESG) topics. Decisions on our Sustainability Strategy are made at a Group-wide level, and are then implemented by dedicated teams in each entity:

- **Board of Directors/Local Sustainability Committee:** defines the Sustainability Strategy and oversees its implementation and development; this includes all ESG-related topics
- **Sustainability Manager:** communicates, implements and assumes responsibility for the Sustainability Strategy across the Group
- **Virtual Team:** a group of senior managers and sustainability experts formed to share information
- **Persons responsible for sustainability in each organisational unit:** decentralised implementation and coordination of sustainability; each unit has a designated staff member responsible for sustainability, who serves as the point of contact for the unit

## UN Global Compact

ČSOB has been a member of the UN Global Compact network since 2010 and we are one of 11 active participants from Slovakia. Our strategy focuses on 5 of the 17 global Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs):



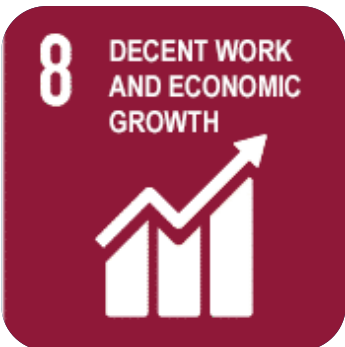
### SDG 3 – GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

We care about the work-life balance of our employees and design our products to improve healthcare, quality of life and safety.



### SDG 7 – AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY

We support local renewable energy generation and its effective usage. ČSOB has discontinued financing, insuring and investing in the direct combustion of thermal coal. We also have clear restrictions in our energy policy on other unsustainable energy solutions such as oil and gas.



### SDG 8 – DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH

We support entrepreneurs and invest in innovative solutions.



### SDG 12 – RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION

We offer banking and insurance products tailored to low-carbon and circular economy businesses while promoting responsible investing as the first and preferred investment solution.

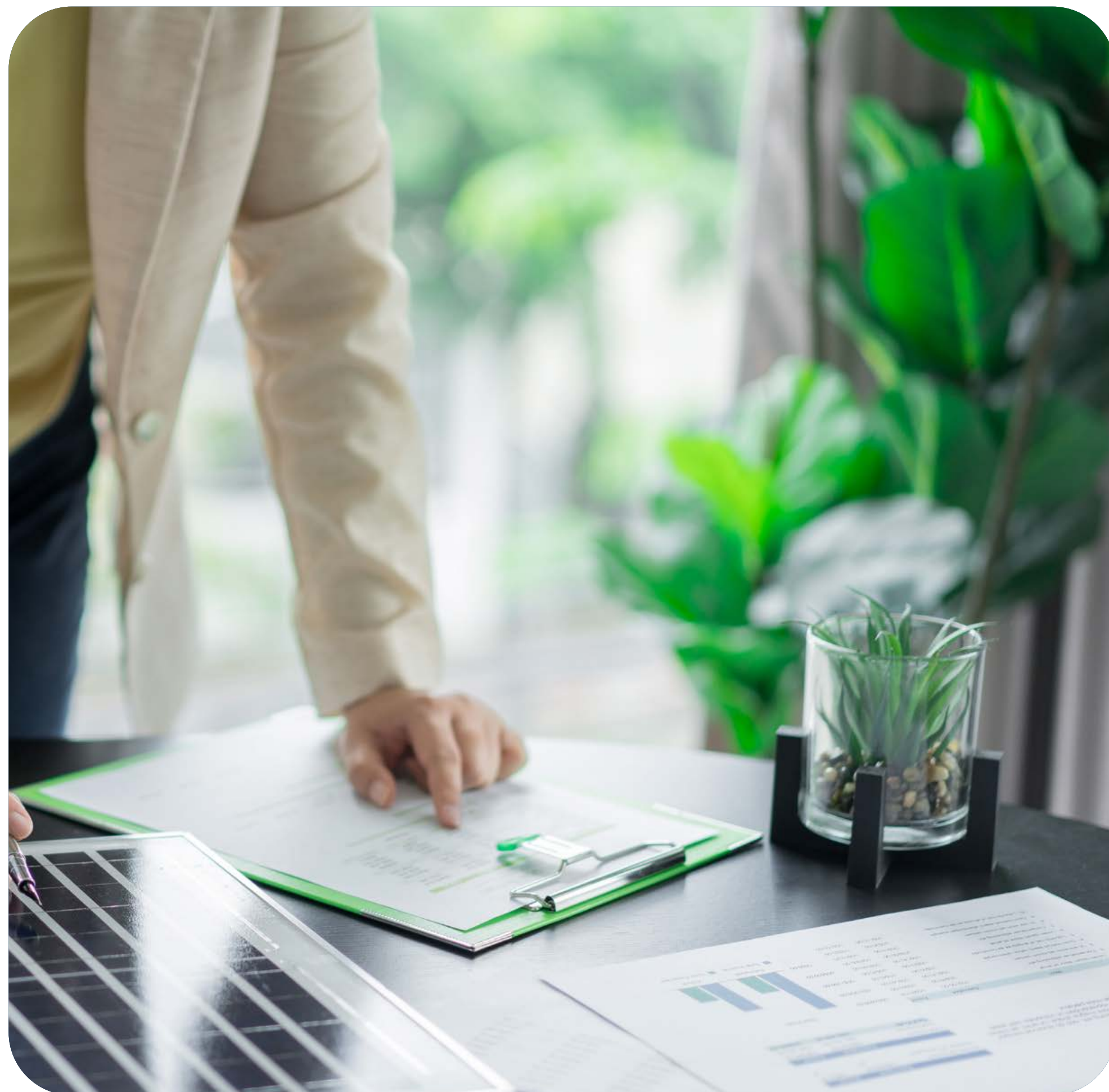


### SDG 13 – CLIMATE ACTION

We implement strong sustainability policies in key activities and, at a KBC Group level, we have set climate targets across our lending and investment portfolio to be in line with the Paris Agreement. We work with our clients as well as our investors to reduce their climate impact while striving to minimise our own environmental footprint.



# Memorandum of the Slovak Banking Association



ČSOB joined the SBA Memorandum on Sustainable Business (the Memorandum) in 2021.

As a signatory to the Memorandum, we are committed:

- **in relation to the environment:** to actively cooperate with the competent authorities in the design, preparation, implementation and enforcement of standards and procedures for achieving the energy efficiency targets for buildings as set out in the European Green Deal, to seek new ways to minimise the environmental impacts of operational activities, to further digitisation and activities that lead to a reduced carbon footprint in line with a low-carbon future economy
- **in relation to society as a whole and to our employees:** to continue increasing the transparency of the impact of our business through sustainability reporting and financial disclosures, continue to assess and evaluate assets and our relationship between the loan portfolio and the contribution of projects to sustainable investment and social responsibility, as well as taking an active approach to social responsibility principles, supporting public projects, civic initiatives and volunteer activities
- **in relation to business partners:** to apply sustainability principles not only to our own business activities but also to our suppliers and partners, and to initiate the development of a sector standard for ESG certification of corporate clients, suppliers and partners
- **in relation to clients:** to continue developing and providing modern and easily accessible financial services while offering sustainable solutions to clients, encouraging and motivating them to behave in a socially responsible manner; we plan to offer services, consultancy and green financial products, investment products, credit and loans that contribute to sustainability, making sustainable financing accessible to Slovak residents
- **in relation to authorities and institutions:** to review and assess our activities and align our business with Agenda 2050 and the related Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the Paris Agreement, the European Green Deal, and to cooperate with national and international organisations, representatives of the Slovak government, representatives of the public administration and regulators, in particular in the rational consideration of sustainable finance issues in European and domestic financial and banking regulation

The Slovak Banking Association monitors and evaluates the fulfilment of our commitments under the SBA Memorandum on Sustainable Business and Development at least once a year.



# People





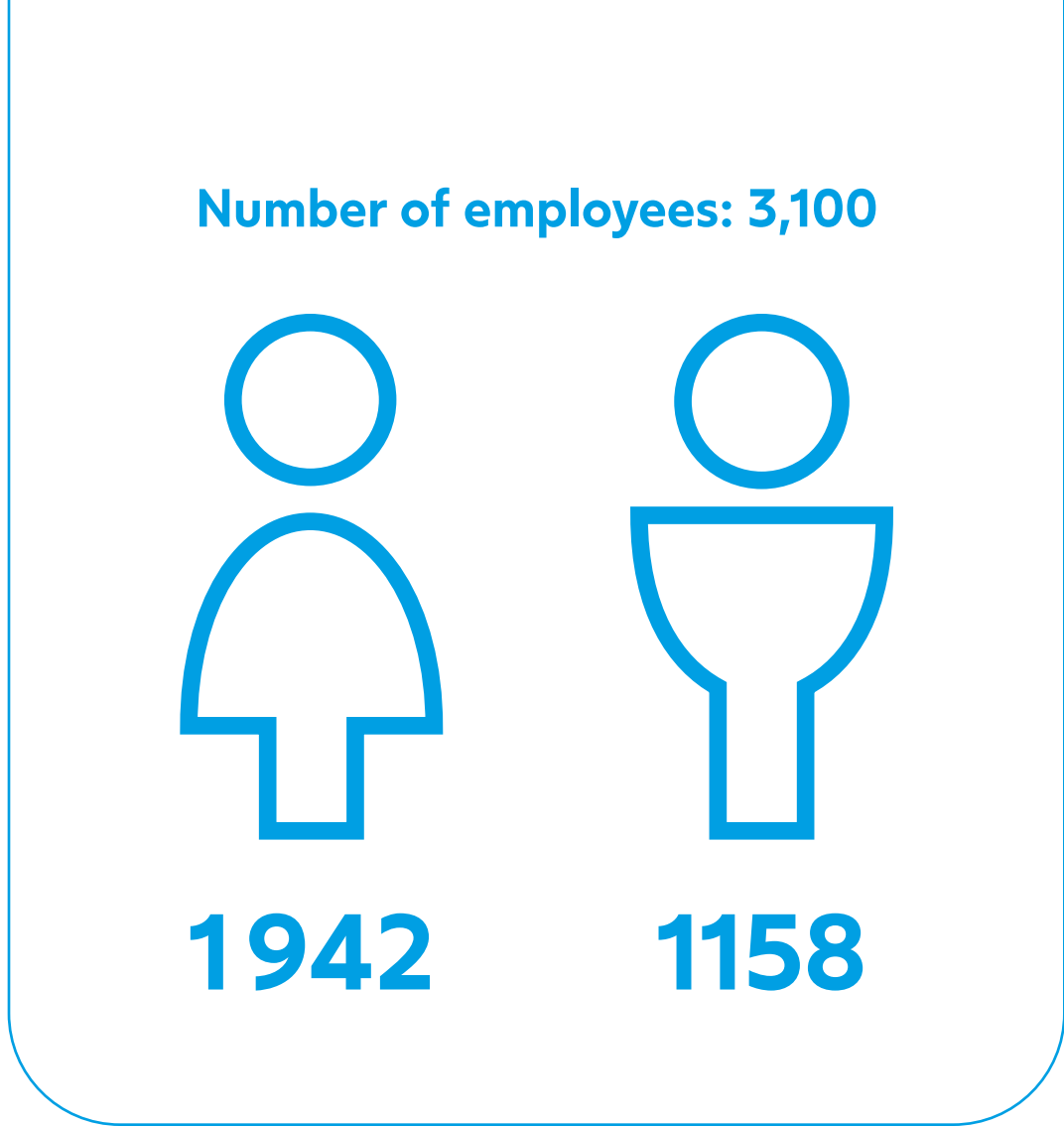
People are and always will be the greatest innovation of ČSOB. We offer our employees multiple benefits, discounted products and additional days off. We understand the importance of well-being in the workplace and a healthy work-life balance. We offer a DE-TOX programme to our coworkers featuring a series of inspirational lectures, and during the summer, employees at the HQ can do morning yoga on the green roof.

CAREER GROWTH

High-potential employees can further their education in the Talent Programme, which focuses on management and soft skills. We also prioritise the development of our managers, whether they are just starting out or have been with us for a while. For new managers, there is the Management Academy to promote skills, communication and personal effectiveness. The Managerial Talent Programme prepares existing managers for senior management positions or international career rotations.

IT UNIVERSITY

The Digi Ambassador and DIGI DNA programmes are designed to bring colleagues up to date with the latest news in banking and the digital world. Through the IT University programme, we enable employees to fulfil their career ambitions in information technology. Colleagues can take various training courses to transition into a career in IT. The programme includes training courses focused on specific IT applications or programming languages, training courses focused on software areas required in IT, and also organises internships in IT departments.



MENTORING

Mentoring at ČSOB operates on several levels. For instance, experienced managers mentor colleagues through the Talent Programme. Our employees are also active in the Duke of Edinburgh's International Award Slovakia programme.

FAMILY PROGRAMME

Parents can participate in the Family Programme while fulfilling their maternity and parental obligations. The programme offers, for instance, contract work, so that people can stay in touch with their coworkers. We communicate with employees on maternity or parental leave on a monthly basis in the form of a newsletter, which shares updates about what's happening in the company—particularly regarding employee benefits, which, of course, remain fully accessible to them.

DIVERSITY CHARTER

As of 2022, we have been one of the signatories to the Diversity Charter, a voluntary initiative by businesses to promote inclusion in the workplace. We are committed to creating and maintaining a work environment where employees feel safe regardless of their gender, age, religion or sexual orientation.



ENGAGEMENT SURVEY

Twice a year, we conduct an engagement survey, called the Pulse Check, which continuously monitors the mood in the company. We track a number of parameters across the financial group, such as the satisfaction, motivation and engagement of our people.

VOLUNTEERING

More and more colleagues at ČSOB are taking up volunteering. We have long been part of the largest corporate volunteering event, Naše mesto (Our City). In addition, we also go to the High Tatras to plant trees and clean up our forests. Colleagues from eastern Slovakia regularly clean the Ružín reservoir under the leadership of the Save Nature by Či-vas civic association. In 2024, we joined the KBC Group's Call for Volunteers, which aims not only to involve more colleagues in volunteering, but also to motivate them to donate blood and attend first aid courses. Our coworkers who decided to spend their weekend helping the organisers of the ČSOB Bratislava Marathon enjoyed our gratitude over the traditional complimentary breakfast.

ECOLLEAGUES

A virtual community of colleagues who care about the environment and sustainability. The ECOlleagues discuss various topics such as volunteering, a packaging-free household and an ethical wardrobe. At the same time, they propose and promote solutions for greener living at ČSOB.





# Responsibility





# Risk Management

The impact of climate change and other transitions are becoming increasingly visible in the ESG context. Current projections state that environmental change will cause extreme storms, flooding, pandemics, mass migration and economic crises. In addition to the physical risks, the transition to a more sustainable economy also brings other risks that could affect both clients and financial institutions. For these reasons, climate and other environmental risks are perceived as some of the main risks for ČSOB in 2024.

## WE DISTINGUISH BETWEEN TWO TYPES OF ENVIRONMENTAL RISKS:

- **Transition Risks** arise from changes associated with the transition to a low-carbon, climate-resilient or environmentally sustainable economy. Examples include policy changes (e.g. the introduction of carbon offset mechanisms, energy efficiency requirements and the promotion of the sustainable use of environmental resources), technological changes (e.g. the replacement of old technologies with new, cleaner technologies), behavioural changes (e.g. consumers or investors switching to more sustainable products and services) and increased litigation risk.
- **Physical Risks** refer to the potential financial consequences caused by physical phenomena associated with climate or environmental trends, such as changing weather patterns, rising sea levels, increasing temperatures, loss of biodiversity, resource scarcity, reduced water availability, as well as extreme weather events such as storms, flooding, wildfires or heat waves that may disrupt operations or damage property.





# Zero Corruption Tolerance

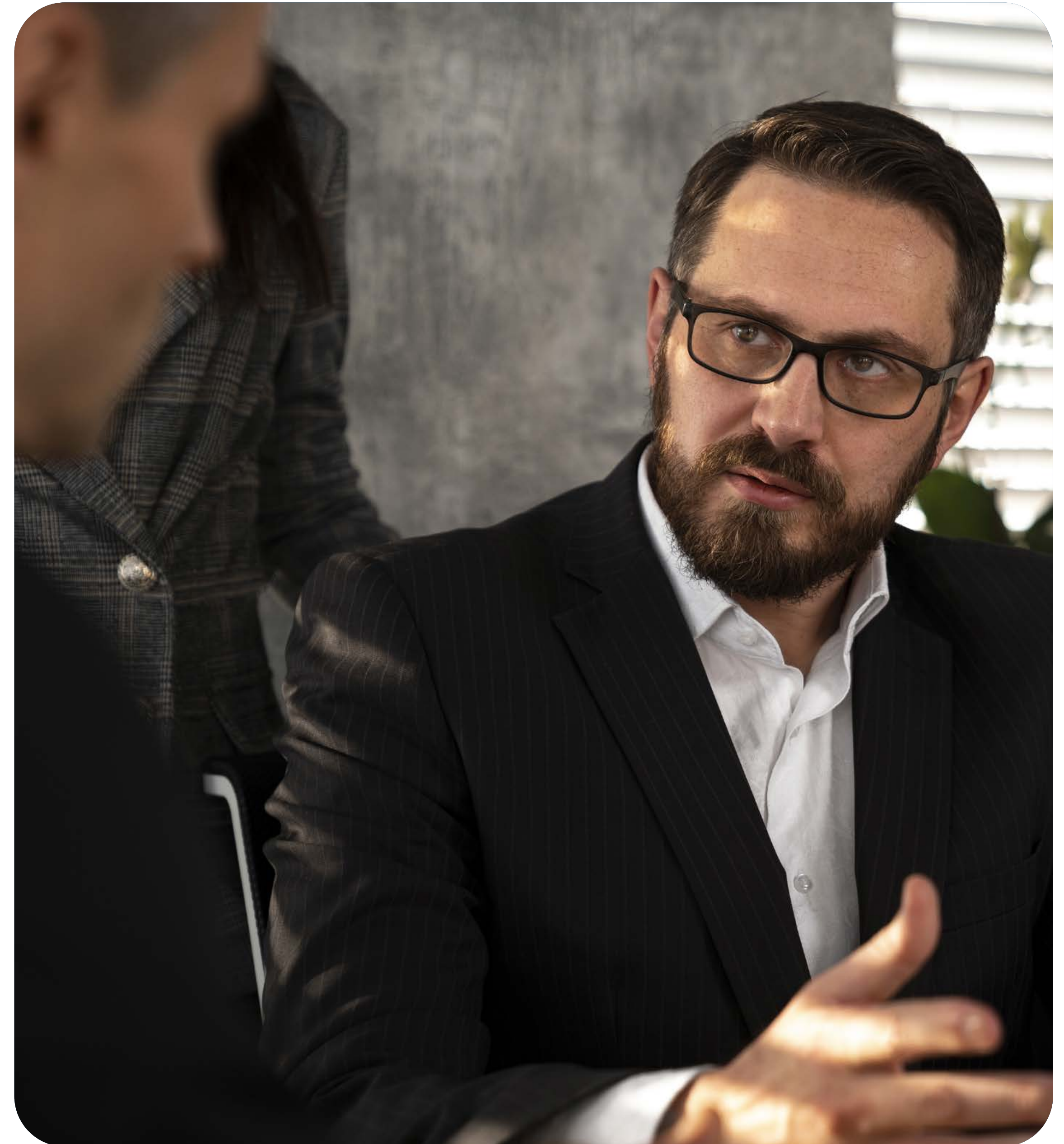
We have established a system of regular trainings, mandatory for all employees of the Financial Group. These include anti-corruption measures and a Code of Ethics. The topics we cover include protection of personal data and banking secrecy, protection against money laundering and terrorist financing, competition law, prevention of corruption and bribery, prevention of fraud and unethical behaviour, etc.

Anyone who suspects unethical or wasteful conduct or serious non-compliance with internal regulations has the opportunity to report potentially illegal conduct without fear of retribution. ČSOB guarantees the protection of the individuals concerned.

## **Our colleagues have several options for submitting a complaint:**

- using the "Report Unusual Operation or Unethical Conduct" intranet app;
- in writing, marked "Do not open—Complaint/WB". Anonymous complaints may also be submitted in this way;
- by e-mail to [whistleblowing@csob.sk](mailto:whistleblowing@csob.sk);
- KBC Group has set up a dedicated whistleblowing e mail account at [reporting@kbc.be](mailto:reporting@kbc.be).

The internal whistleblowing system is regularly communicated to employees through internal campaigns and mandatory training.





## Credibility of AI

We use AI tools in particular to work with large volumes of data on our clients. This poses ethical concerns such as the potential for bias in decision making, privacy and security of personal data, transparency in the AI operation, and ensuring accountability for the results produced using AI. The AI Act aims to address these ethical concerns by setting strict guidelines and standards for the development and deployment of AI. The Act promotes innovation while protecting fundamental rights and confidence in AI systems. In accordance with the AI Act, KBC has adopted a trusted AI framework to ensure that the output of our AI models is consistent with the values and principles of responsible corporate behaviour.

## Information Security and Cyber Risks

Digital technology plays an important role at ČSOB. It helps us run our business efficiently and connect with our clients. However, digitisation also runs the risk of potential cyber-attacks. Unfortunately, cyber attackers are now more experienced than ever when it comes to exploiting weaknesses in systems. This means that we must always be one step ahead of them. We are focused on ensuring our clients are protected from cybercrime by using a variety of proactive security checks to stop all cyber attacks before they can cause any damage.





# Sustainability



# Environmental Policy

**The ČSOB Environmental Policy** defines our values and behaviour in the field of environmental protection. We have adopted several measures and managed to reduce our CO2 emissions by 40% compared to 2015.

A key tool in reducing the amount of emissions produced has been the implementation of the ISO Management System Standards 14001:2015 and 50001:2018 for environmental protection and energy management. As a result, we have been steadily reducing our emissions since 2012.

We are continuously upgrading key building technologies to use energy as efficiently as possible, while maintaining all hygiene requirements at our workplaces. Our first photovoltaic power plant is now operating on the roof of one of our Nitra branches.

The main environmental impacts of ČSOB constitute building operations, commuting and business travel. By improving IT infrastructure and transforming workplaces into flexible operations, more and more employees have been able to work from home.

We are continuously optimising our building management system. The head office is housed in an energy-efficient building that has been awarded the **BREEAM EXCELLENT** rating.

Our colleagues are required to attend e-learning training courses on Integrated Systems of Environmental Management, Sustainability and Climate Change and Responsible Behaviour, which clarify the company's corporate social responsibility and sustainability strategies.

# Biodiversity Action Plan

In 2024, we presented the **Biodiversity Action Plan**, focusing primarily on measures at the HQ building in Bratislava and the building on Vajanského Street in Trenčín. We have a long-standing commitment to the promotion of biodiversity, and are implementing individual measures in line with the latest scientific findings on nature-friendly solutions, sustainable maintenance and organic integration of green space elements. Our Biodiversity Action Plan covers, for instance, water retention measures on the roofs of buildings, the installation of bat shelters, planting vines, as well as various lectures and workshops.

One event popular among employees is the traditional bottling of honey straight from the hives on the roof of the HQ building. In 2024, we ran a workshop on making waxed wraps and beeswax candles, as well as a workshop on making plant terrariums using mason jars from our canteen.





### BEES ON THE ROOF

Three hives are located on the roof of one of the twin HQ buildings in Bratislava. The bee-hives are tended by experts from the Centre for Environmental and Ethical Education Živica. The bottling of the honey, which has already won the gold medal awarded by the Honey Laboratory of the Slovak Academy of Sciences three times in a row, is a highly popular event at ČSOB. Our colleagues can attend the bottling procedure and watch the beekeepers at work.



### BIRD PROTECTION

On one of the twin HQ buildings, we installed stickers on the glass façade to prevent bird collisions, which are often fatal. By installing the stickers, we have been certified as a bird-protecting company.



### DIRECT CARBON FOOTPRINT OFFSET

Starting in 2021, we have begun to offset our direct emissions that cannot yet be eliminated. In this way, we aim to achieve climate neutrality in relation to our own carbon footprint. We have achieved climate neutrality by investing in high-quality climate projects while recognising that there may be gaps in the way we measure carbon credits. However, we believe it is still important to support high-quality projects that aim to protect carbon storage or increase carbon sequestration.

To this end, at the KBC Group level, we have selected high-quality projects that are certified to internationally recognised standards. In addition, we have also chosen to invest in projects that address climate change while providing additional benefits to local communities and biodiversity protection.

Please note that our due diligence process is focused on selecting projects with demon-

strated impact on real-world issues, but that this process is ultimately dependent on information provided by third parties and the availability of credit within these projects. The selected projects aim to expand the range of ecosystems by investing in the conservation of tropical rainforests as well as mangroves and peatland forests.

### TREE PLANTING

In 2024, we concluded a 5-year cooperation project with the Tatra National Park, in which we financially supported the planting of over 150,000 trees. We also joined in on the planting as volunteers.

### REVITALISATION OF WELLSPRINGS

We continue to revitalise water sources and thus contribute not only to cleaner mountain wellsprings, but also to increased satisfaction of hikers. In 2024, we supported the restoration of wellsprings in the Rajecká valley and the Veľká Fatra mountain range. In the summer, we were present at the opening of the reconstructed Glacká well in the Slovak Paradise.





# Sustainable Financing Programme





# ESG Consultancy:

## Helping companies meet the challenges of sustainability



**GABRIELA BIZOŇOVÁ,**

ESG Risk Expert

We are the only bank in Slovakia to have developed a dedicated consultancy product aimed at supporting clients in meeting sustainability requirements. Our aim is to guide clients through the entire CSRD reporting process—from the initial dual materiality assessment, through the assessment of compliance with EU taxonomy requirements, to the collection of relevant data and the production of the report itself. Our consultancy is flexible. For clients who do not need a complete service package, we can address the individual parts separately. We also offer support in other areas such as calculating the carbon footprint of a business or its products (Scope 1, 2 and 3), GAP analysis of a business, ESG risk assessment, development of a (voluntary) marketing ESG report and setting up a customised sustainability strategy.

Our services are strengthened by linking expert advice with a digital solution—the GreenOmeter platform developed by our sister company. We can apply the platform to most of our consulting services to make the entire process more efficient, accurate and transparent. The team behind the consultancy is made up of certified financial ESG experts, and it is thanks to the combination of their professional expertise, digital solutions and local market knowledge that we are able to provide companies with both high-quality and practical support during the transition to sustainable business.

We integrate sustainability not only into our products and services, but also into the relationships with our clients, for whom we want to become a partner on the path to responsible business.

"I have been following the perception of the importance of ESG and CSRD issues in businesses for a while. However, it is only in recent months that companies have started to give this topic more thought. Even discussions with clients and businesses are gradually becoming more professional and profound. They view our advice positively and as something that differentiates our brand from other banks," says Gabriela Bizoňová, ESG Risk Expert and CESGA, ISO 14001 and ISO 14063 certification holder.



# Solutions for the Third Sector

We equally pay attention to clients from the non-profit sector. In order to facilitate fund-raising for helping organisations, we offer an mPOS terminal with push-button mode, thanks to which they can accept cashless donations. This terminal offers preset amount options, including custom ones, allowing interested parties to leave a non-cash donation to the organisation using a bank card, mobile phone or smartwatch. By lending the mPOS terminals free of charge in 2024, we supported, for instance, the Biela pastelka (White Pencil) public collection of the Slovak Blind and Partially Sighted Union, the Belasý motýľ (Blue Butterfly) collection for patients with muscular diseases, as well as the activities of the Zvierací ombudsman (Animal Ombudsman), an organisation dedicated to caring for abused and abandoned animals.



## Cooperation with Sector-Specific Organisations

When looking for partners among organisations in different sectors, we focus on key sectors that are the most vulnerable to environmental change and regulatory developments, such as energy and transport, construction, automotive, chemical, food and beverage, textiles and fashion, mining, and materials manufacturing. Key indicators for client selection include their exposure to environmental and regulatory risks, financial exposure in the bank's portfolio, as well as the sustainability performance track record.

### WE ARE PARTNERS OR MEMBERS OF THE FOLLOWING SECTOR-SPECIFIC ORGANISATIONS:

- **Slovak Green Building Council (member)**—the top ambassador of sustainable construction in Slovakia;
- **Slovak Agricultural and Food Chamber (partner)**—bringing together entrepreneurs in agriculture, food production and services, creating a broad platform to address key issues;
- **EKOS PLUS s. r. o. (general partner)**—company organising professional conferences in sustainability;
- **Slovak Investment and Trade Development Agency (SARIO).**

### IN 2024, WE EXPANDED OUR COOPERATION WITH:

- **Energy Community Cluster of Slovakia**—helping to create, strengthen, support and connect energy communities across Slovakia;
- **Bratislava, the Capital City of Slovakia**—we collaborated in the preparation of the first comprehensive action plan for sustainable energy and climate of our capital city;
- **ESG Club by Greentalk**—a platform for companies to share their ESG knowledge;
- **The Slovak Agrarian Chamber (AKS) and the Slovak Association of Landowners and Agricultural Businesses (ZVPAS).**

### OUR SPECIALISTS FOR MUNICIPALITIES COMMUNICATE WITH THE FOLLOWING SECTOR-SPECIFIC ORGANISATIONS:

- **AKUS**—Association of Local Government Auditors
- **AKE SR**—Association of Municipal Economists
- **APUMS**—Association of Local Government Chief Executives
- **Slovak Union of Housing Cooperatives**



# Responsible Solutions for Clients



# Responsible Investing

In line with both our business objectives and our corporate social responsibility strategy, we motivate clients to invest responsibly. We emphasise that, when investing in mutual funds, profitability is not the only consideration; how the investment was accrued is also important to us.

We do not offer funds that invest in companies that extract, sell or distribute fossil fuels, manufacture controversial weapons, exploit child labour or fail to uphold basic human rights. For ČSOB, it is natural to guide our clients to support businesses that respect the values of sustainability. More than half of our mutual fund investors already have responsible funds represented in their portfolios.

Through the ČSOB SmartBanking app, we offer investors nine responsible funds, including six For Your World thematic funds.

In terms of sales volume, responsible funds accounted for more than a quarter of our sales in 2024. In terms of assets under management in these funds, their share grew by around 40% year-on-year by the end of 2024.

# Responsible Mortgage

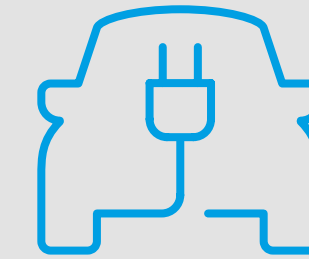
For clients who own a property with a class A or higher energy certificate, we offer a bonus in the form of one monthly instalment. In addition, clients can take out property and home insurance with an ECO bonus. In the event of damage to the home resulting from a natural event, ČSOB Insurance will pay extra for the property's eco-friendly renovation, up to €10,000.





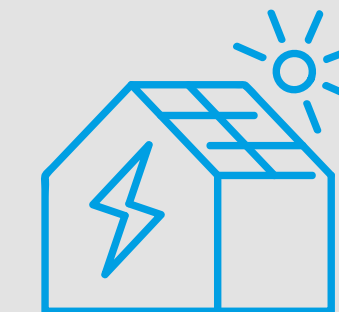
# Cards for Clients with Visual Impairment

Since October 2024, we have been issuing selected payment cards with a notch. Thanks to the cut-out notch, customers with a visual impairment, and others, can easily distinguish the card by touch. Like the other cards in our portfolio, this card is also made from corn-based plastics.



## INSURANCE OF ELECTRIC VEHICLES

ČSOB Insurance was the first in Slovakia to introduce collision insurance for electric vehicles. The insurance covers damage or destruction of the battery as well as damage related to the charging station. Drivers of electric vehicles, which contribute to the reduction of carbon emissions, do not pay excess for damage caused by floods, windstorms, and hailstorms.



## INSURANCE OF ROOFTOP PHOTOVOLTAIC CELLS

This type of insurance responds to the current needs of many entrepreneurs. It covers the usual risks, insurance against natural disasters as well as the cost of electricity supply from an alternative source in the event of an interruption to operations. A new type of insurance covers beehives as part of household insurance in the event of a natural disaster, robbery or vandalism.



## CONSUMER LOAN FOR ENVIRONMENTAL PURPOSES

It is designed for retail clients who are considering renovating their home. If they opt for more sustainable solutions, they can get a lower interest rate. The purpose of the loan can extend to reducing energy consumption (new windows, doors, heating systems, insulation, etc.), investing in renewable energy technologies (photovoltaic cells, heat pumps) and green bicycles and scooters.





# Community Support

We enthusiastically support a number of community events that aim to connect and inspire.



# ČSOB Bratislava Marathon

We are the general partner of the largest sports festival in our capital city. For all those who find the courage to stand at the starting line—from the tiniest crawlers to sporty seniors—we help create opportunities to enjoy sports.

The ČSOB Bratislava Marathon has a very special place in our hearts. In addition to participating in various disciplines, our colleagues from ČSOB also volunteer to help behind the scenes or directly on the course. This sporting event has traditionally been associated with helping those in need. Before the start of the royal discipline, Daniel Kollár, the CEO of ČSOB, presented a donation of €20,000 to the **Slovak Blind and Partially Sighted Union**. In particular, the donation served to break down digital barriers, which individuals with visual impairments encounter on a daily basis.







# Dobrý trh (Good Market)

We have supported this community event in the capital as a partner committed to promoting local businesses. Held three times in 2024—in spring, autumn and before Christmas—the market attracts thousands of people to the streets of the old town to enjoy one Saturday out and about. There are many stalls by local vendors, musical performances, workshops and interesting discussions.

Author: Marek Jančúch





### MARKET AT THE HQ

We welcome small local entrepreneurs, NGOs and sheltered workshops to our headquarters twice a year for the Easter and Christmas markets. These are popular events with positive feedback from both our employees and market vendors. At the markets, we provide vendors who do not have a cashless payment terminal with the opportunity to try one free of charge. We also encourage our colleagues to support small producers by making purchases from them.

In 2024, volunteers from ČSOB have taken on the role of vendors themselves. Together with our colleague Martin Jančovič, a participant in the Pečie celé Slovensko (Slovakia Bakes) TV programme, we baked gingerbread biscuits in our canteen. We gave them out at the Christmas market in exchange for a voluntary contribution. This added another €1,300 to the €10,000 donation made by the ČSOB Foundation to the School for Visually Impaired Children in Bratislava. On top of that, our coworkers took part in a challenge and made the Christmas wishes of the students at the Joint Boarding School on Svrčia Street come true by buying them their dream presents.

### SWAP

The event that gives a second chance to never worn pieces of clothing has been held annually at the ČSOB headquarters since 2022 and is also open to the general public. Once again, there was great interest not only in the clothing swap, but also in various items found at the KOLO—Bratislava Reuse Centre stand. Hundreds of visitors proved that they are no strangers to slow fashion, while also contributing to the revitalisation of our mountain wellsprings.



### DIGITAL SMART GRANT

**The ČSOB Foundation Grant Programme was created to support innovative smart ideas that will bring real change. We understand that the greatest potential of Slovakia has always been and will always be its people. And meaningful smart solutions, backed by smart innovators, is what we believe our society needs right now.**

Digital skills are an absolute necessity today. Topics including cybersecurity and, of course, phishing are very important in our field of business. We believe that even a small process change can have a significant effect towards closing the digital divide. Major projects also require major funding, which is why we have decided not to cap the maximum grant amount. On the contrary, we set the minimum grant amount at €3,000 to support high-impact activities.

In the second year of the Digital Smart Grant, we received 345 applications for support, of which 16 were successful. We supported organisations helping women in IT, protecting children on the Internet, educating young people from marginalised communities, and many others, investing more than €200,000.

The successful applicants were decided by an expert jury composed of:

- **Branislav Straka**, Member of the Board of Directors of ČSOB Financial Group responsible for banking products, processes and innovations, Chairperson of the Board of Directors of the ČSOB Foundation;
- **Jana Karasová**, Digital Development Team Leader, ČSOB;
- **Mária Tóthová Šimčáková**, expert in online child safety;
- **Jakub Šimko**, researcher from the Kempelen Institute for Intelligent Technologies;
- **Samuel Kováčik**, a.k.a. Vedátor, science promoter.



In addition, we build relationships with successful applicants during Surf Talks, internal discussions at the Innovation Studio. We present selected projects and the organisations behind them to our colleagues.



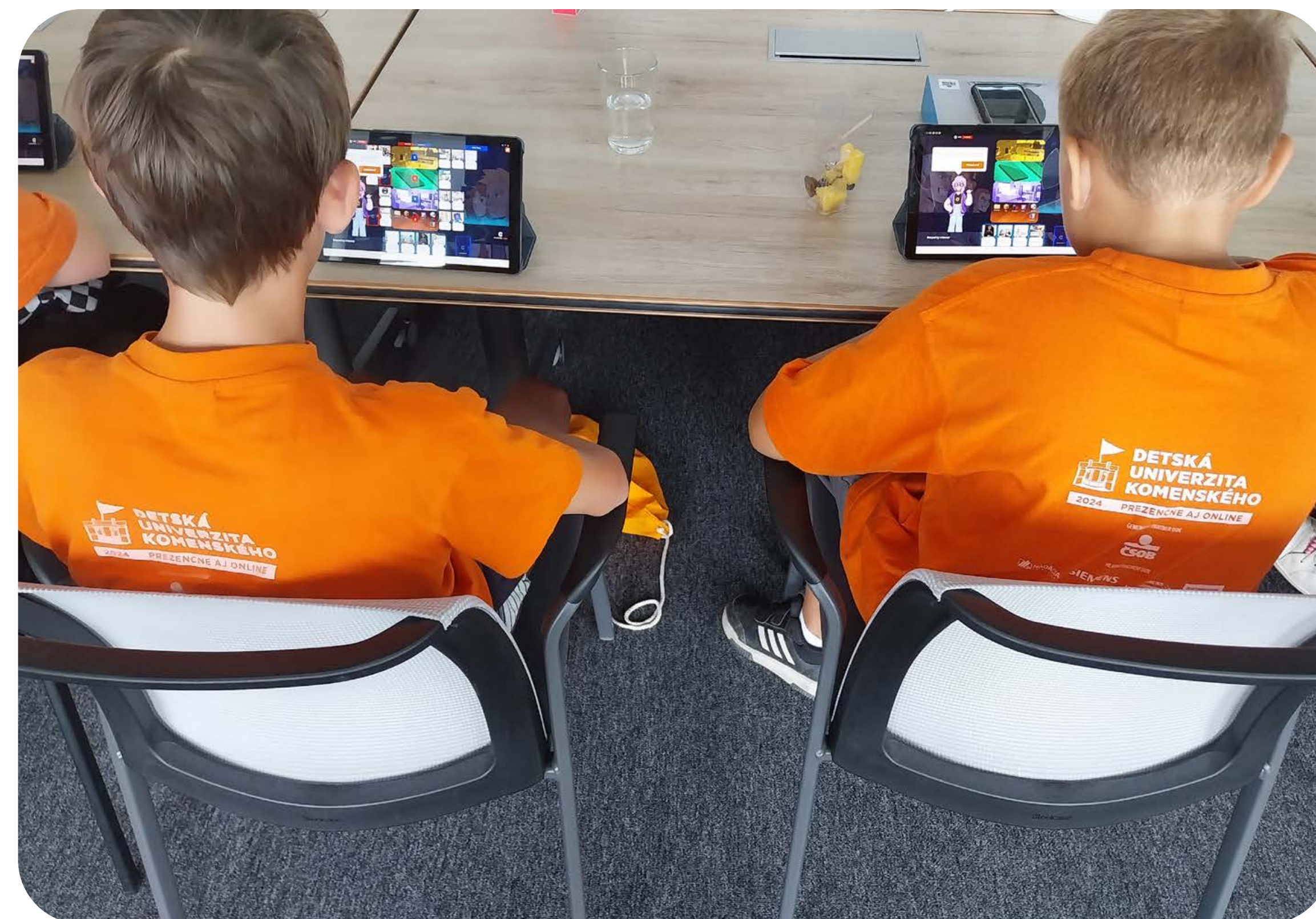
## EUROPEAN RESEARCHERS' NIGHT

In 2024, we once again took on the role of general partner to the European Researchers' Night. It is the largest pan-European initiative to promote science, research and innovation. The event was initiated by the European Commission and takes place in 25 countries and more than 300 cities simultaneously.



## CHILDREN'S COMENIUS UNIVERSITY

In 2023, we became the general partner of the traditional event for primary school students who are hungry for knowledge even during the summer holidays. Hundreds of children spent their days off doing various activities. Every week, they learned new information from experts, professors and deans, both online and offline. In cooperation with doc. Ing. Marián Šimko, PhD. from the Kempelen Institute for Intelligent Technologies, we organised a talk for the children called 'Why the Internet is a good servant but a bad master'. In addition, we organised a workshop for 30 curious participants on the premises of our HQ, where they learned more about special effects used in the production of adverts and films. They also visited the innovative Surf Studio, where they tried their hand at virtual reality games.





# Green Mobility





CYCLING COMMUNITY

We closely monitor what mode of transport our employees are choosing to commute to work. Covered bicycle racks have been installed at the headquarters and the building at Námestie SNP in Bratislava, as well as at our Trenčín branch. At the HQ, we offer ČSOB bicycles, which employees can use to get to meetings off-site. We also have an active virtual Cycling Community, whose members share their tips and experiences that extend beyond their ride to work.



eFleet DAY

For the second year in a row, ČSOB Leasing has acted as the general partner of the conference focused on the development of electromobility in businesses. We took part in a panel discussion titled 'Building a green fleet: how to get it right'.

The electrification of the fleet with the aim of minimising our carbon footprint is one of the top priorities of the ČSOB Financial Group. We currently own 13 electric vehicles and 16 plug-in hybrid models.

SEVA ELF

ČSOB Leasing is an active ambassador for green mobility. We are a member of the Slovak Electric Vehicle Association (SEVA) and the Association of Leasing Companies of the Slovak Republic, using our partnership to conduct a dialogue with government representatives. We are also the general partner of the Slovak Electric Car of the Year competition.

In 2024, ČSOB Financial Group was awarded the SEVA ELF Champion award for electromobility-friendly businesses.





CARBON FOOTPRINT

The following table shows current GHG emissions as of 30 September 2024.

GHG Emissions	2024
GHG Emissions Scope 1	
Scope 1 gross GHG emissions (tCO <sub>2</sub> e)	1,663
Percentage of Scope 1 GHG emissions from regulated emissions trading (%)	0%
GHG Emissions Scope 2	
Scope 2 gross GHG emissions by location-based method (tCO <sub>2</sub> e)	776
Scope 2 gross GHG emissions by market-based method (tCO <sub>2</sub> e)	157
Substantial GHG Emissions Scope 3	
Scope 3 total gross indirect GHG emissions (tCO <sub>2</sub> e)	2,172,642
<sup>1</sup> Goods and Services Purchased	64
<sup>2</sup> Investment Goods	N/A
<sup>3</sup> Fuel and Energy-Related Activities (not included in Scope 1 or Scope 2)	N/A
<sup>4</sup> Transport and Distribution to Suppliers	N/A
<sup>5</sup> Waste Generated by Operations	36
<sup>6</sup> Business Trips	100

<sup>7</sup> Employee Commuting	1,271
<sup>8</sup> Assets Leased to Suppliers	N/A
<sup>9</sup> Transport to Customers	N/A
<sup>10</sup> Processing of Products Sold	N/A
<sup>11</sup> Utilisation of Products Sold	N/A
<sup>12</sup> Disposal of Products Sold at the End of the Lifecycle	N/A
<sup>13</sup> Assets Leased to Customers	included in <sup>15</sup> Investments
<sup>14</sup> Franchise Licences	N/A
<sup>15</sup> Investments <sup>1</sup>	2,171,171
Total GHG Emissions	
Total GHG Emissions (location-based) (tCO <sub>2</sub> e)	2,175,081
Total GHG Emissions (market-based) (tCO <sub>2</sub> e)	2,174,462
GHG Intensity in Government Bonds Portfolio	
Investments in Government Bonds (in tCO <sub>2</sub> e/million EUR of net revenue) <sup>2</sup>	828

<sup>1</sup> The figure represents the total volume of Scope 1 (795,456 tCO<sub>2</sub>e), Scope 2 (19,759 tCO<sub>2</sub>e) and Scope 3 (1,355,956 tCO<sub>2</sub>e) emissions financed.

<sup>2</sup> The most recent year of GHG emissions data has been modelled by our data provider, Trucost (S&P), due to a one-year lag in releasing national emissions data. Retroactive data was used for one data input related to the GHG intensity of countries. After our data provider, Trucost (S&P), informed us of a computational error in the imported country emissions, we recalculated the weighted GHG intensity of the government bonds portfolio including the updated imported emissions received in November 2024.



