



**Reliable partnerships
within the alliance:**

**Confidence and trust in
turbulent times**

Evolution³

The E/D/E headquarters in Wuppertal-Langerfeld



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Gender designations E/D/E attaches great importance to gender equality. However, for the sake of legibility, we do not explicitly use linguistic forms that refer to male, female and other gender expressions. All terms intended to refer to people apply equally to all genders.

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The E/D/E and EVOLUTION



Einkaufsbüro Deutscher Eisenhändler

We are Einkaufsbüro Deutscher Eisenhändler (E/D/E) – the European services and system provider for the industrial B2B sector. We have approximately 1,200 affiliated members, primarily specialist wholesalers supplying commercial customers in the craft sector and industry, as well as local authorities. They specialise in tools and machinery, industrial supplies, fittings and construction elements, building services, steel and products for personal protective equipment (PPE) and technical trade.

When Ferdinand Trautwein founded E/D/E in 1931, it was with the conviction that every individual can benefit from being part of a strong community. He was proven right – and the strength of his idea persists to this day. We now serve as an active link between manufacturers and specialist dealers in the industrial B2B sector in 28 countries and work with more than 3,200 contract suppliers.

Our offer to members

As a system centre, we strengthen the competitive position of our members with market-centric services from central purchasing, logistics – we operate two central warehouses in Wuppertal and Schwebheim – marketing and a modern portfolio of networked digital services. By way of Toolineo – the established online marketplace for craft supplies – E/D/E gives specialised dealers and brand manufacturers the opportunity to engage in contemporary and targeted product marketing. We render financial services via our fully licensed bank, ETRIS BANK, and its strategic business areas central payment and factoring.



At home in the city of Wuppertal, successful in Europe: E/D/E strengthens medium-sized industrial B2B sector companies in 28 countries with a customised portfolio of central services.

EVOLUTION – Strategic development for sustainable growth

EVOLUTION is rooted in a broad-based strategy and organisational development process aimed at continually expanding the performance and future viability of the E/D/E alliance – for the benefit of members, suppliers and collaboration partners. EVOLUTION represents a profound transformation at an organisational, cultural and process level. As part of this, we have established market-oriented and sustainable organisational structures (see the “Services for members and suppliers” section for more details) and made targeted systemic and conceptual changes. In that respect, we raise the organisation’s performance to a new level, thereby overcoming recognised limitations.

During this continuing transformation process, we are consistently guided by our vision for the future and our identity: “We are the European services and system provider for the industrial B2B sector, and are continuing to develop into an organiser and operator of networks for market-relevant supply systems for craft and industry requirements.” To achieve our ambitious transformation goals, we have developed tailor-made intervention architectures that are continually reflected upon and adapted in line with prevailing market and organisational observations – a method that E/D/E defines as the “Change of change.”

In addition to this guiding central principle, the EVOLUTION process is characterised by other guidelines:

Outside-In

EVOLUTION consistently adheres to a market-based approach in which the specific requirements of our partners and recognisable market trends are integrated in the development process. This approach reduces blind spots and aligns our development with our partners’ specific expectations.

System intelligence

We solve complex and interdisciplinary challenges by networking internal and external knowledge. The dialogue between different areas of expertise enables new insights and perspectives that produce innovative and sustainable solutions.

Partner integration

The targeted involvement of our members, suppliers and cooperation partners is key to the success of the transformation. This ensures that the implemented developments and innovations are practical and market-oriented at all times.

Since the end of 2022, we have been working intensively on implementing the reorganisation that was decided in 2019. Such far-reaching reorganisation efforts were (and continue to be) aimed at significantly increasing our dealers’ efficiency. We have realised targeted progress in strategically vital areas under the EVOLUTION 2024 guiding principle of “Creating our own economic momentum, increasing productivity and efficiency and achieving breakthroughs to enable positive leaps in development for the E/D/E Group – thereby developing the necessary resilience.” These include, in particular, the further development of data management (DATAcloud360), a significant increase in the efficiency of the shop systems (SHOPcloud360), successful SAP modernisation and the introduction of the new myEDEportal in the IT system landscape. We also made significant progress in our supply

networks, as well as in the construction of the new Toolineo marketplace. At the same time we have significantly strengthened our organisational performance and cross-divisional cooperation. It became clear that the reorganisation set the right course at an early stage and with foresight. We worked intensively on advancing this successful implementation in 2024.

Looking ahead to 2025, we will continue to consistently align our decisions and actions with our vision for the future. The EVOLUTION Agenda 2025 is, therefore, guided by the motto: "We are one team and we improve our services by simplifying and automating our processes."

This is aimed at fundamentally simplifying and automating data processes. It forms the foundation for successfully tackling additional breakthrough topics, reducing individual dependencies and interactions and for achieving greater efficiency. Furthermore, we will bring about an even greater sense of responsibility within the E/D/E organisation and further increase performance by way of targeted cooperation. In a challenging market environment, the optimised interaction of market-related core functions is intended to create economic activity and reduce existing inhibiting factors. By way of a targeted review and optimisation of existing services, we aim to tap into as yet unused potential by enabling the individual divisions to learn from each other and jointly develop their services. The transformation of our system environment facilitates the efficient, automated mapping of central business processes and creates the necessary flexibility and scalability to react optimally to market requirements in the future. The targeted further development of IT systems and technologies is a key driver for realising our vision for the future and the EVOLUTION Agenda 2025.



The successful idea of company founder, Ferdinand Trautwein, is shaping tomorrow's world with EVOLUTION.

Significant
performance data 2024
of the E/D/E Group

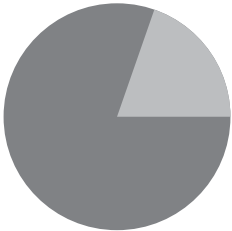
8.9 ^{EUR billion}

Trading volume

6.2 ^{EUR billion}

Product business

69.5 %



2.7 ^{EUR billion}

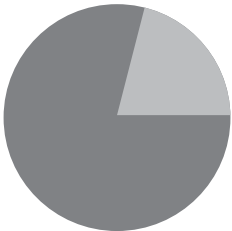
Third-party business
ETRIS BANK

30.5 %

4.4 ^{EUR billion}

Domestic product business

71 %

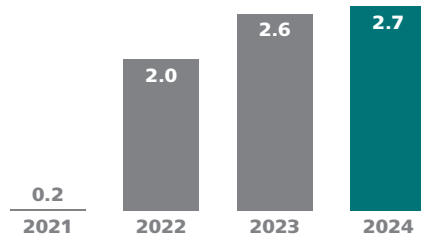


1.8 ^{EUR billion}

Foreign product business

29 %

2.7 EUR billion



**Business volume
Third-party ETRIS BANK**

5.9 EUR billion

**Turnover
Central payment
(CP)**

149 EUR millions

**Bonuses and
reimbursements
to members**

182

Installed brand shops

108

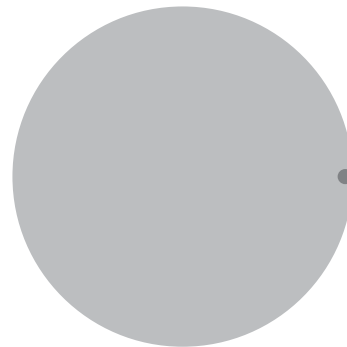
**Completed customer pro-
jects – Industrial services**

Over 3,200

**Participants in E/D/E net-
work events**

24

**ZHH scholarships approved
by the E/D/E Foundation**



115,000
Stock items

>2.5 million
**Articles in the
product range**

16

**Sectors and
product groups**

~1,200

**Member
companies**

~3,200

**Contract
suppliers**

**Active in 28
Countries**

Up to 10,000
**Parcels dis-
patched daily
(eLC)**

347 EUR million
Stock turnover

Editorial





E/D/E is facing the upcoming economic challenges with strength, determination and foresight. Full of enthusiasm and confidence, we are heading into the future with a strong industrial B2B sector.

**Dear ladies and gentlemen,
Dear partners and friends of E/D/E,**

The year 2024 was characterised by economic challenges and uncertainties – yet as an alliance, we demonstrated strength, seized opportunities and created solutions together.

Germany's economic development remained tense. 2024 marked the second year of recession, particularly affecting the manufacturing industry. The mechanical engineering and automotive industries suffered from declining demand, while residential construction also fell sharply, putting additional pressure on the overall economic situation.

Market developments also left their mark on our business. Almost all product groups were affected, with the exception of personal protective equipment (PPE). While the trading volume in other European countries remained at the previous year's level, the financial year as a whole closed with a slightly lower trading volume of EUR 8.9 billion.

However, making smart strategic decisions is particularly important in difficult times. We aimed to guarantee stability, identify opportunities and continue to expand the innovative strength of our alliance.

To counter the assumed market developments and observed trends, we set the course for the successful implementation of our vision for the future at an early stage. By way of the development of dynamic supply concepts for industrial customers, we have been able to strategically further develop our service portfolio and, therefore, pave the way so as to successfully tap into new sectors within the alliance.

Initial discussions with customers have already confirmed the interest and potential in the market.

The ETRIS BANK once again proved to be a stabilising factor in 2024. In addition to the professional processing of central payment operations for E/D/E, the ETRIS BANK has confirmed its strategic importance for the alliance with a business volume of EUR 2.7 billion in third-party market business. The factoring business area, in particular, saw very dynamic development with business volume in excess of EUR 700 million and, contrary to the stagnating overall market in Germany, recorded extremely positive growth of almost 30 per cent when compared to the previous year. External rating agencies also confirmed an excellent rating with a stable outlook ("A+") for the fourth time in a row.

Toolineo also achieved important milestones: a technical redesign created the basis for future growth. This not only improves the user experience for customers, but also significantly increases convenience and efficiency for our distributors, as well as the performance of the digital marketplace. Interfaces have been modernised with a view to being the first port of call for craft supplies. Thanks to a scalable IT infrastructure, the attractiveness for providers is growing rapidly. This enables a continual expansion of the product range and ensures long-term competitiveness.

The EVOLUTION strategy and organisational development process was also a key success factor in 2024. Thanks to the targeted modernisation of the IT and optimisation of our end-to-end processes, we were able to overcome systemic, structural and conceptual limitations and exploit new opportunities. The reorganisation established within the framework of EVOLUTION has proven to be trend-setting, and will significantly shape E/D/E's future.

Our proven principle of "Professionalisation elevated by cooperation" shows that we are on the right track. This is characterised by close cooperation with our partners, a forward-looking strategy and a stable foundation for sustainable growth.

The economic environment will remain challenging in 2025. The GDP growth of 0.3 per cent as forecast by the Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Climate Protection for 2025 has now been significantly revised downwards by leading economic institutes. Positive external stimuli are, therefore, once again not to be expected. It remains to be seen whether or not the new federal government will be able to implement the necessary structural changes for a competitive business location supported by the measures and declarations of intent agreed in the coalition agreement.

The E/D/E alliance, therefore, continues to focus on our own economic activity. This includes the continual development of existing services, the exchange of experience within the alliance and the strategic exploitation of as yet unexploited sources of potential. At the same time, we are already actively preparing for a phase of economic recovery.

In the construction industry, in particular, we expect demand to develop positively in the medium term, supported by the recently approved "Special Infrastructure Fund." This investment package is aimed at gradually clearing the existing investment backlog in Germany, which is in the nine-digit range, in particular in respect of infrastructure and residential construction. The measures that have so far been postponed will increasingly be reflected in rising demand in the coming years. The first positive signals can already be seen in the planning offices – a trend that already gives cause for optimism.

There is no doubt that 2025 will be a challenging year. However, as an alliance, we are very well-positioned to meet the coming economic challenges with strength and determination. We rely on our core competencies, our network and our innovative strength not only to remain stable, but also to seize future growth opportunities in a targeted manner.

This makes it all the more important to take the reins ourselves, with a smart strategy, sustainable investments and in close collaboration with our members, contract suppliers and cooperation partners. Together, we will strengthen and further expand the industrial B2B sector.

We would like to extend our special gratitude to all our partners and employees. Your commitment and drive have enabled us to emerge from the past year 2024 as a strong alliance. Let us continue on this path with determination and seize the opportunities that lie ahead with energy and confidence.

Yours faithfully,



Dr Andreas Trautwein
Chairman of the Management Board



Dr Andreas Trautwein

Report from the Management Board

The German economy experienced its second consecutive year of recession in 2024. The economy was weak in the manufacturing industry, particularly in mechanical engineering and the automotive industry, as well as in residential construction, which declined sharply. The drivers of these negative developments – such as high energy costs, bureaucratic obstacles, high interest rates and struggling exports – are well known.

Developments in the industrial B2B sector

The resulting decline in demand impacted most areas of the industrial B2B sector, with the exception of sub-segments such as the construction equipment rental business. In this market environment, the concentration processes within the industrial B2B sector accelerated due to business closures or insolvencies. Individual companies were able to decouple themselves from these developments, for example, by concluding framework agreements with industrial customers. For the majority of distributors, the focus remained on cost optimisation, particularly through inventory reduction, and E/D/E supported and alleviated the burden on its members in this regard.

Developments within E/D/E

The developments outlined above led to a significant decline in the trading volume that E/D/E settled with its members in Germany in 2024. The E/D/E warehousing business (turnover EUR 347 million) developed slightly more positively than central payment. One exception among the product areas is personal protective equipment (PPE), which saw an increase. The steel business, which declined in the first six months, recovered noticeably in the second half of the year. We expect this trend to continue in 2025.

In other European countries, the overall trading volume in 2024 was closer to the previous year's level, which is in line with the development of the major European industrialised countries. The individual national markets recorded varying trends, from noticeable slumps to healthy growth.

The decline in E/D/E product business was largely compensated by ETRIS BANK's contribution in the form of business volume of EUR 2.7 billion. Additionally favoured by the interest rate trend, the bank made a considerable contribution to earnings. With a trading volume of EUR 8.9 billion, E/D/E considers the financial year 2024 to be satisfactory, taking into account the economic environment.

Company result

The sum of these effects meant that the business development further strengthened the financial power of the E/D/E Group in 2024. At EUR 20.7 million, the consolidated net income for the year was below the previous year's level, but equity increased to EUR 497.1 million. This means that E/D/E still possesses the necessary strength to make the considerable investments in modern technologies, digitalisation and automation that are relevant for the future of the alliance from its own resources.

ETRIS BANK

The E/D/E subsidiary, ETRIS BANK, had a successful year in terms of earnings and risk. In factoring, in particular, the bank achieved exceptional growth in a generally stagnant factoring market in Germany. The general interest rate environment has further reinforced the positive trend. Factoring is the bank's second strategic business segment alongside central payment. This particular business alignment and stable outlook were again confirmed by an external rating agency with an "A+ stable" rating.



E/D/E Management Board: Peter Jüngst, Bettina Jakobi, Dr Andreas Trautwein, Dr Christoph Grote, Marco Statt and Christian Grotowsky (from left)

E/D/E core topics in 2024

In addition to its day-to-day business, E/D/E worked intensively on the following future-oriented topics as part of EVOLUTION in 2024, achieving significant progress:



Completion of the development and roll-out of SHOPcloud360

By combining leading technology with E/D/E's industry expertise, we are able to provide our members with an effective tool to position themselves well in digital competition with the major players in the industry. SHOPcloud360 is characterised, among other things, by an intelligent search that takes individual buyer behaviour into account, as well as industrial B2B sector-specific functions such as free text orders or the specification of individual integration solutions that are required in the industrial B2B sector. The development phase and the onboarding of the first distributors were successfully completed in 2024.

DATAcloud360

Roll-out of DATAcloud360

The new central data portal in the E/D/E alliance delivers an impressive performance with its high usability and customised range of functions. These include, for example, the de-duplication of existing articles or automated data export. This reduces manual data handling tasks and significantly lowers the workload for users in their day-to-day business. By the end of the year, we had supported more than 270 national and international member companies in switching to the new platform.

SAP + IT

Development of the IT roadmap and modernisation of the SAP system

Central planning and considerable preparatory work in the core systems have been successfully implemented for the upcoming transformation to SAP S/4. We specifically align systems, technologies and expertise to exploit the efficiency potential from end-to-end process optimisation, digitalisation and automation, and create the technological prerequisites for growth in the E/D/E alliance.



Start of myEDEportal

By way of myEDEportal, we have created a technologically new and state-of-the-art basis for the central digital access point for our members and contract suppliers in their business relationship with E/D/E. As the successor to the "Extranet", the new portal combines cloud-based technology, user-friendliness and high IT security standards. As part of a pioneering project, myEDEportal was initially launched for the international division at the end of 2024. The launch in Germany is earmarked for 2025.



Expanding the services of E/D/E AKADEMIE

Given the shortage of skilled workers and the opportunities presented by digitalisation and automation, employee qualifications are becoming even more important for the medium-sized industrial B2B sector. Against this backdrop, we can see that the E/D/E AKADEMIE is becoming increasingly important for our partners. We have redesigned the college formats that our members appreciate and expanded the hybrid mix of training courses to include additional topics relating to digitalisation.



New technological platform – Toolineo

At the end of 2024, we transferred Toolineo to a new technological platform, significantly improving the user experience for customers and the sense of convenience for distributors. This creates the basis for strong growth in the coming years. The IT landscape scalability and modern interfaces increase the attractiveness for distributors, enable the constant expansion of the product range and thus strengthen Toolineo's position as the leading marketplace for craft supplies.



Development of the FORMAT Brand Space

By way of the FORMAT 3.0 concept, EDE International has transferred sales support for its European partners to the digital world. In this context, we launched the FORMAT Brand Space in 2024. Interactive 3D models and augmented reality elements provide visitors with an exciting 360-degree virtual experience with contemporary, staged tools and access to the digital FORMAT catalogue.



Challenging times offer opportunities, especially for those who work together and have a clear vision for the future.

A strong network

Collaboration within a strong network is more important today than ever before. At E/D/E, we utilise our combined expertise and resources to relieve the burden on members and actively support them in their current entrepreneurial tasks, and provide comprehensive advice. This applies to the wide range of digitalisation topics, as well as the handling of legislative initiatives. These include the introduction of e-billing, sustainability regulation and the topic of Artificial Intelligence (AI), to name just a few aspects that we worked on together in 2024.

Just how valuable and welcome dialogue on an equal footing is – especially in times of crisis – was also demonstrated at the events organised by E/D/E in 2024 to bring together the industry's leading minds. At the larger event formats alone – such as the marketplaces, which are now called “Meet & Connect,” the Building Elements Forum and our industry get-together “Branchentreff total” – we welcomed around 3,000 guests from trade and industry. There were also specialist group meetings, “Business NETZWERK” conferences and numerous digital events. In many cases – and especially at the industry meeting in Leipzig – we were able to ascertain the high degree of confidence and creative drive that characterises the SME sector and that we all continue to need, despite the difficult prevailing market situation.

Outlook 2025

German economic output this year is expected to be similar to the level before the corona virus crisis. Significant growth is, therefore, not expected. Financial sector experts see 2025 as a year of consolidation, which also offers growth opportunities for active market participants.

We anticipate stagnation in the private sector and only isolated sources of impetus from industrial customers, such as the aviation, wind power and, more recently, the defence industry. The crisis in the construction industry

will continue for the time being and will have a corresponding impact on the associated product areas – including building services and steel. We expect further volume decline in 2025 with prices rising significantly in some cases, but see great potential in the construction-related areas in the following years.

As before, it will be important to provide our own impetus. For us within E/D/E, this means, among other things, intensive activities for our trade brands, the digitalisation of marketing activities, strengthening the eLC central warehouse and acquiring new customer groups for the industrial B2B sector via our industrial services and corresponding framework agreements.

We also want to realise growth potential on our “New” Toolineo marketplace and at the ETRIS BANK. We believe that we are well-positioned to do so, and are working on expanding our alliance with additional capable partners in Germany and Europe, in particular, thereby strengthening it overall. Based on these targets, we plan to achieve a trading volume of almost EUR 9.2 billion for 2025 and thus a return to growth.

To strengthen the competitiveness of the medium-sized industrial B2B sector, E/D/E will continue to provide centralised services in the future that individual members will find difficult to manage on their own. Process efficiency remains a particular focus in the further development of the alliance. One example of this is the “Clearing Centre,” which makes a lot of work in the company easier by digitising and optimising processes that were previously often still manual.

We would like to thank our members, cooperation partners and contract suppliers for their commitment, trust and often long-standing loyalty. Recognition and thanks also go to the employees of E/D/E, who achieved great things in 2024 and made the aforementioned successes possible. This Annual Report provides further details and background information in this regard.

The tasks facing us in 2025 will remain very challenging. However, by standing shoulder to shoulder, with a sense of confidence and a clear idea of a successful future for the industrial B2B sector, we – as an alliance – are in a position to utilise our opportunities in challenging times. At E/D/E we will make our contribution to this.

The Management Board

Einkaufsbüro Deutscher Eisenhändler GmbH



Dr Andreas Trautwein
Chairman of the
Management Board



Dr Christoph Grote
Member- and Supplier
Management, Tools, PPE/Technical Trade, Operating and Construction Technology, Construction



Peter Jüngst
Building Services,
Steel, Logistics



Christian Grotowsky
Digital Services,
Marketing, Toolineo



Bettina Jakobi
Personnel,
E/D/E AKADEMIE,
Service Centre,
Facility Management



Marco Statt
Information Technology

Report from the **Chair of the Advisory Board**



The Advisory Board continued to work constructively and in a spirit of trust with the Management Board in 2024.

Difficult economic environment in 2024

A decrease of EUR 486 million in trading volume for goods and growth of EUR 155 million in trading volume for finance resulted in total volume of EUR 8.94 billion (previous year: EUR 9.27 billion) for 2024 (minus 3.6 percent). In view of the geopolitical crises and domestic political pressures, the Advisory Board expressed its appreciation and respect for this result to the Management and the teams of employees.

Hopes of an economic recovery in Germany had to be abandoned after the first quarter of 2024. In 2024, Germany remained on course for recession in macroeconomic terms and was the lowest-ranked major economy in Europe in terms of economic growth. The entire sector – with its strong dependence on the construction industry – characterised the opportunities and challenges for E/D/E. Despite defensive planning, the approved budget for 2024 could not be achieved. The preliminary figures presented to the Advisory Board were around ten per cent below the previous year's results.

The Management Board presented the Advisory Board with an overview of the different developments in the product business between Europe and Germany. The European members were able to almost maintain the trading volume transacted with E/D/E, while the members in the domestic market had to cope with further significant declines in all product areas in certain cases.

Key Advisory Board topics in 2024

Developments that quickly became apparent early on in the year prompted the Advisory Board to focus its attention specifically on risk potential, cost development, the earnings situation and the liquidity situation. The results, which fell significantly short of expectations, particularly in the warehousing business, required a targeted reduction in inventories, about which the Advisory Board was regularly informed.

The Advisory Board attached great importance to regular reporting on the package of measures adopted to secure results in 2024. More than three quarters of the measures presented in detail by the Management Board were successfully implemented and have stabilised the company's results.

One important topic of consultation was once again the consistent investment activity in essential future projects. The Advisory Board welcomed and supported the Management Board's policy of maintaining investments despite the company's subdued performance. These primarily include the development and implementation of the digital projects SHOPcloud360, DATAcloud360 and myEDEportal, the new technical development of Toolineo and preparations for the transformation to the SAP S/4 system. The Advisory Board was able to confirm that all projects are "on track."

ETRIS BANK's contribution to the company result

The strategic and operational progress of the ETRIS BANK was of particular importance to the Advisory Board. ETRIS BANK's results rendered a disproportionately positive contribution to the key figures of the consolidated result in view of the problematic development characterising the product business. Both strategic business areas (central payment and factoring) once again achieved growth rates and laid the foundations for further growth in 2025. With a total volume of around EUR 2.7 billion, a new record was achieved. The financial result was once again significantly higher than the previous year's good figures.

Systematic reporting on the payment behaviour of members was also of particular interest to the Advisory Board following a significant increase in insolvencies reported in the economy. The Advisory Board was able to satisfy itself that, thanks to the very close support of business partners by the ETRIS BANK, exceptional loan losses have been avoided to date. In view of the statistical trend, the Advisory Board nevertheless recommends adjusting risk provisioning.

Personnel changes at Management level of the E/D/E GmbH

In the Management of the E/D/E GmbH, age-related management changes in key areas of IT, on the one hand, and Digital Services, on the other, were successfully completed. The Advisory Board expressly welcomed the professional selection process and had the opportunity to discuss initial impressions and experiences with both new Managing Directors after a few months in office. In the opinion of the Advisory Board, E/D/E is well-equipped for future challenges with these commitments.

Results for 2024 and budget for 2025

At the meeting on the 5th of December 2024, the Advisory Board dealt intensively with the preliminary company results for 2024. The Advisory Board recognised the results achieved. The second focal point was the discussion of the budget for 2025 prepared by the Management Board – including the various measures to secure earnings in 2025, further investment planning, the personnel situation and the competitive situation.

The Advisory Board agrees with the Management Board that no noticeable source of growth impetus is to be expected from either the overall economic development or specific sector development. The situation is slightly better in European countries. The industry survey conducted again by the Management Board at the end of the year confirms this assessment. The Advisory Board and Management Board unanimously believe that a stabilisation or slight trend reversal in the company's results in 2025 can be achieved solely through the acquisition of new members and contract suppliers in Germany and Europe. The Advisory Board expressly welcomes the initiative that has already been launched to this end.

The proposed budget for 2025 was unanimously approved in all details by the Advisory Board. It provides for a total trading volume of around EUR 9.2 billion. The consolidated net profit is expected to reach EUR 18.9 million

and the cash flow EUR 26.1 million. Stable equity capital ensures that all future investments can continue to be made from our own resources. Once again, the Advisory Board considers these targets to be very ambitious, yet achievable if all the activities and measures presented are implemented consistently.

Cooperation between the Advisory Board and the Management Board

In 2024, the Advisory Board performed its duties in a timely and proper manner in accordance with the Articles of Association and the prevailing Advisory Board regulations. It carefully monitored the Management Board and provided advice on all strategic and important operational issues. The Advisory Board was at all times fully represented and quorate at all meetings. The composition of the Advisory Board remained unchanged in 2024. Meetings were held on the 21st of March, the 27th of June and the 5th of December. The results of the meetings were minuted and unanimously approved.

The Management Board provided the Advisory Board with comprehensive documents and presentations for all meetings and explained them in detail, in order that the Advisory Board was always informed about all significant economic and strategic developments. To ensure prompt reporting, the Advisory Board also received timely quarterly reports on the development of the trading volume and the respective quarterly Consolidated Financial Statements. There were also no extraordinary events and/or developments in 2024 that would have given rise to a special meeting or an ad hoc announcement to the Advisory Board.

The Chairman of the Advisory Board also remained in regular contact with the Management Board. Questions were answered comprehensively and requested documents were delivered promptly. The cooperation throughout 2024 was characterised by mutual trust and constructive consultations. This is how it should remain in 2025.



Hans-Jürgen Adorf
Chairman of the Advisory Board



Hans-Jürgen Adorf

Product ranges: Customised for every target group



Designing a product range tailored to specific target groups is one of E/D/E's core tasks.



Complete, attractive product ranges, needs-based solutions and fast availability: these factors are more important than ever in the current economic climate. The E/D/E's supplier and product group management strengthens the members of the alliance with market-driven services and offers – customised for the respective target groups. Members and contract suppliers benefit equally from this product range policy.

Tools: Reluctance to invest

The tools sector market remained challenging in 2024 due to the reluctance to invest in capital goods. The construction industry continued to record significant slumps, while the industrial business saw a slight decline in trading volumes due to subdued market demand and uncertainties. Companies were noticeably reluctant to invest in goods and merchandise, as securing liquidity was and still is a priority.

To meet the market requirements, the key areas of action included, in particular, an adapted product range strategy, solutions for ongoing digitalisation and ongoing process optimisation. E/D/E also improved ordering processes by further increasing the use of the eLC logistics centre: this led to a reduction in stock levels in the trade itself and consequently to lower investment and handling costs.

The current year will also remain challenging. To secure market share, a targeted approach to members and suppliers is required. In this context, the focus is on consistently implementing and further developing the envisaged strategies. In addition, E/D/E will continue to promote the successful and established trade brands, to strengthen the market position of distributors in the long term.

In the medium term, our members and suppliers will benefit from a series of strategic measures. This includes a comprehensive revision of the concepts and product ranges, as well as the targeted expansion of the European business. E/D/E will also continue to sharpen the positioning of its private labels, to establish them even more robustly as attractive market alternatives.

The implementation of digital training concepts – for example, on the topic of lithium-ion battery storage – will generate further, significant added value, to sustainably strengthen the consulting expertise of specialist retailers.

Technical trade: Positive development bucking the market trend

The technical trade and PPE product ranges registered slightly positive development in 2024, bucking the general market trend. However, different developments are being observed in the respective product groups. To meet prevailing requirements, the supply ranges in stock were categorised according to defined target sectors. This helps to provide members with sustainable support in their day-to-day business. Furthermore, partners on the supplier and member side benefit from the optimisation of data quality.

Due to weak economic data – particularly from the automotive industry and mechanical engineering – the situation remains tense in the current year. The construction-related areas are also likely to remain at the previous year's level

Weakness in the construction-related craft sector affects HANDWERKSTADT and PLUS 1

The economic development in the construction-related craft sector slowed significantly in 2024. This led to a considerable decline in sales in the relevant product ranges. Hand tools and craft-related product ranges registered significant declines. In contrast, there was growth in the power tools segment – albeit starting from a weak prior year in 2023. The forecasts for the current year suggest a stable sideways movement at best.

Motor engineering: Market situation remains tense

In the motor engineering product range, manufacturers' expectations were once again not met. As reported by the Landbautechnik Bundesverband e. V., the majority of specialised companies have seen a decline in trading volumes, which has a direct impact on trade. There is currently no reason to expect any noticeable improvements in the sector. The general economic environment remains challenging.

Welding technology: Focus on services

The E/D/E welding technology registered a decline in 2024. The trend towards mechanisation and automation has accelerated, and is also likely to shape future developments. In addition to an attractive range of products at competitive rates, the focus is on product-related services such as servicing, repairs and maintenance. The BLACKWELD brand has become well-established among many retailers, and the training programme and networking platforms such as the welding technology marketplace – with the highest number of participants to date – have been used intensively. On balance, it can be said that networking between welding professionals has acquired new significance.

Construction industry: The crisis has worsened further

The construction industry in Germany finds itself in a complex crisis situation. The significant decline in building permits in the residential construction sector, the acute shortage of skilled workers, high construction costs, unfavourable financing conditions and global shortages of raw materials have further exacerbated the already tense situation in 2024. While building construction was at a very low level, the association's "GalaBau" and "Tiefbau" divisions still had a comparatively stable year in 2024.

108**Completed
customer projects****35 %****Corporate
customers****6 %****Growth in trading
volume****5.2** <sup>EUR
billion</sup>**Market potential**

Industrial services grow thanks to intelligent supply concepts

Systematic value creation: the product range within industrial business can be summarised as such. The trend is continuing; industrial customers from all sectors are interested in achieving sustainable efficiency improvements combined with savings. In view of the challenging market situation, the efficient supply of C-parts/MRO (maintenance, repair and operations) became even more important in 2024. This is where E/D/E members within the alliance can score top marks with intelligent MRO supply solutions and a high degree of reliability, so that the E/D/E range of services has successfully proven itself in the market with over 100 MRO/C parts projects.

With far-reaching integration into the MRO business processes and the security of an holistic supply, members position themselves with E/D/E as an important partner for the industry and can generate additional trading

volumes. This trend is continuing at a rapid pace in the current year. The modular approach – consisting of system, consulting and concept services – offers optimal conditions for excellent customer loyalty.

The continual development of the service portfolio through value-adding MRO supply concepts, networks and well thought-out supply chain management enjoy top priority in the expansion of the industrial business. There is also a focus on the entry into the robot automation business field, which began in the fourth quarter of 2024. It is to be expected that the market demand for optimisation on the part of industry will continue to grow dynamically in the coming years.



The trading volume in PPE products recorded growth.

In view of the persistently difficult market situation, process optimisation and strict cost management are more important than ever in this product range. The optimised storage concept and the integration of the eLC play an important role in this context.

To overcome this prevailing crisis situation, the optimisation and redesign of the target group ranges (processors, craftsmen and industry etc.) and the supply ranges (construction equipment, building fittings) are of central importance. The intention is to be able to offer a broad, high-performance basic range.

The building fittings product range also had to contend with a gloomy market trend in 2024, which is likely to continue in the current year. Diversification of the product portfolio provided new sources of impetus on the product range side. For example, the sun shading and façade sector still harbours attractive development potential in the building elements segment.

The continual development of merchandise-related services – such as the installation and maintenance of construction elements in the context of fire protection, security and building access – is also gaining in importance. One additional challenge for companies: the rapidly increasing shortage of skilled labour – for example, in the installation of doors and locking systems – is leading to bottlenecks in the processing of potential orders.

Construction equipment: The economic situation has stabilised

The construction equipment product range recorded a decline in 2024. Adjustments to the stock ranges relating to the civil engineering and landscaping target groups led to a slight improvement in the trading volumes achieved. The focus remains on expanding the supplier structure and thus increasing the billing volume for members.

For the current year, the construction industry as a whole is expected to move sideways with only a slight improvement. Falling construction activity-related interest rates and the positive development of the renovation market are contributing to a more hopeful outlook. In the property business, on the other hand, the persistently low order backlog is leading to intense competition. Civil engineering and infrastructure construction remain at a stable level. A slight upturn is expected in the capital goods sector.

EBH: Successful project work

Sales-orientated project work pays off: this has been proven by the cooperation with the Euro Baubeschlag-Handel AG, which is reflected in a slightly positive development – and better than the market trend. We succeeded, in particular, in gaining strategically important new members. And, last but not least, the consistent concentration of suppliers has contributed to the fact that the “Building Elements” product range has performed slightly better than the market as a whole.

In the current year, the focus will be on further developing and expanding our expertise in the SmartWorldPool and ELEMENTec projects, as well as on training and further education. SmartWorldPool is dedicated to networking different trades, to enable proactive market development in cooperation with electrical wholesalers and build up the “Smart Home & Building” business segment in a targeted manner. At ELEMENTec, the combination of expertise in building hardware and elements is leading to new solutions for all aspects of building access – with a high level of installation expertise, as well as engineering and installation from a single source.

Building services: The demand remains weak

Developments in the building services sector in 2024 were characterised by issues such as the energy transition, a shortage of skilled workers and changes in consumer behaviour, which led to subdued demand on balance.

In what remains a challenging market environment, E/D/E was able to contribute to strengthening its market position with the FORMAT trade brand, among other things. By way of targeted marketing centred around the highly competitive product portfolio and attractive conditions, this offers an economical alternative that supports retailers. The strategic importance of the FORMAT brand is, therefore, continuing to grow in the current year, while the building services market as a whole is stagnating.

The challenging market situation in 2024 also affected the business development of our European partner, VGH International. The key factors included the interest rate trend, continued high inflation rates and, in particular, rising construction prices. Only the southern European markets performed somewhat more positively. Overall, the trading volumes settled with E/D/E fell, but remained above the EUR one billion threshold. For the current year, VGH International expects the markets to move sideways, with only a slight upturn.

The IGH Einkaufs- und Marketing eG was also confronted with a challenging economic environment in the previous financial year. While the sanitary and plumbing sector stagnated at the previous year's level, the heating sector was significantly affected by the economic downturn. For the 2025 financial year, the IGH anticipates widespread stagnation, although a moderate recovery in the second half of the year cannot be ruled out. Despite this difficult economic environment, the membership structure developed positively. The acquisition of a new member in Denmark, a co-operative with eight affiliated companies, is particularly noteworthy. This growth contributed significantly to an increase of eleven per cent at EU level. As at the balance sheet date, the IGH had a total of 55 members.

Steel: Well positioned in a difficult market environment

The steel division was able to hold its own in a difficult market environment in 2024. We succeeded in increasing the volumes sold in specific product areas such as steel bars, moulded steel, tubes and sheets. With regard to reinforcing steel/mesh – which is relevant for construction – overall volumes were maintained. At the same time, we succeeded in strengthening existing partnerships and gaining new partners on the member and supplier side. Furthermore, the activities on the European market have been bolstered successfully – which, in turn, makes the ESH EURO STAHL-Handel even more interesting as a partner for suppliers.

In terms of its strategic development, the ESH always keeps a close eye on costs without jeopardising planned investments. Digitalisation and ongoing process optimisation were the primary focus of projects last year. The different platforms for professional dialogue and networking in a total of eight regional groups, along with the two SteelPower and SteelFocus groups, play an important role.

The current year will continue to be characterised by weak construction activity in the steel sector, which may not pick up until the end of the year or only in 2026. Infrastructure construction is proceeding at a similar level to 2024. Due to a positive change in the number of members and suppliers and the resulting stronger concentration, the E/D/E expects a positive development in the steel sector despite the challenging outlook.



Due to the reluctance to invest in capital goods, the tools segment experienced a challenging year.

Services for members and suppliers:

Performance through professionalisation and cooperation



Digital services are a particular focus for E/D/E members and suppliers.



Strengthening the performance of market partners through customised and competitive services – the E/D/E alliance is also guided by this central objective in its strategic and structural development. Major progress was made in 2024.

Customised service packages for our partners

In its role as a key link in the industrial B2B sector, E/D/E offers both member companies and contract suppliers customised added value: member companies are considered individually, to offer them a specifically tailored combination of relevant service modules. E/D/E takes the needs of contract suppliers into account when designing its offers. This creates harmonised service packages for the various supplier groups and industry segments – and thus a clear benefit for manufacturers across various industries.

Thanks to the EVOLUTION strategy and organisational development process, the course was set at an early stage and the necessary organisational structures were created with Member Management and the realigned Supplier/Product Group Management, thereby forming the basis for this market performance. 2024 once again demonstrated that the professionalisation of key areas of responsibility combined with improved cross-divisional cooperation is having an impact that is being felt by the partners.

Structures for a robust market performance

The Member Management team works closely with the member companies, identifies market requirements and issues, and is responsible for addressing them. It ensures that E/D/E members have access to comprehensive, customised and valuable service packages, and that these are coordinated internally and market-oriented in terms of implementation. One exemplary result in 2024 pertains to the combination of successful and market-relevant services such as the Cloud360 family with the coordinated marketing of the trademarks, supplemented by corresponding training services from the E/D/E AKADEMIE.

The efficiency gains achieved thanks to data route optimisation are also an expression of the successful spirit of collaboration between Member and Supplier/Commodity Group Management and the Digital Services department.

E/D/E recognises and appreciates the diversity of its members and works with them on a very individual basis, depending on their requirements, business logic, strategies and different characteristics and areas of focus. While one type of member relies primarily on daily excellence in certain, standardisable core E/D/E services, others are increasingly looking for strategic dialogue and are striving for a high degree of (digital) networking and joint platforms for process optimisation and e-commerce. In 2024, the member managers worked closely with the retail companies assigned to them on a one-to-one basis on all of these topics and implemented a large number of customised solutions.

Supplier/product group management is responsible for supporting the service relationship with suppliers and ensures comprehensive and customised further development – while strengthening the partnership with contract suppliers is a key area of development within EVOLUTION. For example, a comprehensive concept that serves the expansion of co-operative supply ranges was developed, and its implementation initiated. This focusses on process and cost optimisation, with E/D/E acting as the system supplier for defined product and service areas. This is done in close collaboration with the contract suppliers, and opens up significantly increased market penetration and new sources of sales potential for them.

Another important element in this collaboration is the Digital Services division. In close coordination with Member Management and Supplier/Product Group Management, this team develops market-driven, industrial B2B sector-specific, competitive digital services in data management and digital commerce that can be integrated into the holistic service packages in a target group-oriented manner.

Cross-divisional cooperation is key

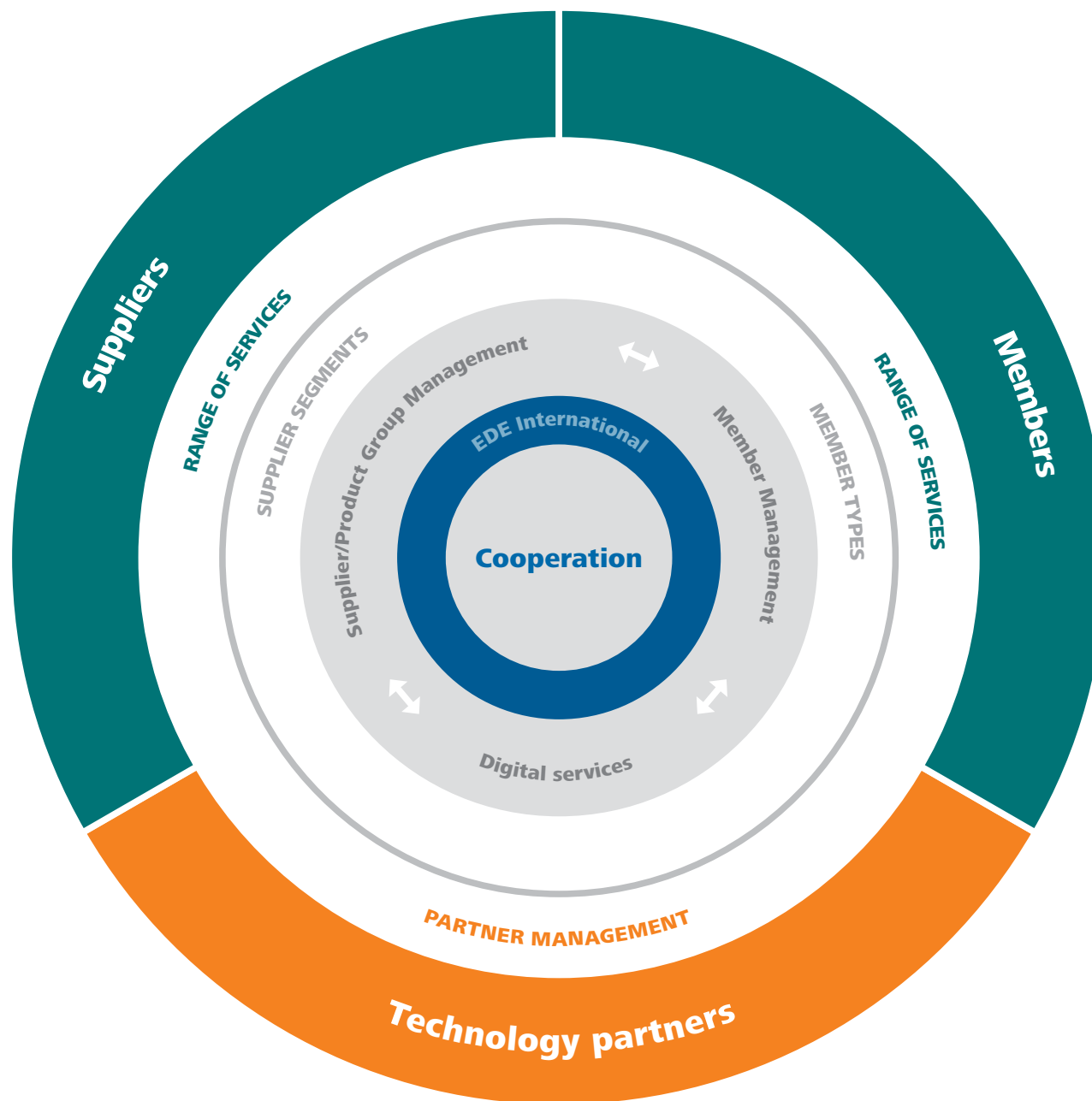
Silo thinking belongs to the past; the key word for increasing performance today is cooperation. E/D/E considers structurally and culturally fortified cooperation – particularly of all market-related core functions – to be a central success factor for the realisation of many strategically relevant initiatives and performance developments in the past financial year.

The associated cultural change in the way we work together is also having a positive impact on the organisation and its market partners.

Digital services remain a particular focus

Digital services, including combined with traditional merchandise topics – continue to be of great importance and offer opportunities (despite all the challenges) for the medium-sized industrial B2B sector. E/D/E will organise attractive overall solutions for its partners in a professional and cooperative manner. The key areas of action in 2025 include the expansion and automation of data management, the E/D/E Clearing Centre, e-invoicing, the ongoing development of SHOPcloud360 and the establishment of a holistic, cross-product yet specific advisory service, to implement customised and industrial B2B sector-specific solutions for both members and suppliers.

The interaction of
market-related
core functions
with international
reach



E/D/E trademarks and sales concepts: Unique selling points for the trade



Strong brands such as FORUM are firmly established in the product range of E/D/E members.



Strong brands stand for quality, reliability and technical excellence – factors that deliver a decisive difference in highly competitive sectors. E/D/E private labels are the best example of this. They offer the industrial B2B sector the opportunity to position itself on the market with clear unique selling points, combined with attractive purchasing conditions, high product quality, technical expertise and excellent quality of advice on the part of the trade.

The trade, therefore, benefits directly and in full from the expertise and experience within the alliance – from product range development and product purchasing to sales support and digitalisation. The E/D/E trade brands, therefore, open up new sales opportunities and possibilities for the industrial B2B sector to strengthen customer loyalty in the long term. At the same time, the established trade brands continue to expand the range with an attractive and well thought-out addition with a wide assortment in various product groups. In some cases, sales are handled exclusively by specialised sales groups within E/D/E.

format
professional quality

forum
Professional Solutions

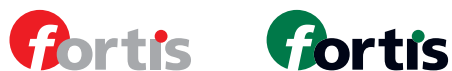
Strong demand for **FORMAT** and **FORUM** brands

The increased focus on private labels was clearly noticeable in 2024, both on the part of the industrial B2B sector and among end users. The FORMAT and FORUM brands thus recorded significant growth.

The established FORMAT brand covers a comprehensive range of products within tools – especially precision tools – PPE and operating equipment, among others, and stands for reliable products for professional use in industry and in the craft sector. FORMAT is established as a tool brand for professionals in industry and in the craft sector under the term “Tools for Professionals” and enjoys a high reputation.

With its high-quality range of tools, the FORUM brand covers the needs of industry and craft trades in a targeted manner. A high degree of quality, excellent purchasing conditions and exclusive availability via E/D/E specialist dealers were also key factors in the brand’s successful development last year.

One highlight of the current year is the 20th anniversary of the FORUM brand. To mark this occasion, a year-long campaign is being implemented featuring social media activities, prepared posts and adverts, a revised homepage and a new, specially produced image film. By way of products that change monthly, and at particularly attractive rates, members can incentivise their customers to buy.



FORTIS: Stable development in industrial business

With a wide range of products in the fields of personal protective equipment (PPE), construction equipment, fastening systems, operating equipment, hand tools, precision tools, welding technology and technical trade, the FORTIS brand meets the high demands of professional users and is, therefore, indispensable in the trade sector. In 2024, the product range continued to grow with stable sales, including new products in the areas of PPE, industrial supplies and tools for the craft sector and industry. To meet the requirements of professional users, "FORTIS Arbeitsschutz" added numerous products in 2024, such as new high-visibility jackets to its existing WorkWear series.



Continual development of the PREMIUM FORMAT GROUP

The sales group, PREMIUM FORMAT GROUP, continued its strategic development in 2024 and finalised this process at the meeting of all members in June of the year. A new PPE catalogue has also been published.

In view of the challenging market situation this year, the focus is on further developing the PREMIUM sales concept in a targeted manner. The private label concept, in particular, is being expanded and actively promoted, to bolster the distributors' market position in the long term.



UNION: A successful sales forum

Following successful previous years, 2024 was characterised by a noticeable economic downturn for UNION's Tools, Power Tools and Factory Equipment sales concepts. Numerous marketing activities served to counteract the trend. The UNION Power Tools catalogue was republished in May 2024, followed by the UNION Tools and UNION Factory Equipment catalogues in October 2024. Furthermore, distributors of this sales concept actively use microsites for the E-COLL and "FORTIS Arbeitsschutz" brands, as well as for power tools.



Many distributors organised in concepts are outperforming the market, including the FAVORIT Group.

The sales forum – which is held every two years – served as a forum for mutual exchange. In November, more than 300 guests from the circle of members and 53 exhibitors from the supplier side came together in Mülheim an der Ruhr. In addition to information about new products, activities focussed, in particular, on networking. The “UNION Werkzeug” sales concept celebrates its 20th anniversary in 2025.

FAVORIT
Arbeitsschutz

PROTECTOR
Die Arbeitsschutz-Experten

Personal Protective Equipment: FAVORIT Group and PROTECTOR

The FAVORIT Group has repositioned itself in 2024. The eight members involved have completely revised their supplier strategy, presented it in numerous meetings and successfully discussed it with suppliers. Among other things, the ForSec service module continues to ensure differentiation in the market. The FAVORIT Group has grown once more in a difficult market environment.

The PROTECTOR Group also recorded growth in 2024. The Sales College developed especially for the Group's sales employees was presented at the conference in November. At product range level, the Group has developed a concept for electro-mobility.

TECHNIK kommt an

Technical trade: Continual development of sales concepts

In the areas of PPE and technical trade, activities focus on the further development of sales concepts. A new microsite created last year on the topics of hose and fitting technology provides valuable information for users and rounds off the “TECHNIK kommt an” marketing concept in a meaningful way.

The grouping of supply ranges in stock in the direction of the defined target sectors serves to support the members in their day-to-day business in the long term. Furthermore, partners on the supplier and member side benefit from the continual optimisation of data quality. In addition, an expansion of services for specialised dealers is in preparation.

The current year also sees the 30th anniversary of the Technical Trade specialist group. Formats such as the Meet & Connect “Technischer Handel/ Arbeitsschutz” event – held in Dortmund in May 2025 – are aimed at strengthening the exchange and networking between industry and trade.



HANDWERKSTADT: Unity and new marketing concepts

The economic development in the construction-related craft sector slowed significantly last year. Within industrial B2B sector systems, this has had an impact on the HANDWERKSTADT and PLUS 1 sales groups.

Against this backdrop, the unity of the HANDWERKSTADT sales group was promoted with a new commitment concept. The cooperation with contract suppliers was stabilised and selectively expanded – accompanied by a clear commitment from retailers to a joint product and supplier strategy.

To generate sources of marketing impulses, more special campaigns have been realised for the craft sector target group. With the microsite for power tools, the HANDWERKSTADT sales group now has at its disposal an instrument to increase both visibility and reach, and to provide information about new products from manufacturers at even shorter intervals. Access to the marketing portal makes it easier for distributors to obtain centrally provided marketing materials such as adverts or social media posts. A separate campaign area is available for the FORUM campaign to mark its 20th anniversary.

The HANDWERKSTADT sales group is celebrating its 25th anniversary this year. Numerous activities are currently being prepared: in addition to the catalogue's new edition, a sales forum with 50 suppliers is planned, as well as many promotional impulses, including intensive social media activities throughout the year.

In the PLUS 1 sales group, activities in 2024 focussed on developing new product range modules tailored to the distributors' relevant regional customer target groups. Basic and extension modules were developed for a

total of 17 product groups. To generate process cost benefits and reduce the burden on members' warehousing, the modules were selected exclusively on the basis of the E/D/E warehouse ranges.

Persistently high stock levels and a noticeable reluctance to buy have affected the Motor Engineering division with its "GreenMoto" sales concept. Intense predatory competition can be observed on the part of manufacturers. A Meet & Connect event with the leading manufacturers is planned for this division for the first time this year, to generate additional impetus at the start of the season.



MIETeplus: New suppliers and trading partners acquired

In these economically challenging times, the idea of renting instead of owning is becoming even more important. Against this background, MIETeplus 2024 has once again developed positively. Many end users are interested in flexible rental offers, to benefit from advantages such as liquidity protection and risk minimisation. Last year, activities focused on maintaining and expanding the network. We have succeeded in acquiring new suppliers in the construction machinery sector, as well as new distributors. E/D/E supports the trade of integrated services from a single source, from rental software to integration with CRM systems and AI-based systems.



WUPPER-RING: Private label gains further importance in building services

High construction costs and politically induced uncertainties among consumers have placed a heavy burden on the building services market in Germany in 2024 and thus presented the WUPPER-RING with major challenges. Considering this point, activities focussed on supporting members by offering competitive conditions and by expanding and updating the FORMAT product ranges.

In view of the prevailing tense economic situation, consumer awareness is placing greater emphasis on the need for attractive private labels. In this market environment, the E/D/E trade brand FORMAT has become even more relevant in the building services sector. Thanks to targeted sales activities, WUPPER-RING distributors were able to achieve even higher own-brand shares.

Marketing that is specifically tailored to the respective target groups and focuses on increasing reach and lead generation offers distributors effective support in meeting their specific needs along the entire value chain. By strategically addressing relevant target groups and using modern marketing tools, we not only reach potential customers, but also build sustainable business relationships to promote the long term success of distributors. This enables targeted demand generation, the optimisation of sales processes and a stronger position within the competitive environment.





The FORTIS PPE series was also expanded and updated in 2024.

EURO-DIY

EURO-DIY focuses on new marketing mix

In view of the noticeable restraint across the market, EURO-DIY's activities focussed even more strongly on target group-oriented marketing measures. Online activities, in particular, increased significantly. This focussed on continual topics such as increasing efficiency and reducing costs.



Specialist groups bundle their expertise

The dialogue in the PRO.ELEMENT specialist group with its competence groups "Contract Business," "Sun Protection + Façade" and "ELEMENTARES Services" helps distributors anticipate market trends at an early stage and find new solutions. Expertise in building hardware and building components is concentrated in the ELEMENTec specialist group, in cooperation with the EBH AG. One of last year's highlights was the initial presentation of the PRO.ELEMENT award 2024 in cooperation with the Fraunhofer Institute to the supplier partner Hörmann KG for product innovations within the scope of sustainability. The ELEMENTARES competence group, which focuses on exhibition sales, has also continued to grow. New activities have been initiated here with the integration of three-dimensional, virtual exhibitions and influencer marketing.

Marketing in the digital transformation

Marketing support is one of the central services provided by the alliance, which opens up significant added value for member companies. E/D/E supports the industrial B2B sector in its transition to an increasingly digital marketing world, and sees itself as a powerful partner for effective marketing campaigns both online and offline.

Customised content

The provision of target group-orientated content is of central importance here. One example of this concerns the numerous templates for social media posts that are available on the marketing portal and can be customised for your own company with little know-how. The microsites presented above relieve members of the time-consuming creation of their own content, create variety on the retail websites and give members the opportunity to visualise their performance in an efficient manner.

Print remains relevant

Despite all the digitalisation in marketing, print remains relevant. In certain cases, there were increases in the circulation of brochures and catalogues in 2024, and additional self-service materials were also made available. E/D/E brochures are also available via the marketing portal, for example, which are aimed at end users thanks to their informative nature. Members can customise these brochures in just a few steps, and use them for their sales activities.

Marketing dialogue established

A new format was successfully established in the association in 2024 with the “Marketing Dialogue”: Marketing experts from the distributors came together both in virtual meetings and at face-to-face events to exchange experiences, gain new inspiration and jointly develop services from which the entire alliance can benefit.

New myEDEportal

The myEDEportal – which replaces the previous Extranet – serves as a central communication hub between members and E/D/E. In addition to the E/D/E homepage, which was completely redesigned in 2024, a further modern communication channel is now available within the alliance.




Steps into a new world: E/D/E digitises target group communication and enables exciting virtual user experiences.

Networked digital services:
Creating added value with practical solutions



E/D/E enables its members to seize the opportunities inherent in the process of digitalisation.



Digitalisation is becoming ever-more important in view of the dynamic changes taking hold in the industrial B2B sector and the high degree of market volatility. We are looking for solutions that are key to the competitiveness of our members, can be implemented efficiently and offer concrete added value – from automated processes to improved added value for our partners.

Developed for practical use

E/D/E is committed to offering practical, technically mature and economically viable solutions – at all times combined with clearly measurable and effective benefits for its partners. For this reason, E/D/E continually reviews the marketability of its offers, to ensure that they can be used directly in day-to-day retail practice and add sustainable value. This applies even more so to small and medium-sized companies, for which it is becoming increasingly difficult to recruit qualified specialists with in-depth technical expertise. Solutions within the alliance thus give members access to services that they could only realise on their own with great effort.

Data: An industry driver

Data is the central source of energy for the industry and forms the basis for almost all current and future developments. The initial effect of data availability is particularly significant for members when it comes to digitalising processes and rendering business models fit for the future. E/D/E also reduces the effort involved in data provision for its suppliers to a significant extent. The data is prepared in such a way that it can be used directly on modern platforms such as ERPcloud360 or the new e-commerce platform SHOPcloud360.

DATAcloud360

Customised product data for the industry

The DATAcloud360 offering serves as the basis for providing customised product data for digital marketing and online sales. By the end of 2024, the E/D/E digital team had supported more than 270 member companies in switching their data procurement to DATAcloud360.

The first stage of expansion already included core functionalities such as the de-duplication of multiple master data sets, individual exports and article compilations or the targeted export of articles with changes (deltas). The automated and regular export of defined data sets, which was realised in 2024 with the second performance level, brings additional and significant efficiency gains in day-to-day business.

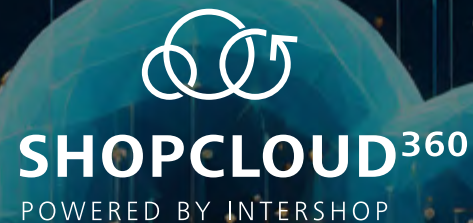
Integration of all digital service modules

The volume traded via electronic channels will continue to rise. The digital networking of distributors, particularly with their existing customers, is likely to increase steadily in the coming years. This is why E/D/E employees advise and support members in connecting their customers via various procurement platforms and in the form of direct connections to their customers' ordering systems. One important success factor concerns and remains the deep integration and optimal coordination of the digital service modules, from product data to ERPcloud360 and SHOPcloud360.

Evaluating artificial intelligence (AI) in a benefit-oriented way

E/D/E experts in all relevant fields of activity are also focussing very intensively on the possibilities of AI applications for their members. If a given technology proves to be market-ready and reliable, they examine its added value and potential use for E/D/E and its partners. The "Onedot" supplier data portal is fully AI-based in all services and has improved time-to-market by a factor of 10. DATAcloud360 also supports data quality and translations with artificial intelligence.

Thanks to the supplier data onboarding portal, E/D/E offers suppliers the opportunity to add new products, update and supplement data at any time, thereby significantly improving data quality. The supplier data is processed using AI and transferred to the systems of E/D/E and its members with minimal time loss and maximum accuracy. Simultaneously, suppliers receive direct AI-based feedback on their data quality and possible optimisation potential. This has reduced the time required for data onboarding for suppliers by 80 per cent and increased data quality by 70 per cent at the same time.



The future of e-commerce in the industrial B2B sector

SHOPcloud360 forms a central building block for the digital transformation in the industrial B2B sector. The e-commerce platform – which has been specially adapted to the needs of industrial B2B sector companies – enables member companies to optimise their sales performance and strengthen their market position at the same time.

The platform integrates seamlessly into existing value-added processes and helps to implement lean ordering processes and optimised data management. The implementation within the E/D/E member group has had a successful start, and the second development stage of SHOPcloud360 was completed in autumn 2024. One of the most important features is SHOPcloud360's personalised and powerful on-site search based on SPARQUE.AI. The eCommerce Services team also provides support for members' individual requirements.

This is linked to the clear requirement that product and article data can be integrated into existing systems and processes with minimum effort. This means less effort for data management and greater focus on the core business. This is achieved with ERPcloud360 and PIMcloud360, both products from our cloud family that are seamlessly integrated into SHOPcloud360. In addition, solutions such as DATAcloud360 are continually improving the quality and usability of data – an area that has further potential for optimisation and which will, therefore, be developed further in the coming years.

Expansion of advisory services

The creation of a reliable data platform forms the basis for numerous other services. It also enables further support and expansion of transactional business between members and suppliers. The world of data and technology is complex, and the multitude of solution providers often causes uncertainty. This is why E/D/E is positioning itself as a reliable partner with a clear, industrial B2B sector-specific advisory service. This is aimed at offering members guidance and develop customised solutions that perfectly match their requirements.

Support on the way to e-billing

The transition to paperless invoicing has begun this year. In preparing for the obligations that this entails, E/D/E supported its members in 2024 with comprehensive communication and training programmes, from the website "e-rechnung.ede.de" to a video series created in cooperation with DER MITTELSTANDVERBUND. The E/D/E Clearing Centre supports members and suppliers throughout the entire process – right up to automated invoice processing – to speed up processes and minimise potential sources of error.

eDC Building Services Data: Focus on online shops

In view of the challenging market situation, support for eDC Haustechnik – the building services data provider – is needed more than ever to drive digitalised solutions for greater efficiency and cost optimisation in trade. The "SellSite" shop solution, which is tailored to the requirements of E/D/E's building services members with its special focus, won over more users in 2024. Within the first twelve months following their go-live, the companies were able to realise high monthly sales in the SellSite shop that far exceeded their own expectations. eDC Haustechnik data provides holistic support with monthly evaluations as a partner that knows and understands the industrial B2B sector business throughout the entire process chain.





E/D/E provides guidance in the complex world of technology.

Shop sales are expected to increase in 2025, with an anticipated rightward shift in the general market level.

PVH FUTURE LAB: 3D printing, applications and Shopware shop in high demand

The “PVH FUTURE LAB” for the industrial B2B sector was founded back in 2018 as an innovative driver by distributors, for distributors. In 2024, there was a further increase in interest among members and suppliers in digital options for improving business processes with the help of software solutions and AI applications.

Demand, in particular, for industrial 3D printed components and project business in industry and craft trades with recurring products from additive manufacturing grew significantly by 18 per cent when compared to the previous year. This trend is expected to continue in the current year.

With regard to flixxstore, the PVH FUTURE LAB completed the development of two new applications in 2024. dataflixx as the data basis for the AI applications of the flixxstore and the new sales app, sellflixx Sales CRM, were programmed, implemented and transferred to live operation with the involvement of distributors. The PVH FUTURE LAB is pursuing an entirely new approach in the industry towards AI-based, event-orientated sales. AI supports the clear and targeted sales approach to customers and combines the topics of task management, customer churn, customer potential and product recommendations in the preparation and execution of customer appointments.

PVH FUTURE LAB

Managing innovations.

flixxstore.com: AI apps for more sales and better processes in the industrial B2B sector

With flixxstore, the PVH FUTURE LAB has been working hard to create a central point of contact for distributors to benefit from applications and software with artificial intelligence since 2021. The tools and business models created by distributors, for distributors, support the innovative and digital use of state-of-the-art system components without a great deal of effort on the part of the distributor. The strategy is based on building API-enabled systems (including 3D printing platform, flixxstore AI apps, Shopware shop) that can be integrated and connected depending on distributor requirements.

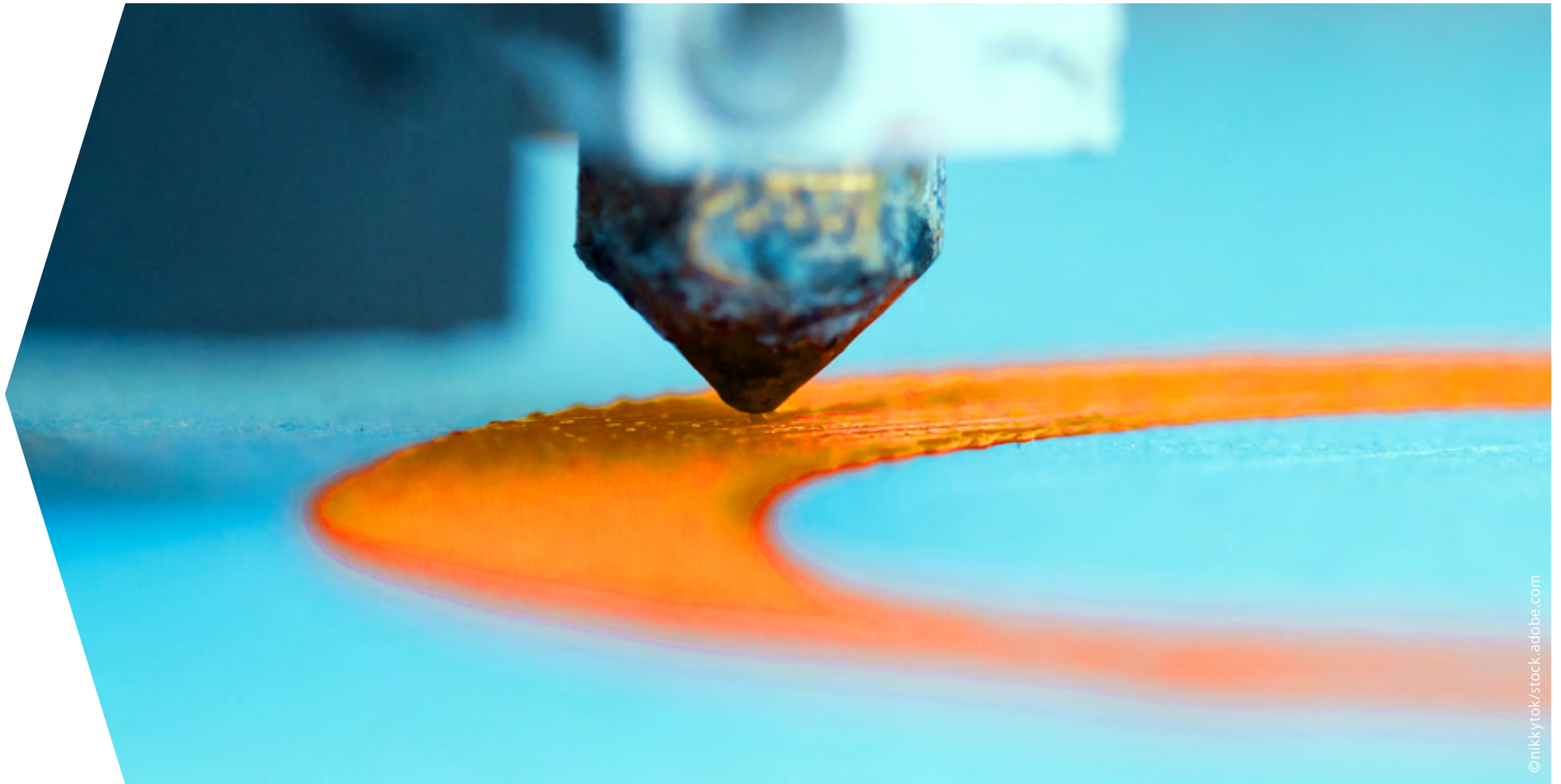
A standardised database (dataflixx) enables distributors to use flixxstore applications with just one click for each additional application after a one-time docking. The connection to the flixxstore model has been greatly simplified and, therefore, offers simple and high scalability. The range of AI applications is being further expanded.

To realise the requirements of the founding members of the PVH FUTURE LAB and other interested distributors for an online shop, a joint Shopware solution was established with sellflixx C2E (Commerce 2 Everyone). More than ten distributors have already joined the solution within the first year. They benefit from the highest licence level Shopware Beyond at low costs and a core with over 100 functions for B2B business in the industrial B2B sector. This focussed on the exchange and joint development of the system.

In the current year, the PVH FUTURE LAB will expand the functional core of sellflixx C2E for Shopware, develop dataflixx as a data hub and integrate sellflixx Sales CRM as an AI solution for other distributors. Furthermore, applications for purchasing from distributors are being developed in the buyflixx area.

Using digitalisation to enhance competitiveness

The huge range of activities and success stories from the reporting year underscore the following: digitalisation and use of artificial intelligence serve as key levers for overcoming the economic challenges of the present and positioning the industrial B2B sector for the future. E/D/E supports its members in making practical use of the opportunities offered by digitalisation and AI.




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The demand for 3D printing increased significantly in 2024.

Efficient logistics: The key to flexibility and sustainable benefits



E/D/E logistics: reliable, efficient and sustainable.



High speed meets maximum reliability: in logistics, the E/D/E offers its members attractive added value that leads to significant competitive advantages in day-to-day business. Under challenging market conditions, the eLC logistics centre once again proved to be an important pillar of the industrial B2B sector in the 2024 financial year, thereby demonstrating a high degree of flexibility.

Direct delivery used intensively

Remarkable: the offer to supply retail customers directly from the eLC was used even more intensively in 2024. Direct deliveries now account for well over 80 per cent of total shipments – a clear sign of how efficient, reliable processes and high product availability are proving to be added value for members. The trend towards inventory optimisation in the trade itself has also increased further. In addition to flexible customer delivery, this also brings economic benefits: capital commitment and own logistics costs are significantly reduced and liquidity is optimised.

Performance and partnerships

The eLC was able to meet these requirements in full, with same-day processing once again reaching almost 100 per cent. This high level of performance was accompanied by strict cost management. This depends not least on resilient and proven partnerships. Among other things, the contract with the parcel service provider UPS was extended on a long term basis, to combine high-performance transport chains for Germany and Europe with secure conditions.

Challenges in 2025

This year will continue to be characterised by considerable challenges in the entire logistics sector. By way of targeted measures and a high level of cost awareness, the E/D/E ensures that it will continue to provide its members with the high quality they have come to expect at optimal economic conditions as added value. E/D/E anticipates a further increase in demand for centralised logistics services and is positioning itself accordingly. Continual process improvements are aimed at further optimising handling costs.

Sustainability in logistics

Other key topics include the implementation of EU regulations and supporting members with these challenges. One example of this concerns the upcoming replacement of the extinguishing agent in the hazardous materials warehouse. At the same time, the topic of sustainability remains a high priority with the optimisation of the association's carbon footprint.

Strong in alliance: Networks create added value



Growing together is the principle in a strong network like E/D/E.



Recognising market changes at an early stage, anticipating new requirements and benefiting from the shared wealth of experience within the alliance: Member Management is seen as indispensable in the continual communication between the E/D/E and its members. Especially in challenging times, exchanging ideas and finding solutions together becomes even more important.

Always close to the market

In close dialogue between the members and Member Management, E/D/E's broad-based portfolio is used to identify precisely those modules and solutions that offer added value for the respective member's business and optimally meet their requirements. Every member benefits from a dedicated contact person and 1:1 management rooted in a spirit of trust. In all projects, Member Management provides support with an interdisciplinary approach and close proximity to the market – strengths that were once again confirmed as key advantages in 2024.

Exchange within the network

One of the central and proven activities is the "Business NETZWERK" with twelve fixed groups. The number of participating entrepreneurs and decision-makers increased significantly again in 2024. The new Business NETZWERK "SteelMinds" group, which was created with the participation of the ESH EURO STAHL-Handel, contributed to this. It includes steel traders from the next generation of entrepreneurs. The tried-and-tested Business NETZWERK "Online Compact" format was continued in 2024. This serves to open up topics discussed in the presence groups to all members.

The new Business NETZWERK AI was launched in spring with more than 100 participants. The aim is to jointly identify applications of artificial intelligence with high practical benefits for the industrial B2B sector. In autumn, two Business NETZWERK AI learning groups were also founded in presence.

Industry get-together: "Branchentreff total"

The E/D/E industry get-together "Branchentreff total", the largest networking platform in the industrial B2B sector, was held again in 2024. True to the motto "zusammenWACHSEN" (growing together), roughly 1,500 participants from trade and industry met at the Leipzig Trade Fair Centre at the



Networking is a central element of our work within the alliance.

end of September to discuss current topics in a positive atmosphere. The successful concept of concentrated one-to-one meetings every 30 minutes once again proved its worth, and there were also numerous other networking opportunities that were utilised intensively.

Succession issues gain further importance

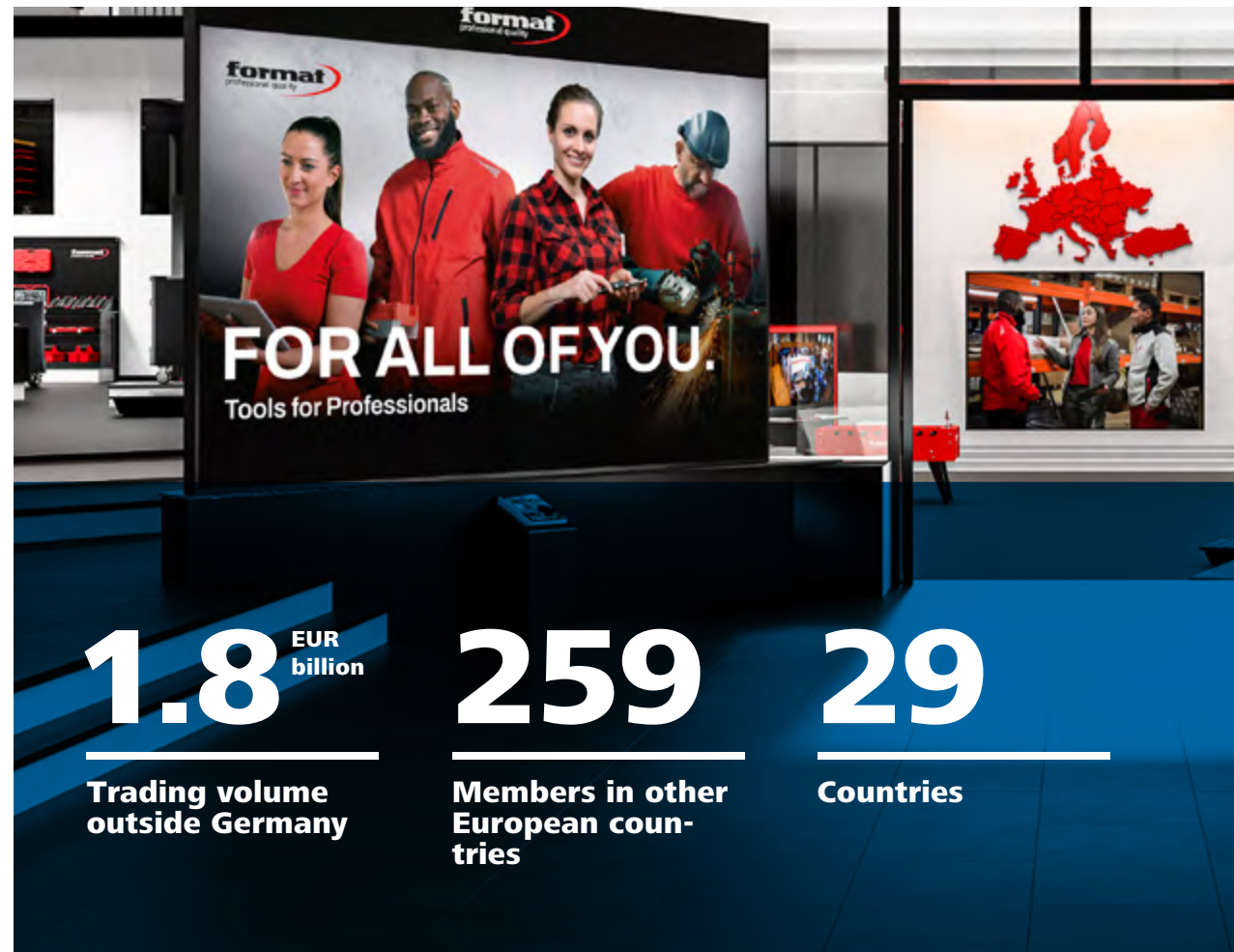
In the current year, Member Management will continue to be a permanent and experienced point of contact for the industrial B2B sector. Last year's experience suggests that succession issues will become even more important in many companies. E/D/E supports entrepreneurs with expertise regarding the associated issues, to address the topic at an early stage and in the long term.

Further activities in the current year are aimed at increasingly networking members beyond the traditional E/D/E range of services, in order to drive forward joint service development, for example, in the area of sales training or marketing, and to react more quickly to new requirements. Another focus is on supporting the development and expansion of services relating to private labels – such as planning and consulting. This enables member companies to further diversify their business models and generate additional earnings opportunities.

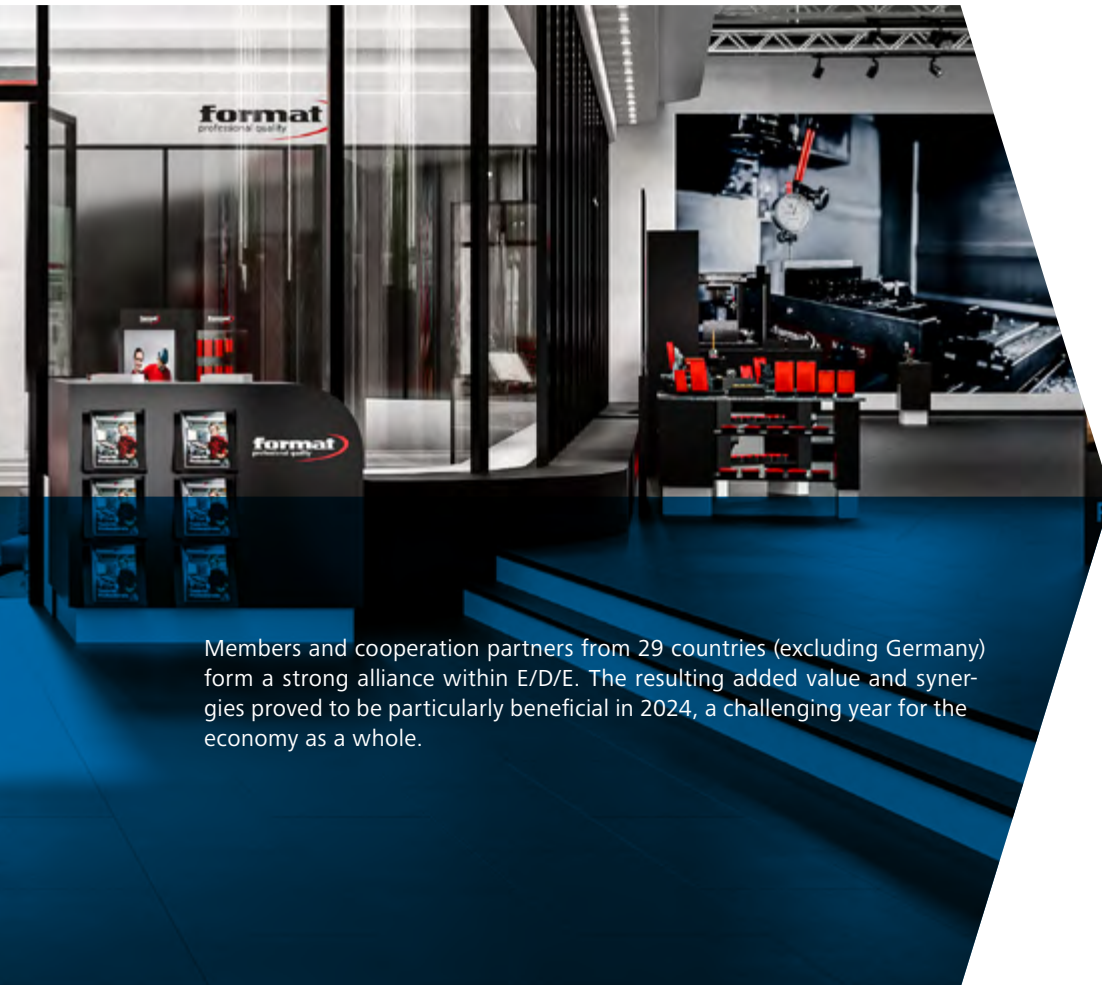


The E/D/E industry get-together “Branchentreff total”: the largest networking platform in the industrial B2B sector

EDE International: Digitalisation and intensification of pan-European cooperation



In 2024, many new international members and suppliers were acquired.



Members and cooperation partners from 29 countries (excluding Germany) form a strong alliance within E/D/E. The resulting added value and synergies proved to be particularly beneficial in 2024, a challenging year for the economy as a whole.

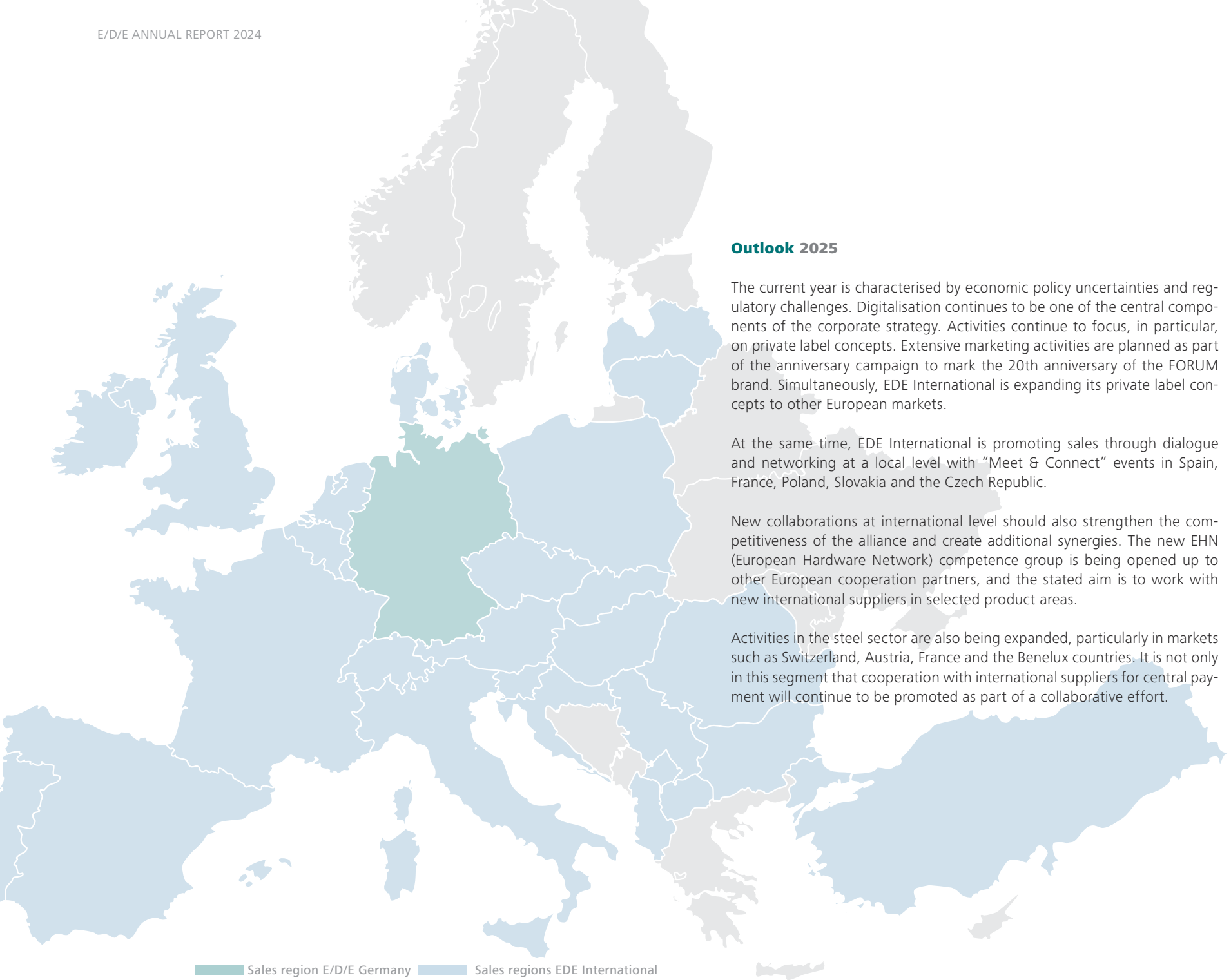
The prevailing difficult situation in the construction and industrial sectors in large parts of Europe was almost entirely offset by extensive activities. Business in Spain, Poland and the Czech Republic developed particularly well, with double-digit growth in trading volumes. Some markets continued to grow slightly, while other countries lost ground compared to the previous year, in some cases significantly.

For international business, the previous year was once again characterised by the acquisition of new members and suppliers, the intensification of collaboration with members and cooperation partners, the strategic (and ongoing) expansion of the E/D/E trade brands in Europe, the further development of modern sales and marketing concepts and – as a result – the advancement of digitalisation at all levels.

Digitalisation, process optimisation and automation

In terms of sales and marketing, EDE International has consistently and successfully continued on its path of digitalisation. As part of the FORMAT 3.0 concept, the Brand Space was developed as a pioneering virtual reality platform for members of the European network, to significantly improve digital sales and marketing for FORMATplus.

The optimisation of operational processes was also accelerated. The modern partner portal myEDEportal went online at the end of the year. EDE International played a pioneering role as a pilot project; European members were successively integrated into the new information and communication platform and migrated to the modern DATAcloud360 data portal. The new ticket system was introduced in the European Service Centre, thereby rendering the workflow for communicating with members faster and more efficient.



Outlook 2025

The current year is characterised by economic policy uncertainties and regulatory challenges. Digitalisation continues to be one of the central components of the corporate strategy. Activities continue to focus, in particular, on private label concepts. Extensive marketing activities are planned as part of the anniversary campaign to mark the 20th anniversary of the FORUM brand. Simultaneously, EDE International is expanding its private label concepts to other European markets.

At the same time, EDE International is promoting sales through dialogue and networking at a local level with “Meet & Connect” events in Spain, France, Poland, Slovakia and the Czech Republic.

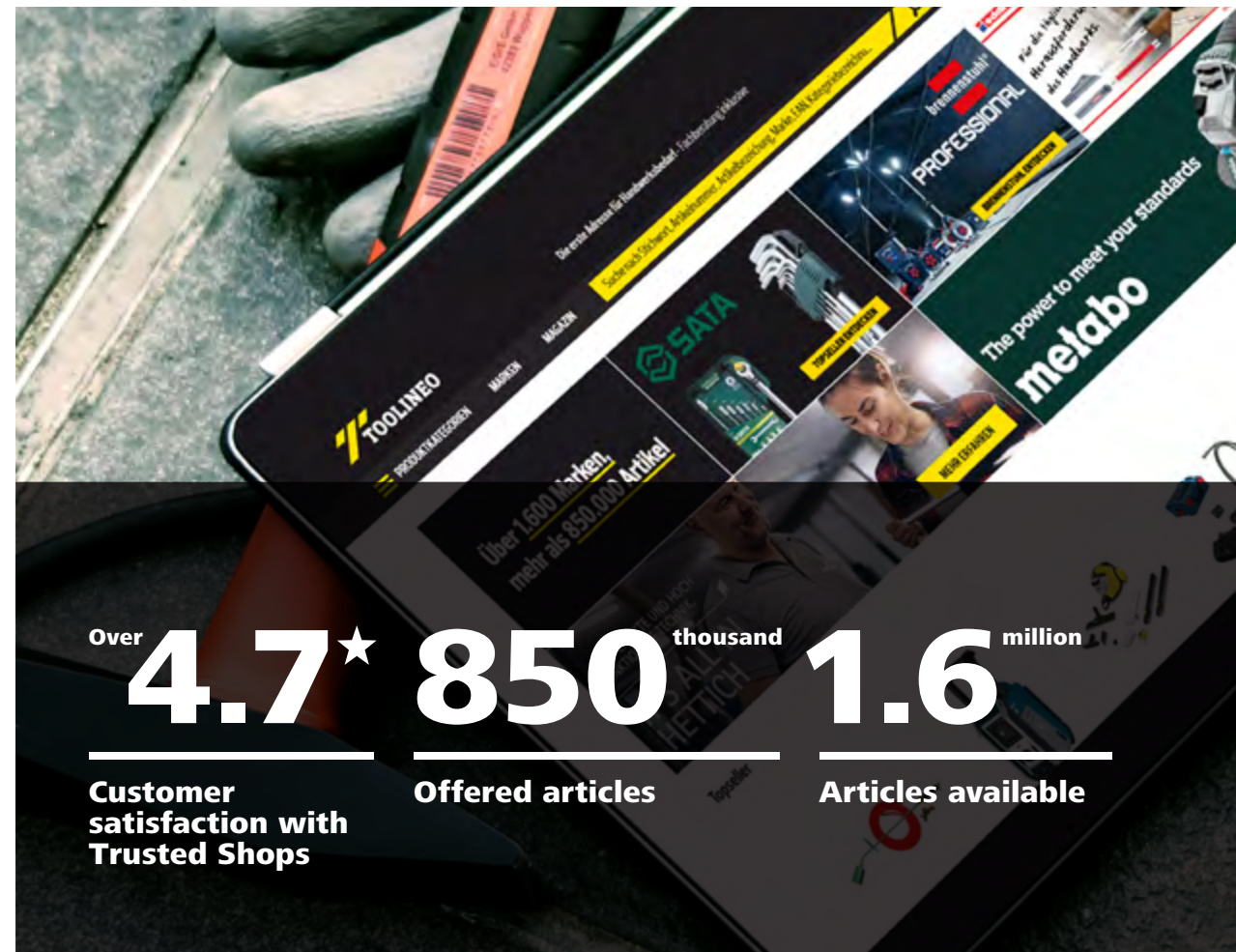
New collaborations at international level should also strengthen the competitiveness of the alliance and create additional synergies. The new EHN (European Hardware Network) competence group is being opened up to other European cooperation partners, and the stated aim is to work with new international suppliers in selected product areas.

Activities in the steel sector are also being expanded, particularly in markets such as Switzerland, Austria, France and the Benelux countries. It is not only in this segment that cooperation with international suppliers for central payment will continue to be promoted as part of a collaborative effort.



Innovative: EDE International is breaking new ground with the FORMAT Brand Space.

Toolineo: On course for growth with a technological redesign



Toolineo offers great growth prospects for the E/D/E alliance.



2024 was a year of transition for the online marketplace Toolineo, the first port of call for craft supplies: the successful rebuild behind the entire IT infrastructure and the successful go-live of the new system on 11 December 2024 laid the foundation for a clear growth strategy in the coming years.

The new architecture offers numerous advantages for everyone involved. Customers benefit from faster loading times, extended payment options such as credit card and PayPal, improved customer account functions and more precise product information. The new platform also offers clear advantages for distributors: existing EDI interfaces are retained, supplemented by a modern API to make quotation management much more convenient. This allows effortless scaling of offers and processes, to drive the planned item growth. For brand manufacturers, the increasing growth of Toolineo means an even greater reach to address their messages specifically to relevant target groups. Toolineo is already aiming for a significant increase in reach and order value in the current year.

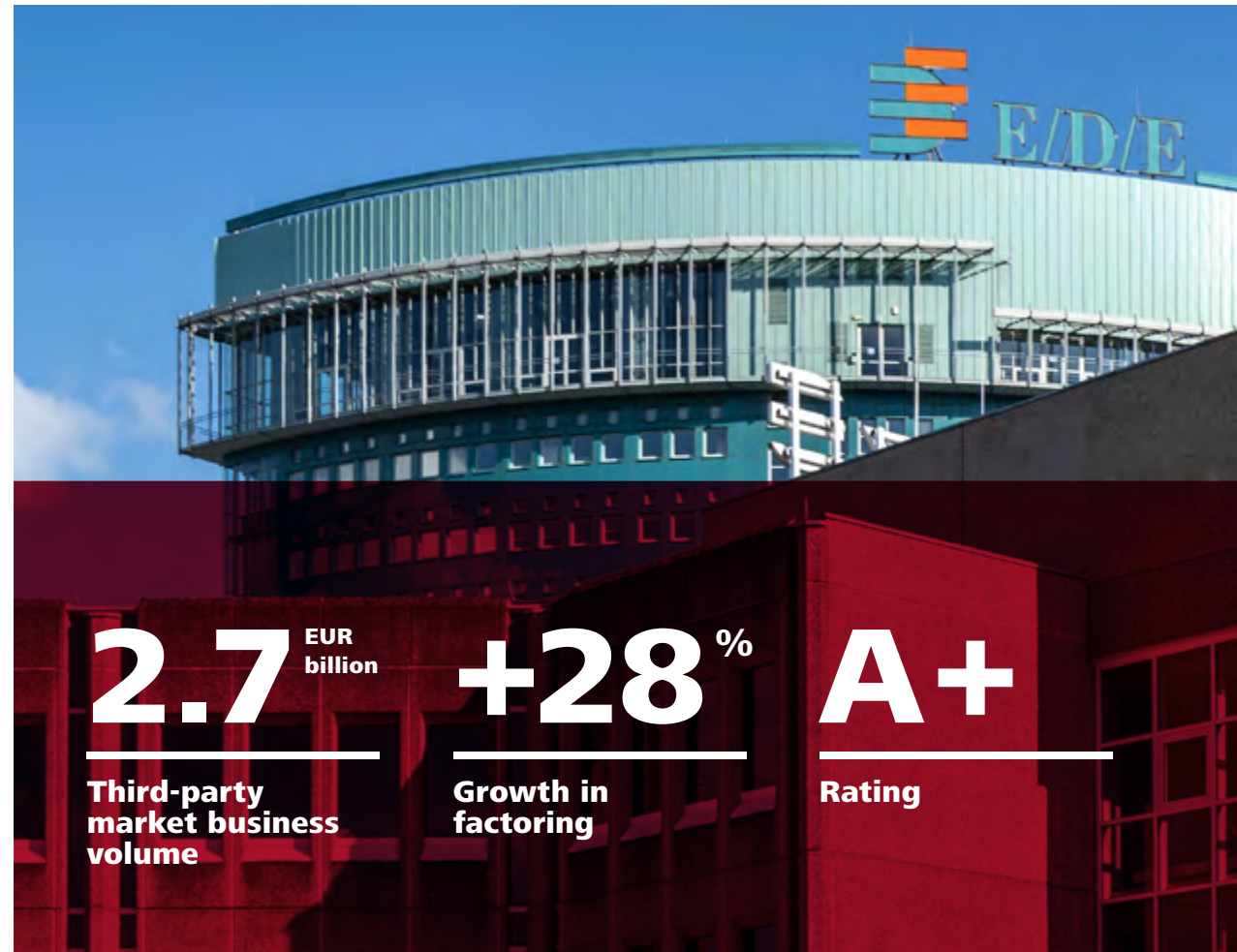
Marketplace for craft supplies

Toolineo GmbH & Co. KG has been operating the marketplace since 2015, and has since developed an impressive network of customers, distributors and suppliers. As a platform with a clear focus on the industrial B2B sector, Toolineo bundles the main product ranges of the participating distributors into an attractive overall offer and assumes responsibility for central marketing, as well as IT and process steering, between customers and distributors.

The strategic relevance of the marketplace as a professional partner for distributors, brand manufacturers and customers in the B2B sector is further strengthened by use of new technology, and successfully transfers the concept of the alliance into the digital world.

ETRIS BANK:

A sought-after partner for factoring and central payment



ETRIS BANK remains on course for growth.



Thanks to its two strategic business areas of central payment and factoring, the ETRIS BANK – as a wholly-owned E/D/E subsidiary – seamlessly continued the successful development of previous years in 2024. Numerous new customers in the factoring segment and the general interest rate environment fuelled the growth path and contributed significantly to the positive development of the earnings situation.

Partner to the SME sector

ETRIS BANK sees itself as a competent partner for SMEs in all matters relating to receivables and risk management. One central focus concerns central payment for members and suppliers of the company's own group of companies and the associated payment processing. The bank is also increasingly covering central payment with and without the assumption of del credere for third-party alliance groups. Increased sales activities in the current year will serve to further establish this area successfully.

Digital factoring services in demand

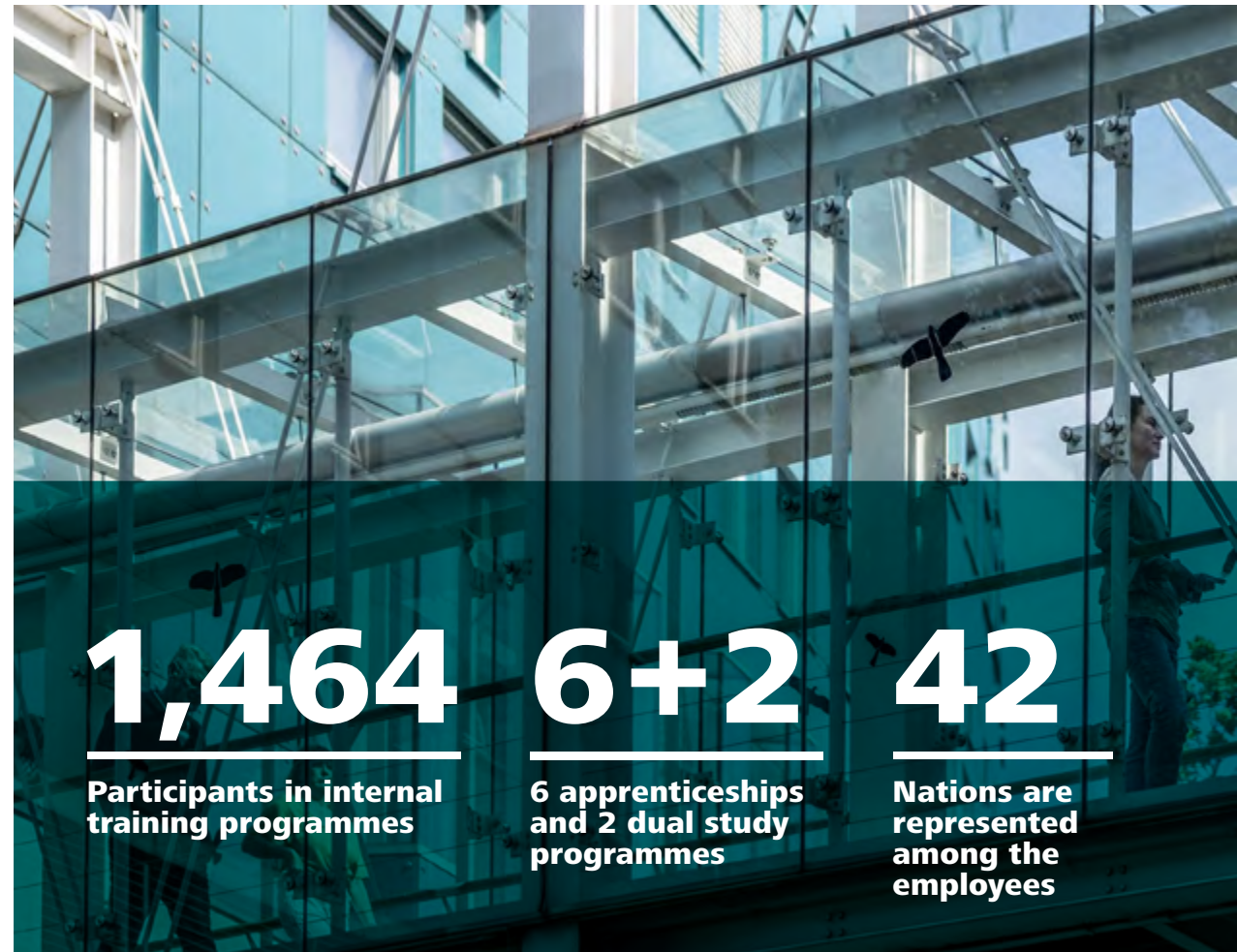
In addition, digital factoring services have quickly proven to be another long-term success factor for the ETRIS BANK. Business developed well above plan in 2024. In the current year – just five years after the launch of this business segment – the EUR 1 billion mark is within sight for the first time. One of the key reasons for this strong growth: the ETRIS BANK offers factoring in all variants, tailored to the respective customer requirements. This financing solution with full del credere assumption improves the liquidity situation in the industrial B2B sector, and is becoming even more important in view of an uncertain economic environment.

Top rating confirmed several times in a row

ETRIS BANK holds a full banking licence – an important unique selling point against the regulatory backdrop of the entire financial services industry. The solidity of the business model and the robustness of the entire organisational and operational structure are regularly confirmed by independent experts. For the fourth time in a row, the ETRIS BANK has received the top rating of "A+ with stable outlook" from the GBB rating agency in 2024.

Personnel:

E/D/E – an attractive employer brand



Growth requires excellence: the employees at E/D/E are shaping the industrial B2B sector of the future with a great deal of creativity and commitment.



The world of work is undergoing fundamental change. However, one thing remains unchanged: the human factor is indispensable for long-term business success. This is why the E/D/E pro-actively focuses on employee retention, team spirit and daily interaction.

Meaningful tasks

In 2024, E/D/E continued to meet the diverse challenges in personnel management with pragmatic and flexible approaches. To cope with increased personnel costs without jeopardising employee satisfaction and loyalty, E/D/E continued to focus on employee development, more efficient processes and automation. This serves, in particular, to relieve employees of repetitive tasks and promote the development of meaningful tasks.

New ways to attract employees

The shortage of skilled workers and the general labour shortage affects almost all areas of the Group. Innovative solutions are, therefore, needed to attract and retain qualified employees. This is achieved by way of a combination of appealing employer branding, particularly across social media, competitive remuneration and comprehensive further education programmes.

Today, a strong online presence and a positive employer brand are crucial for attracting and retaining talented specialists and employees. In this context, the innovative, AI-supported recruiting platform has proven its worth in reducing application hurdles and optimising the selection process.

Continual further education and qualification

Further education is a key to employee retention and development. The modern learning management platform makes it possible to offer customised and low-threshold learning programmes both for the company's own employees and for member companies. This promotes continual learning and adaptation to changing market requirements.

Among other things, E/D/E launched a new programme in 2024 for managers, who can receive individual advice in a change consultation. It also offers individual learning consultations for employees. In the Collaboration Hub, managers can familiarise themselves with various workshop formats or book a moderation session. The Lego Serious Play® format has been particularly well received.

Automating processes

The continued automation of HR processes is contributing to greater efficiency across the entire organisation, and reduces administrative burdens not only for employees in the HR department. Use of modern technologies has enabled further routine tasks to be automated and complex processes to be simplified. This creates time for substantive work with managers and employees.

These focal points will also characterise the current year in HR management. E/D/E wants to further sharpen its profile as an attractive employer brand to successfully retain employees and to make a convincing case in the recruitment area. Continual further education remains the key to operating with the usual high level of performance vis-à-vis members, suppliers and cooperation partners.

E/D/E AKADEMIE: From knowledge transfer to a solution-oriented approach

Targeted, project-related further education

Numerous companies in the industrial B2B sector are using the current economically challenging times to step up their further education activities. Instead of standardised training courses, there is an increasing demand for company-specific, individually tailored measures. This focusses on the desire to work together with colleagues on specific, practical solutions. The boundary between further education and project work is often blurred. The E/D/E AKADEMIE team of experts can meet these high-level requirements with a deep understanding of the market and customers and with the involvement of E/D/E Member Management.

The open E/D/E AKADEMIE portfolio with a wide range of entertaining, low-threshold formats once again proved its worth. In conjunction with training, activities in this area remained at the previous year's level in 2024, while in-house measures increased significantly.

Advisory services are to be expanded

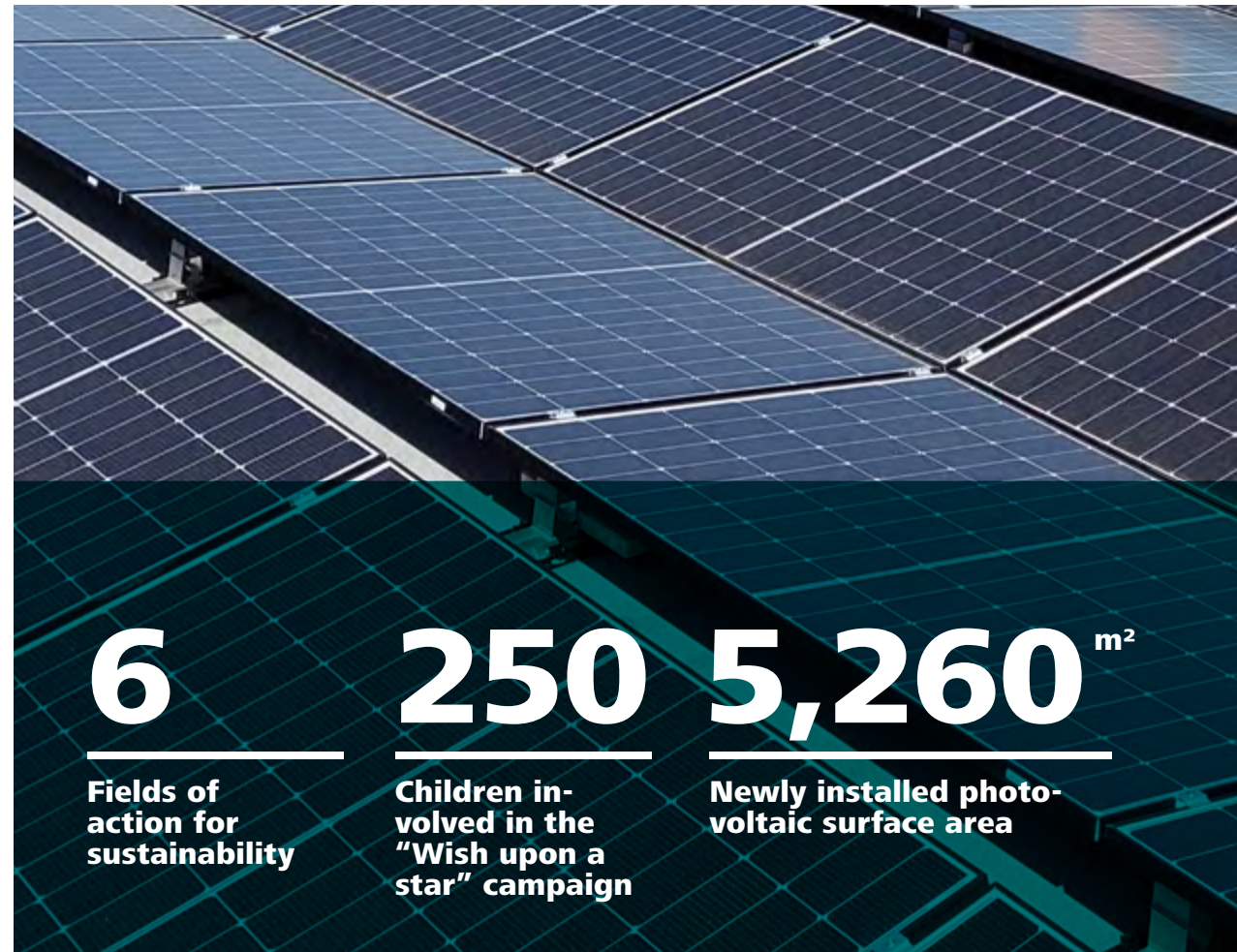
For the current year, the trends described in the area of vocational training and further education are expected to continue. To meet the increasing demand for individualised measures, the E/D/E AKADEMIE will significantly expand its advisory services and further strengthen its own team. Numerous companies that have not yet systematically dealt with the qualification of their employees are increasingly recognising the significant added value associated with this: it is no longer just about building up the knowledge of the individual, but about developing joint solutions.



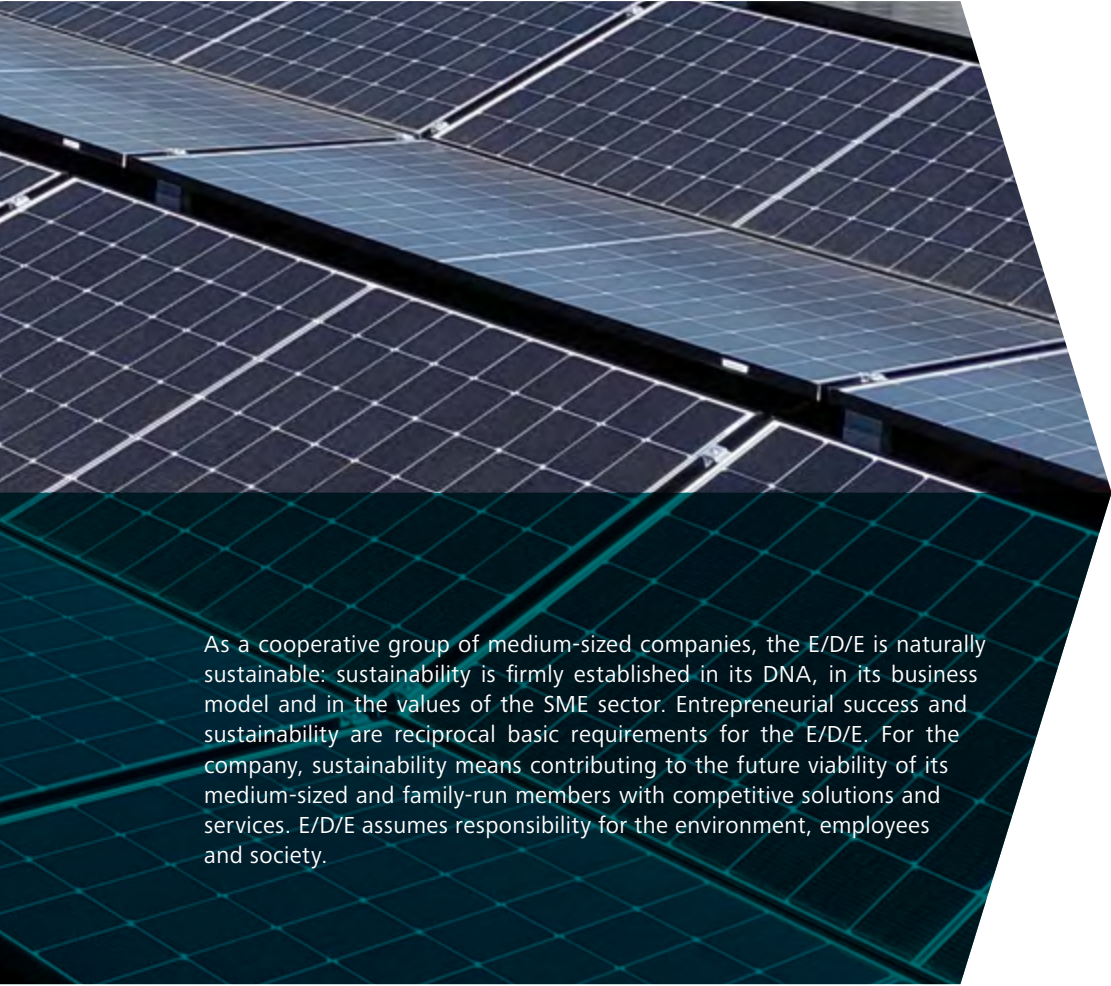
A positive working environment promotes inspiration and contributes significantly to the success of E/D/E.

Sustainability

is a question of
attitude for us



E/D/E is involved in six areas of sustainability, including responsibility for ecologically sustainable processes – for example, in the form of energy self-sufficiency through photovoltaics.



As a cooperative group of medium-sized companies, the E/D/E is naturally sustainable: sustainability is firmly established in its DNA, in its business model and in the values of the SME sector. Entrepreneurial success and sustainability are reciprocal basic requirements for the E/D/E. For the company, sustainability means contributing to the future viability of its medium-sized and family-run members with competitive solutions and services. E/D/E assumes responsibility for the environment, employees and society.

Our claim

E/D/E's sustainability objectives are rooted in combining ecological, social and economic sustainability across the entire value chain. To this end, E/D/E has also implemented numerous sustainability activities in the six fields of action in 2024, which will have an impact within the alliance.

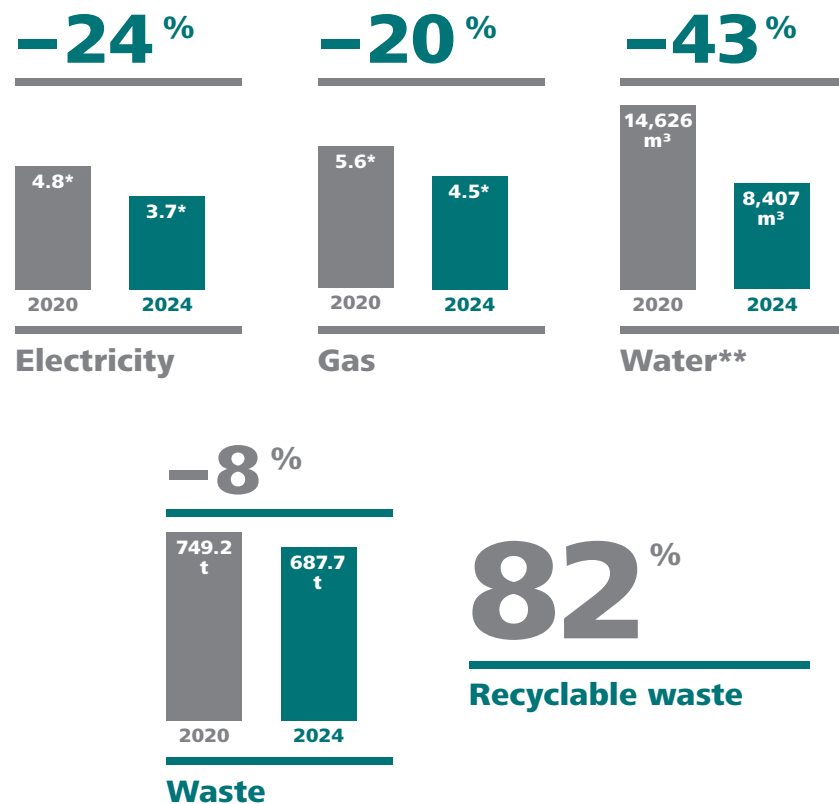
Relief from regulatory requirements

The previous year was characterised by the preparation and implementation of increasingly stringent regulatory requirements. A well-founded range of services is aimed at offering members solutions that reduce the effort required to meet regulatory requirements.

To comply with the requirements of the German Supply Chain Due Diligence Act (LkSG), the E/D/E offers and uses a powerful, AI-based software solution in collaboration with Prewave. Furthermore, the E/D/E 2024 has also expanded the Prewave offer for members not subject to the German Supply Chain Due Diligence Act (LkSG), from whom customers are now increasingly expecting effective compliance and the ability to provide information on the supply chain. E/D/E also acts early and pro-actively on upcoming issues such as the EU Deforestation Regulation (EUDR), to relieve the burden on members in their day-to-day business.

To ensure efficient sustainability reporting, the E/D/E works with the online platform "leadity," and also makes this solution available to its members via a framework agreement. This enables partners to meet the requirements of the EU Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive (CSRD) as easily as possible.

A “Positive” minus: Conserving resources with success



* Million kilowatt hours

** Increased consumption due to burst pipes in 2020 and 2021

Knowledge transfer and communication

E/D/E maintains close and regular communication with its partners, and exchanges information in various committees and networks, particularly with regard to sustainability regulation as a whole. To impart knowledge, it initiated training courses on the German Supply Chain Due Diligence Act (LkSG) via the E/D/E AKADEMIE, for example. E/D/E has also established a permanent information section on current sustainability topics in the industrial B2B sector magazine and answers further enquiries in a personal dialogue – an offer that members and partners have increasingly taken advantage of in the past year.

In internal communications, a separate sustainability section has been created on the Intranet, which is aimed at imparting knowledge ranging from various background information and tips to a sustainability glossary. In addition, existing communication formats have been further developed and new ones established.

Certification Maintaining assured sustainability

One important milestone was reached in April 2024 with the certification of the “Assured Sustainability” seal of approval by the German Institute for Sustainability and Economy (DINO) in April 2024. E/D/E also continued its activities in the ECOPROFIT Club 2024 and both maintained and expanded its cooperation efforts with important partners such as the MITTELSTANDSVERBUND (ZGV) and the “Zukunftskreis Nachhaltigkeit”³. Networking and a constant exchange of experience are and remain of central importance to E/D/E.

Responsibility for nature and the environment

In terms of ecological sustainability, the installation of photovoltaic systems on some of the logistics halls was one of the key measures. Renewable electricity

Services for members and suppliers

Our level of ambition

We use sustainability trends and market requirements as leverage for innovation, differentiation potential and growth.

Image: WrightStudio/stock.adobe.com

Networks and partners

Our level of ambition

We promote sustainability in the development of the industrial B2B sector through our ecosystem.

Image: amnaj/stock.adobe.com

Corporate responsibility

Our level of ambition

By assuming social responsibility, we achieve an impact in the region that makes a difference.

Image: engel.ac/stock.adobe.com



Regulatory requirements

Our level of ambition

Compliance with laws and regulatory requirements is a matter of course for us.

Image: ARMMY PICCA/stock.adobe.com

Ecologically sustainable processes

Our level of ambition

We organise our processes to avoid and reduce the use of resources and to return materials and products to the cycle.

Image: Naiyana/stock.adobe.com

Responsibility for employees

Our level of ambition

We create space and optimal conditions for the employees who want to create and achieve something together. We promote performance, development and success, while assuming social responsibility.

Image: Dragana Gordic/stock.adobe.com

generation in E/D/E will begin in the current year. This is aimed at using the energy ourselves and thus further reducing our carbon footprint. The E/D/E also once again took on ecological responsibility in 2024 in the form of a climate sponsorship for a moorland project. In addition, five bee colonies with a total of around 200,000 bees moved into the E/D/E site in the middle of the year.

Responsibility for **employees**

Maintaining health and promoting well-being are high priorities in terms of the association's "Responsibility for employees". Regular health days with an extended offer for individual health care, the promotion of participation in the "Wuppertaler Schwebebahnlauf" and a wide range of company sports activities contribute to this. E/D/E also promotes the compatibility of work and family life with a new parent-child office, a daycare centre and various flexible working time models.

The topic of sustainability is firmly established in the training concept and also plays an important role in the onboarding process for new employees. They receive comprehensive insight into the sustainability objectives and measures right from the start, to sensitise them to the range of topics. The biodiversity project on the E/D/E site has been continued with the trainees and dual students, and a tree planting campaign has also been realised, for example.

Responsibility for **society**

E/D/E meets its social responsibility on many levels and by supporting a wide range of charitable projects. The E/D/E Foundation, E/D/E and its employees once again supported regional and local institutions and delivered sustainable projects in 2024. As part of the E/D/E Christmas "Wish upon a star" campaign in 2024, roughly 250 children's wishes from children's and youth homes in Wuppertal were once again fulfilled with donations of money or goods.

The first E/D/E cooperation course with the Junior University of Wuppertal was also a great success: during a three-day course, three E/D/E employees offered 14 young students exciting and comprehensive insight into topics such as sustainability, resource conservation and process chain management.



The non-profit E/D/E Foundation has once again approved scholarships for further vocational training at the "ZHH-Bildungswerk" training centre. Over the past 19 years, more than 540 scholarships have been approved, including 24 in 2024. In conjunction with the University of Wuppertal, the Foundation is also participating in the "Deutschlandstipendium", a programme of the Federal Ministry of Education and Research, for the ninth year in a row.

Sustainability priorities for 2025

Sustainability at all levels remains a central objective at E/D/E. For this reason, the focal topics are being consistently driven forward, and joint activities are being initiated in the association. Continual sustainability regulation, in particular, and the associated regulatory effort will continue to tie up many resources in the current year, not only with regard to CSRD reporting. The intention remains unchanged: to relieve the partners as much as possible of the bureaucratic burden.



The installation of the photovoltaic system is one of the key sustainability measures for 2024.

Legal notice

Publisher, editorial office, concept, layout, typesetting

Einkaufsbüro Deutscher Eisenhändler GmbH
Business division marketing
EDE Platz 1, 42389 Wuppertal, Germany

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