Importaco

Sustainability report 2022

STATEMENT OF NON-FINANCIAL INFORMATION

IMPORTACO
2022

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1. LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

The world is facing a complex global scenario caused by the war in Ukraine, rising inflation, the energy crisis and tensions in supply chains. These situations add to the challenges that COVID-19 has already brought us in previous years. These challenges call for a strong global partnership, in which business plays a key role due to its capacity to generate economic and social development together with other social actors.

In this environment, the 2022 financial year was marked by cost increases and the integration of this deviation in our results so as not to make products more expensive for the end consumer. This effort was necessary to contain prices and mitigate the population's loss of purchasing power. It is precisely in this context that we remain committed to continue investing in order to consolidate our international development, increase the sustainability of our processes and generate innovative products in line with the latest trends in advanced food.

The food sector plays a fundamental role in social cohesion. By offering safe, healthy and affordable food we contribute to the development of fairer societies. To achieve this, we develop programmes of integration at source, quality and sustainability that allow us to involve all the actors in our value chain. Only through this collaboration can we continue to offer quality, safe, sustainable and healthy food that is accessible to as many people as possible.

At Importaco, we have strengthened our commitment to quality, specialization and innovation by investing more than 17 million euros. Only through the generation of knowledge and the talent of our teams will we be able to implement models that make our customers' experience unique. In the area of sustainability, we have also reinforced our strategy through energy efficiency plans with which we have reduced our annual consumption by 10 % and the circular economy through zero waste certification in four production centres.

I would like to thank all the people who make up the Importaco team for their tireless work and dedication. Your commitment is the driving force that makes us grow and become a benchmark company in the sector every day, not only for our products but also for the values with which we work. Thank you for making the Importaco project possible.

Toño Pons Casañ
President of Importaco

2. 2022 MILESTONES

Importaco accelerates its energy transition strategy with the installation of 9,800 solar panels

We have invested 3.6 million euros in the installation of 9,800 photovoltaic solar panels at 10 production sites - an investment that guarantees 14 % of our self-consumption and avoids the emission of 4,600 tonnes of CO_2 per year. So far, Importaco has managed to reduce its energy consumption and emissions by 20 % since 2018.

"*Come sano, crece fuerte*" achieves its goal of educating more than 1000 young people

Importaco's "*Come sano, crece fuerte*" social project has continued to increase its reach. This initiative seeks to promote the consumption of fruit, vegetables, legumes and nuts among young people in Valencia. In 2022, the programme reached more than 1,200 young people, raising awareness of the importance of a nutritious diet and a healthy lifestyle.

Collaboration with the Vicente Ferrer Foundation

Importaco collaborated with the Vicente Ferrer Foundation by donating almonds, water and registrations for the "VII Anantapur Ultramarathon City of Valencia", a non-competitive charity race that raises funds for the construction of an orthopaedic and rehabilitation centre in Dornala, in the south of India.

Four new centres certified in the ISO 50001 standard

During the year 2022, Importaco carried out the certification of its energy management system in four of its production centres. This certification allows the company to improve the energy efficiency of its facilities and contribute to environmental protection.

Importaco wins silver medal on the ECOVADIS platform

Importaco received the 2022 silver medal from EcoVadis. This certification assesses both the environmental impact of the company's activity and its labour practices, human rights, ethics and sustainable procurement. It also places Importaco in the top 25 % of the best qualifications, reflecting its commitment to people, innovation and the sustainability of its products and the company.

Itac Professional launches a selection of allergen-free ingredients

Itac Professional, Importaco's B2B brand, offers catering professionals a selection of gluten-free and peanut-free nuts and dried fruits, with the aim of guaranteeing peace of mind for you and your customers. The products included in this selection are almonds in different varieties and formats (sliced, diced, ground, whole), shelled walnuts, standard and premium shelled pine nuts, premium sultanas, pitted and unpitted plums and dried apricots. Itac Professional, aware of the benefits of this selection for both catering professionals and consumers, continues to work to incorporate new references.

Collaboration with universities to promote young talent

Importaco maintains alliances with the University of Valencia, EDEM, the Polytechnic University of Valencia, Florida Universitaria and ESIC, to contribute to the development of young talent. Through these alliances we share our knowledge with students so that they can establish links with the world of work and learn first-hand about the practical application of their studies.

Gaspar Alapont appointed 1st vice-president of Almendrave

Gaspar Alapont, a colleague of Importaco since 1993 and current head of almond purchasing, was appointed by the governing body of SAB-Almendrave as the new 1st vice-president of the organisation.

Importaco participates in the INC XXXIX World Nuts & Dried Fruit Congress

The president of Importaco, Toño Pons, participated in the peanut round table at the XXXIX World Nuts & Dried Fruit Congress organised by the INC in Dubai. He analysed current consumption patterns and market supply and demand. The Congress organised by the INC is the most important international meeting of professionals dedicated to the dried fruit and nuts sector in the world, with 1,000 participants from more than 60 countries.

Talk by the allergist Ramón Salgueiro, doctor at La Fe Hospital of Valencia

Dr. Ramón López Salgueiro, an allergist at La Fe Hospital of Valencia, gave a training talk at Importaco's Quality, Research and Innovation Department on the need to provide consumers with accurate information on the labelling of nut packaging in order to avoid restrictions on their consumption, as they are a source of essential nutrients for health. He also explained that food allergies are increasingly common in the population, both in adults and children, so the risk of cross-contamination must be prevented.

Importaco Terra has become the first FSA and GlobalG.A.P. certified almond plantation

Importaco Terra has obtained the FSA (*Farm Sustainability Assessment*) and GlobalG.A.P. certifications for its almond growing farm La Guita, located in Badajoz, Extremadura. This is the result of a certification process that began more than a year ago, with the total dedication of the Importaco Terra team, the support of the Quality and Environment and Agricultural Integration Departments, as well as the advice of an external technician. These certifications recognise Importaco's agricultural integration model, guaranteeing that the almonds come from a supply chain based on an efficient, safe and environmentally-friendly production process.

Almond tree plantation at Importaco Terra's farm La Guita in Badajoz.

Teresa Cercós participates in "Family businesses facing the challenge of innovation"

Teresa Cercós, Director of Quality, Environment and Innovation at Importaco, participated in the round table "How and why does the family business innovate", organised by the LAB Mediterráneo Foundation, AVE, IVEFA and EY. During her speech, she explained that the company has a willingness to change, a long-term vision and an implementation of innovations for both external and internal customers.

Participation in the Regional Forum on Economy and Sustainability, organised by Levante-EMV and À Punt Mèdia

Irene Moreno, External Relations and CSR Director of Importaco, participated in the Economy and Sustainability Forum promoted by the Camp de Morvedre. The aim was to promote sustainable development through social inclusion, equal opportunities, the reduction of inequality and sustainable economic management. Topics such as digitalisation, entrepreneurship, employment, corporate social responsibility, the environment and financing were addressed.

Food Innovate Summit in Milan

The Food Innovate Summit in Milan has become an essential annual event for the food industry. It showcases the latest trends in food, innovation, R&D&I and consumption from all over Europe. Importaco participated in this fair with our Director of Quality, Innovation and Environment, Teresa Cercós, who presented a paper on neuroscience and customer experience to integrate consumer expectations into the supply chain.

Improvement of the industrial processes of the dried fruit centre

With the aim of always seeking continuous improvement, this year we have implemented a new technology that allows us to improve the industrial processes of dried fruit production. This technology is based on the use of an ultraviolet light camera to identify any anomalies before final inspection. This makes it possible to detect defects in the dried fruit before processing, which improves the quality of the final products and reduces production costs.

Our corporate laboratory of the Technology Centre has revalidated the ISO 17025 accreditation, granted by the National Accreditation Entity - ENAC

The Importaco Technology Centre's corporate laboratory has achieved the revalidation of the ISO 17025 accreditation for the analysis of aflatoxins and ochratoxin A. This accreditation, granted by the Spanish National Accreditation Body (ENAC), guarantees that the laboratory has the technical competence and the necessary procedures to carry out tests and calibrations properly.

Visit of the CEIP María Yocasta of Puerto de Sagunto to the Seeds Factory

The second year of primary school pupils from the Maria Yocasta Primary School in Sagunto visited the Seeds Factory, as part of an educational initiative for pupils to learn about the working processes of factories and trades in Valencia. This is part of our strategy to build relationships with the local communities where we operate. During the visit, the students learned in situ about the professional work of several of our colleagues, as well as a talk on waste treatment and our sustainability strategy.

Importaco supports sport: a successful contribution to the Trinidad Alfonso EDP Valencia Marathon

Importaco once again collaborated in the Trinidad Alfonso EDP Valencia Marathon, held on 4th December 2022 in Valencia Ciudad del Running. Our contribution included the participation of Importaco Runner, a club ranked 25th in terms of number of participants; in addition, 32,000 units of Natural Nut Mix were donated, with a total investment of 21,297 euros. This collaboration reflects our company's firm commitment to promoting a healthy lifestyle through sporting activities.

3. IMPORTACO: ABOUT OUR COMPANY

1 Countries in which Importaco has people working. Operations are understood to be those carried out by these people to contribute to the company's objectives.

3.1. Company profile

Importaco is an international food company specialising in the production of nuts and mineral water. It was founded in 1940 and is currently one of the largest producers of dried fruits and nuts in Europe and the second largest mineral water group in Spain.

Our team is made up of 2,311 people who develop a business model focused on health and meeting the expectations of consumers at all stages of consumption. To achieve this, we have an integrated value chain, a team of great professionals and highly-specialised production centres.

Our business is built around the purpose of improving people's health and wellbeing, guaranteeing responsible production and consumption. Importaco, during its more than 80 years of history, has demonstrated its ability to adapt to the market, industry, customers and consumers, which is reflected in its continued growth and its varied range of products and services. Quality, sustainability and innovation are the three fundamental pillars of its development, with a long-term vision.

3.1.1. PRODUCTS AND SERVICES

IMPORTACO NUTS

Importaco Nuts has extensive experience in the production and marketing of nuts and dried fruits. Our activities include the manufacture, production and distribution of nuts, snacks, chocolate-covered nuts, dried fruits and seeds. We currently operate in four different markets: the retail market in the Iberian Peninsula, the international retail market, the food service market and the ingredients market for the agri-food industry. We have 13 production centres: eight in Spain, two in Italy, one in Poland, one in Turkey and one in the United Kingdom.

IMPORTACO WATERS

Importaco Waters specialises in the commercialisation of mineral water and has four springs in Spain: Sierra de Albarracín (Teruel), Peñagolosa in Cortes de Arenoso (Castellón), Sierra de Gredos (Ávila) and Sierra de la Tramontana (Mallorca). Our commercial brands Agua de Cortes, Agua de Bronchales, AguaDoy and Font S'Aritja are present in national retail through Mercadona. Agua de Cortes and Font des Teix are active in the food service market.

3.1.2. OUR PRESENCE IN THE WORLD

Our group, based in Beniparrell (Valencia, Spain), has an extensive global presence[1].
We have production centres in Spain, Italy, Poland, the United Kingdom and Turkey, and purchasing offices in Argentina, the United States and China that cover the different nut and dried fruit growing areas.

Argentina, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Egypt, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hong Kong, Hungary, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kuwait, Latvia, Lithuania, Lebanon, Malta, Northern Ireland, Mauritius (Isl.), Norway, Netherlands, French Polynesia, Poland, Portugal, United Kingdom, Czech Republic, Slovak Republic, Romania, Serbia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey and Ukraine.

COMMERCIAL PRESENCE

As for our customers, we supply nuts to 48 different countries.

OFFICES AND PRODUCTION SITES

SPAIN
- Importaco Headquarters
- Head office
- Commercial offices
- Nut factories (8)
- Mineral water bottling plants (4)
- Almond tree plantations

PORTUGAL
- Almond tree plantations

POLAND
- Nut factory

TURKEY
- Dried fruit factory
- MENA Procurement Office

ITALY
- Besana Headquarters
- Nut factories (2)

UNITED KINGDOM
- Nut factory

ARGENTINA
- Latin America Procurement Office
- Peanut plantations

UNITED STATES
- North American Procurement Office

CHINA
- Asia Procurement Office

VALUE CHAIN

Importaco works in partnership with suppliers, farmers and companies in the agri-food sector with the aim of supplying the most nutritious and safest food. Strategic and preferred suppliers account for approximately 80 % of the volume of raw materials, with whom long-term relationships are established to ensure food safety, quality and sustainability.

We have suppliers from the following geographical areas:

Supplying areas	Main countries	Number of suppliers
Africa	Burkina Faso, Malawi, South Africa and Tunisia	8
Asia	United Arab Emirates, China, India, Iran, Israel, Japan, Sri Lanka, Singapore, Thailand, Vietnam and the Philippines	20
Europe	Bulgaria, Switzerland, Germany, Spain, France, United Kingdom, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Netherlands, Poland and Turkey	86
Oceania	Australia	1
America	Chile, Peru, United States, Argentina, Canada and Brazil	61
TOTAL		**176**

3.2. Economic performance indicators

In order to ensure Importaco's long-term sustainable economic performance, we are committed to creating value for all of our stakeholders. To this end, we include in our strategic plan programmes for the financial sustainability of the group and the efficient management of investments and operating costs.

ECONOMIC-FINANCIAL DATA 2022 (IN THOUSANDS OF EUROS)

Economic value generated	
Net sales	744,873
Operating result	-6,143
Profit before tax	2,418
Profit after tax	3,518
Net worth	202,340
Investments	17,458

Economic value distributed	
Operational costs	67,204
Employee salaries	81,784
Financial costs	3,155

SALES VOLUME (IN THOUSANDS)
Nuts: 105,298 kilograms
Mineral water: 808,820 litres

Installation of solar panels at Importaco's headquarters in Beniparrell.

3.3. Strategy and management model

3.3.1. RESPONSIBLE MANAGEMENT MODEL

Importaco's management model is based on the values of trust, rigour and participation in order to achieve our business purpose: to improve people's health and well-being, while guaranteeing responsible production and consumption.

The corporate principles, commitments and courses of action are designed to promote the participation of all people, reflecting the company's business philosophy and serving as a guide for professionals. The statements included in the management model are practical and reflect our commitment to the principles of business ethics and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

In this model, each person becomes a protagonist, as it is their exemplarity and experience that enable the implementation of the business model and corporate strategy. All Importaco employees act under this model, to ensure that our activities are carried out in an ethical, transparent and sustainable manner. This helps to create a shared, stable and solid culture capable of mobilising people.

OUR PRINCIPLES

The principles are the result of the combination of Importaco's values, which define the rules of conduct aimed at guiding people's actions. In order to comply with the established principles, Importaco undertakes and makes concrete commitments with the aim of advancing sustainable development.

Importaco works in collaboration with suppliers, farmers and companies in the agricultural sector with the aim of supplying the most nutritious and safest food. To this end, suppliers are classified into four levels according to the volume of purchases and the level of integration of their policies: strategic, preferential, transactional and challengers. Strategic and preferred suppliers account for approximately 80 % of the volume of raw materials, with whom long-term relationships are established to ensure food safety, quality and sustainability.

HEALTH AND WELL-BEING
We contribute to improving the health and well-being of consumers through the supply of quality products that enable them to enjoy a good diet.

- Developing a reliable, inclusive, sustainable and efficient food system
- Offering safe, nutritious and healthy products
- Promoting a healthy lifestyle

LEADERSHIP AND INTEGRITY
People are the cornerstone of our growth. We are committed to demanding, committed and rigorous people who share our values.

- Creating an excellent working environment
- Fostering leadership based on our values
- Respecting human rights

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY
We make responsible and efficient use of natural resources by striking a balance between economic development and environmental protection.

- Reducing our emissions to achieve neutrality
- Responsible water use
- Applying circular economy criteria

DEVELOPMENT AND CONTINUITY
As a family business, we uphold our values and act in a way that is committed to long-term development and the creation of a shared project.

- Building lasting relationships with our customers
- Ensuring economic and financial sustainability
- Conducting business ethically

INNOVATION
We work together with our stakeholders to develop innovative projects that allow us to be aligned with the latest trends and create shared value.

- Creating a culture of innovation
- Generating new opportunities through exploration
- Creating new products based on neuroscie

TECHNOLOGY
We incorporate technology to transform our organisation and our products and use them as a tool to respond to the challenges of the future.

- Integrating digitisation and fostering agility
- Be more efficient and offer higher-quality products
- Creating a culture of IT security

3.3.2. SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGY

Our broad commitment to sustainability is embodied in our Green Company strategy, in which we integrate sustainability into our business through three pillars: Green (Planet), Health (Product), Social (People). To meet the demands of our stakeholders and ensure the long-term sustainability of our company, our strategy is based on these three pillars, each with specific plans and projects.

SOCIAL: PEOPLE
At Importaco, we are firmly committed to improving the lives of all those with whom we interact. This is achieved through the promotion of a diverse and equitable organisation, the respect and development of human rights and the establishment of ethical principles. To meet these aspirations, we have in place a Social Compliance programme, a Code of Ethics, an equality plan, a Health and Safety policy and a strategy aimed at promoting stable and quality employment. The People and Values Department strives to maximise employee well-being and ensure a safe and healthy working environment.

HEALTH: PRODUCT
Importaco strives to provide responsible, affordable and high-quality products, including environmental and health criteria, trends and elements of responsible innovation in their creation and development. In order to improve formulations in line with the health demands of today's society, several projects have been carried out, including the formulation of new products by minimising the content of additives, salt, sugar and fats; the elimination of allergens; and the evaluation of the life cycle analysis of certain products to assess the environmental impact at all stages. These initiatives are complemented by Importaco's 360° quality model, which offers consumers safe, nutritious and healthy products, as well as transparent labelling to inform them about the ingredients used in each product.

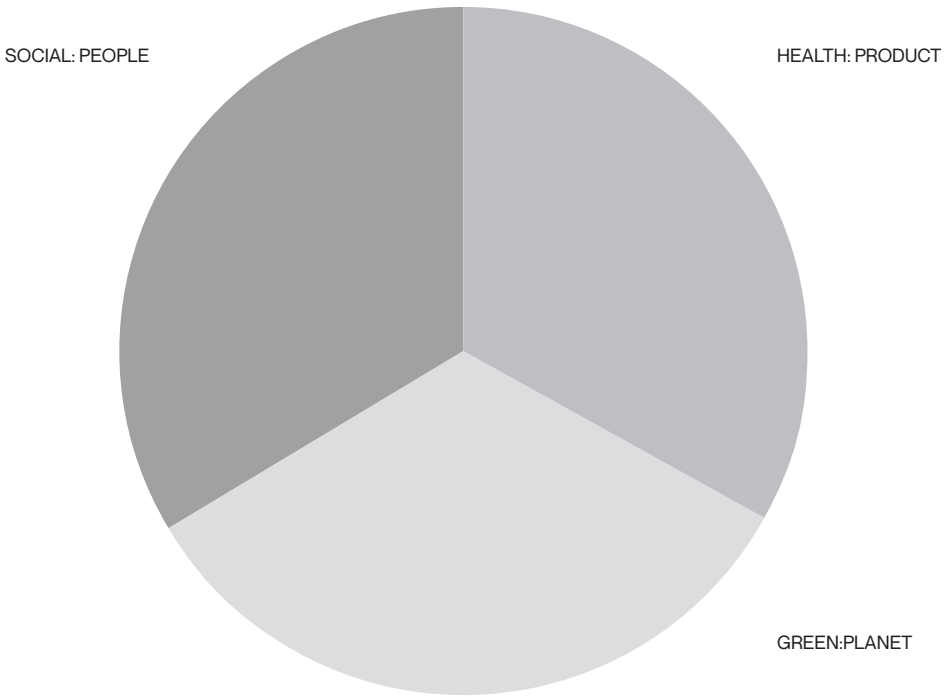
GREEN: PLANET
At Importaco, we are committed to protecting nature through our motto "producing more with less". This is achieved by involving everyone in the circular economy, reducing the consumption of natural resources and greenhouse gas emissions. Our action plans include continuous improvement of energy efficiency, environmental awareness and sensitisation of the workforce, sustainable use of water, implementation of new measures related to climate change adaptation, promotion of sustainable agricultural practices and the definition of a roadmap to achieve climate neutrality through decarbonisation.

3.3.3. CORPORATE STRATEGY

Importaco wishes to consolidate its European leadership in the production and distribution of dried fruit and nuts and to maintain its position as one of the leading companies in the Spanish mineral water market. In order to achieve this objective, a series of development lines have been established to guide the company's areas.

The strategic plan is oriented towards continuous development in the current markets: retail, industry and food service. The strategic lines included in this plan are the development of sales in all markets, the collaboration with strategic customers, the launching of elaborated and innovative products, the improvement of the group's competitiveness and the promotion of quality plans adapted to the requirements of each customer.

To achieve these objectives, corporate changes will be made to adapt the group's organisational structure, harness the talent of its people and enhance digitalisation and sustainability.



Blooming of almond trees in the fields of Importaco Terra.

4. ABOUT THE REPORT: MATERIALITY ANALYSIS

4.1. Stakeholder engagement

At Importaco, we take into account the interests of our stakeholders to align our actions and strategies with their expectations. The engagement methodologies applied allow us to make adjustments and improvements to our products and services to better meet the needs of our customers, employees, shareholders and other stakeholders. In addition, we seek to detect new business opportunities, discover new areas for improvement and increase our productivity. In this way, we achieve our goal of enhancing the well-being of all people.

In 2022, we focused on improving our positioning in terms of specialisation, quality, innovation and sustainability. We have also continued our corporate communication and public affairs strategy to better connect with our stakeholders through dialogue tools, generate more trusting environments and maintain constructive relationships with all stakeholders.

Stakeholders	Dialogue and transparency tools	Periodicity
Employees Importaco's staff members	Importaco Convention Enlarged Board of Directors Chairman's Committee Works Council Equality Committee Internal communications Health and Safety Committee Ethics Committee Importaco Connect	Annual Four-monthly Weekly Four-monthly Four-monthly Constant Quarterly Quarterly Daily
Suppliers Companies that supply products or services to Importaco	Meetings and visits of procurement, quality and sustainability teams Direct communications	Constant Constant
Costumers Companies that Importaco supplies its products to	Customer service Crisis Committee Meetings with commercial and quality teams Direct communications	Daily On request Constant Constant
Institutions and NGOs Organisations with which Importaco collaborates	Meetings and gatherings Partnership agreements	Constant Constant
Shareholders Persons owning Importaco	General Meeting of Shareholders Board of Directors	Annual Monthly
Public administration	Meetings Participation in associations	On time Constant

4.2. Definition of content

Importaco has identified the company's significant social, environmental and economic impacts through a materiality analysis. This information has been gathered through extensive stakeholder consultations to establish a sustainability strategy based on the values of participation and transparency. Dialogue with stakeholders has enabled us to better understand and manage stakeholder expectations, share views and allocate resources to address relevant issues.

In terms of methodology, we followed three main steps:

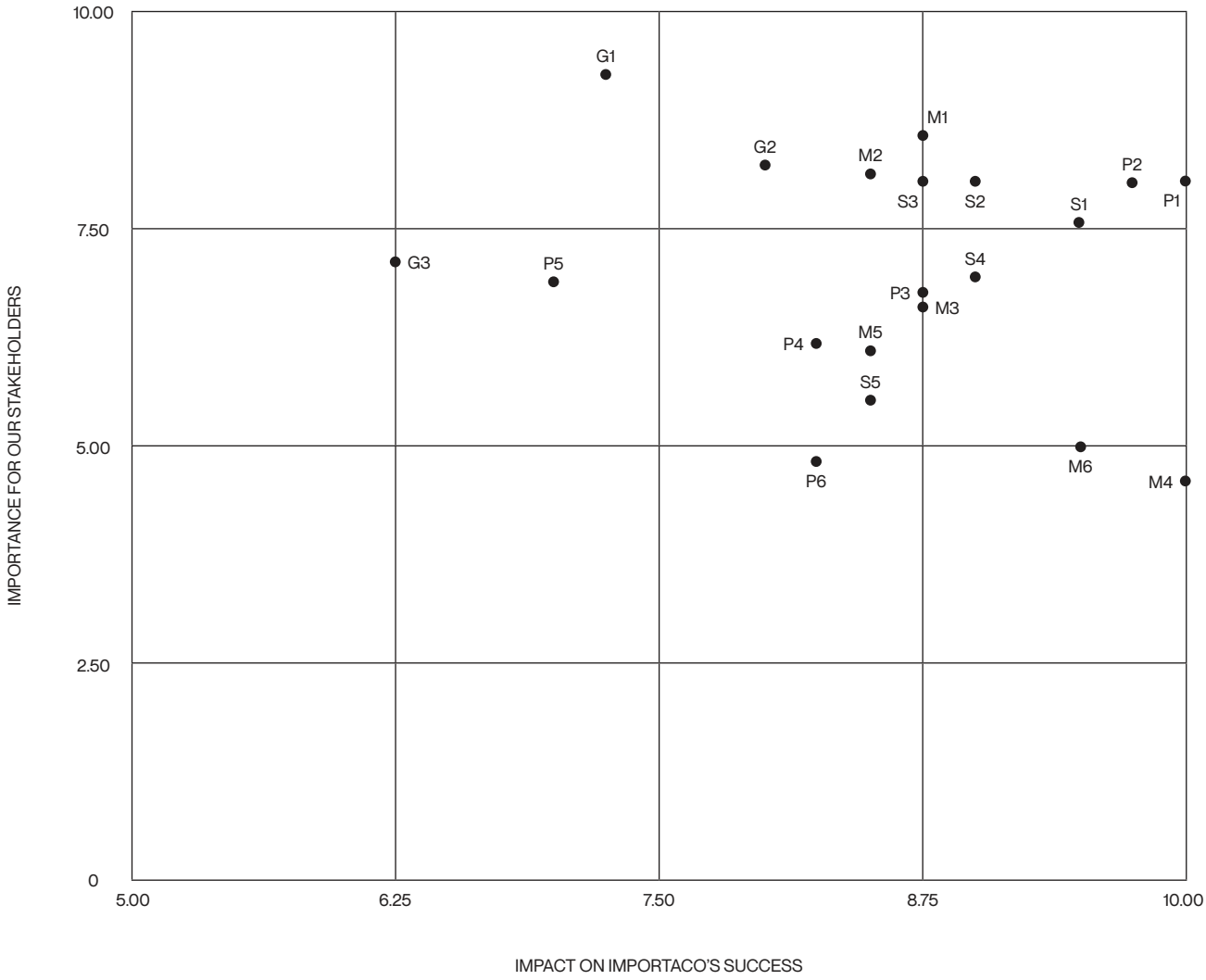
1. IDENTIFICATION
An initial internal consultation and review of existing literature enabled us to identify a comprehensive list of issues directly or indirectly related to Importaco's business and stakeholder interests. External sources from professional organisations, best practice guides, companies linked to the business and new legislation were used to establish the material criteria to be considered in this assessment.

2. ASSESSMENT
This step included a quantitative survey launched to all our stakeholders, involving some 700 Importaco employees, more than 20 suppliers and 15 key customers. This survey prioritised and assessed material issues covering 4 areas: social, environmental, governance and product.

3.PRIORITISATION
Guided by the perceptions of the various respondents, the final step was to identify the 20 key issues that Importaco should address as a priority. The prioritisation of material issues provides a framework for building strategies, making decisions in line with sustainable development and communicating progress more effectively. This allows us to define the main areas of action to improve the company and align plans with stakeholder expectations.

Once the issues relevant to Importaco and its stakeholders have been identified, the next steps include the prioritisation of issues and objectives to be addressed. We set measurable and achievable objectives that include a monitoring system for the evaluation of results.

Importaco Materiality Matrix (2022 assessment)



GOOD GOVERNMENT

G1—Control and monitoring of compliance with the Code of Ethics
G2—Measures taken to prevent corruption, bribery and money laundering
G3— Impact of the company's activities on employment and local development

ENVIRONMENTAL

M1—Energy efficiency and use of renewable sources
M2—Greenhouse gas emission reduction and carbon footprint calculation
M3—Recyclable packaging and waste management (circular economy)
M4—Sustainable water use
M5—Environmental or ecological certification (ISO 14001, FSA, GLOBALG.A.P. ...)
M6—Climate change adaptation measures (reforestation, emergency response, infrastructure protection, etc.)

PRODUCT

P1—Food safety and quality
P2—Innovation and technology in production processes and development of new products
P3—Accessibility and affordability of products (food security)
P4—Product traceability (from farm to fork) and life cycle analysis
P5—Agricultural research for development
P6—Clean label and reduction of colouring, flavouring or preservatives

SOCIAL

S1—Training and professional development
S2—Equality, inclusion and diversity
S3—Health and safety at work
S4—Decent wages and non-excessive working hours
S5—Implementation of measures to facilitate reconciliation of work and family life and disconnection from work

Sandra Julio and Mila Fernández, International Logistics and Customs administrative staff, at Importaco's headquarters in Beniparrell.

STAKEHOLDER RELEVANCE	Very high		Control and monitoring of compliance with the Code of Ethics	Energy efficiency and use of renewable sources
	High	Impact of the company's activities on employment and local development	Measures taken to prevent corruption, bribery and money laundering Agricultural research for development	Food safety and quality Innovation and technology in production processes and development of new products Training and professional development Equality, inclusion and diversity Health and safety at work Greenhouse gas emission reduction and carbon footprint calculation Decent wages and non-excessive working hours Accessibility and affordability of products (food security)
	Moderate		Product traceability (from farm to fork) and life cycle analysis Clean label and reduction of colouring, flavouring or preservatives	Recyclable packaging and waste management (circular economy) Sustainable water use Environmental or ecological certification Climate change adaptation measures (reforestation, emergency response, infrastructure protection, etc.) Implementation of measures to facilitate reconciliation of work and family life and disconnection from work
		Moderate	High	Very high
	IMPACT ON IMPORTACO'S SUCCESS			

Chocolate peanut production process
at the Chocolates factory in Chella.

5. ESG STRATEGY

5.1. Corporate governance

Importaco is committed to contributing to SDG 17 by establishing relationships based on transparency, trust, and responsible business behaviour. This involves complying with ethical and legal standards, respecting the interests of third parties, ensuring the proper use of resources, establishing a strong culture of compliance and dialogue with all stakeholders, in order to ensure the sustainable growth of the company and contribute to the development of a more inclusive and sustainable society.

5.1.1. CORPORATE STRUCTURE

Importaco's corporate governance model establishes a series of rules and principles that regulate the relationships between the different governing and management bodies: the General Shareholders' Meeting, the Board of Directors, the Appointments and Remuneration Committee, the Audit Committee, the Ethics Committee and the Strategy Committee. Furthermore, Importaco's governance ensures transparency in business management, guarantees equal treatment without discrimination of any kind and takes ESG criteria into account in decision making.

This system requires corporate governance to act diligently, ethically and transparently in the performance of its duties to ensure compliance with the principles of ethics and sustainable development at Importaco, and thus achieve business success.

GOVERNMENT BODIES

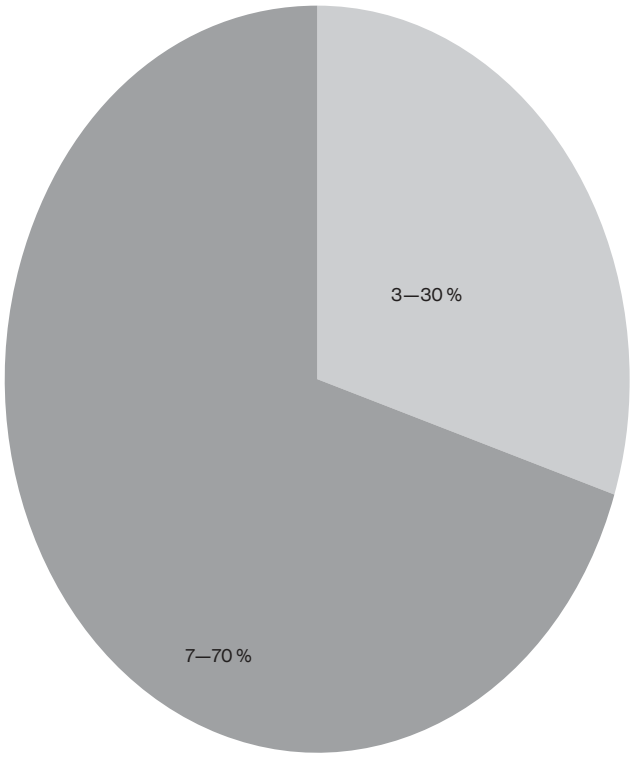
BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Importaco's Board of Directors is governed by the principles of professionalism and transparency to ensure excellence in its performance. To this end, it has external advisors and 70 % of its members are women. Its main functions are to approve Importaco's management model, corporate policies and strategic plan; to monitor key business management indicators; and to monitor the achievement of the investment plan.

Importaco also holds shares in the companies Helados Estiu and Foener, and is a member of their boards of directors.

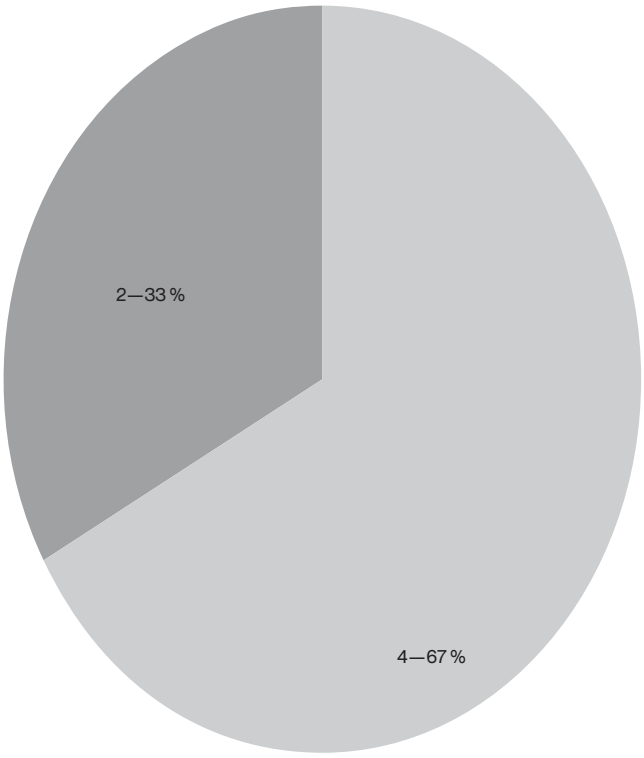
Name	Position in the Council	Date of last appointment	Position in the company
Juan Antonio Pons Casañ	President	2021	Executive
Jerónima Casañ Verdeguer	Vice-President	2021	Non-executive
Bárbara Sancho Costa	Vice-President	2021	Non-executive
Eva Pons Casañ	Secretary	2021	Executive
Lucía Pons Sancho	Vocal	2021	Executive
Amparo Pons Sancho	Vocal	2021	Executive
Elena Pons Casañ	Vocal	2021	Executive
Natalia Pons Sancho	Vocal	2021	Executive
Fernando Pons Casañ	Vocal	2021	Executive
Francisco Pons Sancho	Vocal	2021	Non-executive

Gender distribution 2022



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

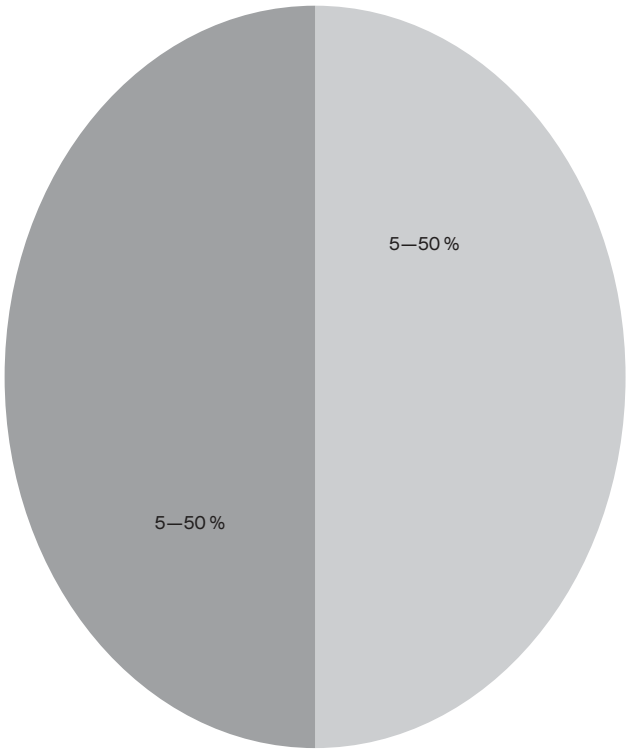
Gender distribution 2022



APPOINTMENT AND REMUNERATION COMMITTEE

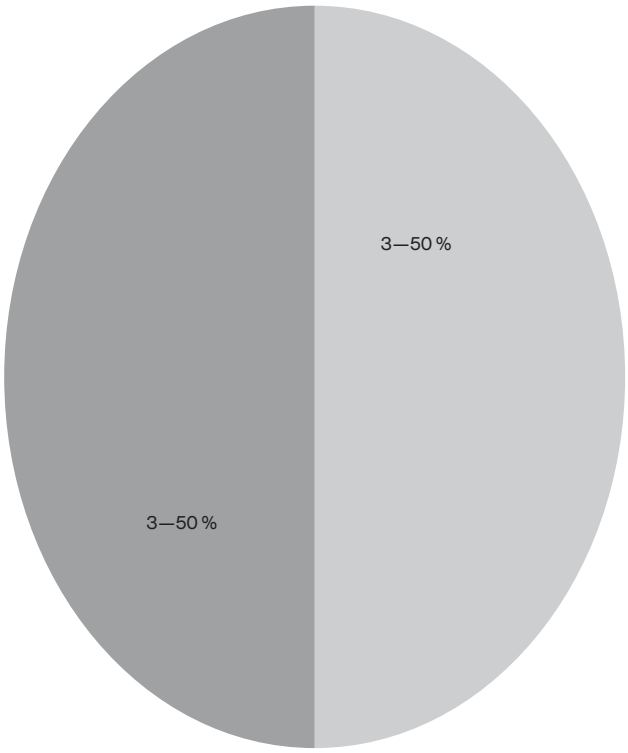
Female Male

Gender distribution 2022



ETHICS COMMITTEE

Gender distribution 2022



AUDIT COMMITTEE

5.1.2. BUSINESS ETHICS PROGRAMME

Importaco is a company committed to transparency, ethics and integrity. To reflect our commitment, we have developed an ethics programme that includes a mandatory Code of Ethics for all employees, an ethics channel for dealing with queries and complaints as well as an Ethics Committee. All employees, regardless of the country or division in which they work, are required to follow our ethical principles, with the Board of Directors overseeing the implementation of the programme.

CODE OF ETHICS

Through the Code of Ethics, we express our commitment to respect national and international labour standards, including the prohibition of child labour and forced or compulsory labour. In addition, we promote equality and non-discrimination, adherence to working hours, payment of a living wage, compliance with health and safety principles and respect for freedom of association. These aspects are reinforced by our supplier code of conduct, which integrates the obligation to respect human rights and contribute to the improvement of the quality of life in the countries where we operate, as well as ensuring compliance with ethical principles through effective due diligence.

In regard to anti-corruption, we are committed to not accept or participate in bribes under any circumstances nor abuse our positions in the company for personal gain. At the same time, we are committed to respecting rules on travel expenses, political contributions, facilitation payments, money laundering and the protection of intellectual property. Furthermore, we set rules to limit our participation in company-related leisure activities to those that are professionally justified.

Importaco acts in a responsible and ethical manner in its commercial transactions in the market and with consumers, endeavouring to provide truthful and sufficient information. To this end, it implements the necessary controls to avoid any dishonest, fraudulent or unjustified practices, promoting free competition and equal opportunities.

Furthermore, through our Code of Ethics, we are committed to protecting the environment in all our actions, making changes that guarantee a balance between economic development and environmental protection. For this reason, Importaco complies with the required environmental permits and monitors compliance with legislation in the countries in which it operates. All its practices are aimed at reducing the consumption of resources, minimising waste, emissions and dumping, as well as preventing damage to the environment as a result of its activity. In addition, it carries out technological innovations to ensure that its production processes are sustainable.

ETHICAL CHANNEL

Importaco has established an ethical channel, whose function is to receive, process and respond to any notification related to a possible breach of the Code of Ethics, as well as to act in the event of conduct of corporate criminal significance.

Anyone with information regarding a violation of Importaco's Code of Ethics, policies and covenants may report it through the ethics channel. Any report is expected to be made in good faith and with a reasonable belief that the information disclosed relates to a breach of the Code of Ethics. Any false or malicious reporting will be subject to review by the Ethics Committee. The proceedings conducted through this channel guarantee the confidentiality, privacy and integrity of all persons involved.

ETHICS COMMITTEE

Importaco's Ethics Committee is the body responsible for informing Importaco's president of any breach of the company's Code of Ethics and standards of conduct, supervising compliance, detecting risks of non-compliance, ensuring the control of the main non-financial, ethical and reputational risks, periodically assessing whether the organisation's culture favours ethical decision-making, and proposing actions for the development of the Code of Ethics and the improvement of the organisation's ethical culture.

The Importaco Ethics Committee is the body to which all persons linked to Importaco must turn to report possible breaches and make enquiries regarding the Code of Ethics, whether they affect them directly or affect third parties. The Importaco Ethics Committee will meet a minimum of four times a year and, on an extraordinary basis, whenever its chairman deems it necessary based on the notifications and queries received.

The aim for the coming year is to establish an action plan to update and improve the channel.

BUSINESS ETHICS TRAINING

During 2022, we held 17 training sessions on business ethics, in which 190 employees from categories 4, 5 and 6 participated. These sessions analysed the rules and practices found in the code of ethics that regulate the conduct of the members of our organisation and establish the principles and values by which they should be governed. Topics covered included respect for others, integrity, responsibility, integrity, honesty, respect for the law, safety at work and appropriate use of resources.

5.1.3. RISK MANAGEMENT

At Importaco, risk analysis and management are an integral part of our business model, applying the precautionary principle to all links in our value chain. We seek to minimise the risks associated with our operations by improving people's health and well-being. To achieve this, we have developed processes for identifying, assessing, recording and controlling ESG (environmental, social and governance) risks that enable us to achieve our objectives as effectively as possible. These processes also help us to set standards that enable us to measure and monitor the effects of our activities on the environment and society, and to identify opportunities for improvement.

Our company has established a corporate risk map through which we have identified 64 risks, assessing their probability of occurrence and their potential economic, reputational, environmental and people-related impacts.

The risks assessed are divided into strategic, operational, regulatory and financial risks. Strategic risks refer to risks related to corporate governance, strategic planning, strategic initiatives, growth policy, internationalisation and diversification, reputation and stakeholder communication. On the other hand, operational risks cover sales and marketing, supply chain, human resources, information technology, hazards and physical assets. Finally, regulatory risks are those related to legislation and ethical culture, while financial risks refer to impacts related to market, liquidity and credit, accounting and reporting, taxation and capital structure.

The process of prioritising the risks in each block determines the urgency required in the management response, the types of action needed and the level of investment in risk response. After reviewing and revising sustainability-related risks to identify changes that could significantly affect the business strategy and objectives, effective management of these risks is sought. Risk-related information is communicated to the Board of Directors and management with the objective of improving decisions related to strategy setting, day-to-day operations and the allocation of appropriate resources to address risk.

5.1.4. INSTITUTIONAL RELATIONS

Importaco's institutional relations programme aims to collaborate with institutions to promote changes related to the improvement of food safety, quality, sustainability and technology. To this end, we develop lines of work such as the identification of food safety and quality risks to strengthen management policies; the search for shared solutions to achieve the sustainable development of the company, and the analysis of the challenges of the sector in the generation of joint initiatives. The most important issues addressed in 2022 have been the promotion of innovation in the Valencian Community, the improvement of the nutritional profile of our products and the control of emerging risks.

Importaco participates in various business, sectoral and sustainability associations, such as:

- INC (International Nut and Dried Fruit Council Foundation)
- Almendrave (Spanish Almond Board)
- Asociación de Snacks
- Asociación Europea de Snacks (European Snacks Association)
- Cercle Agroalimentari de la Comunitat Valenciana (Agroalimentary Circle of the Valencian Community)
- DIRCOM (Association of Communication Managers)
- FRUCOM
- ANEABE (Spanish Mineral Water Association)
- FEDACOVA (Agri-food Business Federation of the Valencian Community)
- ASECAM (Association of Entrepreneurs of Camp de Morvedre)
- AVE (Valencian Businessmen's Association)
- Institute for Family Business
- EDEM (Entrepreneurs Business School)
- ETNOR (Ethics in Business and Organisations)
- AECOC (Business Association of Manufacturers and Distributors)
- SAI (Sustainable Agriculture Initiative Platform)
- AINIA
- ITENE (Technological Institute of Packaging, Transport and Logistics)
- LAB Mediterráneo Foundatio
- CNTA (National Centre for Food Technology and Safety)
- FIAB (Spanish Federation of Food and Beverage Industries)

Additionally, through the Italian company Besana, we are present in:

- FRUITIMPRESE (National Association of Fruit and Vegetable Enterprises)
- Tradizione Italiana
- Cesena Fiera
- NDFTA & TNA – (Nut and Dried Fruit Trade Association & Tree Nut Association in London UK)
- Nucis
- Freshfel Europe
- Almaverde

5.1.5. DATA PROTECTION AND INFORMATION SECURITY

Importaco has established a cyber security programme to ensure the confidentiality, integrity and availability of the company's stored data, as well as to prevent the misuse of important information. This helps reduce the risk of loss of vital data and helps ensure compliance with applicable security and regulatory compliance requirements. To date, during 2022, no complaints related to breaches of customer privacy have been filed.

Notably, during 2022 we conducted seven bi-monthly cybersecurity drills, which have helped to strengthen the information security programme. In addition, Importaco has reinforced its commitment to information security and data privacy by implementing various internal controls. These measures include the implementation of two-factor authentication systems for access to information systems and employee training on information security issues.

Fátima Escamilla and Rafael Alfaro, staff from the Health and Safety Department, at Importaco's headquarters in Beniparrell.

5.2. PEOPLE: Promoting leadership and integrity

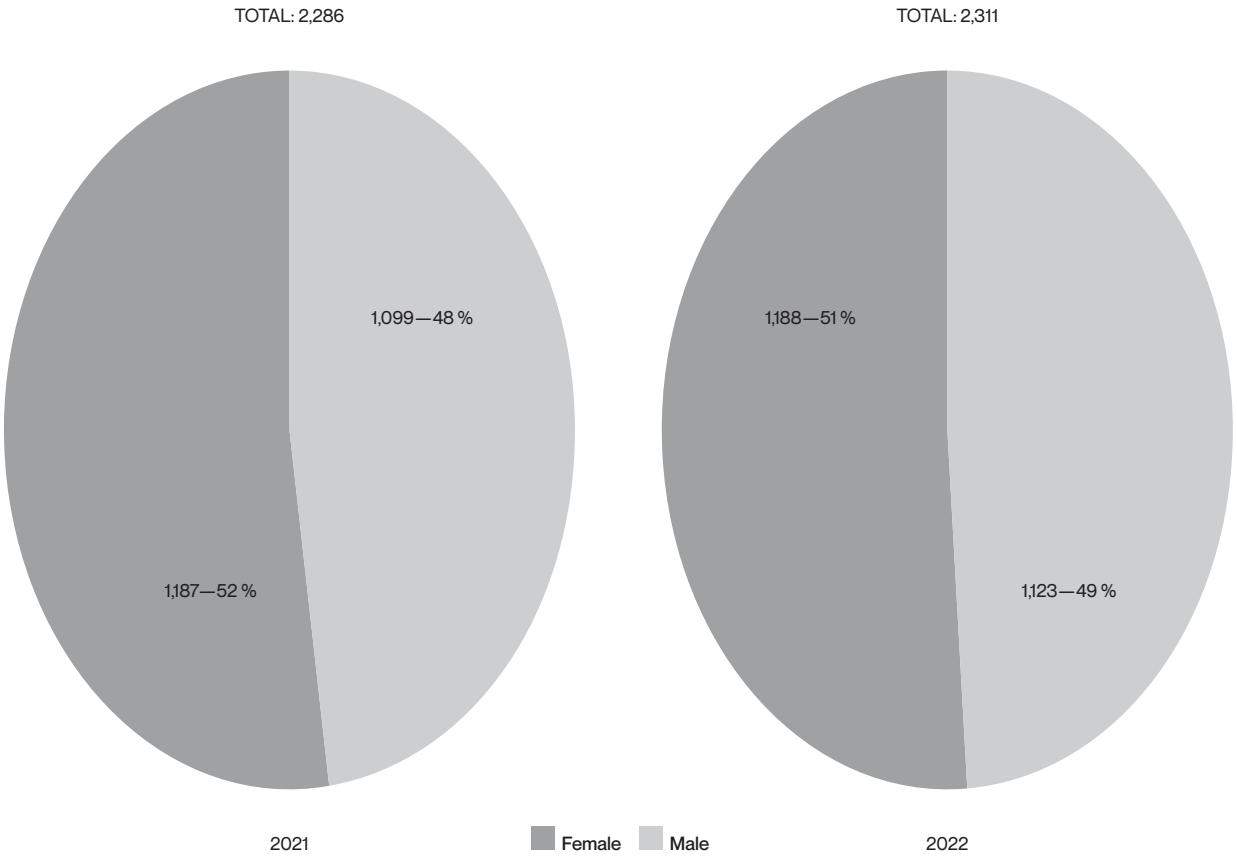
At Importaco, we are aware of the importance of the people who form part of our teams, as they are the foundation of our growth. That is why we strive to provide quality jobs and promote a safe working environment for all our employees, in line with SDG 8. We are committed to the personal and professional development of our entire workforce, promoting their leadership and integrity to reach their full potential.

5.2.1 TALENT ATTRACTION AND MANAGEMENT

Importaco currently employs 2,311 people[2] in the different countries in which it operates. These people are our greatest asset and are the key to the success of our company. We bring together a great team that works with dedication and enthusiasm, driven by our values and united by the same corporate culture.

With a mission to "improve people's health and well-being", Importaco has a diverse, expert, multidisciplinary and international team of professionals committed to excellence. It is also concerned with the protection of labour rights and the promotion of a safe working environment, offering stable, quality jobs with salaries above the industry average, as well as a work-life balance. Currently, 73 % of the global workforce has a permanent contract, and in Spain this figure exceeds 85 %. Additionally, the company's base salary is 16 % higher than that of the sectoral agreements.

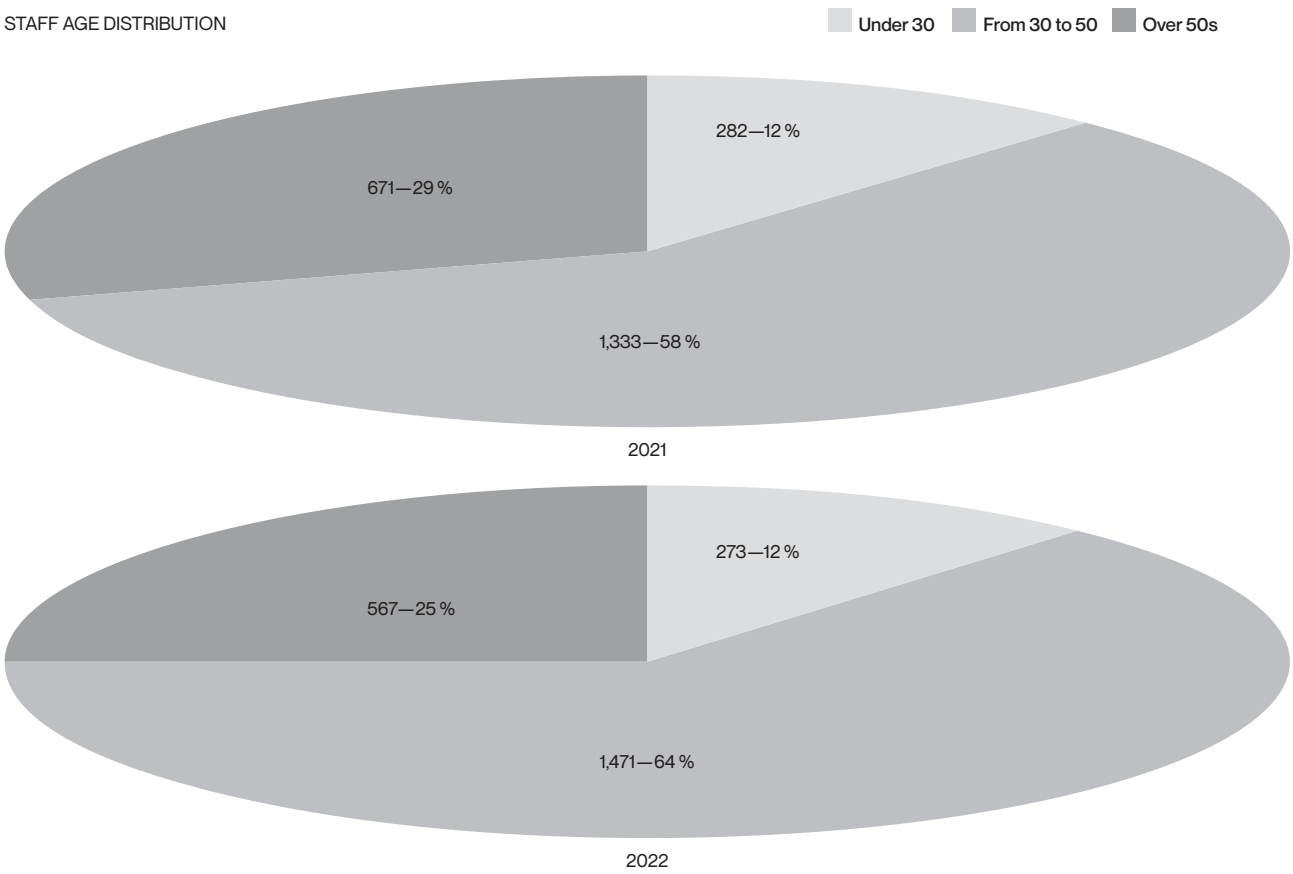
STAFF GENDER DISTRIBUTION



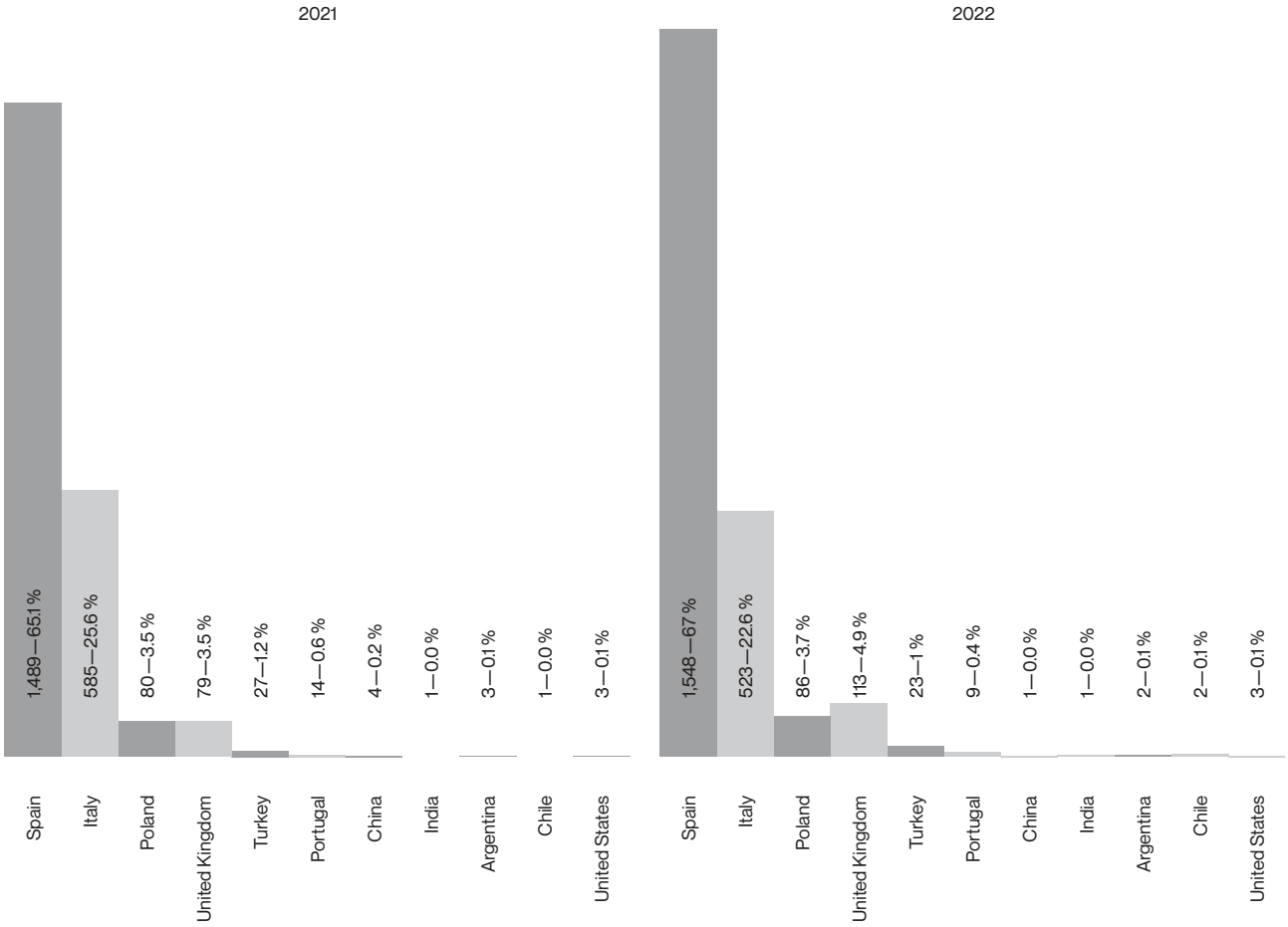
2 The total employee count is determined by calculating FTE (Full Time Equivalent), which includes the average headcount of temporary agency workers.

María Brage (Strategy and Development Department) and Claudia Esteban (External Relations and Corporate Social Responsibility Department) at Importaco's headquarters in Beniparrell.

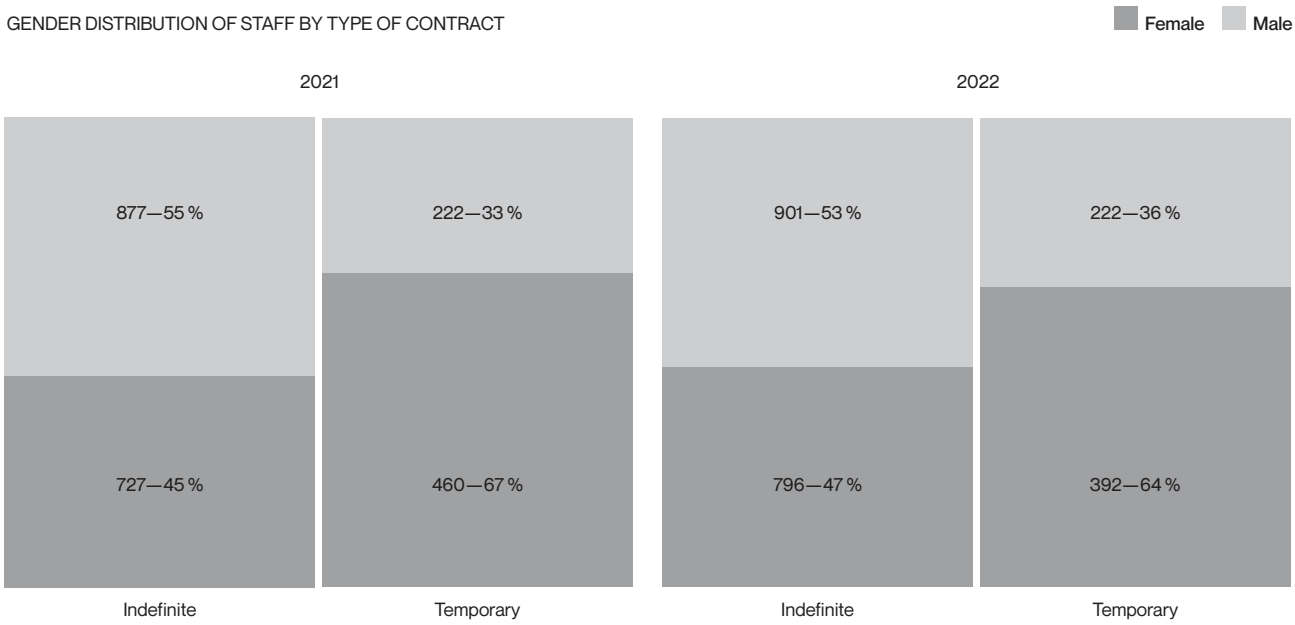
STAFF AGE DISTRIBUTION



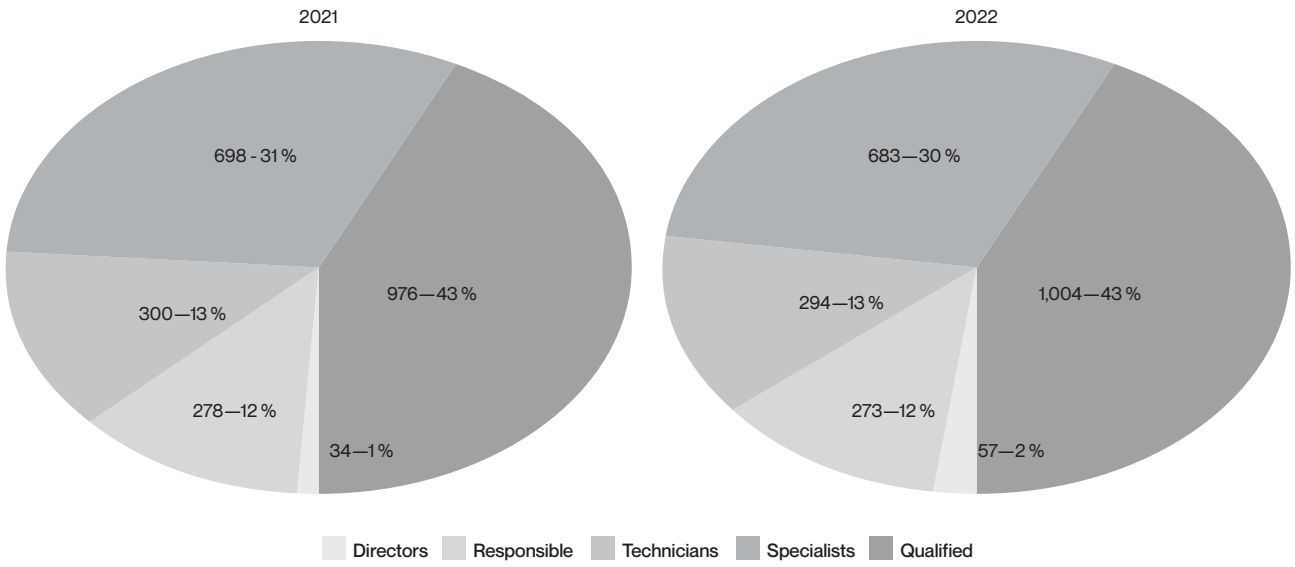
DISTRIBUTION BY COUNTRY



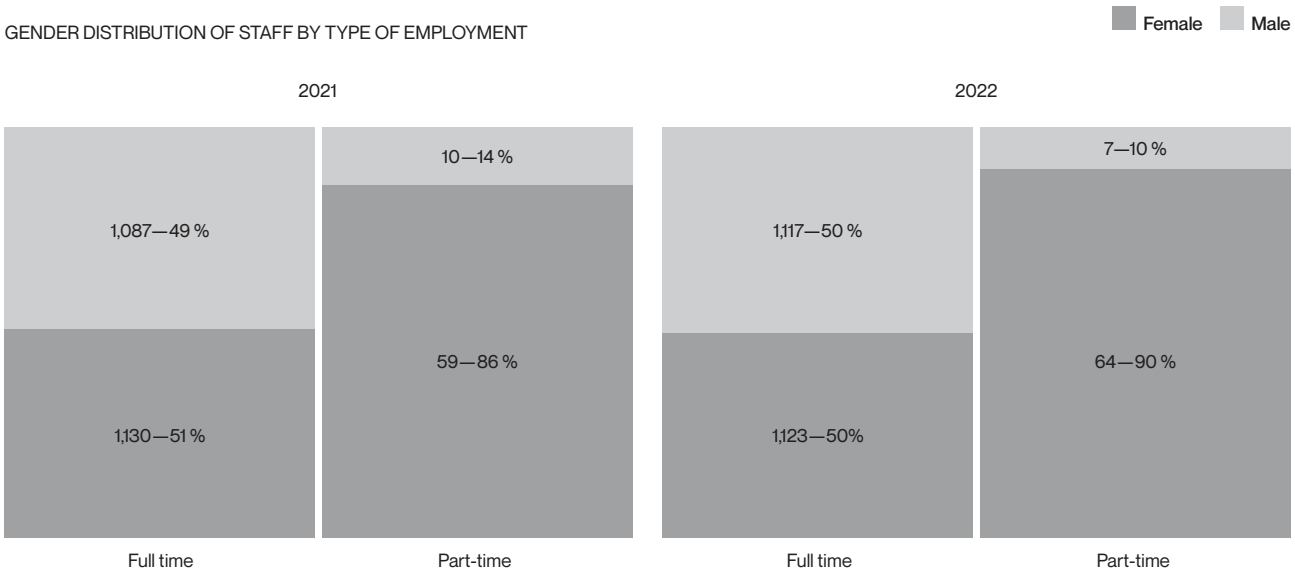
GENDER DISTRIBUTION OF STAFF BY TYPE OF CONTRACT



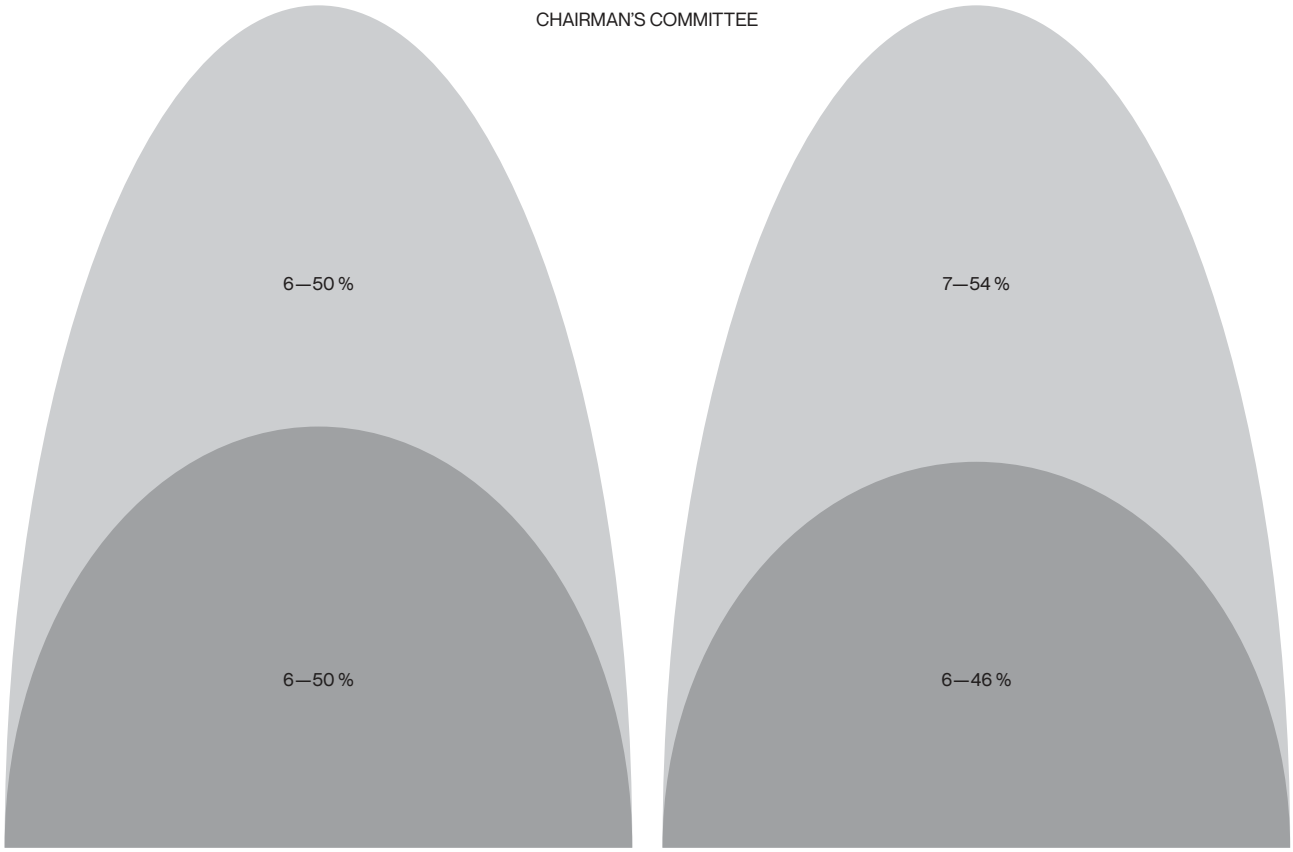
DISTRIBUTION BY STAFF CLASSIFICATION



GENDER DISTRIBUTION OF STAFF BY TYPE OF EMPLOYMENT

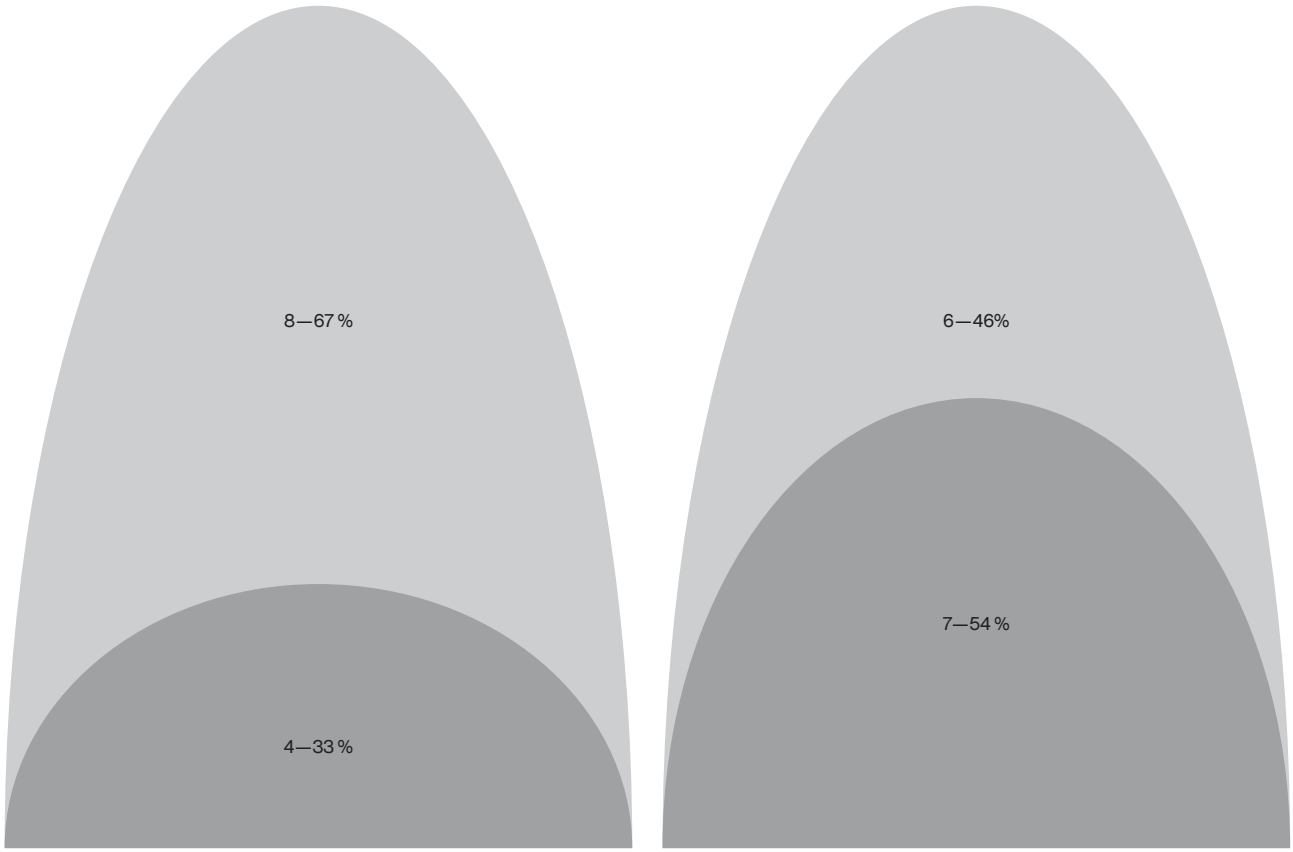


CHAIRMAN'S COMMITTEE



2021 GENDER DISTRIBUTION 2022

Female Male



2021 AGE DISTRIBUTION 2022

From 30 to 50 Over 50s

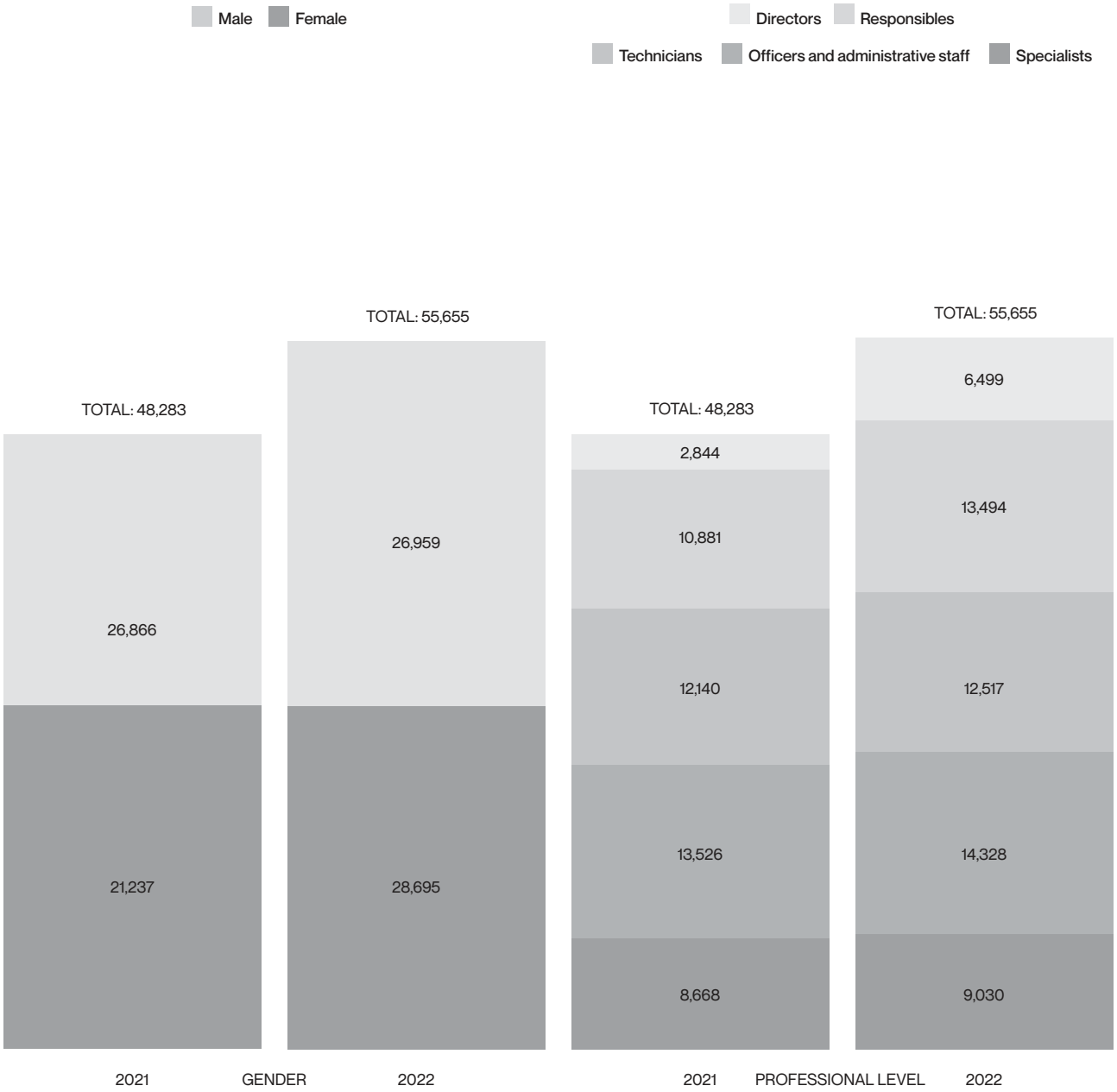
5.2.2. TRAINING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

In line with Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 8, related to decent employment and economic growth, Importaco promotes policies aimed at the development and progression of people, the creation of decent jobs, training, creativity and innovation, as well as investment in well-being at work. In terms of career development, we encourage internal promotion to ensure employee development and motivation.

At Importaco, we firmly believe in the ability and potential of each of our employees, which is why we promote training and the generation of opportunities within the company. Importaco's training plan is designed to improve employees' job skills and knowledge through specialised training programmes that cover all areas of the company. The plan includes training in leadership, communication, technical and business skills, teamwork skills development, as well as continuing education courses. In addition, this plan contributes to team cohesion, a better working environment and increased business competitiveness.

During the year 2022, we have invested 518,777.34 euros in the annual training plan, training 80 % of our workforce in different areas. The average number of training hours received by the organisation's employees during the reporting period is 24 hours.

TRAINING HOURS



The main types of programmes implemented and support provided to improve employee skills in 2022 include two main areas: digitalisation (Office 365 technical training and cybersecurity) and personal skills (communication, leadership and emotional management). The most relevant training actions this year were:

COMMUNICATE +
The main objective of this training was to raise awareness and promote the understanding that communication is a key element for overall well-being. This training also included the development of optimal and powerful communication skills to ensure responsible, natural, effective and healthy communication; in addition to providing tools to communicate efficiently in all types of situations and to deal with difficult conversations, as well as to detect and contrast sources of misinformation. This training was aimed at plant personnel (mainly labourers, officers and maintenance technicians) and had a total of 254 participants, with a duration of 930 hours.

OFFICE 365 TECHNICAL TRAININGS
The Office 365 technical training aimed to train office teams on Office 365 management tools. A total of 422 participants from levels 2 to 6 participated in the training, with 1,617 cumulative hours of instruction.

LEADERSHIP
The aim of the leadership training was to work on and develop an attitude that would accompany the vision and the need for shared leadership, as well as the competencies required to exercise it, first for each of the participants and then for the transfer to their teams. A total of 89 participants from Importaco's levels 4, 5 and 6 took part in this training, totalling 1,339 hours of training.

Additionally, we would like to emphasise two internal and permanent training programmes: the Proa Plan, which aims to promote the culture of excellence, and covered a total of 585 hours during 2022, as well as training in business ethics, which covered a total of 190 hours. These initiatives seek to promote among employees the principles of trust, rigour and participation to increase their leadership, responsibility and commitment to corporate values, contributing to the construction of a better organisation.

5.2.3. EQUALITY, INCLUSION AND DIVERSITY

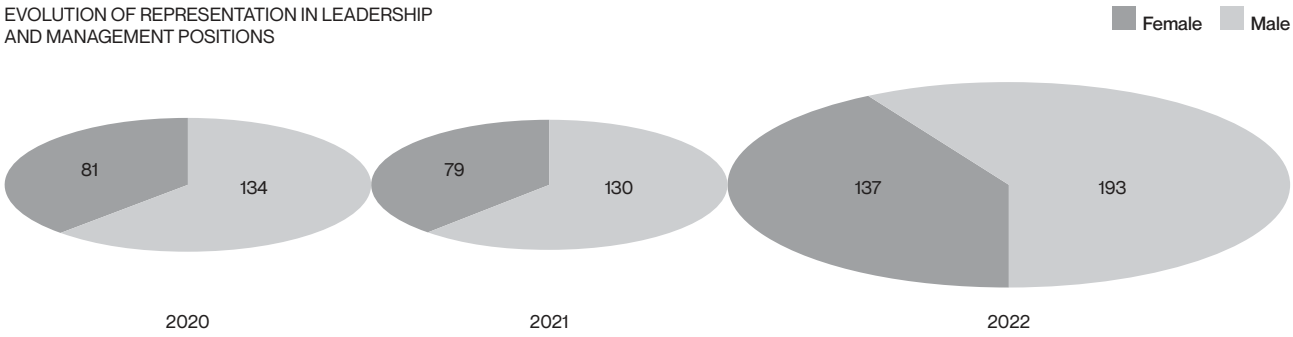
Through our commitment to diversity, we understand that the labour market must be open to all people regardless of their place of origin, age, religion, gender or sexual orientation. We therefore foster a corporate culture based on equity, inclusion and the promotion of diversity to create fair working environments, where equal opportunities guarantee access to employment and professional development for all employees. Our workforce is made up of people with different nationalities and a balanced representation between men and women, with 1,123 men and 1,188 women working at Importaco. Additionally, the percentage of disabled employees in the group is 1.6 %, being higher than 2.2 % in Spain.

Importaco recognises gender equality as a fundamental human right and one of the main foundations for building a just, prosperous and sustainable world. We have therefore implemented an equality plan with the aim of ensuring the full and effective participation of women in the company, as well as equal leadership opportunities at all levels of decision making. To achieve this purpose, we have adopted and reinforced strong policies that promote women's equality and empowerment in all areas, thus promoting SDG 5.

Our equality plan promotes equal treatment and opportunities between women and men as a fundamental principle in labour relations and in the management of group members. To this end, we seek to promote equal pay, prevent sexual and gender-based harassment, and encourage the development of skills and competencies for internal promotion regardless of gender, age, culture and origin. It also seeks to incorporate the gender perspective in management policies and systems, to guarantee the use of inclusive language in the company's internal and external communications and to ensure a balanced gender presence in all areas, levels and positions.

Importaco has a remuneration system that establishes an equitable structure based on a job-evaluation process. This methodology assigns points to different functions related to the job and its environment, in order to reflect the employees' contribution to the organisation's objectives. The sum of points obtained determines the salary level assigned to the job. This job-evaluation methodology has been worked on by external consultants as part of Importaco's remuneration project with the aim of achieving the greatest equity in the allocation of salaries. Importaco's workforce has an average salary of 27,001 euros, 28,356 for men and 25,437 for women. The existing salary difference is due to the distribution of men and women in organisational positions, as we have mechanisms in place to ensure that remuneration is associated with the job and is not influenced by the gender of the person who performs it. In other words, at Importaco we comply with the principle of "equal pay for equal work".

EVOLUTION OF REPRESENTATION IN LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT POSITIONS



5.2.4. DIALOGUE AND WORK ORGANISATION

WORK CLIMATE

Work climate surveys and sessions are useful tools for determining the degree of satisfaction of Importaco's employees with their working environment. Thanks to this, people can express their opinions and suggestions to improve communication and culture at Importaco, which in turn motivates and engages the workforce. During the year 2022, a work climate survey was carried out, analysing different aspects such as communication, working conditions, change management, leadership and work organisation. The objective results in this evaluation have increased with respect to 2020, obtaining an overall rating of 6.60 points. A total of 1,771 people took part in this year's study: 845 men, 852 women and 74 people who did not indicate their gender.

In addition to the questionnaires, sessions have been held with different working groups to expand on the information received and to gather suggestions and proposals for improvement from the staff. The aim of these evaluations and sessions is to increase their satisfaction, motivation and link with Importaco. Therefore, the results of these surveys and sessions contribute to an improvement in the working environment and the well-being of the company's employees

PERFORMANCE EVALUATIONS

During 2022, we have worked on improving the performance-evaluation process, the aim of which is to adapt the company's profiles to the competencies, both corporate and those defined for each position. We have worked with a pilot team that has allowed us to receive feedback that we will be able to apply to the rest of the people who will be part of this process from 2023. Additionally, 440 users have completed the objective-based evaluation, which allows us to measure the performance of employees through previously-defined indicators.

LABOR RELATIONS, FREEDOM OF ASSOCIATION AND COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

The right to freedom of association and freedom of collective bargaining are universally recognised fundamental rights. Through dialogue between stakeholders, the aim is to meet the needs of both sides and to promote agreements that improve the well-being of both employees and the company. In the negotiation of collective agreements, several key points are covered, such as the provision of personal protective equipment, the establishment of health and safety committees, participation, training, grievance mechanisms and the right to refuse unsafe work. Multiple aspects and protocols are also foreseen to improve working conditions, including a protocol for action in case of sexual or gender-based harassment, environmental management, integration of minorities and training.

Professionals are involved in their own health and well-being by forming and participating in health and safety committees, which are composed on a parity basis and must meet quarterly. These committees are responsible for promoting initiatives to improve working conditions, as well as for monitoring occupational health and safety procedures. In centres with fewer than 50 workers, a prevention delegate is appointed to carry out this function.

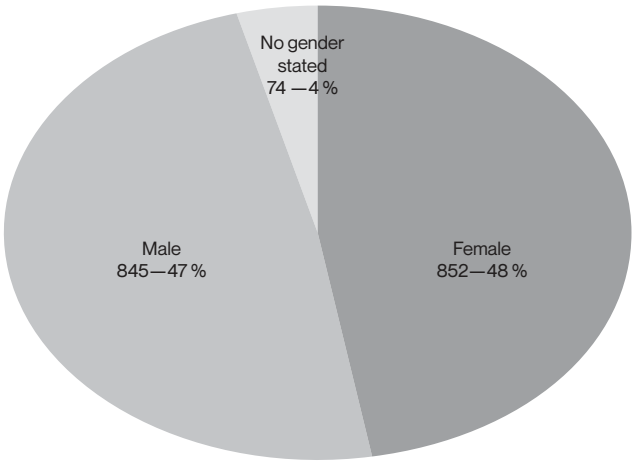
All employees of the group are protected by collective bargaining agreements, sectoral agreements and national labour legislation. The agreements make direct reference to the statute in terms of notice periods prior to the implementation of significant operational changes, as well as notice periods and provisions for consultations and negotiations.

In 2022, the agreement for the Importaco Waters business (formerly Natural Drinks) was formally negotiated, with improvements compared to the sectoral agreement, such as: shorter annual working hours, one additional day of holiday, more rest within the working day, 100 % supplement for temporary disability in the event of sick leave due to common contingencies because of hospitalisation, compensation in the event of death of the worker, inclusion of variable remuneration, improvements in paid leave and higher salary remuneration.

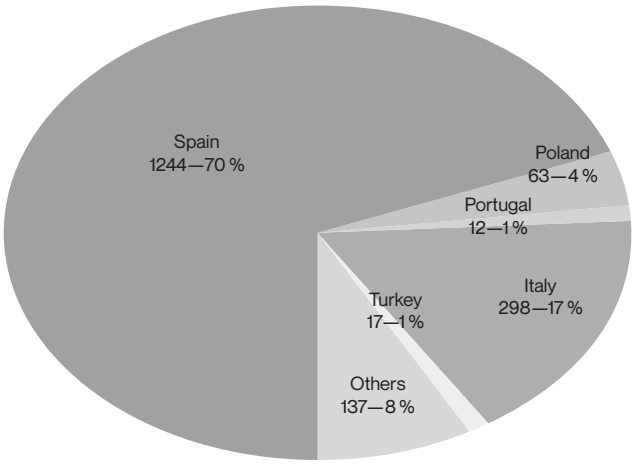
RECONCILIATION AND DISCONNECTION FROM WORK

Importaco's work-life balance system offers its professionals the possibility of taking advantage of different measures with the aim of optimising the management of their working time, such as flexible working hours, work-life balance or reduced working hours in situations of legal guardianship. During 2022, a total of 17 people (14 women and 3 men) took advantage of the reduced working day. In addition, 55 took paternity leave (18 women and 37 men). The employees returned to their jobs at the end of their leave and remained with the company one year later.

RESPONDENTS IN THE WORK CLIMATE, BY GENDER 2022



RESPONDENTS ON WORK CLIMATE, BY COUNTRY 2022



5.2.5. HEALTH AND SAFETY

Importaco is committed to improving well-being at work, prioritising the creation of healthy and safe working environments. To achieve this, we have implemented a global health and safety management system, certified to the ISO 45001 standard, which is implemented in 10 workplaces, covering 85 % of the entire workforce. Through this standard we demonstrate our commitment to continuous improvement in managing our health and safety risks by reducing accidents and illnesses, as well as increasing operational efficiency by reducing emergencies and sick leave.

Importaco's Health and Safety Department guarantees workers' compliance with the Law on the Prevention of Occupational Risks and the Prevention Services Regulations. This includes the identification and reduction of work-related hazards, the systematic and regular detection of early signs and symptoms of work-related injuries, and the adoption of preventive measures. Health surveillance is carried out by specially-trained and accredited health workers to assess the impact of work on workers' health and improve their conditions.

During 2022, we carried out a total of 11,633 hours of training on health and safety issues. The topics covered were related to general risks and prevention, planning drills, self-protection, emergencies, manual handling, control of hazardous substances, fire and first aid.

Health and Safety Indicators 2022

Number of deaths (male)	0	Number of occupational accidents without sick leave (male)	71
Number of deaths (female)	0	Number of occupational accidents without sick leave (female)	107
Mortality rate	**0**	**Rate of occupational accidents without sick leave**	**0.82**
Number of occupational accidents with sick leave (male)	48	Number of hours worked (male)	2,030,259
Number of occupational accidents with sick leave (female)	40	Number of hours worked (female)	1,919,644
Rate of occupational accidents with sick leave	**1.83**	Occupational diseases (male)	0
		Occupational diseases (female)	0

5.2.6. SOCIAL ACTION

During 2022, Importaco spent 70,362 euros on social actions, comprised of 40 % for financial donations to non-profit organisations such as UNHCR and AECC; 37 % for product donations, such as nuts and mineral water, and 22 % for our social project "*Come sano, crece fuerte*". All donations are made in a transparent manner, applying internal control systems, such as the formulation of agreements and the traceability of donations.

The social investment made by the company is aimed at supporting non-profit institutions and associations that develop projects for the promotion of nutrition and sport and professional development. Therefore, social spending in 2022 has gone to the San Vicente Ferrer Foundation, Spanish Red Cross, Zero Hunger, Sepelaco Cycling Club, Food Bank Association of Valencia, Help a Family Foundation, Alicante Gastronomic Solidarity Association, Together for Life Foundation, Niquia Children's Food Project, National Association of Bardet Biedl Syndrome and Ciliopatias Association, David Casinos Meeting, APORTEM and Atletico Nazareth Solidarity Football Tournament and Novaterra Foundation.

Within the framework of the National Plan for the Reduction of Childhood Obesity in Spain, an ambitious public health programme aimed at reducing childhood obesity in the nation, Importaco wishes to contribute to the promotion of healthy lifestyles among children and adolescents, as well as to the prevention of obesity. For this reason, we have launched the "*Come sano, crece fuerte*" project, which aims to raise awareness of the importance of healthy eating and physical activity, thereby promoting healthy lifestyles. Through education on healthy eating and physical activity, as well as the promotion of healthy food consumption among children, we have managed to reach 1,275 young people in Valencian schools, with a programme growth rate of 78 % compared to last year.

"Come sano, crece fuerte"

RESULTS OF THE PROGRAMME "COME SANO, CRECE FUERTE"

Programme growth rate over the previous yearr : **78.57 %**

Total number of young people trained in the programme: **1,275**

Social project "Come sano, crece fuerte" to promote healthy eating and healthy habits in Valencian schools.

5.2.7. HUMAN RIGHTS AND DUE DILIGENCE

Respecting human rights is fundamental to ensuring that all individuals are treated fairly and equally. This means respecting the rights to liberty, life, equality, privacy, security and participation. It also means respecting the rights of vulnerable groups, including children, older persons and persons living with disabilities.

When selecting and evaluating our suppliers, our criteria go beyond economic criteria and focus on compliance with human rights, labour and social standards, environmental protection, equality and anti-corruption policies. These social and environmental clauses favour the creation of a sustainable and long-lasting value chain with a strong social and environmental commitment, promoting equal opportunities and the well-being of future generations.

SOCIAL COMPLIANCE PROGRAMME: SUSTAINABLE SUPPLY CHAIN

The Social Compliance Programme was created in 2012 with the aim of transmitting the company's values and ethical culture to the supply chain. Thanks to this programme, the company has managed to define requirements relating to the environment and human rights that make it possible to identify other companies that share the same commitment in these aspects in order to establish commercial alliances. In the same way, these requirements allow progress to be made in the creation of a supply chain that is increasingly sustainable and respectful of the planet and people.

The requirements of both the Code of Conduct and the Social Compliance Programme are mandatory. Suppliers are expected to comply not only with these criteria, but also with national and other applicable laws. In the event of a conflict between the basic code and the law, our business partners must apply the provision that offers greater protection to employees.

In this regard, the company seeks to ensure that all links in the supply chain comply with and respect human rights. To achieve this goal, strategic and preferred suppliers (who account for approximately 80 % of raw material purchases) have been involved in the Social Compliance Programme, with the aim of learning about compliance with labour rights, health and safety standards, environmental practices, as well as the application of ethics in the workplace.

During 2022, the scope of the programme focused on the 52 strategic and preferred suppliers with whom we continuously work to improve sustainability and quality action plans. Within this framework, we achieved results of 96 % business connection on the Sedex platform and 77 % of suppliers with a current SMETA 4P audit. In 2023, we will continue to work towards ex-

panding our goals to build a supply chain that is compliant with human rights and sustainability.

The specific commitments and policies for the respect of human rights included in our Code of Ethics set out obligations to:

1. Establish and respect human dignity: recognise and respect the inherent worth and dignity of all people, respect their human rights and do not tolerate discrimination and harassment.
2. Prevent labour exploitation: do not allow exploitative labour or child labour, and do not accept working conditions that do not meet internationally recognised labour standards.
3. Protection of workers' rights: guarantee workers the right to form and join trade unions and the right to collective bargaining.
4. Protection of children's rights: no exploitation of child labour, forced labour, recruitment of children, or discrimination in the employment of children.
5. Protection of women's rights: prohibit discrimination in employment and sexual harassment, ensure equal opportunities and access to health services, and enable the payment of fair wages.
6. Environmental protection: promoting the responsible management of natural resources, respecting environmental laws and taking measures to prevent and reduce pollution.
7. Fiscal responsibility and conflicts of interest comply with tax obligations in all countries in which we operate and do not engage in tax evasion or corruption.
8. Transparency and accountability: providing transparent and complete information on the financial, operational and social situation of the company.
9. Due diligence: constitute an ongoing management process to address their responsibility to respect human rights.

To reinforce this, we also include the following compliance aspects in our code of conduct for suppliers:

1. Commitment to human rights compliance.
2. Regular employment.
3. Prohibition of forced labour.
4. Prohibition of sexual, physical, verbal and other forms of intimidation.
5. Prohibition of child labour.
6. Compliance with environmental legislation.
7. Fight against discrimination.
8. Reduction in the consumption of natural resources.
9. Freedom of association and collective bargaining.
10. Prevention of environmental damage.
11. Safe and healthy working conditions.
12. Prohibition of bribery.
13. Living wages.
14. Right to privacy.
15. Not excessive working hours.
16. Protection of knowledge.

FORMAL COMPLAINT AND/OR GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES

In a changing context, Importaco implements measures to be prepared to prevent, control and mitigate risks, as well as to assume responsibility for the effects of its activities. Through the precautionary principle, we avoid damage to people, the environment and property, and by carrying out appropriate due diligence, we minimise risks in business decision making.

Importaco has established a secure and confidential communication channel for its employees and other stakeholders to report possible breaches of its Code of Ethics, as well as to react to possible behaviour with corporate criminal relevance. These reports will be received, processed and responded to under the supervision of the Ethics Committee, which acts independently to maintain the confidentiality of all involved. The channel can be contacted by email (canal-etico@importaco.com) or by ordinary mail addressed to the Ethics Committee (Ctra. Real de Madrid Norte 81, 46469 Beniparrell, Valencia, Spain). In addition, the collective agreement also includes a grievance process for employees.

Sara Pastor and Helena Moscad, Recruitment Technicians, at Importaco's headquarters in Beniparrell.

5.3. PLANET: Caring for the environment and environmental sustainability

According to the United Nations definition, environmental sustainability is the protection of natural resources and the conservation of biodiversity to ensure that future generations have the same quality of life, or better, than current generations. At Importaco, we are committed to achieving our goals while respecting the environment and contributing to the sustainable progress of society.
Each year we make progress in reducing the ecological footprint of our business by raising awareness of responsible consumption (SDG 12) and promoting a sustainable lifestyle. As a company, we strive for proactive and forward-looking leadership to achieve environmental sustainability, a cross-cutting goal of the 2030 Agenda.

5.3.1. ENVIRONMENTAL RISKS AND ENVIRONMENTAL CULTURE

The evaluation of the environmental risks that affect Importaco's activity allows us to identify and establish cross-cutting mitigation plans based on the characteristics of our business model. According to studies by the World Health Organisation (WHO), the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO) and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the greatest risks we face in our productive and agricultural activities are related to air, water, soil and atmospheric pollution, the environmental impact of packaging, changes in climate and the loss of biodiversity and soil health.

These environmental risks are analysed and evaluated for their correct control within Importaco's environmental plans. In this sense, Importaco's agricultural projects have manuals of good agricultural practices to reduce the use of active substances, minimise the use of water and guarantee soil fertility. In our production centres, we maintain environmental management systems that integrate correct waste management and the sustainable use of natural resources. Importaco is currently certified in accordance with the ISO 14001 environmental management standard in all its production centres in Spain and Turkey.

Corporate management oversees an environmental management system in each of them, in order to minimise their environmental footprint and ensure compliance with environmental laws and regulations. Prior to the implementation of new processes, their environmental impact is assessed to prevent any damage. The main objective is always to prevent, reduce and repair pollution, controlling carbon emissions, as well as noise and light pollution with possible effects on the environment.

5.3.2. CLIMATE CHANGE

CLIMATE CHANGE MITIGATION MEASURES

Importaco recognises the significant challenge posed by climate change and is therefore committed to adopting a decarbonisation strategy based on SDG 13 to minimise the environmental, social and economic damage it entails and contribute to sustainable development. As a company, we are committed to reducing greenhouse gas emissions and achieving net zero emissions by 2050.

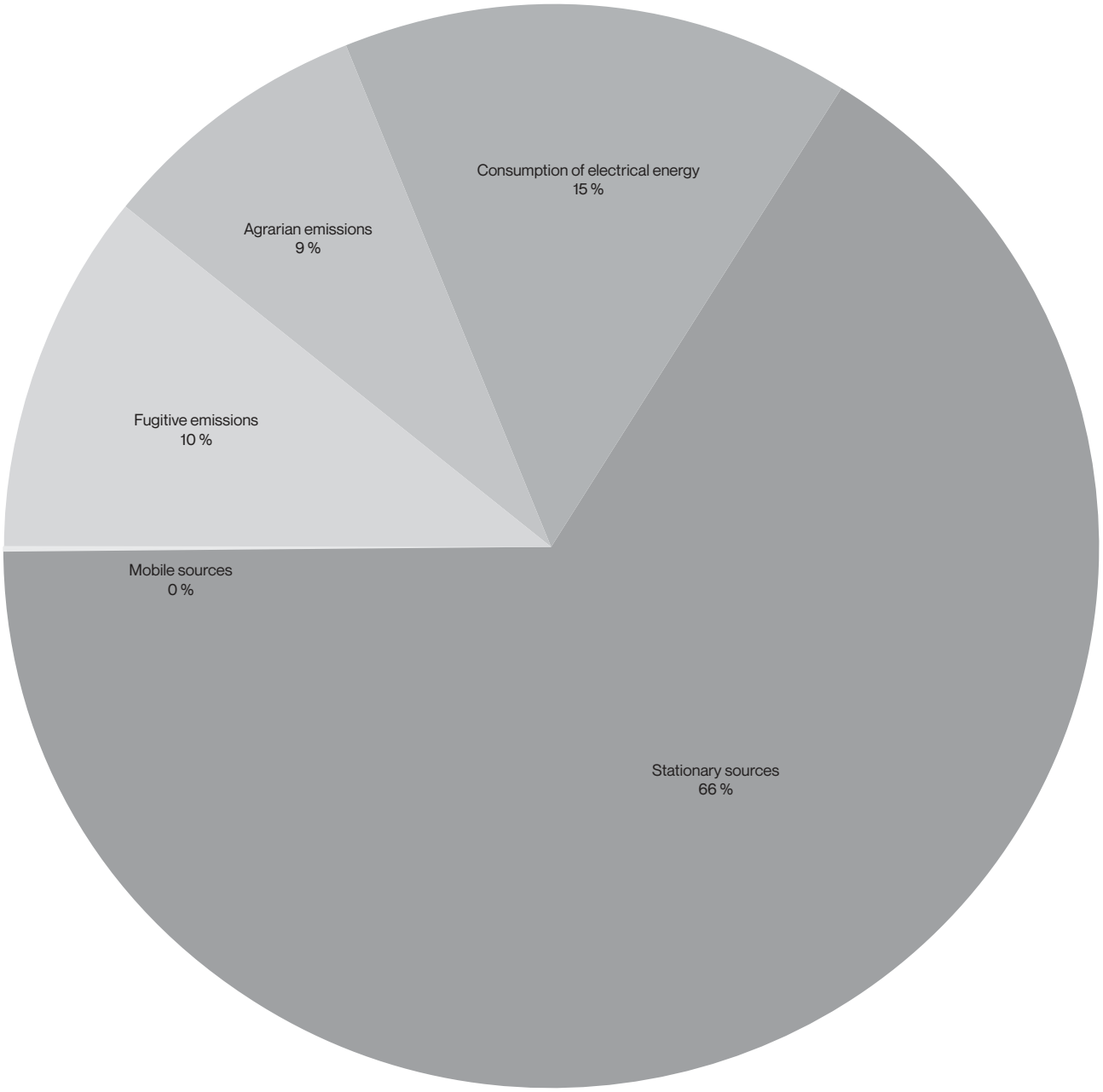
Importaco has a climate policy that establishes the lines of work to reduce our emissions in relation to the supply of products, the eco-design and circularity of packaging, sustainable mobility, energy decarbonisation and carbon removals. Among the actions included in this policy are the promotion of regenerative agriculture practices, research into new ranges of more sustainable packaging and the carbon neutrality of our work centres. In 2023, we will realise a decarbonisation pathway aligned with the SBTi Alliance, an international organisation comprising the Carbon Disclosure Project (CDP), the United Nations Global Compact, the World Resources Institute (WRI) and the Worldwide Fund for Nature (WWF). In addition, we will involve our main raw material suppliers to join forces and contribute together to the decarbonisation of the nut sector. This initiative will allow us to make progress in the reduction of Scope 3 emissions.

During 2021, the level of emissions in Scopes 1 and 2 were higher than in 2020 due to increased production. However, the 2022 calculation reflects an emission reduction process, which has resulted in an overall reduction of 351.51 tonnes of carbon dioxide (CO_2), equivalent to a percentage decrease of 3 %. This reduction is predominantly due to the reduction of fossil fuels.

RESULTS OF THE CARBON FOOTPRINT CALCULATION

	Emissions (tonnes of CO_2 equivalent)		
	2020	2021	2022
Scope 1	11,107	11,345	11,149
Scope 2	1,886	2,164.3	2,008.71
Scope 3	206,572	222,724	In progress

DISTRIBUTION OF SCOPES 1 AND 2 BY SOURCE (2022)



Additionally, this year we have carried out the calculation of the carbon footprint internally, with the aim of improving data collection procedures for greater accuracy. Despite the fact that the estimated total Scope 3 emissions result is higher than the base year (222,724 tonnes of CO_2 in 2021 compared to 206,572 tonnes of CO_2 in 2020), Importaco has managed to reduce the number of tonnes of CO_2 per kilo of its products, achieving a 2.38 % decrease in tonnes of CO_2 equivalent per million tonnes manufactured in the nuts and dried fruit business. This reflects the company's commitment to the environment and its commitment to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

In order to reduce our carbon footprint in the coming years, we are committed to working with our suppliers to raise awareness of the importance of sustainable production, optimisation of energy use, storage and transport. It is only by working collaboratively that we will be able to consolidate our sustainable supply chain.

CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION MEASURES

Climate change adaptation measures are actions we take to minimise the negative effects of climate change on Importaco's business. These measures include adopting climate risk management practices, using renewable energy, improving energy efficiency and reducing our carbon footprint. Through these actions we are improving our resilience with new technologies, increased disaster preparedness and uncertainty management.

Adaptation plans help us meet our global responsibilities and take advantage of the opportunities arising from the transition to a low-carbon economy. The main actions carried out in relation to climate change adaptation are divided into the areas of infrastructure protection, emergency response as well as crops and agriculture. These actions were included in the EU climate change adaptation mission report led by the Regional Ministry of Agriculture, Rural Development, Climate Emergency and Ecological Transition.

INFRASTRUCTURE PROTECTION

- Increased ranges of maintenance of roofs and rainwater collection networks to prevent water entering production centres, in the face of increased intensity and episodes of torrential rain.
- Increasing the cooling capacity of production processes in the face of rising temperatures and an increase in the number of heat waves.
- Refrigeration and humidity control in all raw material warehouses, in order to avoid impacts on product quality due to exposure to high temperatures and humidity.

EMERGENCY RESPONSE

- Dynamic pressure control of water distribution networks to fire protection systems to ensure their operation during periods of heat waves.
- Increased provision of fire protection services.

CROPS AND FIELDS:
OUR WAY TO REGENERATIVE AGRICULTURE

- Conservation agriculture to prevent erosion and desertification.
- Soil protection techniques.

Continuous assessment of potential new cultivation areas.

- Optimisation of irrigation to reduce water consumption.
- Integrated pest management, respecting the fauna of useful insects that favour the biological control of pests.
- Leguminous cover crops to reduce use of fertiliser and protect the soil.
- Use of new varieties adapted to the new climatic conditions.

ENERGY TRANSITION

In order to comply with Sustainable Development Goals 7 and 13, at Importaco we make annual plans to reduce our emissions and drive system change towards a climate-neutral economy. The electricity we use comes from renewable sources, we optimise our energy consumption and we have an internal sustainable mobility plan and another to offset direct emissions.

Our energy transition strategy aims to reduce energy consumption and boost the deployment of renewable energy. As a result of its actions, since 2018 we have achieved a 20 % reduction in energy consumption and associated emissions. This is a direct result of conservation and efficiency initiatives, by which 4,990 MWh of electricity and diesel have been reduced.

At Importaco, we prioritise the consumption of renewable energies such as renewable electrical energy or thermal energy generated with biomass boilers. Currently, 90 % of the electrical energy consumed is of renewable origin thanks to guarantees of origin, which accounts for 52 % of the total. In terms of self-consumption, an investment of 3.6 million euros was made in 2022 in the installation of 9,800 solar modules with a total power of 5200 kWp.

The scope of this project cuts across the group's two business lines, nuts and mineral water, and will cover 14 % of the energy needs of the production centres in Spain. The panels are currently installed at the dried fruit and nuts centres in the Valencia region (Beniparrell, Carlet, Chella, Sagunto and Vall d'Alba), and at the bottling plants in Cortes de Arenoso, Calera y Chozas (Toledo) and Bronchales (Teruel). In total, the project will complete the roofing of 10 work centres, which are expected to be fully operational in 2023. This initiative has been financed with a sustainable credit and will avoid the emission of 4,600 tonnes of CO_2 per year, the energy equivalent to the consumption of 1,800 Spanish households.

In addition, a pilot project has been carried out for the use of solar thermal energy as an alternative to gas at the snack production centre in Carlet (Valencia). The project includes the installation of 16 solar modules with a thermal capacity of 290 kWt and a production potential of 305,000 kWh. This initiative is part of Importaco's strategy to reduce its dependence on fossil fuels, which includes the study of new energy formulas, such as biogas.

Consumption and emissions by energy source

	2021		2022	
	MWh	Tons of CO_2	MWh	Tons of CO_2
Electricity	51,467	1,444	54,750	1,161
Gas	40,858	8,946	41,979	8,016
Propane	2,838	718	3,598	8,83
Diesel	1,690	520	190	48
Almond shells	5,221	0	4,712	0
Total	**102,075**	**11,722**	**105,229**	**10,107**

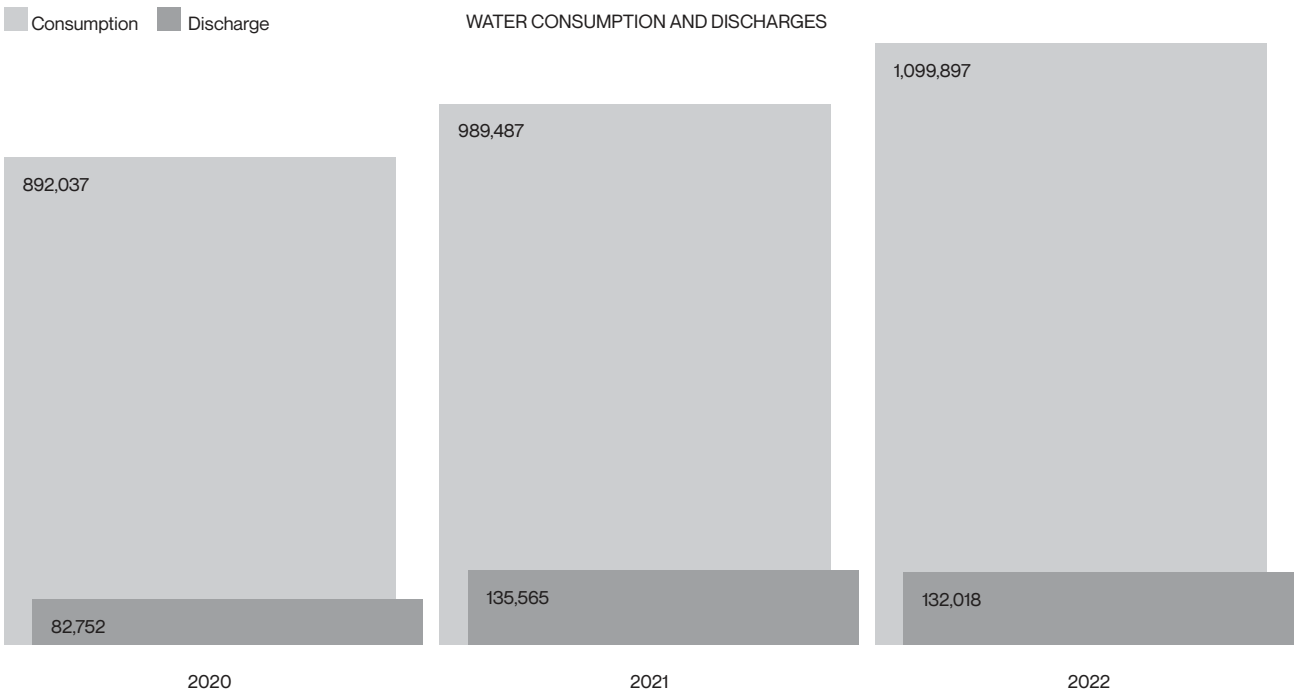
5.3.3. SUSTAINABLE WATER USE

It is vitally important for progress towards a sustainable development model that we all use water responsibly. Importaco has aligned its environmental plans with the targets set out in Sustainable Development Goal 6, using the measurement of the company's water footprint as a key indicator. This has led us to raise awareness internally about the rational use of water, develop reuse plans, improve wastewater recycling systems and optimise cleaning tasks to achieve greater efficiency.

In the nuts business, we have implemented water-saving measures in agricultural crops and optimised the industrial cleaning processes of the production centres. In addition, we have wastewater recycling systems through which we reuse 17,116 tonnes for the production of biogas, and we treat 132,018 cubic metres of wastewater in compliance with water quality standards.

In the mineral water business, we have special plans to protect aquifers and their environment, ensuring their purity and sustainable use. In addition to monitoring the state of the aquifers for the maintenance of water resources, we carry out exhaustive controls of the security perimeter to prevent any external contamination that could alter the composition of the water. As for cleaning and hygiene tasks, we have CIP (Cleaning in Place) stations at our Agua de Cortes, Agua de Bronchales, Fuente Arevalillo and Font des Teix springs to reduce the use of cleaning products and water, maintaining the highest standards of hygiene.

In 2022, the total water consumption in both businesses was 1,099,897 cubic metres, which was used for mineral water bottling, nut processing and hygiene tasks.



5.3.4. CIRCULAR ECONOMY

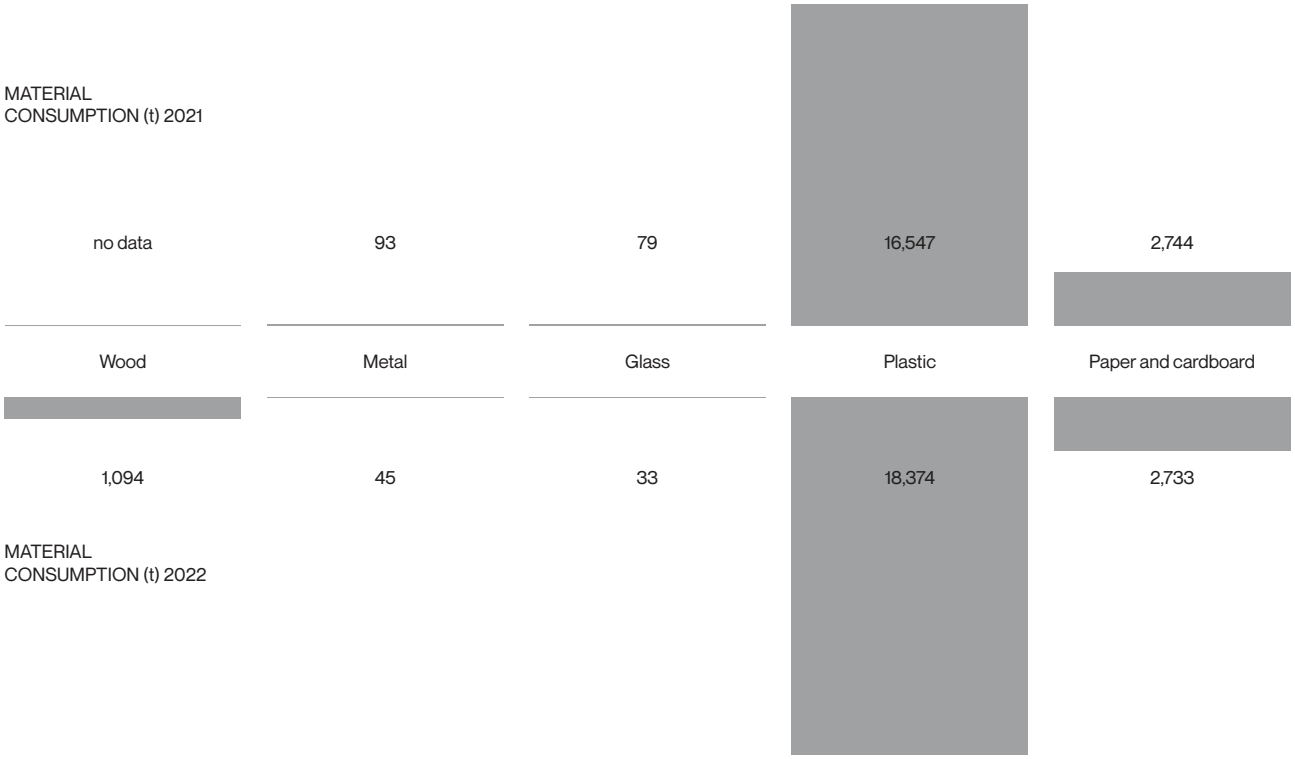
SUSTAINABLE USE OF MATERIALS

The circular economy proposes an alternative to the linear production model based on the extraction of resources to produce, without taking into account the use of all resources. Our internal system focuses on recycling the materials used, saving resources by optimising processes and using resources in a more sustainable way. Instead of discarding, we seek to reuse materials and reduce the environmental impact in order to reduce the amount of waste and ensure more sustainable production.

Packaging is necessary to maintain product quality and ensure the highest standards of food safety. However, at Importaco we are committed to making this progress compatible with the sustainable use of materials. During 2022, we have progressed the sustainable packaging project, in which we set a target of 100 % recyclable, reusable or compostable packaging by 2025.

All brands in our mineral water business have 100 % recyclable packaging, using printed film with a 50 % recycled content and the 1-litre water bottles contain 25 % rPET. These packaging changes mean that they contain a total of 762,145 kilograms of recycled material.

In regard to the cardboard used in the nut business, 87 % of it is made from recycled materials and more than 85 % comes from sustainable forests certified by the FSC (*Forest Stewardship Council*).



WASTE MANAGEMENT

Importaco advocates sustainability as its strategic framework and seeks to avoid the disposal of waste into landfills. To achieve this, we revalue over 5,000 tonnes of waste per year into energy and materials such as cardboard and plastic. This allows us to maximise the value of raw materials, save energy and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Sustainable Development Goal 12 focuses on managing resources efficiently. This involves implementing methods to reduce resource use, as well as resource recovery and recycling to achieve proper disposal of non-reusable waste. Our priorities are to achieve zero waste certification at all our sites and to research and develop sustainable products for the future.

In this regard, this year we have obtained Zero Waste certification in three new plants: Snacks, Seeds and Fruit, which together with the previous year's certification in our Nuts plant, we have managed to obtain 99.93 % of our waste recovered. Likewise, thanks to awareness raising and increased waste segregation, we have achieved a reduction of more than 14 % in the amount of waste generated at several of our plants, and an increase of more than 50 % in the amount of plastics separated at the plant compared to the previous year. In addition, the hazardous waste of rags and absorbents from the nut plant has decreased by 32 % compared to last year. Finally, we have improved the composition of plastic containers to facilitate their recycling, launching 15 containers on the market with 100 % recyclable material.

Focusing on the generation of organic waste, we seek to prevent food waste throughout its shelf life through improvements in industrial processes and collaboration with various social organisations. In 2023, we will establish an action plan under the new Food Waste Prevention and Management Act to put in place the necessary measures to reduce food waste in industry and improve the existing food chain, as well as the redistribution of uneaten food.

Waste generated (t)	2021	2022	Method of elimination
Cardboard	2,435	2,159	Recycling
Plastic	929	891	Recycling and energy recovery
Organic	2,581	2,655	Re-use, resale, by-product or animal feed
Raffia	447	468	Recycling
Industrial waste	797	775	Energy recovery
Wood	147	170	Recycling and reuse
Scrap	136	53	Recycling
Oil	411	633	Recycling
Sludge and sludge	14,844	17,124	Energy recovery
Other non-hazardous waste	No data	1,562	Recycling, recovery and reuse
Total hazardous waste	58	62	Treatment according to the nature of each waste

5.3.5. AGRICULTURAL INTEGRATION AND SUSTAINABLE PRODUCTION

Importaco is committed to creating sustainable products by using agricultural practices that protect biodiversity and ecosystems and by improving the processes of elaboration and processing of products in plants. To this end, it is essential to carry out life cycle analyses of our main products in order to understand the environmental impacts of their cultivation and production.

To move towards more sustainable production, we need the involvement of our suppliers and their commitment to the Sustainable Development Goals. We carry out this involvement through the Social Compliance Programme where we evaluate the environmental performance of suppliers through the SMETA 4P standard, and through the agricultural integration strategy to implement farming practices that meet quality, food safety and sustainability standards. As part of this strategy, Importaco is part of the Sustainable Agriculture Initiative (SAI) and has implemented a series of practices to reduce the environmental impact of its crops.

The agricultural integration project integrates our own production and partnerships with farmers for concerted production. In this area, we are committed to respecting land rights and natural resources with our suppliers by analysing the critical points that may affect them, drawing up action plans for their management, including water management, integrated production and the protection of biodiversity, as well as monitoring and indicators for each of them. Our main commitments would be threefold:

A. Address biodiversity and habitat loss and prevent its negative impacts.
B. Move towards sustainable production patterns, including water resources and inputs related to fertilisation and plant protection.
C. Conserve the soil by preventing soil degradation, erosion and depletion along with the maintenance of microbial activity.

IMPORTACO TERRA

Importaco Terra is our project dedicated to the cultivation of almonds in Spain and Portugal. It currently has an area of 550 hectares spread over the La Guita, Freixo and Zurria estates, which are cultivated in accordance with sustainable and regenerative agricultural standards. Among the achievements reached in 2022, it is worth highlighting that 100 % of the crops maintain a vegetation cover integrated by a part of spontaneous flora typical of the ecosystem; and the 60 % reduction in the use of active substances thanks to the integrated management of pests and the implementation of Integrated Production practices. In addition, we conduct annual audits to assess sustainability criteria such as water use, soil management and nutrient requirements.

In order to achieve a biological balance in the almond tree plots, we continue with our action plans focused on biodiversity protection such as the installation of nesting boxes, shelters for reptiles, bats, etc. and drinking troughs for birds. During 2022, we have achieved the certification of the La Guita farm in the Farm Sustainability Assessment (FSA) standard and the GLOBALG.A.P. 5.2 Certification in all Importaco Terra farms, demonstrating our high level of performance in this area and achieving the first Spanish almond to obtain FSA silver level.

Main soil health threats identified and soil management practices used

Potential threats	Action plans
Soil erosion	A plan is drawn up for the use of machinery to carry out tasks, avoiding the use of ploughs and protecting the vegetation cover.
Loss of biodiversity (micro-organisms)	Organic pesticides and fertilisers are used, as well as a plan with a focus on preserving the natural habitat through conservation practices.
Fertiliser toxicity	Fertilisation is applied only to those plants that require it, as determined by irrigation probes, soil analysis and foliar analysis.

OWN PEANUT PRODUCTION

Importaco is carrying out a project to grow peanuts in Argentina, with the aim of offering high quality, food safe and sustainable products. The project, during the year 2022, produced a total of 2,035 tonnes of peanuts on a total of 570 hectares. The initiative aims to control the traceability of peanuts and apply sound agricultural practices to ensure quality and reduce defects. This year, despite an early and heavy frost, the results achieved exceeded the national average, with a yield of 3.5 tn/ha, compared to the national average of 3 tn/ha for July 2022.

AGRICULTURAL INTEGRATION PROGRAMME

Partnerships with farmers allow us to apply good agricultural practices in the cultivation of products such as peanuts, sunflower seeds, almonds, corn and pumpkin seeds. This project integrates all stages of cultivation and allows product traceability from the field, as well as the application of agricultural practices aimed at maximising quality, reducing defects and detecting emerging risks.

At Importaco Terra, we work to reduce the environmental impact of farming through sustainable agricultural techniques such as soil conservation, the use of agrochemicals with caution, the development of water management practices, crop rotation and the preservation of biodiversity. We also improve the welfare of farmers through training in new production techniques, improving harvesting processes and access to new sources of income.

Indicators Agricultural Integration Programme 2022

	2020	2021	2022
Farmers	453	346	453
Hectares	19,854	22,593	24,738
Tons	61,372	69,933	67,631

Diego Olivares, Iberia Agricultural Purchasing Manager, visiting almond crops with a farmer to reinforce our specialisation in sustainability and quality.

5.4. PRODUCT: We take care of people's health and wellbeing

Importaco is committed to improving the global agri-food system to ensure healthy and sustainable food that meets society's expectations, in relation to SDG 2 (Zero Hunger) and SDG 3 (Health and Wellbeing). In this line, we are committed to ensuring food security and nutrition for future generations.
Our goal is to offer healthy and conscious food in order to improve food safety and quality; therefore, we offer nuts, dried fruits, seeds and mineral water to contribute to people's health. To do this, we improve the nutritional profile of our products and promote responsible innovation that generates a health benefit for our consumers.

5.4.1. INNOVATION AND TECHNOLOGY

For more than 80 years, Importaco has been committed to providing the highest quality products, which has enabled it to position itself as a leader in the European food industry. Seeing innovation as the basis for progress, Importaco strives to improve the formulations, preservation processes and nutritional profiles of its products through constant research.

In fact, in 2022 Importaco received the Innovative Company Award from the Association of Entrepreneurs of Camp de Morvedre (ASECAM). This distinction motivates and stimulates the company to continue growing along these lines.

Our innovation process is based on seven steps:	
1. Ideas and concepts	Detect unmet needs based on market trends and product portfolio.
2. Feasibility and planning	Define consumer acceptance, assess the feasibility of the project and develop a work plan for its implementation.
3. Design	Design and validate laboratory prototypes of the product to be developed.
4. Execution	Establish the industrialisation requirements for prototypes by identifying and defining the technologies and manufacturing processes needed for large-scale production.
5. Preparing the launch	Establish the nutritional, legal and technical information of the final product, followed by the first production validation.
6. Product marketing and monitoring	Launching a new product with the aim of satisfying consumer needs and desires and monitoring consumer satisfaction.

LINES OF INNOVATION DEVELOPED IN 2022

Importaco's lines of innovation are aligned with the latest trends in healthy eating, as well as with the nutritional needs of the population. In recent years, we have developed a line of innovative products including snacks, vegetable drinks, pastas, creams and food supplements. These products are designed to offer healthy and appetising food through high quality products produced with the latest technology.

We have also improved our snack line by producing healthy nuts without artificial additives. These snacks are rich in nutrients and flavours, making them a healthy and fun option for consumers. Another of our other lines of innovation is food supplements to improve the nutrition and health of consumers. These supplements are designed to provide the necessary amount of essential nutrients for consumers. Finally, Importaco is working on the development of a line of healthy creams, made with 100 % natural ingredients and no artificial preservatives.

Innovation achievements in 2022	
New launches	189
Innovation sales over total sales	5.4 %

Our aim is to offer the highest quality products to satisfy a healthy lifestyle with products that are wholesome, nutritious and sustainable. During 2022, we launched 189 new products and managed 630 innovation projects. These new launches are carefully selected to ensure maximum freshness and quality. In addition, we are committed to maintaining the highest standards of hygiene and food safety.

LAUNCH CHARACTERISTICS

Launches are characterised by the development of ranges for strategic customers in the nuts and snacks sectors. There is adaptation of new products to new legislation such as high fat, high sugar and high salt (HFSS) foods in the UK. New product categories have emerged with ranges of nut spreads and sports nutrition with developments focused on plant-based proteins. In the ingredients market, new developments have focused on the creation and application of nut pastes in sectors such as ice cream, confectionery and baked goods.

During the year 2022, it was noted that the main trends were related to innovation and health. These trends were classified into four areas:

- Healthy living: satisfying consumers' desire to live better and feel good.
- Conscious consumption: consume products that care for the planet and are affordable.
- New forms of socialising: adapting food to new forms of socialisation.
- Simple pleasures: enjoying food that balances pleasure and reward.

5.4.2. TECHNOLOGY CENTRE

The Importaco Technology Centre has a team of forty professionals specialised in science and technology; it also invests more than six million euros annually to become a benchmark in food safety, quality and innovation through the generation of knowledge, open innovation and applied research. It has seven laboratories for sensory, physical, chemical and microbiological analysis with ISO 17025 accreditation for the determination of aflatoxins and ochratoxin A, as well as kitchens for the design of innovative products and a pilot plant for pre-scaling, in addition to a semi-industrial plant to complete the scaling process with the aim of a rapid product launch.

5.4.3. PROA PLAN: CULTURE OF EXCELLENCE

Laboratory test tubes at the Importaco Technology Centre.

Importaco's PROA Plan aims to promote a culture of excellence to achieve top quality products, through initiatives such as the detection of individual contributions, the product-person tandem and the cells of excellence, which put customers and consumers at the centre of decisions.

The contribution workshops are meeting points where professionals discover how to contribute their knowledge to the creation of a product of optimum quality. Through the PROA Plan, the aim is to assess each process in order to improve the quality of the products. To this end, 44 practices have been defined that will be evaluated to measure the performance of each professional, made up of OD practices (key points to achieve maximum quality) and PROA practices (continuous improvement processes to achieve excellence). The cells of excellence are multidisciplinary teams created to address challenges related to quality, raw material selection and product preservation, with the aim of achieving quality 10 (Q10).

360° QUALITY MODEL

Importaco has created a 360° quality model in order to offer consumers safe, nutritious and healthy products. This transversal model manages quality through four dimensions: corrective, preventive, predictive and exploratory, in order to guarantee the integration of quality requirements in all phases of the value chain. It is based on specialised knowledge of customers, products and processes, as well as neuroscience studies that contribute to well-being. This research focuses on understanding mental health and cognition, and analyses the interaction of nuts and dried fruits with the human brain. These processes are carried out with transparency and from a multidisciplinary perspective, involving different stakeholders in order to ensure the highest standards of quality and food safety.

CORRECTIVE QUALITY

At Importaco's centres, corrective quality is oriented towards the evaluation and continuous improvement of quality through process control and customer service. We have the best technology to guarantee the reliability and specialisation of each process, as well as uninterrupted monitoring controls of the production lines, which are made up of an average of 150 parameters, 25 % of which are dedicated to food safety. As an example, in the natural drinks business, a total of 114,072 physico-chemical analyses and 181,365 microbiological analyses have been carried out to ensure the highest standards of safety and quality. In addition, we have a specialised customer service team in charge of managing and analysing recommendations on our products, as well as auditing customers and implementing process improvements to guarantee the technical characteristics of the product. These protocols regulate the response times to any query or incident related to food safety, in order to fulfil our commitment to immediate response.

PREVENTIVE QUALITY

Importaco has implemented a preventive quality process to ensure the application of strict quality and food safety protocols during all stages of the value chain. In addition, we collaborate annually with more than 453 farmers to cultivate a total of 67,631 tons of produce. This enables product traceability from the field and the application of good agricultural practices to maximise quality and reduce defects.

Likewise, in 2022 we have continued to make progress in our own almond and peanut cultivation project, which allows us to continue generating knowledge on cultivation processes and the integration of sustainable practices. As a result, we have achieved a crop free of endemic diseases, as well as guaranteeing traceability and adapting cultivation techniques to customer needs. Specifically, 570 hectares have been reached in the peanut cultivation project in Argentina, with harvest results of more than 2,000 tonnes.

Importaco's quality at origin programme seeks to collaborate with its suppliers to establish a common quality and food safety programme, aligned with the criteria established by the organisation. This is carried out through the following two lines of work: audits at source and the implementation of quality management systems in line with Importaco's culture of excellence. We implement procedures for the selection of raw materials and the control of defects and carry out on-site audits to monitor parameters such as allergen management, the stability of the product's nutritional values, among others. Additionally, we verify that suppliers are audited according to GFSI international standards and that their processes comply with Importaco's standards of excellence. Once the products arrive at Importaco's facilities, strict controls of raw materials and storage are carried out to verify their technical parameters. These controls are based on technical data sheets and are followed throughout the production process to ensure that all identified risks are monitored. In addition, the 6 Sigma methodology is applied, emerging risks are continuously assessed and new technologies are implemented to ensure the stability of the process. Importaco's production processes are certified in accordance with the international food safety and quality standards BRC and IFS Food, as well as through verification systems for religious community practices, such as kosher and halal.

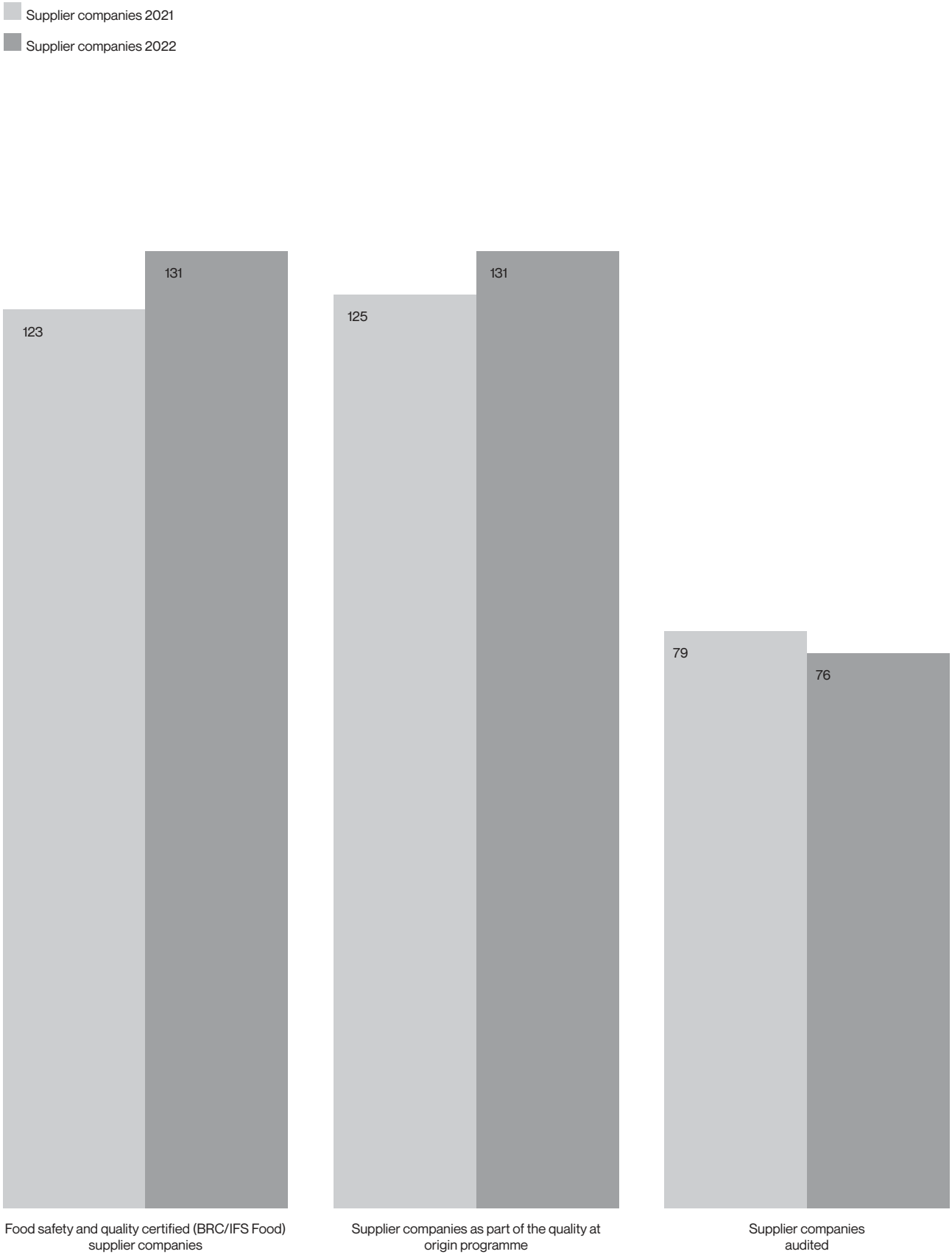
EXPLORATORY QUALITY

Exploratory quality investigates the use of new technologies with the aim of finding solutions to quality challenges. To this end, we carry out open innovation projects, where, through collaboration with technology centres and start-ups, we carry out a cross-sector study to assess the capacity of consolidated technologies in other fields, as well as emerging technologies with the ability to progress.

PREDICTIVE QUALITY

Finally, we apply data intelligence methodologies based on predictive quality in order to establish product behaviour. This is an emerging line of work that seeks to reduce product deviations through multivariate data analysis. Thanks to on-line and at-line data collection, we are able to identify process changes and prevent any deviations in production. To achieve this, we have annual process reports, trend analysis of critical quality characteristics and continuous monitoring systems through quality cells.

INDICATORS OF THE QUALITY AT ORIGIN PROGRAMME



5.4.4. ADVANCED FOOD AND RESEARCH

At Importaco we remain true to our values, which are based on quality, health, food safety and sustainability, and we apply the principles of responsible innovation in our research projects. The purpose of the advanced food project is to promote the benefits of nuts and dried fruit to improve people's health through a healthy diet. To this end, we carry out research into the design of products associated with the needs of special groups, such as the elderly and children, the functional properties of nuts and their capacity to maintain people's wellbeing.

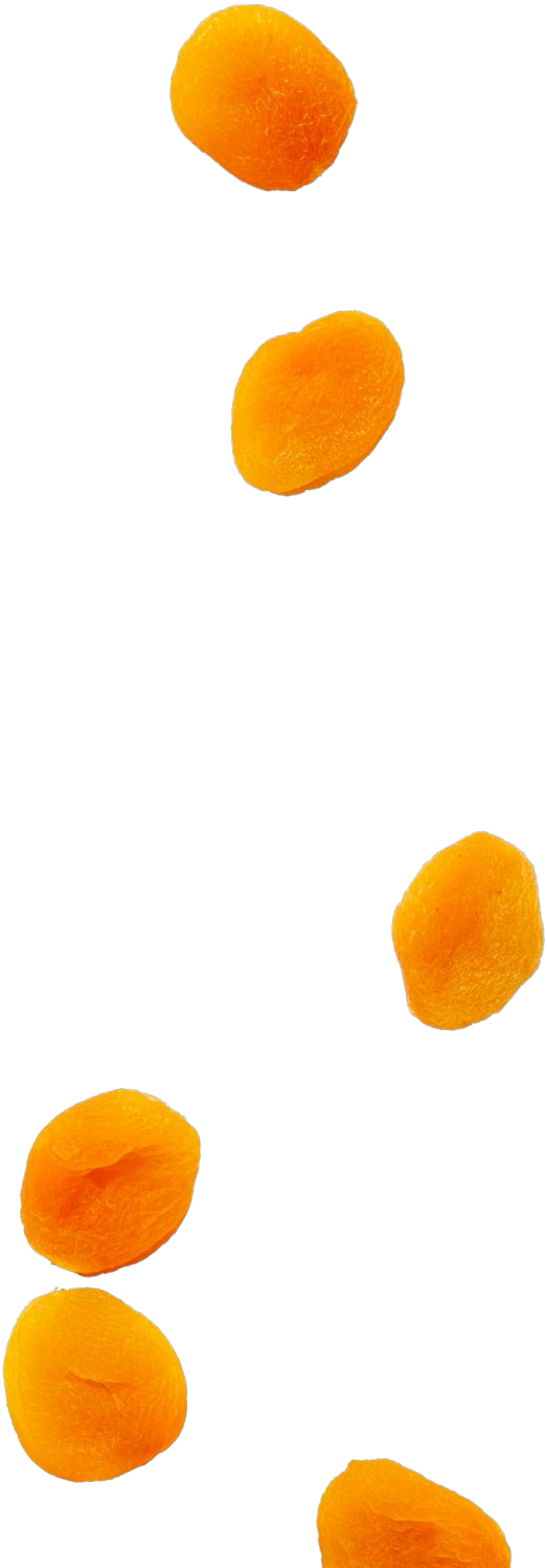
Advanced nutrition stems from the knowledge we have accumulated at Importaco about nuts and their health benefits. Through transparent processes, and from a multidisciplinary perspective, we collaborate with clients, technology centres, start-ups and researchers in social sciences and nutrition. In addition, we explore new avenues of research based on three health benefits: emotional wellbeing, the relationship between diet and wellbeing and the possibility of delaying ageing.

Within the framework of resolving our company's R&D&I challenges, in 2022 a multidisciplinary group from the Quality, MA and Innovation Area began a project to explore biotechnological strategies to eliminate nut allergenicity. During the project, different technologies (thermal, physicochemical and biological treatments) were compiled by means of which it would be possible to eliminate or significantly reduce nut allergy, and a collaboration was initiated with the allergy research group of La Fe Health Research Institute through the member of this group and allergist of La Fe University and Polytechnic Hospital, Dr. Ramón López Salgueiro.

As a result of this collaboration, we have initiated several lines of work with Dr. López, to resolve specific cases of allergies, as well as the possibility of having initiated a project to study the elimination of the declaration of the presence of traces of nuts in our products. Specifically, this study will evaluate the possible allergenicity of a food matrix by confronting an extract of the food with serum from patients allergic to nuts and milk.

Paula Salvá, laboratory analyst at the Importaco Technology Centre, carrying out quality tests.

6. ANNEX



6.1. The Statement of Non-financial Information

6.1.1. DATA COLLECTION

Entities included in this sustainability report	
Importaco, S. A.	YES
Importaco Casa Pons, S. A. U.	YES
Importaco Nuts Company, S. L. U.	YES
Importaco Mediterranean Nuts, S. L.	YES
Importaco Internacional, S. L. U.	YES
Importaco Poland SP. Z. O. O.	YES
Importaco Gilda Sanayi Ve dis Ticaret Anonim Sirketi	YES
Importaco Terra, S. L. U.	YES
Importaco Terra la Guita, S. L. U.	YES
Importaco Terra Portugal, S. L.	YES
Desarrollo Empresarial y Capital, S. L. U.	YES
Bebidas Naturales, S. L.	YES
Aguas de Cortes, S. A.	YES
Agua de Bronchales, S. A.	YES
Fuente Arevalillo, S. L. U.	YES
Font Teix, S. A.	YES
Grupo Helados Estiu, S. A.	YES
Fondo de Energías Renovables, S. A.	YES
Fruits Secs y Desarrollo Internacional, S. L.	YES
Uncle Vincent, Limited	YES
Besana UK	YES
V. Besana S. P. A.	YES

The differences with previous years are due to the fact that the company Importaco Casa Pons S. A. U. has absorbed Importaco Snacks S. A. U., Importaco Chocolates S. A. U., Importaco Food Service S. L. and Importaco Ingredients S. L.

6.1.2. REPORT FORMAT AND FREQUENCY

The information contained in the report refers to the year 2022 (January-December). The reporting cycle is annual and the last report was published in May 2022.

6.1.3. VERIFICATION

This sustainability report has been independently and externally verified by BDO to ensure that the data provided is accurate, truthful and complete.

6.2. GRI Table of contents

INFORMATION REQUESTED BY LAW 11/2018	PAGE OR ANSWER	GRI STANDARD
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Organisational objectives and strategies	15 and 16	GRI 102-14
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Management approach: description and results of the policies relating to these issues, as well as the main risks related to them and linked to the group's activities	39 and 40	GRI 102-15 GRI 103-2
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If you have any queries or doubts about the published information, please contact us at:

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