



## BARONA'S BUSINESS ACTIVITIES AND OPERATIONAL PRINCIPLES

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### **1 ABOUT BARONA**

Barona is a service company established in 1999. We are reforming working life through comprehensive solutions that support the growth of the labour force and companies. These solutions include employment, learning and wellbeing services, as well as diverse comprehensive solutions.

Barona is one of the largest employers in Finland and Finland's biggest private employment agency. We have more than 30 offices across Finland and operate internationally in nine countries. Our more than 30,000 professionals serve our clients in nearly all industries in Finland. Barona's revenue in 2023 was approximately EUR 484 million (pro forma).

Our technology and service solutions make our clients' world more predictable and solve their strategic problems. We are a significant recruiter of international labour force and the leading relocation service provider in Finland. We offer comprehensive warehousing solutions at our Avialogis logistics centre.

We pave the way for other operators and establish new ways to work and employ.

Barona builds careers and develops competence. We are an important adult education provider in Finland. We train over 3,000 people for new professions every year.

Barona is comprised of multiple independent companies operating under another name. In addition to the Barona companies, Barona Group includes Saranen Consulting, Arffman, Talentgate and Finland Relocation Services, Uggla Engineering and Creators, among others.

Barona is a member of the Bravedo community, a group of nearly 40 bold companies. Bravedo companies help to create completely new technological applications and business solutions, as well as impactful social and health services.

BARONA IS PART OF BRAVEDO, A COMMUNITY OF BOLD COMPANIES.

### **BARONA'S KEY FIGURES**

**Established in** 

1999

**Barona** is

100%

Finnish-owned company.

We employ over

30,000 workers annually.

We operate in Finland in over

30

locations and internationally in 9 countries.

We help more than

8,000

foreigners develop their skills or find a job in Finland every year.

**Barona employs almost** 

1,900

foreigners. Barona's employees represent a total of 109 nationalities.

We retrain approximately

3,500

people for new professions and direct some 1,700 people facing the risk of reduced work ability to new career paths every year.

This responsibility report concerns Barona Group's business activities in Finland. The economic and personnel data also include the Group's international operations, unless otherwise stated.

# BARONA IN 2023 BARONA

BARONA'S YEAR

2023 \$\tilde{\pi}\$

**Revenue EUR** 

484

million (pro forma)\*

**Growth of revenue** 

4.5%

**Operating profit margin** 

0.2%

**Personnel (FTE)** 

7,885

928

employees at Barona's offices

Employee experience, client company employees (NPS):

+31

12,054

found employment through Barona Employee experience, employees at Barona's offices (NPS):

+24

**Barona helped over** 

14,000

people to develop their competence in 2023

**Business client experience** (NPS):

+47

<sup>\*</sup> reported revenue EUR 443 million



### 2.1 CEO'S FOREWORD

### DEAR READER,

you are reading Barona's Responsibility Report covering our activities in 2023. This responsibility report complies with the international GRI standard and thus provides a comparable view of our responsibility activities.

The year 2023 was two-parted. Early in the year, the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic were behind and the entire Finnish economy started to grow strongly. Unfortunately, this phase was very short due to accelerated inflation, among other reasons. In general, the revenue of the biggest private employment agencies fell during 2023, but at Barona, we managed to increase our revenue despite the challenges. This was a very strong achievement, considering the economic and market situation.

During the year, we continued our internal development work according to our strategy. Working life is becoming increasingly demanding – this is also confirmed by our own research – and therefore we set up a wellbeing team focused on prevention in spring 2023. Even though the talent shortage has temporarily alleviated due to the economic downturn, internationalising Finnish working life is an important mission for us – without it, the shortage of experts cannot be solved. Our welfare state's basic services will also need labour force from abroad. You can read more about these topics as well in this report.

Recently, we have had internal discussions about diversity. This theme is important, and we at Barona are well aware that we also have room for improvement when it comes to diversity. What

matters is the attitude: just tolerating difference is not enough, it should be recognised as a significant asset.

In 2023, we had numerous dialogues with our customers about responsibility. Underlying many discussions was the new CSRD legislation, which Barona will also be subject to next year. We have begun to prepare for the new regulatory responsibility reporting: in autumn 2023, our parent company Bravedo conducted a double materiality assessment across the business community.

Barona is one of Finland's largest employers, and the social impact of our activities is very significant. This is demonstrated by the Upright analysis, which surveys the net impact of companies: according to it, Barona's impact is very positive. Our overall score is a fantastic +59, placing Barona among the world's top 10% in terms of impact.

Responsibility is one of the four core values of our company.

Responsibility is a matter of action in particular, and we take the importance deriving from our company's scale seriously. Thank you for your interest in Barona's activities and responsibility work.

I believe that this report will give you a comprehensive insight into how we have performed.

Best regards, Lassi Määttä, CEO, Barona



### 2.2 HIGHLIGHTS

### **WELLBEING TEAM STARTED**

In 2023, Barona set up a wellbeing team to provide comprehensive support to employees. The team is comprised of healthcare professionals with a wide range of know-how. The purpose of the telephone service provided by the team is to provide easy-to-access support for all Barona employees in different challenges related to work or free time. The service allows employees to receive support at an earlier stage, thereby preventing factors that impair their ability to work in the long term.

During 2023, the wellbeing team handled approximately 37,000 contacts, 42 per cent of which were related to the most common infectious diseases. There were 570 contacts relating to life management, including relationship problems or financial issues. A total of 320 contacts were related to mental health and 1,900 to musculoskeletal symptoms.

The new operational model has brought the help closer to the employees and has been well received: the service recommendation rate (NPS) in 2023 was as high as +96.

### SKILLCODE IS BARONA'S NEW LEARNING COMPANY

According to the Future of Job 2023 report, 44 per cent of current employees' core competencies will change over the next five years. For companies, this can be seen as a growing need to increase strategic competence throughout the organisation, not just in individual roles. In 2023, Barona founded Skillcode to support the development of competence in the business field, offering learning solutions that impact the business, are tailored and also simultaneously scalable for many companies. With a business-oriented focus on anticipating competence needs, Skillcode helps companies to renew the competences of their current staff and avoid unwanted personnel turnover.

In its first year of operation, Skillcode supported its customers in areas such as developing data and analytics skills, building change capability and managerial coaching. New competence needs caused by generative Al increased the demand, and managerial coaching highlighted the importance of feedback and interaction skills.

### FRENDIE APP FOR ALL BARONA EMPLOYEES

According to a study by the University of Turku, the share of people experiencing loneliness

more than tripled between 2016 and 2022. This observation is supported by Barona's own employee surveys as well as the experiences of the company's wellbeing team from discussions with employees.

Barona wants to support the formation of social networks for employees, as loneliness can also significantly impair wellbeing at work. In late 2023, Barona made a minority investment in the Frendie app, designed to build social relationships and prevent loneliness.

The app is available to all Barona employees, allowing them to find friends based on common interests, hobbies or values, for example. In the first few months, around 2,000 Barona employees downloaded the app.

### FIRST GROCERY STORE EMPLOYEES FROM ABROAD WERE RECRUITED

Barona recruited staff from abroad for the first time for Osuuskauppa Arina's grocery shops in different locations in northern Finland. Underlying this is the significant talent shortage in Lapland, and the necessary retail labour force could not be found within Finland. For example, the future of the S-market opening in Muonio was uncertain due to shortage of skilled workers. Barona recruited 15 grocery store employees from the Philippines, thereby helping to ensure the vitality of small towns. Before arriving in Finland, the employees underwent several months of Finnish language training. The employees are employed on a permanent basis, and the goal is to have them stay permanently in Lapland to work and live. More than 80% of the Philippine employees previously recruited by Barona have remained permanently in Finland.

# THE ACCIDENT FREQUENCY OF PERSONNEL WORKING FOR BARONA'S CLIENTS DECREASED BY 56 PER CENT

In 2023, occupational safety at Barona improved significantly. The accident rate (LTIR, accidents per one million working hours) of employees working for Barona's clients was 6.5, while the figure a year earlier was 14.9. The number of occupational accidents decreased in each of Barona's business sectors by a total of 22 per cent.

The main reasons for the decrease in the number of accidents were a reduction in the need for temporary labour force, increased safety induction and training for employees and client companies, and a closer dialogue on safety among all stakeholders. See chapter 6.5 for more information.



### ONE APPLICATION FOR ALL SUMMER JOBS IN ALL INDUSTRIES

In 2023, Barona launched a summer job campaign where it was possible to apply for summer jobs across the country in all industries with a single application. The aim was to simplify the jobseeking process for young people and make it easier for them to find employment.

In the summer job campaign, the job-seeker added their wishes, competences and experience to the system. They could also express interest in vacancies afterwards. Each application was processed individually. In January–June 2023, Barona received almost 35,000 summer job applications, up 16 per cent compared to previous year.

### A NEW SEARCH EXPERIENCE FOR INTERNATIONAL JOB APPLICANTS

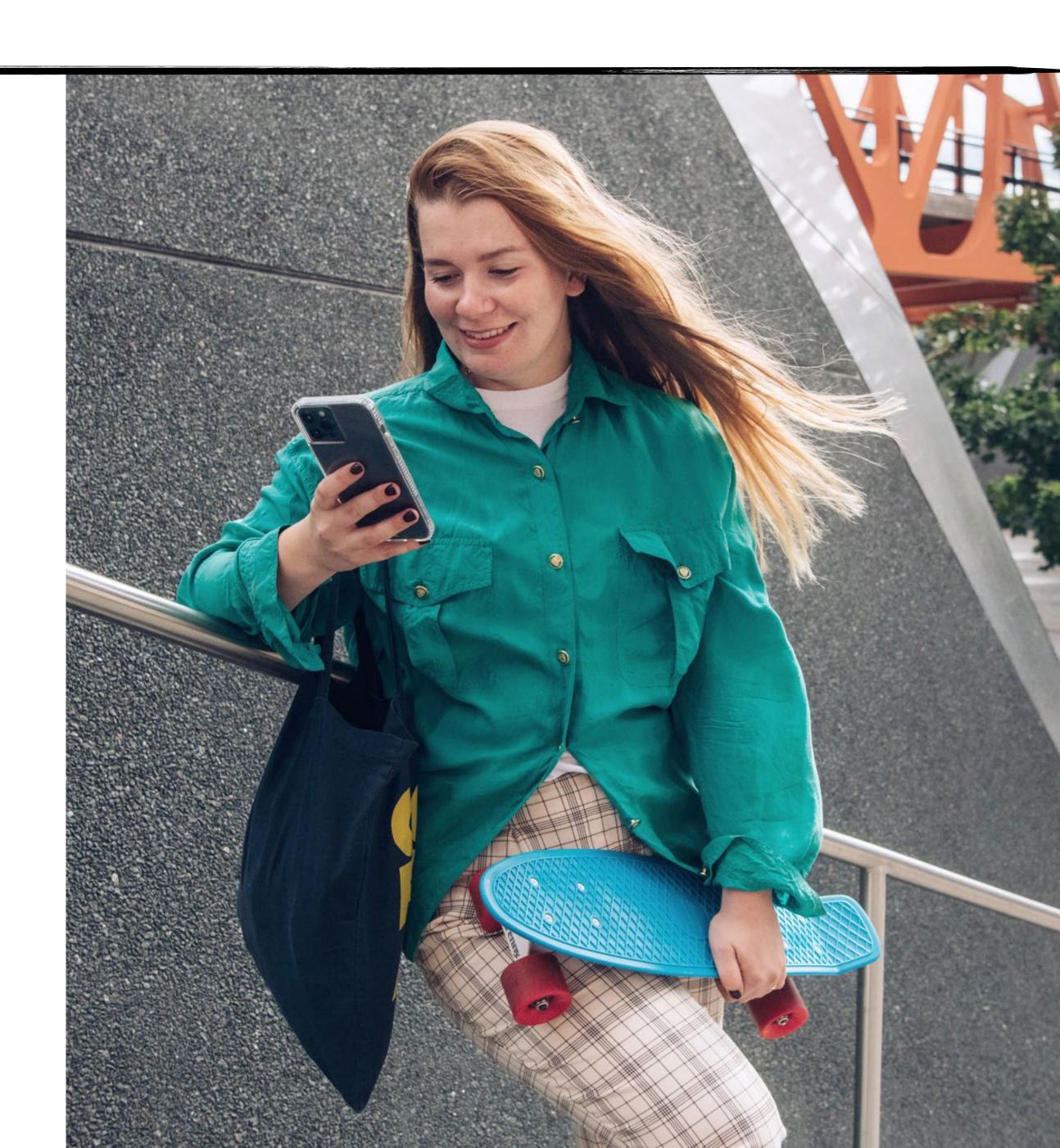
Nordic website for international job applicants.
The website serves as a platform for all international talents who are interested in working in Finland or other Nordic countries.

Logged-in users automatically receive Al-assisted recommendations for open workplaces based on their profile and skills. The website serves a significant number of users, as Barona received around 250,000 applications from abroad in 2023.

# THE BRAVEDO XCEL MENTORING PROGRAMME SUPPORTS MODERN CAREER DEVELOPMENT

Barona is part of the Bravedo community, which launched a new joint mentoring programme in 2023. The aims of the programme were to support personnel in modern working life, increase understanding of the Group's various functions and promote internal networking and thus cooperation between the different business functions. Any member of the Bravedo community who was interested in developing their own job description, the Group's growth opportunities or mentoring their colleagues could apply to become an actor or a mentor.

16 mentoring pairs were selected and the first pilot group implemented the programme in August–December 2023. The effective pilot helped participants to clarify their own career thinking, increased awareness of opportunities within the Group and provided the ability to respond to changing needs in working life. Based on the feedback and NPS (+73), the participants were satisfied with the mentoring and the programme will continue.





# 2.3 BARONA'S BUSINESS ACTIVITIES IN 2023

Barona's primary operating area is Finland, but growth is also actively sought in other Nordic countries. In Finland, we operate 31 offices nationally. In addition to the Nordic countries, we operate in Estonia, Poland, Slovakia, Spain and North Macedonia.

Barona's year 2023 was twofold. The COVID-19 restrictions that were lifted the previous year no longer made it difficult for companies to operate, and Finland temporarily returned to a time of talent shortage. The year 2023 therefore started with signs of growth, but during the beginning of the year, the Finnish economy turned to a decline. The economic situation was particularly affected by interest rate hikes due to increased inflation, which had a negative impact on business conditions for companies.

Barona's revenue developed positively in 2023, despite the challenging situation in the employment services market overall. According to Employment Industry Finland, the revenue of the largest companies in the sector fell by around seven per cent in 2023 compared to the previous year.

In 2023, the revenue of the Barona Group operations increased by 4.5% compared to the previous year. Revenue totalled approximately

EUR 484 million. The operating profit margin was 0.2 per cent.

Barona's core business area, staffing services, has been strongly linked to companies' human resources needs, which turned to a decrease during 2023. The main objective for Barona's financial year was to improve profitability and implement organisational changes in line with the strategy.

### **DEVELOPMENT IN INDUSTRIES**

A significant part of Barona's business focuses on meeting the personnel needs of companies in different industries. In the construction sector, the year was very challenging due to the weak economic situation. The challenging situation was particularly evident in the demand for construction employment services and increased price competition. On the other hand, revenue from the project business increased during the year. In the industrial sector, the year started positively, but the challenges of the operating environment and customers began to reduce demand as we moved into the second half of the year. Major investment projects were carried out in Oulu and Kemi. Overall, Barona's industrial revenue decreased slightly compared to the previous year.

In the service sectors, turnover in the accommodation and catering sector increased due to the upturn in client companies' business. There was some customer turnover in the retail

sector, with revenue decreasing slightly compared to the previous year. New growth was generated in customer services in the operator and energy business, among other sectors. The logistics business grew in 2023, but at the same time, a significant automation investment was made in the Avialogis logistics centre, which had an impact to the profit. In the social and healthcare sectors, temporary staffing of nurses decreased, but temporary staffing for doctors increased, and the sector's overall turnover increased by more than 50 per cent compared to the previous year.

In the specialist sectors, the overall slowdown in the Finnish economy affected IT business in 2023, which contracted compared to the previous year. Similarly, HR and finance business activities grew compared to the previous year, with growth mainly generated by temporary staffing in the banking and insurance sectors. The marketing and communications business remained roughly unchanged.

The uncertain financial situation in the training service provider Saranen Consulting's business and the decline in the IT talent market had a negative impact on the demand for recruiting training programmes. Correspondingly, the labour market situation increased the demand for change management services. Overall, Saranen's revenue increased by approximately 11 per cent. Talentgate, a training company specialising in commercial expert roles, performed well in 2023, with revenue increasing by 34 per cent.

The revenue of Arffman, a provider of employment and integration services, increased by more than 12 per cent in 2023. Despite economic uncertainties, the company managed to improve its profitability. Growth was driven by success in public tenders. Arffman also began preparing for the TE24 reform, in which the responsibility for unemployment and employment management is transferred from the state to the municipal level.

### STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT

In 2023, Barona continued to implement internal strategy initiatives. Processes relating to recruitment and employee communication were revised and the new bHub unit was established. The development of the B2C experience continued: with the help of new metrics and data management, the job-seeking process and employment were streamlined and the range of different skills opportunities was increased.

BARONA'S REVENUE DEVELOPED
POSITIVELY IN 2023, DESPITE
THE CHALLENGING SITUATION
IN THE EMPLOYMENT SERVICES
MARKET OVERALL.



The service portfolio for business clients was developed. In early 2024, Barona's organisation and business structure were clarified by dividing the service functions into four business areas: industry & construction, logistics & services, professionals and learning & wellbeing.

In 2023, Barona continued to invest in international recruitment and expansion. During the year, preparations were initiated to harmonise international recruitment services, which was completed in early 2024. For more information on the international labour force business, see section 3.6.

Barona developed its skills and training services to help companies to overcome the shortage of talent. Training programmes for recruitment were organised and apprenticeships were added. More than 4,000 immigrants received integration training.

In 2023, Barona continued to invest in employee wellbeing and reducing absences due to sickness. Special attention was paid to mental health and the prevention of musculoskeletal disorders. A new multidisciplinary wellbeing team was launched in the spring to provide early stage support for Barona employees. The team helps employees with both work and free time challenges and guides them to the right services.

In 2023, absences due to musculoskeletal diseases decreased significantly, by approximately 20% compared to the previous year. Mental

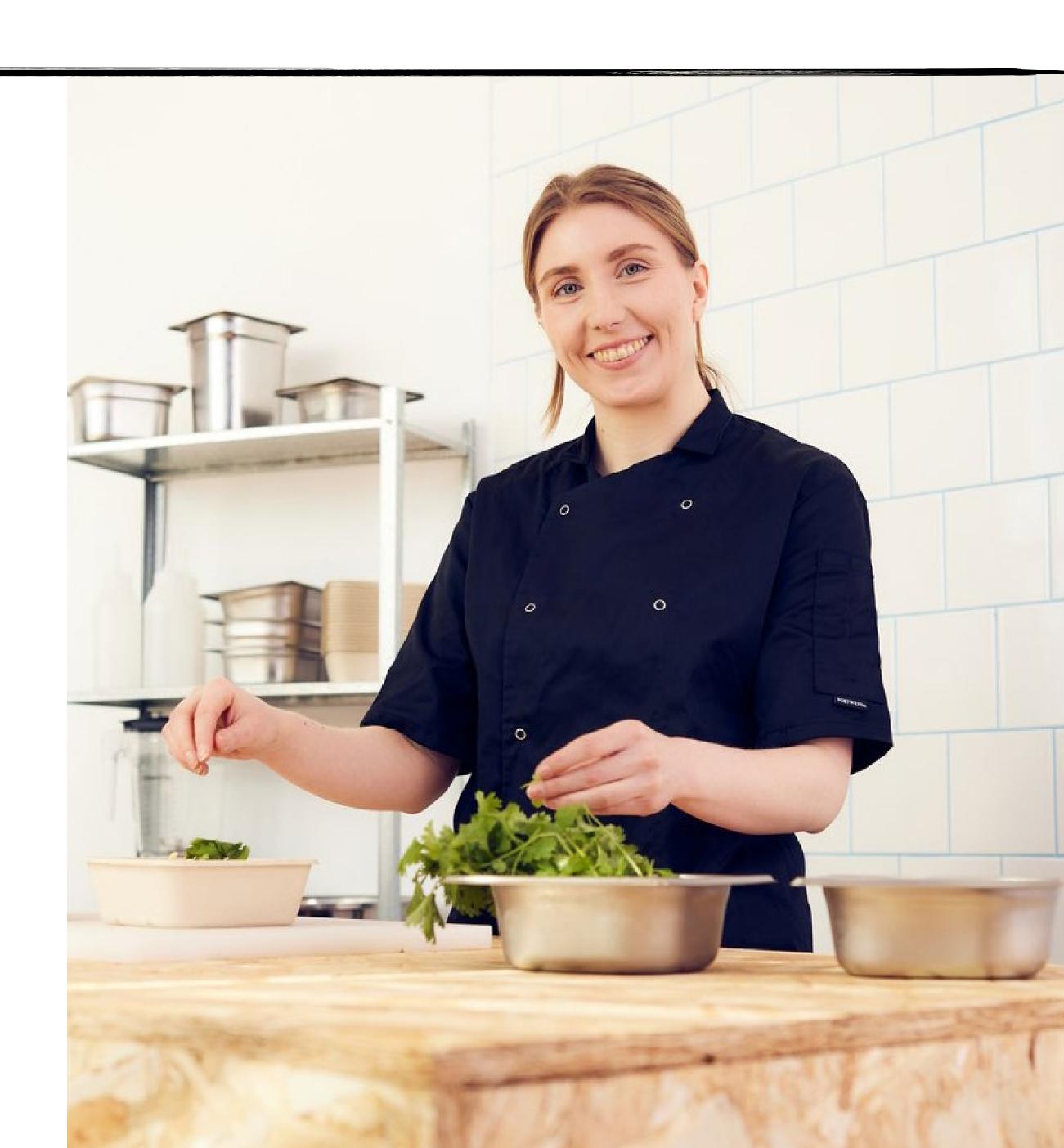
health-related absences, on the other hand, increased by four per cent in 2023. Special attention will be paid to factors related to mental wellbeing going forward as well.

In May, Barona Oy acquired the entire shareholding of Ensin Infra Oy. In June, the Group increased its holdings in Koutsit Group Oy, Medimanageri Oy and WMRT Rakennus Oy. In July, the Group company Uggla Engineering Oy acquired a majority holding in the Swedish company Kompetenskonsult AB.

The invoicing service FREE.fi, previously part of the Barona Group, carried out a financing round at the end of 2023. Following the arrangement and the new financing, Barona's holding decreased in such a way that FREE.fi was no longer a Barona group company at the end of the financial period.

In December 2023, Barona made a minority investment in the Frendie app, designed to build social relationships and prevent loneliness. Through the cooperation, Frendie was made available to all Barona employees (read more in section 2.2).

Barona started preparing for the new CSRD sustainability reporting. In autumn 2023, the parent company Bravedo conducted a double materiality assessment covering the entire corporate community. Barona will be subject to the new legislation from January 1st 2025.





### REGIONAL BUSINESS ACTIVITIES IN FINLAND

Due to the general economic situation, 2023 was a challenging year for the regional business as well.

The Helsinki metropolitan area accounts for just under one-half of Barona's revenue in Finland. The year was particularly challenging in the construction and IT sectors. The hospitality and logistics sector succeeded in growing despite the market situation, which was boosted by the first full year of operation of the Avialogis logistics centre in Vantaa. In the Helsinki metropolitan area, resourcing and outsourcing services grew, while the volume of recruitment services temporarily decreased.

The first six months were a very strong period of growth in Central Finland, but the direction changed at the end of the year. In 2023, revenue increased by around ten per cent compared to the previous year. Urbanisation is seen in Central Finland in such a way that companies operating in small towns in particular have great difficulty finding skilled employees. During 2023, Barona had numerous discussions with customers in the region about international recruitment needs, and new initiatives were implemented. Another significant trend is training foreign-language jobseekers who already live in Finland for new roles. An example of this is the cooperation with Danfoss (read more on page 54).

In Eastern Finland, the year started as expected. The shortage of skilled employees was challenging in many sectors, and Eastern Finland would not have been able to cope without global talent, either. International experts were recruited for the industrial and catering sectors, among others. During the summer season, tourism sector companies, for example, needed labour force. In the second half of the year, the general economic situation weakened the demand for services. Revenue and profit were at the same level as last year. Of the industries, the restaurant and social and health care sectors in particular grew strongly.

In Western Finland, the year was divided into two very different halves. Early in the year, the positive mood of the previous year continued in almost all sectors. After the summer, however, demand declined as the business of numerous client companies faced challenges. New accounts were also acquired during the year, which levelled out the situation, especially in Southwest Finland. Overall, revenue increased by nine per cent compared to the previous year.

In Northern Finland, 2023 was more successful than expected in many business units, and revenue increased by 16 per cent. There was steady growth throughout the year, especially in the logistics and services businesses, which was due to factors such as the record year in tourism in Lapland. Significant international recruitment

projects were carried out for industrial clients. At Barona, the share of international labour force was around 25 per cent in Northern Finland in 2023, including 47 different nationalities. In Northern Finland, the distances are long, and the use of private cars for commuting in the area was reduced, resulting in a 24 per cent reduction in the total number of kilometres travelled compared to the previous year.

### BUSINESS ACTIVITIES IN OTHER COUNTRIES

Barona's business abroad s focused on the Nordic region. The most extensive business is in Sweden, where Barona operates in the customer service, industry, IT, HR and finance sectors. Northern Sweden is a significant growth area. The volume of business in Sweden was slightly lower than in the previous year.

In Norway, Barona operates in the construction sector through offices in Oslo, Drammen and Moss. The activities are based on international recruitment targeting electrical engineering and pipe installation tasks. Revenue declined year-on-year, particularly in the Oslo region, due to significant regulatory restrictions on temporary staffing services, which led to a shift to the outsourcing model in service production. In Denmark, where Barona focuses on HR services in the IT sector, and in Estonia, the scope of the business was at the same level as last year.

In 2023, Barona's revenue in the other Nordic countries fell slightly from the previous year to around EUR 29 million.

Barona has nine sales, customer service and back office service centres in Finland, Sweden, Poland and Spain. These units serve as service production centres for clients in the Nordic region. In addition, Barona is a co-owner of a service centre in North Macedonia. During 2023, Barona initiated an expansion of the service centre in Fuengirola, Spain, with new premises for 150–200 specialists. The premises will be commissioned in early summer 2024. Barona is the biggest private employer in Fuengirola.

In spring 2022, Barona initiated its exit from the Russian market. The divestment of the Russian operations was completed in 2023. In early 2024, the transaction was still awaiting approval from the authorities.

Overall, Barona's abroad business in 2023 amounted to around EUR 43 million, down about three per cent compared to the previous year.

# **BARONA'S** MANAGEMENT AND STRATEGY



### 3 BARONA'S MANAGEMENT AND STRATEGY

# 3.1 BARONA AS A CREATOR OF VALUE

Barona creates value through its economic, social and societal influence.

In 2023, Barona's tax footprint was EUR 170.9 million. Barona's tax policy is based on the company's strategy and values. We aim to be a responsible and transparent taxpayer. We strive to establish interactive cooperation with tax authorities. We continued our enhanced client cooperation with the Tax Administration, which began in 2018. Enhanced cooperation is an OECD-recommended preventive and transparent operational model for handling tax-related matters. Within the framework of this cooperation, unclear tax-related matters and issues are addressed in advance through continuous dialogue.

Our social and societal influence is based on our position in the labour market and the value chains of our stakeholders. Our influence is the sum of many factors.

Finland's dependency ratio is deteriorating every year, meaning that the number of working-age people is decreasing. According to Statistics

Finland, the number of working-age people was at its peak in 2009, but decreased by 136,000 people in the 2010s. Simultaneously, Finland is suffering from a severe talent shortage that concerns nearly all fields and industries, and a mismatch between labour demand and supply due to several factors.

The right to work is a fundamental right, and Finland needs the contribution of the entire working-age population. Regardless of their age, gender, ethnicity or other personal characteristics, everyone should be offered suitable work to make a living and feel that they contribute to society in a meaningful way. Companies need personnel, training and wellbeing services to ensure that they always have enough skilled workers to meet their human resource needs.

Barona has solutions for these challenges. We act as a link between employees and employers. We offer work, training and coaching opportunities to job-seekers. We help municipalities find employment for unemployed job-seekers. Barona is an expert in employing unemployable and partially disabled people. We cooperate with

educational institutions and help them develop their selection of courses to meet the needs of businesses. We provide companies with flexible staffing services and comprehensive solutions, which include software development and consulting services.

According to an Upright analysis measuring the net impact of companies globally, the <u>overall</u> <u>impact of Barona</u> is very positive and significant. Barona's overall rating is +59. The biggest positive impacts come from job creation, taxes, accumulation of competence and know-how and generation of the experience of meaningfulness. About 90% of the more than 10,000 companies worldwide modelled by Upright at the most detailed level have a weaker impact on the world.

WE ACT AS A LINK

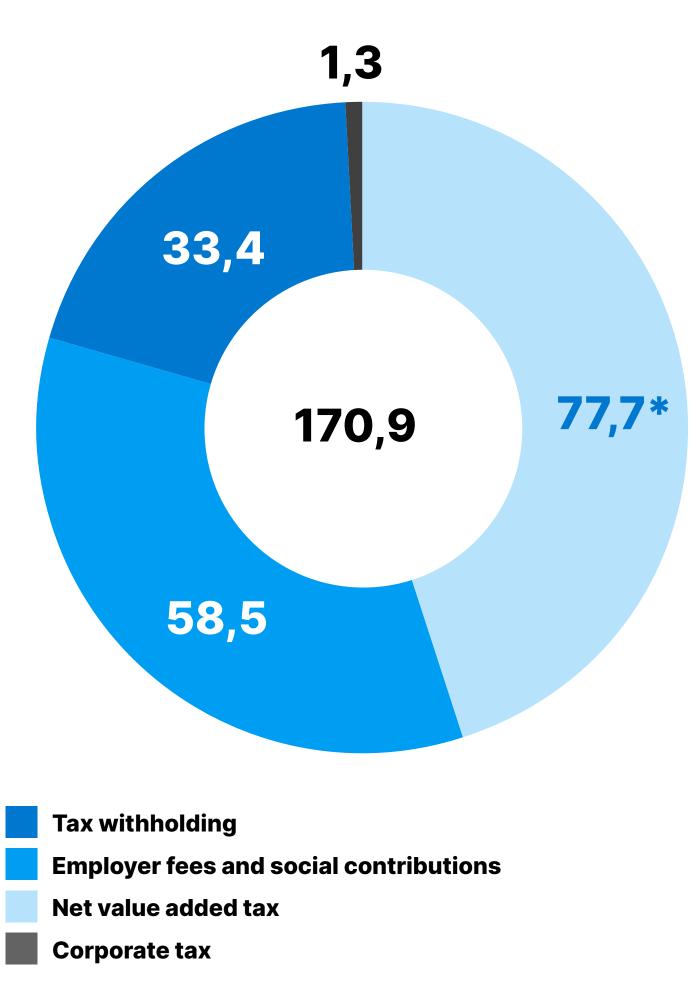
BETWEEN EMPLOYEES

AND EMPLOYERS.

### **BARONA EMPLOYEES**

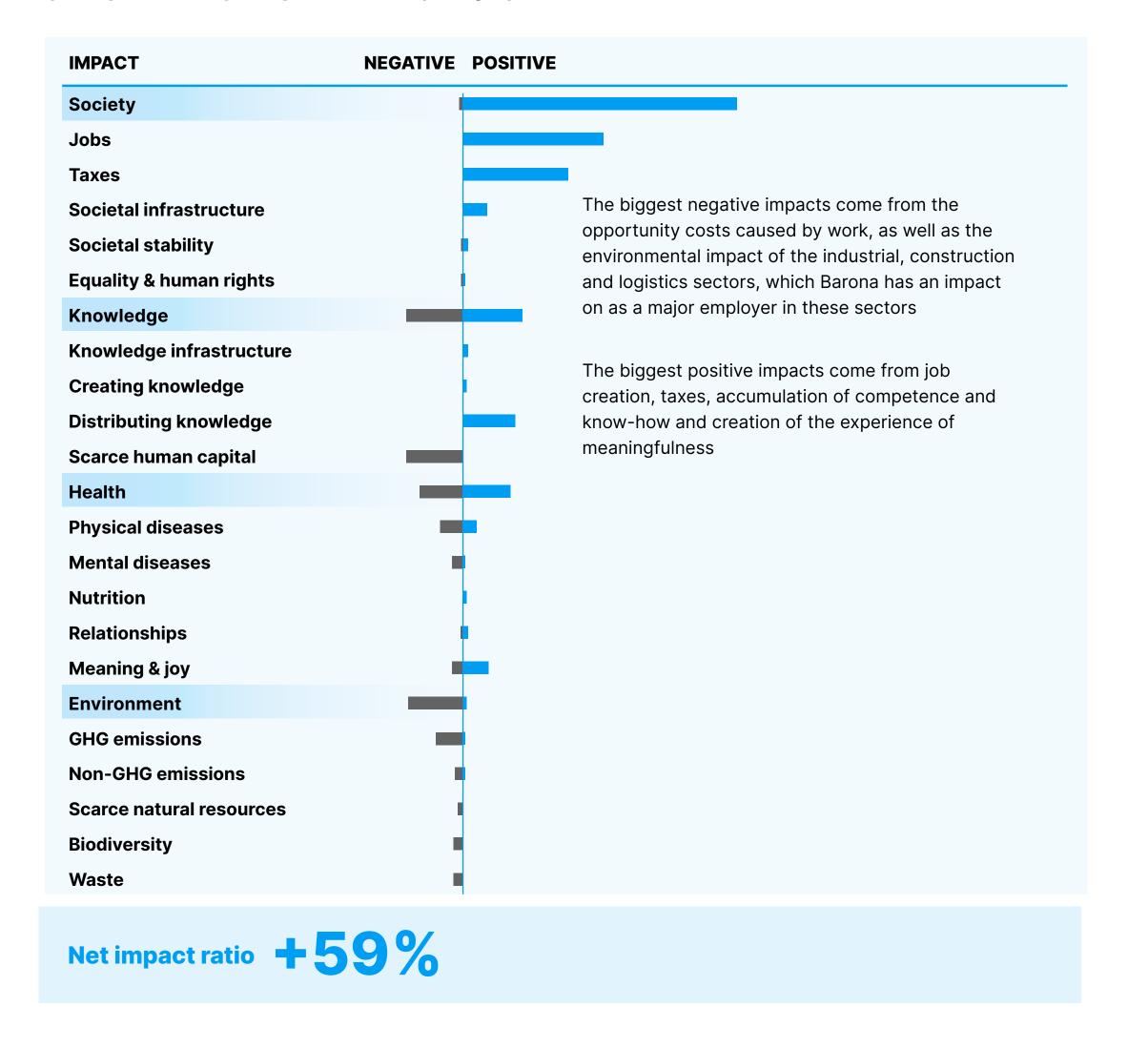
Barona's personnel consists of three employee groups: employees working at Barona's offices, employees working at units managed by Barona for clients, and employees working at clients' locations. Units managed by Barona include the Avialogis logistics centre and service centres. Employees working at client locations are Barona employees, but they work in the client organisation under the management and supervision of the client company.





\*The decrease in VAT compared to the previous year is due to the fact that the 2022 report included the work of light entrepreneurs invoiced through Free Laskutus, which is no longer included in the reporting

### **UPRIGHT: BARONA'S NET IMPACT 2023**



### **BARONA AS A CREATOR OF VALUE**

### **RESOURCES**

### **ECONOMIC CAPITAL**

- Turnover 484 million euros (pro forma)
- Operating profit 1.1 million euros
- Financially sound and stable company
- 100% domestic ownership

### **HUMAN CAPITAL**

- Motivated personnel
- Personnel competence and its development
- Investing in the wellbeing of personnel and their ability to work

### **INTANGIBLE CAPITAL**

- Barona brand and brand portfolio
- Barona's service solutions
- Information systems and data
- Responsible operating models

### **SOCIAL CAPITAL**

- Employee networks
- Client relationships
- Stakeholder and partner networks
- Cooperation with the public sector

### **NATURAL RESOURCES**

- Water 284 m<sup>3</sup>
- Heat 76 MWh
- Electricity 99 MWh
- District cooling 44 MWh



# WE ARE A PLATFORM

WE ARE A PLATFORM THAT BUILDS POSITIVE INTERACTION AND VALUE BETWEEN BUSINESSES AND PEOPLE.

- Work
- Learning
- Wellbeing

### **IMPACT**

### **ECONOMIC IMPACT**

- Salaries and remuneration 299.4 million euros
- Tax footprint 170.9 million euros
- Pensions 50.3 million euros
- Indirect employee expenses 14.1 million euros

### **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT**

- Greenhouse gas emissions 31,211 tCO2e (scope 1, 2 and 3)
- Waste 500 kg
- Emissions intensity 78.1 g CO2e (scope 1, 2 and 3)

### **SOCIAL AND SOCIETAL IMPACT**

- Employment created: 7,885
- Employing young people
- Employing immigrants and increasing the diversity of the business sector
- Strengthening the skills of the workforce
- Promotion of occupational safety
- Improving the wellbeing of the workforce

### LONG-TERM SOCIETAL IMPACT

- Improving employment rate
- Securing companies' growth and readiness for change
- Mitigating the convergence problem
- Preventing marginalisation and social exclusion
- Increasing the intellectual capital of the workforce
- Improving equality in working life

# 3.2 BARONA'S BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT AND STRATEGY

In the past 20 years, Barona has grown into the leading staffing service company and one of the largest employers in Finland. Over the years, Barona has expanded its service portfolio from traditional staffing services to more extensive solutions, including training and consulting services, management of change situations as well as logistics and customer service outsourcing solutions.

Barona's subsidiaries (read more in Appendix 1) have further expanded the Group's sphere of operations, technological capacity and service portfolio. The share of training courses, outsourcing solutions and consulting services in Barona's total revenue has increased.

The needs of company and public administration clients, as well as working life, are changing rapidly. The COVID-19 pandemic transformed working practices permanently in many fields and, according to numerous studies, it accelerated the change in people's attitudes towards and expectations for working life.

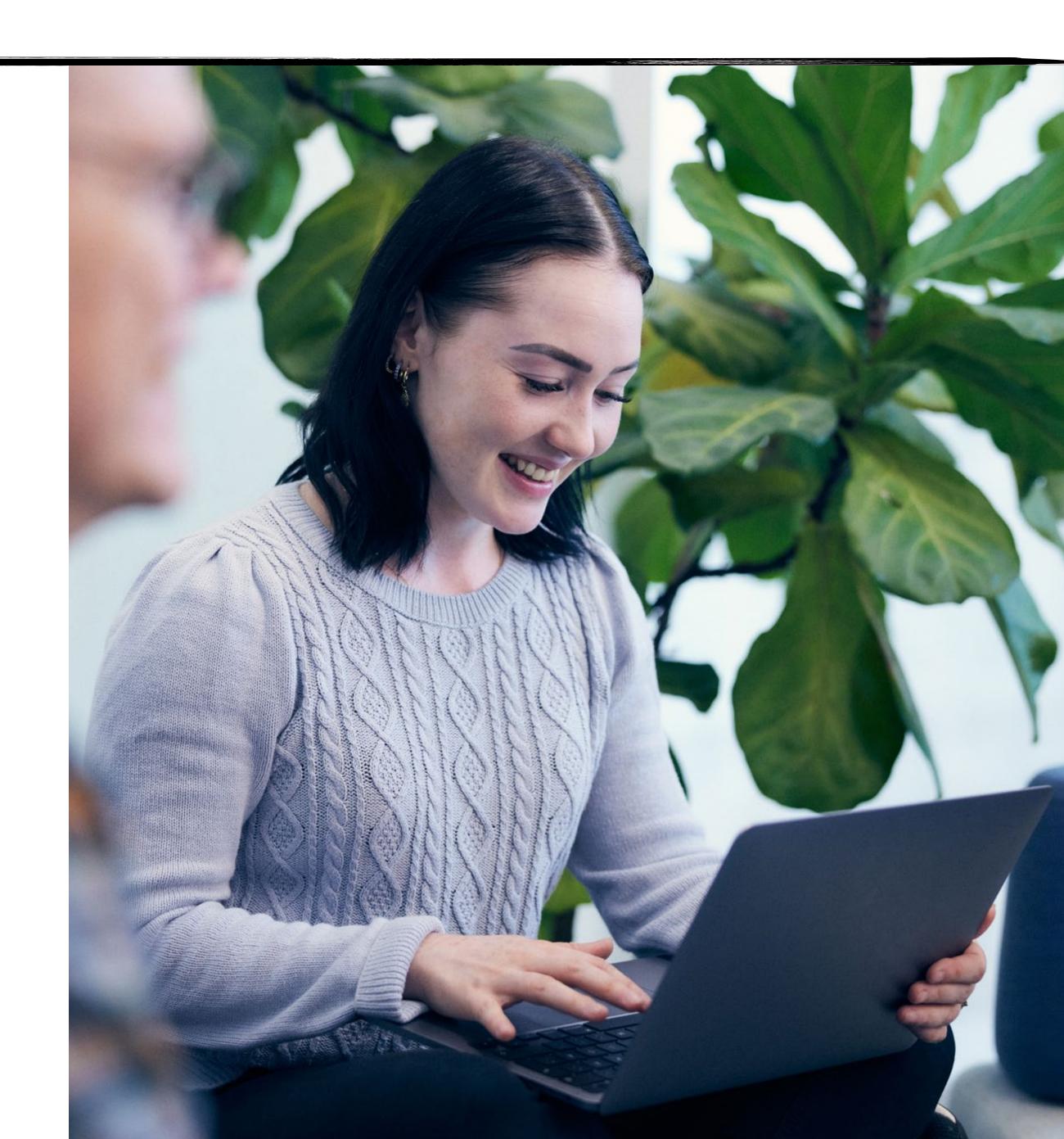
People tend to think more carefully about what kind of work they want to do, and the increasingly demanding nature of working life has contributed to mental health problems. Applying for a job is

generally still too difficult and rigid. The talent shortage has generally deepened, and in many sectors, the availability of skilled personnel is more of a challenge than ever. The aging of the Finnish population and complex employment mismatch issues create a situation in which international recruitment is essential. The need for lifelong learning requires a diverse supply of adult education and training.

With technological advances, there is also a desire to easily acquire services related to working life online. Companies increasingly operate in cooperative networks and expect their partners to provide flexible and scalable comprehensive solutions.

Due to these changes in the external operating environment and the company's expanded scope of operations, Barona revised its strategy in 2021. In 2023, the implementation of strategy reforms continued through numerous projects and structural reforms.

Barona's strategic focus areas are employment, learning, wellbeing and the solution business, which combines the competences of different units into a total solution for customers. As a service company, our vision and mission are to be a platform that creates positive influence and value between companies and individuals. People are our greatest resource – Barona strives to offer people personalised opportunities to learn, support their wellbeing and work.







### 3.3 BARONA'S CORE VALUES

Barona's management is value-based. This means that values are more than just words to us – they guide all our operations in practice.

### **RESPONSIBILITY**

Together, we promote an equal and ethical working life. We encourage transparent activities that support diversity and respect differences. In our opinion, everyone deserves to find their place in working life. Where necessary, we will tackle difficult issues and develop our own operations. Barona employees are known for their ability to take responsibility in working life.

### COURAGE

We encourage experiments and rolling up one's sleeves without fearing mistakes. We would rather be pioneers than laggards. We set ambitious goals and create a happier and fairer working life through them. We respect those who take responsibility and who come up with creative new things on their own initiative by utilising their own strengths.

### **FREEDOM**

We give people the freedom to be exactly who they are and to work in their preferred way by following the principles we have set together. With us, you do not need to hide the rest of your life, not your religion, not your hobbies or who you love. We believe in people and a working life that suits them.

### **WORKING TOGETHER**

We create a better working life by working together. We share our competence and expertise with our colleagues, employees and clients. We respect each other's opinions and strive to find solutions together. We make visible the work done together and give thanks for and celebrate successes together.

### **VALUES IN PRACTICE**

For us, responsibility means putting people first: treating people as individuals and taking into account their wellbeing and needs in all our operations. For us, courage means being critical of our own operations and establishing an open feedback and dialogue culture to initiate public discussion on difficult themes. Barona is a low-hierarchy organisation that believes in individuals' ability to succeed by working in the way they consider most appropriate. This creates a sense of freedom within the company. Cooperation means working together as a tight community and collective.





### 3.4 BARONA'S

### MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

Barona Oy's Board of Directors monitors the Group's operations and management. The Board of Directors decides on the Group's strategy, corporate restructuring and significant investments.

The Chair of the Board is **Taru Tujunen**. The other members of the Board are **Juko Hakala**, **Tommi Kajasoja**, and **Markus Oksa**, one of Barona's founders.

Barona's strategy guides the company's management system, which was revised in early 2024. Operational activities are managed by Managing Director Lassi Määttä, together with the extended management team: Juho-Pekka **Nojonen**, industry and construction business area; Juha Martiskainen, logistics and services business area; Harri Alamäki, professionals business area; Janne Lindfors, learning and wellbeing business area; Jussi Ropo, finances and responsibility; Marita Paajaste, personnel; Elina Koskela, global labour force; Henrik Rantala, private client experience; Mikael Nuotio, technologies and digitalisation; Venla Rapila, digital client experience; Petra Leinonen, procurement: **Anna Jalonen**, strategy.

Barona is organised so that it responds to regional and sector-specific special needs. Barona's tax strategy is reviewed annually under the supervision of the company's CFO.

Barona's responsibility work is managed as part of the company's operational activities. Barona's responsibility report is approved by Barona Oy's Board of Directors (read more about responsibility management in <u>section 5.1</u>).

### 3.5 RISK MANAGEMENT

Barona has a group-wide risk management policy that applies to the entire Bravedo company community. The policy covers risk management objectives, practices and responsibilities.

Barona's risk management is based on continuous development and improvement. Risk analysis is a constant process that includes risk identification and the assessment of risks' likelihood, impacts and significance.

Barona's Management Group is responsible for Barona Group's risk management. Barona's risk assessments and risk management measures are reviewed and approved annually by the Management Group. The company management follows the development of the business environment and risk situation actively and sets development goals.

Risk management is led by the CFO together with the risk management team. The risk management team consists of the safety manager, chief information and information security officer, security personnel, human resources management, chief legal officer, and communication and business management. The risk management team makes operational decisions concerning safety and security and maintains security-related documentation authorised by the Management Group. The risk management team meets quarterly or as required.

The overall assessment of risks, meaning the risk mapping of group-wide key areas or their updating, is carried out annually or more frequently if necessary, if significant changes are observed in the operating environment. Risks are divided into the following categories: strategic, operational and financial risks, and risks of damage. Risks are also analysed based on their likelihood and potential impact. Risk management has also been extended to the supply chain and service providers.

Barona's identified key business risks include the sector's cyclical sensitivity, availability of labour force, increased competition, data security, reputation and attractiveness as an employer, availability of electricity, increase in costs, the impact of exceptional events on clients' business and employee absences, and changes in legislation or collective agreements. The identified risks have been addressed, for example, by strategy reform, by increasing international recruitment and by developing the employer image. The use of risk management systems has been expanded and risk management workshops have been held with the business units. Personnel absences and wellbeing challenges have been addressed through prevention and maintenance of working ability. We have added back-up connections to our offices and created working methods for a physically decentralised business model. Data security processes have been developed (read more in section 3.7). Software and application development processes have been refined.

Barona's risk management is monitored electronically and regularly evaluated. Barona uses an electronic risk management system to keep the situational picture up to date. The company's development areas are determined based on risk analyses. Further actions are determined, responsible persons are named, and an initial target schedule is prepared.



# 3.6 BARONA AND INCREASINGLY

# INTERNATIONAL WORKING LIFE

Barona has several years of experience in international activities through its subsidiaries and operations as an expert in international recruitment. We play a key role in employing, training and integrating foreigners. In public discussion, we have brought up the necessity of international recruitment and thus influenced the general attitudes.

We are making the social welfare and health care, restaurant, manufacturing, construction and IT sectors more international. Our international recruitment efforts focus on the Philippines, where we have been recruiting for more than ten years in cooperation with the same local partner. Numerous companies have recruited their first foreign employees through Barona. Barona also recruits international talent to other Nordic countries. Barona's operations in Norway are based on foreign experts.

In 2023, we continued to develop the capabilities of Barona's international labour force. The operations are led by International Recruitment Director Elina Koskela. In 2023, preparations were started to harmonise international operations so that all work, competence and wellbeing services needed for international recruitment will be easily accessible from a single source.

We strengthened our recruitments from different countries without local partners. In the autumn, we launched a new website, baronanordic.com. During the year, we received around 250,000 applications from abroad, and we used advanced artificial intelligence in our recruitment platform to process them.

In 2023, Barona recruited around 700 talents from abroad to the Nordic region, of whom around 500 to Finland. Late in the year, we started our first recruitment activities in the retail sector from abroad. The language training of recruited care professionals is mainly provided by Barona's subsidiary Arffman, and when arriving in Finland, the nurses have sufficient Finnish language skills to start working.

Barona aims to recruit more than 6,000 people internationally responsibly and sustainably during 2025. Barona has received recognition for ethical recruitment from the UN's International Labour Organisation (ILO). We comply with the Employment Industry Finland guideline on the responsible recruitment of foreign employees. For example, we do not charge a recruitment fee to the employee, we see to the employee's sufficient skills and integration, and we ensure that all the employee's rights are respected.

Barona Group also includes Finland Relocation Services Oy, the most experienced relocation service company in Finland. The company's Managing Director is Elina Koskela. The services of this company will be part of the Barona Global business, which will also combine cultural coaching, EOR services, spouse programmes and vocational training.

In autumn 2023, we conducted an employer study to survey the attitudes and activities of Finnish employers in terms of international labour, focusing on recruiting and hiring international talent. The third survey showed that 42 per cent of Finnish employers have hired international employees. International recruitment challenges were seen to have eased compared to the previous year. The majority of companies (80%) recruit international talent for professional positions. Even though the talent shortage seemed to have eased temporarily, 32 per cent of respondents still estimated that the shortage would increase over the next year. Weak language skills were still seen as the biggest obstacle to hiring international experts.

### INTERNATIONAL LABOUR FORCE AND BARONA

- Barona employs more than 1,900 foreigners, who represent 109 nationalities.
- We help more than 8,000 foreigners develop their skills or find a job in Finland every year.
- We help 1,500 experts and their families relocate and settle annually.
- In 2023, we recruited employees from approximately 20 countries.
- Our goal is to boost international recruitment so that in 2025 we will recruit more than 6,000 employees from abroad to Finland.

IN 2023, BARONA
RECRUITED AROUND 700
EXPERTS FROM ABROAD TO
THE NORDIC COUNTRIES.



# 3.7 TECHNOLOGY AT THE CORE OF BARONA'S OPERATIONS

Barona utilises technology in a versatile manner. Digital solutions offer an opportunity to streamline processes, better take into account the individual needs of our employees, and improve coping and wellbeing at work.

Barona offers technological innovation as a service. Over 50 experts work in product development at Barona Group and we cooperate closely with other technology companies within the Bravedo company community.

We also meet our clients' needs by developing software. In 2023, we focused on developing a target group-specific service experience. We also continued the development of existing applications and solutions.

In 2023, Barona's technology unit expanded to include all of the Group's technology talents. At the same time, we continued to implement the objectives and ways of working in line with Barona's strategy. Barona's core competencies were redefined and career paths were planned to meet the new skills requirements in a sustainable manner. The company's technology architecture vision was updated and the project portfolio developed to support it has been actively used to prioritise projects. Barona's cloud-based IT

infrastructure has been strengthened and its goals have been clarified from the points of view of both sustainability and production reliability.

Developing personnel competence is an integral part of Barona's HR policy. The new joint group tech operational model enables seamless talent deployment across company boundaries. During 2023, experts worked on more than 15 projects, such as the deployment of the ERP system, the development of recruitment and employment management systems, various PoC and conceptualisation projects, and the development of the data platform. Almost 400 software development and maintenance tasks, a similar level to the previous year, were solved and carried out on average per month.

Barona has carried out numerous development projects by involving business experts in digital development. In 2023, the use of citizen developer tools continued, with new applications being built, among other things. for logistics and service centres. We developed the use of artificial intelligence with a Copilot project, for example.

During 2023, the Barona Hub project established itself as part of Barona's digital service offering. Barona Hub is an interface that enables the integration of Barona's and its clients' systems. This enables the customer to use just their own working shift planning system, which reduces manual work and increases efficiency.

### **DATA SECURITY**

Barona considers data security to be of paramount importance. The goal is uninterrupted business operations and continuity even in exceptional situations. Operations are based on a model of continuous preparedness and development. Barona uses Elisa's security operations centre (SOC), which monitors the data security of ICT environments and telecommunications links.

We use modern processes to constantly identify and prevent threats and breach attempts. We respond to data security incidents through our Major Incident Management (MIM) process and have clear operational models and responsibilities in case of data breaches.

It is important to us that every employee understands the importance of data

security. In 2023, we conducted an internal phishing exercise to analyse the employees' ability to respond to data security threats. The results of the exercise have been used to improve data security. We require every employee working at a Barona office, service centre or other location managed by Barona to complete the revised online training on information security and data protection every two years. Any additional training in the subject area is also mandatory for these employees.

We will continue to develop our data security capacity and risk management. The goal is to further develop the business units' continuity plans in case of exceptional situations and to ensure the security of application development.

# OPERATIONAL PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICES



### 4 OPERATIONAL PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICES

Barona's operational principles have been described in the Code of Conduct document, which is available <a href="here">here</a>.

# 4.1 BARONA'S CORPORATE CULTURE

We want to offer everyone a working community in which employees can be their true selves. At Barona, we are transparent and we trust and respect each other. Our company's values are freedom, responsibility, courage and working together.

Employees' experiences of Barona's corporate culture may vary, depending on whether they work at Barona's own office or on our clients' premises. Regardless of where we work, we are always promoting equality, diversity and non-discrimination in all our activities.

We trust the individual's ability to take responsibility and encourage individual initiative. We encourage employees to seek solutions to tackle both small and big challenges. We are agile and willing to change if the situation requires it.

At the same time, we encourage individuals to ask for advice and support from their team members, supervisors and other personnel. Barona has internal channels and groups through which employees can influence our operations

and decisions. We are not afraid to bring up our shortcomings and find solutions together.

Barona has a great responsibility as a major employer and employment agent. We monitor our employees' wellbeing and ability to work. We measure the job applicant and employee experience systematically and develop our services actively by, for example, investing in employee training and coaching services. We encourage supervisors to actively contribute to the establishment of an open, interactive and respectful corporate culture.

We are relaxed and genuine, we do what we promise, and we support each other whenever necessary. We are genuinely proud of our work and encourage development together. We want to continuously learn and improve both as a working community and as individuals. We believe that together, we can achieve more.

### 4.2 WELLBEING

People are at the heart of all Barona's activities. Comprehensive wellbeing is a prerequisite for working, being successful and developing one's competence.

We understand that wellbeing comprises both physical and mental health. We also provide support when events in private life cause a burden. We focus on preventive measures for the maintenance of our employees' ability to work and wellbeing.

Barona treats all job applicants as individuals. We strive to respond to their unique needs and wishes, and we offer them suitable work or other means of support to help them move forward in their career.

### 4.3 COOPERATION

A positive client experience is one of the focal points of our strategy. Positive client experiences cannot be achieved without responsible cooperation and transparency throughout the supply chain, including subcontractors.

We ensure that trade secrets and confidential information are processed without compromising the interests of Barona, our employees, job applicants, coaching service participants, clients or partners.

We value all our clients and strive to be worthy of their trust. We treat our clients in an equal and

fair manner. We sell, market and communicate our services in line with good business practices. We operate honestly and take anti-corruption measures. Barona also expects its stakeholders to implement an anti-corruption policy. We do not tolerate bribery or extortion in any form whatsoever: this also applies to offering, promising, making or receiving inappropriate payments to gain a business advantage or other inappropriate benefits.

We follow transparent and fair competitive practices. We do not condone any anticompetitive practices, including pricing agreements, cartels or the abuse of market position.

# 4.4 EQUALITY AND PARITY

Barona is committed to supporting and promoting equality and parity. Plans concerning diversity, equality and parity guide our operations.

Barona is committed to complying with the principles of the ILO <u>Declaration on Fundamental</u> <u>Principles and Rights at Work</u> and to respecting the universal human rights included in the UN's <u>Universal Declaration of Human Rights</u>.

Barona respects the value, privacy and freedom of religion and the conscience of each individual and does not accept any discrimination, harassment, intimidation or insults in any form in its operations or its supply chains.

Barona strives to reinforce parity through its activities in all of our personnel groups. In principle, we always aim to ensure that employees working under a client company are treated equally in relation to the client company's other personnel. We regularly assess the implementation of equality and non-discrimination.

### 4.5 DIVERSITY

Barona's recruitment process focuses on job applicants' competence and suitability for the position in question. We treat all applicants equally. We are aware of the issue of diversity and prejudices related to recruitment and take them into account in our recruitment process. We educate our employees to embrace and promote diversity and inclusion in their work.

Barona promotes diversity in working life by initiating public discussion on multiculturalism and the necessity of international recruitment.

# 4.6 PRIVACY AND DATA SECURITY

At Barona, we process personal data responsibly, carefully and systematically. Our communications

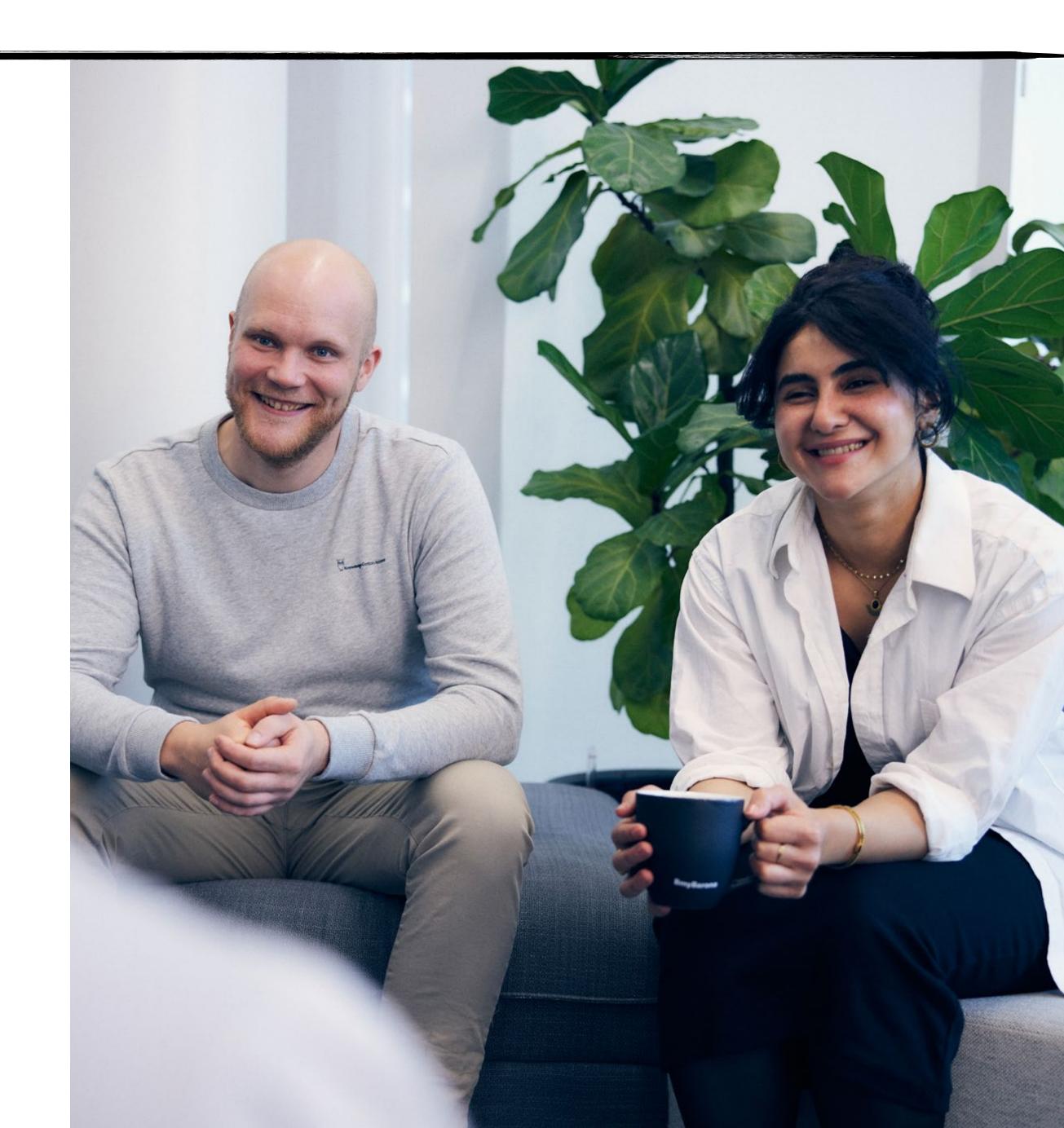
concerning the processing of personal data and customer rights are open and clear. We comply with the obligations set out in the EU's General Data Protection Regulation (2016/679).

We respect privacy and maintain a high standard of data security. We comply with data protection laws and good personal data processing practices in everything we do. We require the same from all stakeholders that process personal data on our behalf. We process personal data only for pre-determined legal purposes. We only collect the data necessary for the purpose, update the personal data regularly, and erase or minimise the personal data that we no longer need.

Our up-to-date privacy policy is always available to the data subjects, and we ensure that the rights of data subjects are enforced by relevant legislation. We maintain the competence of employees who process personal data by providing privacy protection and data security training on a regular basis.

Our service centres in Finland, Sweden, Spain and Poland have been certified by the international data security management system standard ISO 270001.

You can read Barona's privacy policy here: policies.barona.fi/main-policies/







### **5 RESPONSIBILITY AT BARONA**

# 5.1 MANAGEMENT OF RESPONSIBILITY

We are building a more human and responsible working life. Barona aims to be a pioneer of responsible business and social influence – our employees, clients and other stakeholders expect this of us. Responsibility is one of Barona's four core values. Values are more than just words to us – they guide all our operations. In the end, actions are more important than words.

We produce sustainable value through our business operations, and we take care of our financial, social and environmental responsibilities. This means that we, for example, implement appropriate risk management measures, secure the profitability of our activities, take into account the principles of sustainable development, and develop our social impact. Barona's operations promote sustainable development especially in the categories of economic and social responsibility.

Our social impact arises from our ability to provide employment, increase the total Finnish labour force, give meaning to individuals' lives through our work, educate and care for the wellbeing of our employees. Barona is one of the largest employers in Finland, and we take our responsibility seriously. We play a key role in the working life and daily life of thousands of people working in Finland. The development of individuals' employability and their wellbeing are at the core of Barona's strategy.

We are committed to complying with the principles of the <u>ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles</u> and Rights at Work. We respect the universal human rights included in the UN's <u>Universal</u> <u>Declaration of Human Rights</u>. In addition, we observe the World Employment Confederation's (WEC) <u>Code of Conduct</u> in our personnel resourcing services. In 2023, Barona committed itself to the UN <u>Global Compact</u> initiative.

### **MEASURING RESPONSIBILITY**

Barona's responsibility activities are managed by Barona's CFO, who reports to the Board of Directors together with the company's Management Group. The CFO gives the Board of Directors an annual responsibility report. The personnel responsible for employment relationships and HR matters plays a key role in the implementation and development of the company's personnel policy. The finance, communications and client understanding teams participate in the measurement, reporting and development of Barona's responsibility work. All Barona employees contribute to the implementation of responsibility work. Barona's responsibility work is based on active interaction and dialogue with clients, employees and work applicants.

We monitor the development of our reputation among the Finnish population through the national Reputation&Trust study. In 2023, Barona's reputation was rated 3.23 (scale 1–5), slightly up from the previous year (overall rating 3.22 in 2022). Barona's reputation is better than the private employment services sector average (3.16). Based on the Reputation&Trust survey, Barona's strongest areas are financial stability and stakeholder interaction. The most important areas of improvement are responsibility and the transparency of governance and administration.

We also use the Upright net impact analysis to assess Barona's net impact on society. Upright's model calculates companies' net impact by using a machine learning-based technology that processes data from millions of scientific articles and other data sources. This way, the model

measures the positive and negative impacts of organisations and makes the value creation of companies in all sectors comparable. According to Upright, Barona's overall rating is +59, or very positive. About 90% of the more than 10,000 companies worldwide modelled by Upright at the most detailed level have a weaker impact on the world.

We monitor the wellbeing of our employees through regular surveys. We develop our operations based on feedback.

BARONA'S RESPONSIBILITY
WORK IS BASED ON ACTIVE
INTERACTION AND DIALOGUE
WITH CLIENTS, EMPLOYEES
AND JOB APPLICANTS.



# 5.2 BARONA AS A SOCIAL INFLUENCER

Barona is an active social influencer and responsible reformer of working life. One of our key objectives is to give rise to public discussion on socially important topics. Barona brings up its stand on subjects such as international recruitment, reforming working life and job search, competence development and employee wellbeing clearly and systematically. In addition to CEO Lassi Määttä, many Barona experts have appeared in the media and spoken about various social topics at events and social media.

In 2023, we continued to carry out surveys on the development of working life. Työelämätutkimus 2023 focused on employees' own experiences of career, competence and wellbeing The survey showed that 38 per cent of employed Finns are considering changing workplaces. Based on the results, working life has become more demanding and employees need better support from employers in maintaining their own health and more flexible work-life balance.

Kansainvälinen työvoima ja tulevaisuus 2023 survey conducted in autumn 2023 focused

on questions related to recruiting and hiring international talent. The third survey showed that 42 per cent of Finnish employers have hired international employees. The talent shortage seemed to have eased temporarily, but 32 per cent of respondents still estimated that the shortage would increase over the next year. Both surveys were noted in the media and sparked debate on social media as well.

Barona also strives to renew working life by influencing political decision-making and by bringing corporate experiences to the attention of public authorities. In 2023, we met with members of parliament, civil servants and other key stakeholders. The most important themes were making international recruitment easier and increasing cooperation between the private and public sectors in employment services. We presented our experience and views in the setting of parliamentary election targets for the various parties and in the negotiations on the government programme. We also met with authorities preparing the TE24 reform, for example.

Barona also influences the development of the personnel services sector through the Employment Industry Finland.

# 5.3 RESPONSIBILITY THEMES AND OBJECTIVES

Barona's responsibility objectives are based on the company's view on the needs, wishes and expectations of work applicants, Barona employees, clients and societal stakeholders. The key responsibility themes and areas of improvement have been defined on the basis of Barona's process of constant development. This process consists of three stages: identification, prioritisation and constant development.

Barona is ready for the progress of CSRD legislation, and with this in mind, we conducted a double materiality assessment at the end of 2023. This analysis provided additional insight, among other things, about the wishes and requirements of our clients. Barona's goal is to adopt CSRD reporting already in the reporting for 2024.

Barona employees have been involved in setting responsibility targets. The company's human resources management played a key role in taking the wishes of Barona employees working with client companies into consideration. Information on the needs and expectations of clients was collected from employees who are in contact

with our clients. The wishes and needs of our key stakeholders were surveyed by consulting Barona employees who work with them and are part of various networks and representative bodies. Two service providers specialised in responsibility have consulted Barona and provided support in 2020–2023.

Barona understands ethical conduct and good employer and partner practices as perfect compliance with legislation and agreements. However, these days, we are also expected to take a more active role as a humane reformer of working life and social influencer.

Barona's responsibility objectives are divided into three areas: people, clients and stakeholders, and environment.



# BARONA IS A RESPONSIBLE SOLUTION.

### **THEME 1: PEOPLE**

### 1.1. PROMOTING DIVERSITY AND INCLUSIVITY AT BARONA AND IN SOCIETY

Objective 1: Developing diversity and inclusivity
Objective 2: Increasing international recruitment significantly

**Objective 3:** Allowing Barona employees to be themselvess

### 1.2 DEVELOPING BARONA EMPLOYEES' COMPETENCE

**Objective 1:** Investing in learning

**Objective 2:** Barona employees feel that the employer invests in the development of their competence

### 1.3. GUARANTEEING BARONA EMPLOYEES' WELL-BEING AS WORKING LIFE EVOLVES

**Objective 1:** Improving occupational safety

**Objective 2:** Preventing absences due to sickness

**Objective 3:** Supporting wellbeing

### **THEME 2: CLIENTS AND STAKEHOLDERS**

### 2.1 WE ARE A RELIABLE AND RESPONSIBLE PARTNER

Objective 1: Barona is an attractive employer
Objective 2: Barona is a reliable and reputable
partner

### 2.2 HELPING THE PUBLIC SECTOR EMPLOY AND TRAIN PEOPLE

**Objective:** Be the public sector's most comprehensive employment and training service partner

### **THEME 3: ENVIRONMENT**

# 3.1 REDUCING BARONA'S AND OUR SUPPLY CHAIN'S ENVIRONMENTAL LOAD

**Objective 1:** Carbon-neutral administration by 2025

**Objective 2:** Minimising the use of natural resources at our offices

**Objective 3:** Taking the environment into account in procurement decisions



# 5.4 COOPERATION, STAKEHOLDERS AND MEMBERSHIPS

Barona promotes the company strategy by influencing numerous communities, decision-making bodies and networks. We cooperate closely with various stakeholders.

Business clients expect us to provide flexible and responsible personnel services, increasingly comprehensive solution packages and insight into the future of working life. Public labour authorities and municipalities expect Barona to have the capacity to solve unemployed job-seekers challenges reliably and efficiently. Employee pension insurance companies need versatile services for employing rehabilitees and partially disabled people. Educational institutes consult us on the current competence and educational needs of the corporate sector. Our cooperation with government authorities is often related to streamlining job search and permit processes.

Solving the challenges of the labour market and businesses is only possible if multiple operators work together. This is why Barona uses its influence to connect different stakeholders. We bring different operators together and lay the foundation for extensive partnerships, through which new solution models can be developed.

Barona is a member of FIBS, the largest corporate responsibility network in the Nordic countries. We are committed to FIBS' <u>diversity pledge</u>. In other words, Barona is committed to promoting the diversity, inclusivity and parity of its working community.

Barona is the largest personnel services company in Finland. In 2023, we contributed to the development of the personnel services industry as a member of Employment Industry Finland. Employment Industry Finland's goal is to improve the operating conditions of member companies through advocacy and employment relationship counselling.

# BARONA USES ITS INFLUENCE TO CONNECT DIFFERENT STAKEHOLDERS.

When preparing the government programme after the parliamentary elections in 2023, HELA highlighted themes that are important for the

personnel sector, such as the role of private employment agency and smooth practices for international recruitment. In the reform of employment and economic development services, HELA highlighted the benefits of the partnership between the personnel sector and public employment services. In 2023, collective bargaining agreements were also negotiated in the personnel sector and the guidelines for the responsible recruitment of foreign personnel in the private employment services sector were renewed to support member companies' ethical and legal recruitment. In addition, HELA launched an educational partnership with the aim of highlighting cooperation opportunities between personnel companies and educational institutions.

In 2023, Barona was also an employer member of Service Sector Employers Palta, Technology Industry Employers of Finland, Technology Industries of Finland, the Confederation of Finnish Construction Industries, the Finnish Commerce Federation and Finnish Hospitality Association MaRa.

### RESPONSIBLE WORKPLACE PARTNERSHIP

We have joined forces with other operators to develop better working life for, for example, young people. We participate annually in Oikotie's Responsible Workplace campaign. We are also committed to the seven principles of a responsible workplace and summer job, which aim to provide young people with positive work experiences. The principles include good induction training and guidance, taking care of wellbeing, and immediate intervention in harassment.



### **STAKEHOLDER COOPERATION**

STAKEHOLDER	COOPERATION	MAIN TOPICS	BARONA'S MEASURES
Employees and job applicants	Job interviews Meetings Personnel and feedback surveys Website Social media Marketing and advertising Internal communication Work applicant and employee systems Training Events	Application process Employee rights Wellbeing at work Wages Occupational safety Fair and equal treatment Skill development	<ul> <li>We listen to work applicants and employees, and we develop our operations based on their feedback.</li> <li>We provide coaching and training services to develop one's competence.</li> <li>We take care of the wellbeing of employees.</li> </ul>
Clients	Meetings Client surveys and interviews Website Social media Marketing and advertising Client systems Events Reporting	Client needs Talent shortage solutions Service offering and availability Principles and procedures Responsibility Occupational safety Technological solutions Analytics	- We offer services and consultation to help our clients We develop our service portfolio based on needs and feedback.
Shareholders and investors	Meetings Investor communication Website Reporting	Finances, profitability and growth Company strategy Barona's social and societal effects Responsibility	- Active communication with shareholders and investors We report transparently on responsibility and its development.
Policy-makers	Meetings Communication	Employment legislation and regulations International recruitment Cooperation between the public and private sectors	- We influence decisions concerning working life by contacting decision-makers and bringing up the needs of business and solution proposals.
Labour market organisations	Meetings Working groups	Interpretation of labour legislation Collective agreements Employee rights Wages Fair treatment and equality Foreign and young employees	<ul> <li>As a member of Employment Industry Finland, we built better cooperation with public employment services and highlighted the need for an international workforce and a smooth permit process.</li> <li>We engage in active dialogue on various themes with employer and employee associations.</li> <li>We participated in Employment Industry Finland's board activities.</li> </ul>
Authorities	Meetings Working groups	Legislation Exchange of information Data security Data use Foreign labour force	- We cooperated with other operators to address practices and legislation concerning the foreign labour force.

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STAKEHOLDER	COOPERATION	MAIN TOPICS	BARONA'S MEASURES
Media	Enquiries Interviews Website	Labour market situation International recruitment Job seeking Barona's research	<ul> <li>We communicated and provided information about Barona and the development of the labour market.</li> <li>We responded to contact and interview requests.</li> <li>We influenced public debate on the development of working life.</li> <li>We published studies surveying the working population, young people and the use of the international labour force.</li> </ul>
Educational institutions and training partners	Meetings Working groups Reporting	Cooperation Companies' competence needs Partnerships Apprenticeships	<ul> <li>We help educational institutions develop their course selection to meet the needs of companies.</li> <li>We help educational institutions reach potential students and employees.</li> <li>We connect educational institutions with companies and help establish partnerships.</li> </ul>
Centres for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment and Employment (TE) services	Meetings Communication Website	Employment Solving regional incidents Language training for immigrants Training programmes for recruitment Joint development	<ul> <li>We met thousands of work applicants and coached and trained them for new careers.</li> <li>We organised language and integration training for foreign work applicants.</li> <li>We found work and training opportunities for immigrants.</li> </ul>
Municipalities and municipal federations	Meetings Communication Website Reporting	Employment Cooperation Talent shortage solutions Employment partnerships	<ul> <li>We helped immigrants become active, multilingual residents of their municipality.</li> <li>We carried out result-based employment cooperation with several municipalities.</li> <li>We participated in research projects by giving interviews to scholars, among other things.</li> </ul>
Universities and research community	Meetings Interviews	Working life research	
Employee pension insurance companies	Meetings Website Reporting	Rehabilitation Ability to work Employment Training Language training as part of rehabilitation	<ul> <li>In 2023, we provided vocational rehabilitation services to all employment pension companies in Finland.</li> <li>As a service provider, we developed operational models for vocational rehabilitation and ways to measure the effectiveness of services.</li> </ul>
Organisations	Meetings Website	Partnerships Development of working life	- We are a member of the corporate responsibility network FIBS ry We were one of the main sponsors of Economy and Youth TAT's Yrityskylä concept in 2017–2023.

### **BARONA GROUP MEMBERSHIPS IN 2023**

**Avantin Kehitys** 

Central Finland Chamber of Commerce

Confederation of Finnish Construction Industries RT, Uusimaa

**Employment Industry Finland** 

**European Employment Services EURES** 

European Relocation Association EuRA

FEX Finnish Executive Search Firms' Association

Finnish Association for Human Resource Management

Finnish Association of Purchasing and Logistics LOGY

Finnish Business & Society FIBS

Finnish Commerce Federation

Finnish Hospitality Association MaRa

Finnish Maintenance Society Promaint ry

FinNuclear

Helsinki Region Chamber of Commerce

Hospitality Insiders Club

Häme Chamber of Commerce

Infra

**INFRA Uusimaa** 

IT Service Management Forum itSMF Finland

Kajaanin Kauppiasyhdistys

Kasvuryhmä

Lahti Chamber of Commerce

Lapland Chamber of Commerce

Lifelong learning Group (Centre for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment, North Ostrobothnia)

Ostrobothnia and South Ostrobothnia Chamber of Commerce

Oulu Chamber of Commerce

Professional Kitchen Experts' Association

Rauma Chamber of Commerce

Ruka-Kuusamo Tourist Association

Satakunta Chamber of Commerce

Service Sector Employers Palta

Software Finland

South Karelia Chamber of Commerce

Suomen Liikemies-Yhdistys

Suomen Taloushallintoliitto

Talonrakennusteollisuus

Tampere Chamber of Commerce

Technology Industries of Finland

Technology Industry Employers of Finland

Tieke Finnish Information Society Development Centre

Turku Chamber of Commerce

Työtehoseura

Visit Levi

Wave Customer Service Network







### RESPONSIBILITY OBJECTIVES AND REALISATION OF THE PEOPLE THEME IN 2023

### 11 Promoting diversity and inclusivity at Barona and in society

1.1 Promoting diversity and inclusivity at Barona and in society			Realised In progress Not realised New indicator		
OBJECTIVE	INDICATOR	ОИТСОМЕ	ADDITIONAL INFORMATION		
Objective 1: Developing diversity and inclusivity	INDICATOR: 90% of Barona's recruiters have completed the diversity and inclusivity training by the end of 2023		Of Barona's 93 recruiters, 79, or approximately 83%, completed DEI training by the end of 2023.		
Objective 2: Increasing international recruitment significantly	INDICATOR 1: 1,000 employees recruited from abroad in 2023		We recruited approximately 700 employees from abroad in 2023.		
	INDICATOR 2: 6,000 employees recruited from abroad in 2025		The target level has been lowered from 8,000 to 6,000 due to changes in the labour market situation in 2022–2024 caused by the weaker economic cycle.		
Objective 3: Allowing Barona employees to be themselves	INDICATOR 1: The average score for the "I am appreciated as a person by my working community" statement in the personnel survey for employees working for our clients exceeds 4.0 annually		The grade average in 2023 was 4.1.		
	INDICATOR 2: The average score for the "I can be myself in our working community" statement in the personnel survey for employees working at Barona offices or units led by Barona exceeds 4.0 annually		The grade average in 2023 was 4.5.		



### 1.2 Developing Barona employees' competence

OBJECTIVE	INDICATOR		ОИТСОМЕ	ADDITIONAL INFORMATION
Objective 1: Investing in learning	INDICATOR:	More than 8,000 trainings attended in the bLearning e-learning environment every year.		In 2023, Barona employees attended 9,591 trainings through Barona's own online learning environment, which is approximately 16% more than in the previous year.
Objective 2: Barona employees feel that the employer invests in the development of their competence	INDICATOR:	The rating of the "Learning and development" section of the extensive personnel survey is no less than 4.0 (2021: 4.0)		The grade average in 2023 was 4.1.

Realised

Not realised

New indicator

### 1.3. Guaranteeing Barona employees' well-being as working life evolves

OBJECTIVE	INDICATOR	OUTCOME	ADDITIONAL INFORMATION
Objective 1: Improving occupational safety	INDICATOR 1: Reducing the number of occupational accidents involving our personnel by 10% by the end of 2023 compared to 2021 verrattuna		Year 2021: 538 occupational injuries Year 2023: 486 occupational injuries Development 2021-2023: -10%
	INDICATOR 2: The lost-time injury frequency (LTI4) of personnel working for our clients is below 12 annually.		The accident rate in 2023 was 6.5, down 56% compared to the previous year.
	INDICATOR 3: In 2024, we will reduce the number of accidents among employees working at our client's premises by 20%.		
Objective 2: Preventing absences due to sickness	INDICATOR 1: Annual reduction of absences due to mental health problems until 2025		Mental health absences increased by 4% in 2023. The situation is under special monitoring and, for example, the well-being team supports the employees.
	INDICATOR 2: Annual reduction of absences due to musculoskeletal diseases until 2025		In 2023, absences due to musculoskeletal disorders decreased by approximately 20% compared to the previous year.
Objective 3: Supporting wellbeing	INDICATOR: The grade average for responses to the employee survey's questions "I am satisfied with Barona's wellbeing and occupational health services" is over 4.0 annually		The grade average in 2023 was 3.7.



### 6 RESPONSIBILITY FOR PEOPLE

# 6.1 BARONA AS AN EMPLOYER AND PATH TO WORKING LIFE

Barona offers a path to working life. We are one of Finland's largest employers with 7,885 employees (FTE) in 2023. During the year, we employed 22,348 different people. Approximately 1,000 people work at Barona's own offices. The average duration of employment relationships (excluding temporary employees) in 2023 was 25.3 months, which is 3.9 months more than in 2022 (the reporting method changed so that seamlessly successive employments will be counted as continuous employment going forward. The figures reported are comparable).

A substantial share of our personnel comprises young people who might be anxious about being in working life and finding their first job. We employ a significant number of young people aged under 30 every year. In 2023, they made up approximately 48 per cent of our entire personnel. Many people find their first job in their own field through Barona. In 2023, approximately 7 per cent of our personnel were younger than 20.

Barona also encourages employers to hire employees nearing the end of their careers. Working life can continue for a long time if there are meaningful workplaces matching one's own pace. In 2023, 12 per cent of Barona's total personnel were over the age of 50, and almost 500 of them were over the age of 60.

Barona has ensured, in accordance with the principles of ILO, that it does not, in its own operations or supply chains, use or participate in the use of forced labour or hire persons under the legal working age. We comply with legislation and rules concerning the employment of young people. Persons under 18 are not hired for work that endangers their physical or mental development. In fields where we employ persons under 18, we pay special attention to the assigned tasks and working hours, for example.

Working life is always evolving and employers' competence needs change rapidly. Nobody can avoid learning new skills during their career.

Barona is an important adult education provider.

Every year, we organise numerous recruitment training programmes (read more in section 6.3) and apprenticeships that take a practical approach to teaching individuals skills in demand

in the labour market and helping them find employment. In total, more than 14,000 experts participated in Barona's training programmes in 2023.

Barona is a significant employer and trainer of foreign workers. Our goal is to boost international recruitment so that in 2025 we will recruit more than 6,000 employees from abroad to Finland. Barona has more than a decade's experience in ethical international recruitment, and our activities have been recognised by the International Labour Organisation ILO.

Our subsidiary Arffman is the largest immigrant integration training service provider in Finland. Arffman's coaching and training services help more than 5,000 people with immigrant background develop their competence and working life skills every year.

All of our employees have access to the CaPS employee benefit programme.

During 2023, we developed reporting on our personnel and improved our business intelligence capabilities. The measurement, analysis and continuous improvement of the personnel

experience was developed using the Eletive tool, which also provides benchmarking data concerning other employers. We have regularly measured and analysed the employee experience and developed our operations and services for different employee groups based on this information. We have significantly increased our employee communication.

We trained our personnel in the amendments to labour legislation. We systematically increased awareness of the topics of equal and fair treatment in recruitment and employment management. We have held regular dialogues as required by the Act on Cooperation within Undertakings and have drawn up plans for the development of the working community.



#### **INDIVIDUAL SUPPORT AND ASSISTANCE**

We help people at different stages of life and transition points when they need external support to find work. We are favourably disposed towards different working-time arrangements to coordinate Barona employees' work and family life.

Working life can be demanding and can be a strain on one's personal capacity. Every employer must ensure the wellbeing of their employees. For example, the prevention of the social exclusion of young people and mental health support is of paramount importance. Read more about Barona's work ability services in section 6.4.

Fast and flexible arrival is an important part of international recruitment. The family of a recruited worker is also considered and helped in the process. Barona helps 1,500 experts and their families relocate and settle annually. The easier it is to offer work and services to an entire family, the higher the likelihood of the recruited employee staying in Finland for a long period or permanently.

Barona is committed to addressing all potential shortcomings. Therefore, it is important that the threshold to bring up issues and challenges is low. In accordance with our cultural promise, we encourage each of our employees to bring up any perceived shortcomings.

Our employees have the opportunity to provide feedback through the employee survey twice a year. In addition, Barona adopted an anonymous whistleblowing channel in 2023. All suspicions of misconduct are taken seriously and treated confidentially: the handling and recording of reports is secure and the whistleblower is protected in accordance with the Whistleblower Act. The reports are handled confidentially by three persons appointed by the Board of Directors of the Company, whose duties include maintaining whistleblower protection.

People other than employees can also submit reports: <a href="https://barona.fi/en/barona/">https://barona.fi/en/barona/</a> report-suspected-misconduct

#### "FROM FAMILY LEAVE TO WORKING LIFE" TRAININGS

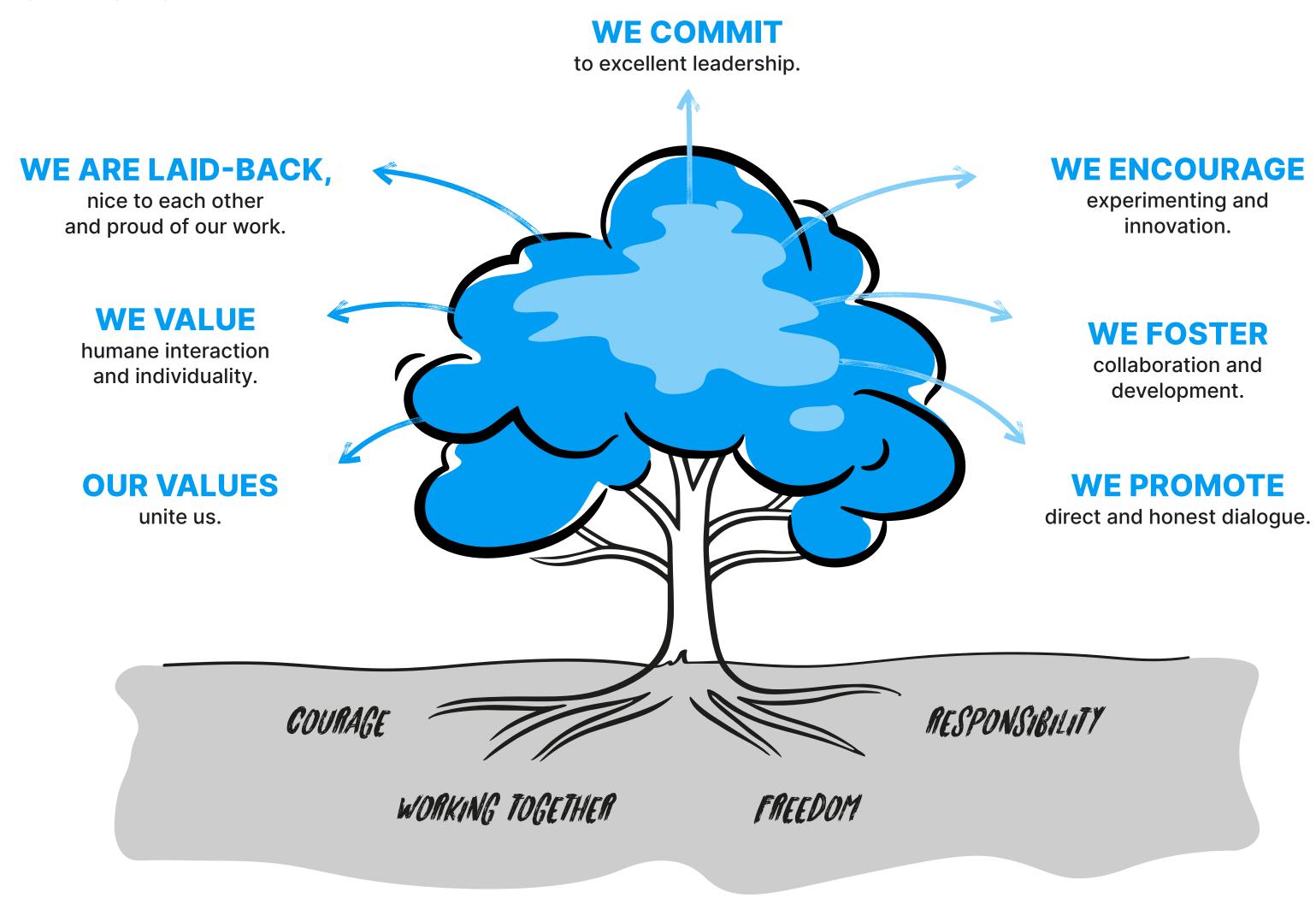
Arffman's "From family leave to working life" trainings, which started in 2021, were a success. The aim was to provide support for parents who were planning to return from family leave to work. The service included a customised three-month coaching period and a follow-up meeting. The training was carried out to suit the needs of the families: children were allowed to attend the meetings and remote participation was also possible.

The project reached more than 2,300 people nationwide and thus helped many stay-at-home mothers to return to the labour market and life. More than 100 Ukrainians also participated in the service; they were specifically offered support in understanding the various processes of public administration, job-seeking in Finland and peer support through the group. Approximately 85 per cent of the participants contributed to their employment during the training

#### **ADDITIONAL SUPPORT FOR THOSE AGED OVER 55**

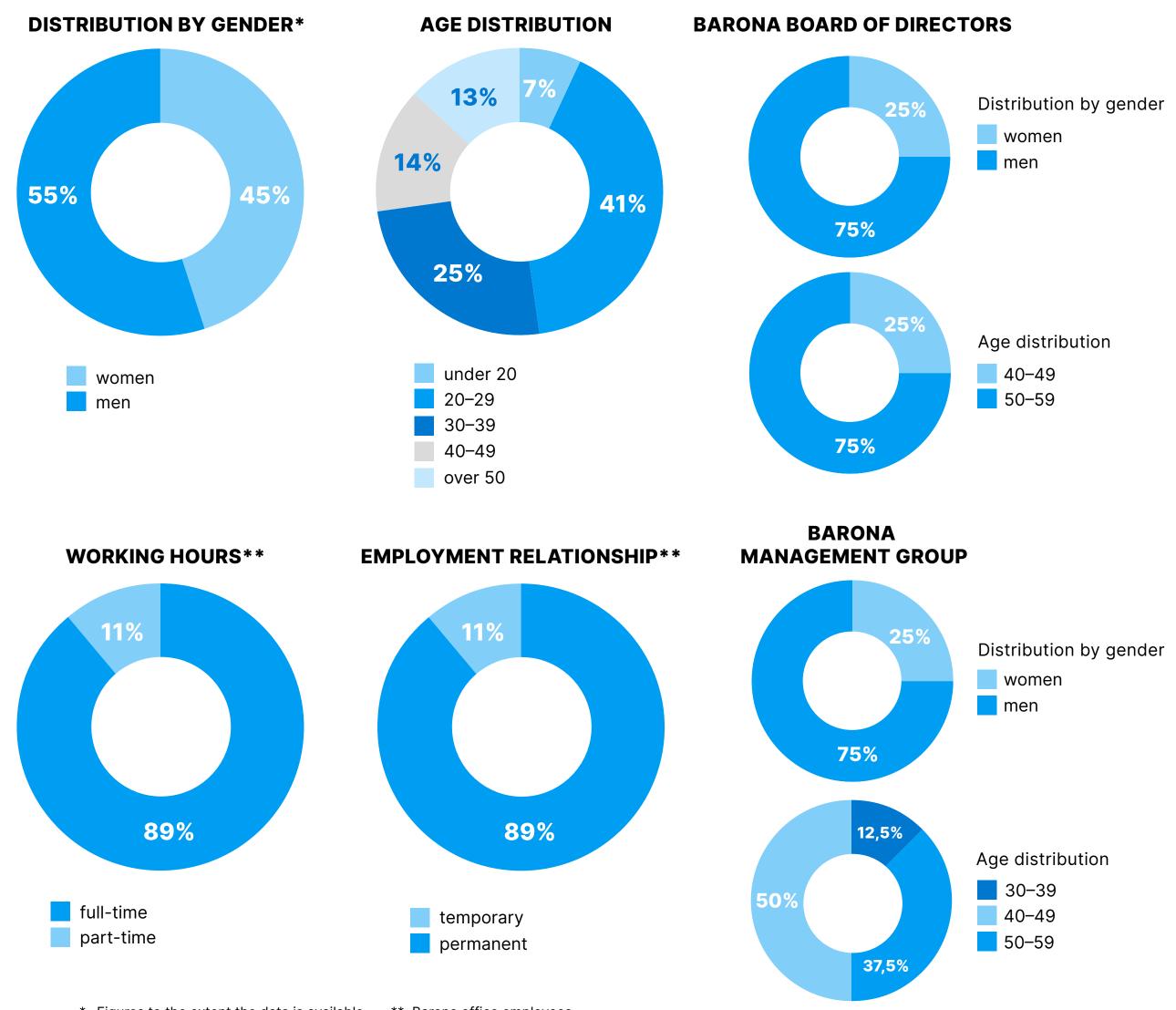
At the beginning of 2023, an expansion of the act on change security entered into force. It applies to employees over the age of 55 who have been dismissed for financial or production-related reasons. By law, these individuals may be entitled to receive separate change security training. In 2023, Saranen offered individualised additional training to more than 50 people aged 55 and over in marketing, programming, financial administration and many other topics. Satisfaction with the service was very high among the participants (9.1/10).

## BARONA CORPORATE CULTURE PROMISE TREE





## PERSONNEL DISTRIBUTION AT BARONA



### **BARONA GROUP COMPANY:**

## **SARANEN CONSULTING OY**

- Finland's leading recruitment, training and career service company.
- Trains over 2,000 job applicants every year.
- Organises over 50 training programmes annually with an employment rate of over 80%.
- Employs approximately 80 people in 8 locations.
- In 2023, the company's revenue was EUR 10.7 million.
- Read more: saranen.fi

#### **BARONA GROUP COMPANY:**

## **TALENTGATE**

- A recruitment training and training company specialised in commercial specialist roles.
- Helps more than 200 people find employment every year.
- Organises approximately 20 training programmes annually with an employment rate of almost 80%.
- Employs approximately 20 people in six locations.
- In 2023, the company's revenue was EUR 2 million.
- Read more: talentgate.fi

<sup>\*\*</sup> Barona office employees



# 6.2 RESPONSIBLE JOB APPLICANT AND

## **EMPLOYEE EXPERIENCE**

At Barona, we want to make it easier to apply for and find a job, and as a large employer, we have a significant responsibility and an opportunity to make a difference. Therefore, a specific focus area of Barona's strategy is the development of the job applicant and employee experience, in which we also invested in 2023.

Our aim is to streamline job-seeking for both Finnish and foreign job applicants, accelerate employment, support the development of our employees' competence and wellbeing during employment, and ensure the continuity of employment relationships.

During 2023, we increased contacts and communications with job applicants. For example, new job and training opportunities are regularly communicated to job applicants. We created the completely new <a href="baronanordic.com">baronanordic.com</a> platform for foreign job applicants (read more in <a href="section">section</a> 2.2). We have developed job-seeking analytics to better understand the needs and wishes of job applicants. We have streamlined the recruitment process with new digital solutions and organisational changes. We have also improved the accessibility of our training portfolio.

These changes will make it even easier to find a job. In addition, job applicants have an even better chance of finding interesting training and job opportunities that they initially missed. The change can be seen, for example, in that in early 2024, more than 200 job applicants were employed each month in a position they had not initially applied for themselves.

With regard to employee experience, we have developed the content and functionalities of the digital MyBarona employee platform. Via MyBarona, employees are given suggestions or they can search for suitable training and career development opportunities themselves. We revised the onboarding procedures for new employees. In addition, we set up a new wellbeing team (read more in <a href="mailto:section 2.2">section 2.2</a>) and a new unit for general employment-related questions. Employees can contact it easily and quickly via e-mail, phone or chat channel.

The number of job applications continued to increase in 2023. We received more than 506,000 job applications (91% more than in 2022) from over 225,000 applicants. During the year, we conducted 26,523 job interviews and 12,054 of those interviewed found employment.

We regularly measure and monitor job applicants' experiences of the job-seeking process in order to develop our conduct and address any issues that may occur. In 2023, approximately 5,800 job applicants provided feedback. Job applicants'

average rating for their interview experience was 9.2 (scale 0–10) and the interviewers' average was 9.5. There was little change in the results compared to last year, showing that the job applicants are very satisfied with the job application process.

We also systematically monitor our employees' experiences. The satisfaction of our employees working with our clients remained unchanged in 2023. The net promoter score (eNPS) for the last measurement period of the year was +31. The net promoter score among employees working in Barona offices decreased significantly (13 points) compared to the previous year due to uncertainty caused by e.g. organisational changes. In the last measurement in 2023, it was +24, which is still a good level.

In 2023, we launched a whistleblowing channel at Barona. During 2023, there was one contact via the channel, which we handled in accordance with our internal process.

MORE THAN 200 JOB APPLICANTS ARE EMPLOYED EACH MONTH IN A POSITION THEY HAD NOT INITIALLY APPLIED FOR THEMSELVES.

## **BARONA GROUP COMPANY:**

## FINLAND RELOCATION SERVICES

- Founded in 1994, the most experienced relocation service company in Finland.
- Operates through an international partner network in more than 500 locations.
- Has helped over 32,000 people to relocate to Finland or from Finland to other countries.
- Approximately 20 employees.
- In 2023, the company's revenue was EUR 2.2 million.
- Read more: finlandrelocation.com



# 6.3 COMPETENCE DEVELOPMENT

The rapid development of the labour market, different industries and working life in general set high demands for the traditional education system. In today's world, the idea of getting an education immediately after comprehensive school and then being ready to work until retirement is impossible for most people. More and more people are no longer interested in a traditional career path: According to Barona's Working Life Survey, 44 per cent of Finnish workers believe that they will change careers completely. More than three out of four expect the employer to help update their competences.

As a result of the changes in the competence needs of employers and individuals' motives, career-long training and competence development are necessary and natural measures to be taken. In the competence development of organisations, the focus has shifted to supporting the implementation of change and building new competencies for the current personnel. Competence development can mean long degree study programmes, precise training of a few months, crash courses or personal training services. Many people learn practically at work with a hands-on approach. All these services are needed to ensure the labour market stays flexible and adaptable.

Barona companies offer very diverse learning solutions. In 2023, we helped more than 14,500 people in total to develop their professional competences. This was 17 per cent more than the previous year.

We continuously work together with public labour authorities to organise recruitment training programmes across Finland. These training programmes help unemployed job-seekers and those in difficult job-seeking situations to update their skills to meet the needs of the labour market and employers, and to find employment. In 2023, we organised over 50 recruitment training programmes involving close to 850 job applicants. Through the training courses, employees were employed in a wide range of roles in the IT, construction, logistics, finance and insurance, administration and support services, accommodation and catering, and retail sectors.

IN 2023, BARONA
COMPANIES HELPED
14.591 PEOPLE TO DEVELOP
THEIR COMPETENCES
FOR WORKING LIFE.

Many employers find apprenticeships a great way to hire individuals who want to develop their skills alongside work or train for a new profession. For an individual, apprenticeship provides new training and a job easily in the same package. In 2023, Barona organised 350 apprenticeships in e.g. the industrial, restaurant, construction, logistics, social and health care and retail sectors.

For example, in 2023, we implemented integration training that includes studying the Finnish language and working life skills for almost 4,200 immigrants. In addition, we provided training in the social and health care sector for almost 500 people. More than 1,000 people participated in coaching and training in various change situations.

We organise intensive coaching and quick induction training in the restaurant sector, attended by approximately 450 employees in 2023. The free online training for customer service employees was completed by approximately 250 people in 2023.

Barona employees are also enthusiastic to learn new things independently. In 2023, Barona employees attended 9,591 training courses via Barona's proprietary online learning platform, which is around 16 per cent more than the previous year.



## DEVELOPING THE COMPETENCES OF EMPLOYEES WORKING AT BARONA'S OFFICES

Skilled employees are a prerequisite for all business success, and Barona offers equal opportunities for learning and competence development. Most of the new skills are learned in day-to-day work and by applying the shared knowledge of the working community. In addition, learning takes place in various training courses.

Those working at Barona's offices have access to the Barona Academy, which include various courses for different target groups. Some of the courses are offered on the digital learning platform bLearning.

Competence development focuses on the following themes, from which employees can also choose according to their job function and area of responsibility:

- General training: Processing of personal data, security, Barona knowledge, office software, cooperation skills, self-management skills, working life and meta-skills
- Management, supervisory work, incl. work ability management
- Employment management and HR
- Recruitment
- Sales
- Payroll administration
- Customer service
- Economy
- Technology, data and analytics
- Language skills, cultural understanding and diversity, equality and inclusion (DEI)

In 2023, one of the key joint goals at Barona was to develop the diversity skills of Barona personnel. We organised a DEI training for everyone working in Barona offices with the help of a diversity expert. The training was held at four different times and in both Finnish and English so that everyone had the opportunity to participate. More than 550 Barona employees completed the DEI training in 2023.

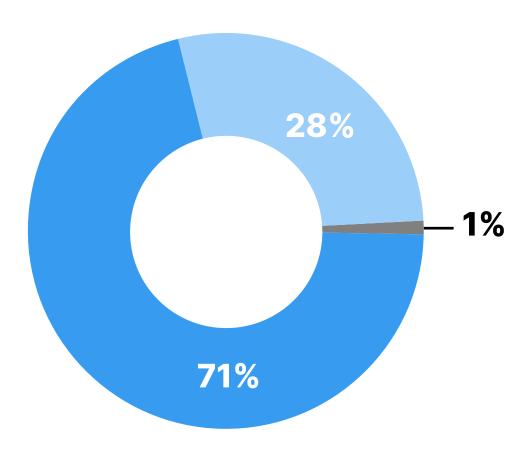
Our company's capacity for learning to learn and strategic competence management was increased by bringing together a group for learning and competence development. This network includes approximately more than 20 members, representing a diverse range of business units and work roles.

We redesigned the supervisor training, which was conducted in Finnish and English. We created a digital learning path for both supervisors and recruiters. We started to use the translation feature of the EasyGenerator online training tool, translating courses into English and Swedish. We strengthened the language skills of the personnel with the Let's talk in English with colleagues programme, where English is learned in a practical way together with a peer, i.e. a colleague. The communication skills of Barona employees were developed through two communication training courses for key personnel.

A total of 3,781 courses were completed through our e-learning platform in 2023 by those working in Barona offices. This is about 51 per cent more than last year.

During 2024, Barona Academy will be redesigned to better meet the needs of our business operations and support the execution of our strategy.

## LEARNING BY BARONA OFFICE EMPLOYEES



A total of 3,781 trainings completed

Self-study eLearning courses
Virtual remote training
Classroom training

MORE THAN 550 BARONA EMPLOYEES COMPLETED DIVERSITY TRAINING IN 2023.



## 6.4 WELLBEING

The ever-changing nature and complexity of working life put pressure on people. This shows in the growing incidence of mental health issues, which have become the most common reason for incapacity for work among young people in Finland. It is increasingly important that employers support their employees' overall wellbeing and ensure that individuals are assigned suitable tasks. At Barona, work ability management and promotion of employees' overall wellbeing have been strategic choices laying the foundation for the company's future.

Barona's wellbeing and work ability management system consists of active cooperation between the human resources department, occupational health care, insurance companies and supervisors, as well as the entire personnel's commitment to the common operational models and objectives. The development of wellbeing and ability to work is managed centrally at the group level, taking into account the special characteristics of each business area: for example, the annually updated occupational health care plan is prepared at both the strategic and operational levels.

All Barona employees have access to occupational health care services, which include statutory occupational health care services and diverse

medical treatment services. If an employee's ability to work is endangered by a factor other than their health, Barona may offer personalised solutions to support the employee's ability to work.

We are actively taking care of our employees' wellbeing and safety by promoting their physical and mental health and safety through comprehensive and preventive work ability management. Regardless of the nature and length of their employment, Barona office employees and employees working in other locations or with client companies are covered by our work ability management and occupational health and safety.

We aim to increase the number of days our employees are fit for work by investing in preventive measures. The idea behind the development of Barona's work ability management is that work ability management means all management of people.

We are focusing on the prevention of mental health problems and musculoskeletal conditions because they are the most common reasons for sickness absences. We are developing our preventive measures and low-threshold services in close cooperation with our occupational health care provider and authorised pension companies and accident insurance companies.

In 2023, absences due to musculoskeletal diseases decreased significantly, by approximately 20% compared to the previous year. Mental health-related absences, on the other hand, increased by four per cent in 2023. Special attention will be paid to factors related to mental wellbeing, including the new well-being team that provides preventive support and helps employees with both work and leisure challenges.

In 2023, 19 work disability pensions and five partial disability pensions were granted to Barona employees. Compared to the previous year, the number of both invalidity pensions and partial invalidity pensions decreased slightly.

## **CONCRETE SOLUTIONS**

Barona wants to help solve the challenges of working life through concrete measures. Barona was the first private employment agency to be awarded the Hyvän mielen työpaikka label. We are also a founding member of the Mielenturvaa network. The network challenges companies to develop mental health services and make mental health visible at the workplace.

As a responsibility act, we want to support the social networking of our employees and make sure that no one is left alone. Since autumn 2023, all of our employees have been offered the option

to use the Frendie app (read more in <u>section 2.2</u>) to support employee wellbeing. With the Frendie collaboration, we aim to combat the loneliness experienced by our employees, which research shows has been on the rise in recent years.

We have been eager to promote the physical wellbeing of our office and service centre employees for a long time. The Break Pro office workout application is in use at our offices. It contains versatile exercises encouraging employees to increase the amount of exercise in their daily lives. The application allows employees to do also mindfulness or voice care exercises during breaks.

#### **VOCATIONAL PENSION REHABILITATION**

Keeping everyone in working life in accordance with their own ability to work is a key societal task that has significant impacts on individual wellbeing and livelihood. Every year, Barona supports approximately 1,700 persons at the turning points of their lives and careers by organising vocational rehabilitation and coaching services.

During vocational rehabilitation, we prepare a plan for private customers, helping them find employment matching their working capacity through a work trial, work training or education. In 2023, we drafted a plan matching their individual health for 86 per cent of the rehabilitation customers. No fewer than half of our work trial clients are directly employed after the trial.

The objective of vocational rehabilitation is to find an individual work that suits their current health to ensure that they continue working despite their disease or disability. Although utilising an individual's existing competence and work experience is always the starting point of vocational rehabilitation, sometimes it is necessary to acquire new skills and, for example, retrain the client for a new profession.

Our career coaches help our clients form unique career paths that ensure that the client's competence and health match the needs of the labour market. More and more people find themselves in rehabilitation due to mental health issues. In this case, a career coach finds them work that is in line with the client's working capacity in terms of stress and content, and supports the client by encouraging and motivating them.

In 2023, we started a significant partnership for vocational rehabilitation with Keva. As a result of this cooperation, the largest professional sector from which our vocational rehabilitation clients come changed from sales to social and educational functions.

27 per cent of our rehabilitation clients were under 40 years of age and 55 per cent under 50 years of age. They still have a significant career ahead and something to give in their working lives. According to the calculations, the costs of vocational rehabilitation are covered after one year of working. In 2023, no less than 48 per cent of Barona's rehabilitation clients were employed 12 months after the end of the coaching. For those over the age of 50, the figure is nearly the same, 47 per cent.

Our career coaches engage in valuable advocacy work to erase the stigmas related to different levels of work ability. We want to hear people's personal views of their working and functional capacity and understand how their disease or disability affects their life. This enables us to remove the obstacles blocking their career options.

Vocational rehabilitation is beneficial to individuals, employer companies and society. Finding suitable work is rehabilitative, and it promotes inclusivity and enables meaningful participation in society. In addition, the continuation of an individual's career improves their opportunities to make a living and accumulate a pension.





# 6.5 OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY

Occupational health and safety are top priorities for a good employer. We find it of paramount importance that our employees feel safe and comfortable at work and that there are no accidents.

Barona has implemented a safety management model to protect people, property, information, reputation and the environment. The company's safety-related activities are managed by the safety manager and the business management team. The safety management model is a tripartite system, in which the operational management works together with the risk management team to apply measures to ensure a safe working environment. The risk management team guides safety-related measures and procurements, and prepares and maintains safety-related documentation. The company management monitors the development of safety and sets objectives for the company's safety activities.

We aim to commit every Barona employee to making Barona a safe and healthy working environment. We require our employees to report any shortcomings, threats or acts of misconduct they observe to their supervisor or the person in charge. Our long-term objective is to have zero accidents at Barona.

Any near incidents related to occupational safety and health are documented and investigated. We require our clients and partners to assess their safety and health risks on a regular basis. This way, we can support our employees' occupational safety and wellbeing together. We also engage in safety work with authorities. We utilise technology in guaranteeing and developing occupational safety: we use it to investigate occupational accidents that have occurred and to analyse the accidents and the root causes of the incidents.

Barona has paid special attention to the physical and psychological stress factors of work and their management. The management of the work ability and safety of our office employees emphasises psychosocial stress factors. For example, we strive to prevent burnout and other mental health problems. The management of employees working in the construction, industrial, logistics and hotel and restaurant sectors emphasises the prevention and management of physical risks and accidents, for example, upper and lower limb injuries.

In 2023, there were zero occupational accidents at Barona's offices. The situation was the same in 2022. There were five accident on the way to or from work, which was four more than in 2022.

In 2023, there was one serious occupational accident among the employees working with a client company. There were no serious accidents in the previous year. In 2023, the LTIR rate of serious accidents was therefore 0.08 (per one million hours worked). Including minor accidents,

the total number of occupational accidents among those working with client companies was 486. In the previous year, 2022, there were 585 such accidents, meaning that employment accidents decreased by approximately 22 per cent.

In 2023, the accident rate (LTIR, accidents per one million working hours) of employees working with a client company was 6.5. In 2022, the accident rate was 14.9, so the rate decreased by some 56 per cent. There were 143 accidents on the way to or from work among the employees working with a client company in 2023, while they numbered 184 in 2022.

We succeeded in meeting the occupational safety targets set for us. The reasons for this success include increasing cooperation between client companies and employees and developing internal competence.

By 2024, we aim to reduce the number of accidents by 20 per cent and the accident frequency rate by 30 per cent. In addition, we will allocate additional personnel resources to manage occupational safety issues.

# 6.6 WAGES AND REWARDS

Barona uses systematic processes and continuous maintenance of competence to ensure that wages are paid correctly and on time in accordance with the applicable collective agreements and other regulations. The amount of wages is no less than what has been laid out in the applicable collective agreement. Local bargaining is applied to employees working with a client company if it is part of the collective agreement. We have implemented constant quality control and development measures to monitor our calculation of wages.

Barona aims to ensure that one's wage and any pay gaps are always based on the difficulty level of the position in question and the individual's experience and performance. In 2024, we will take measures to improve gender equality in terms of remuneration, and we will develop associated reporting and transparency. We are preparing well in advance for the introduction of the Pay Transparency Directive in 2026.

We offer diverse personnel benefits to all our personnel groups. The benefits may vary somewhat between different Barona companies.

Different personnel groups have different reward models. Employees may be entitled to other forms of compensation and benefits, according to the client company's policies and practices.

In addition to material compensation, employees enjoy immaterial rewards. These include gratitude and praise, recognition and utilisation of one's competence, offering new challenges, and feedback.

# EMPLOYEES' STORIES



Risto Simonen

## FINDING A CALLING THROUGH REHABILITATION

"There has been excellent chemistry with my career coach Antti, and I have received a huge amount of support from him along the way. Especially in the early stages of professional rehabilitation, I was still in quite a bad mental state and lost in terms of the future. That makes me appreciate even more the fact that it has been really easy to reach the same level with Antti."

After experiencing burnout as a car dealer, Risto began to consider a new direction for his career through vocational rehabilitation after the recovery period. He became interested in working with children and young people and started a work trial as a classroom assistant. Risto feels that he has found a new vocation and is taking a vocational qualification in education alongside his work trial.



Teemu Huuskonen

## A FINANCIALLY SAFE PATH TO A NEW PROFESSION

"The apprenticeship offered me an excellent opportunity for a career change, and as a practical training course, it is suited for a variety of life situations. It was also a good financial option for me: the professional qualification of a truck driver promised me a higher salary in a permanent job. At the same time, it offered a foundation for the future and the opportunity to update tasks that already felt like a routine."

Teemu bravely jumped into Barona's apprenticeship training through his own employer, Martela. Having worked as a furniture fitter and mover, Teemu wanted to expand his competence into a new profession. The apprenticeship gave him the qualification of a professional driver, new duties as a driver with the familiar employer and more independent work.



Lotta Kärmeniemi

## JOURNEY TO THE TOP OF THE RESTAURANT INDUSTRY

"The Raflateam coaching before we started work was really good because it taught us a lot in advance. I discovered that I could do things that a person doing their first day at work would not have mastered yet. I started as a breakfast waiter, then gradually went to à la carte. Winning the PRO Gala didn't come without effort, but strengthened the desire to grow in the industry."

Lotta's career from breakfast server to à la carte service and PRO Gala's newcomer of the year 2024 winner began via Barona. Before starting work, she took part in Barona's free Raflateam training, which is a quick introduction to the basics of the restaurant industry. In Lotta's case, the competence gained through coaching was quickly reflected in the work, gave confidence and helped to stand out.



**Razel Cruz** 

## **WORK-LIFE BALANCE TEMPTED TO COME TO FINLAND**

"Barona was easy to approach, they answered my questions quickly and supported me throughout the process. Most of the language challenges I had anticipated were overcome when I completed language and culture training beforehand. In Finland, the work-life balance is significantly better. I couldn't have made a better decision moving here, and I plan to stay here permanently."

Long and hard days as a nurse in the Philippines made Razel dream of a life change. Family members who already live in Finland gave a tip about Barona, and Finland's reputation as the happiest country in the world made the decision to move to Finland easier. She works with mentally and physically disabled patients and finds her work very rewarding.





## RESPONSIBILITY OBJECTIVES AND REALISATION OF THE CLIENTS AND STAKEHOLDERS THEME IN 2023



## 2.1 We are a reliable and responsible partner

OBJECTIVE	INDICATOR		OUTCOME	ADDITIONAL INFORMATION
Objective 1: Barona is an attractive employer	INDICATOR:	The Net Promoter Score (NPS) of employees working for our clients will improve annually until the end of 2025		In 2023, the Net Promoter Score (NPS) of corporate customers was +47, compared to +41 a year earlier. Thus, the recommendation rate increased.
Objective 2: Barona is a reliable and reputable partner	INDICATOR:	Barona's overall rating given by the Reputation&Trust study is over 3.5 by the end of 2025		Barona's reputation had an overall rating of 3.23 (on a scale of 1-5) in 2023.

## 2.2 Helping the public sector employ and train people

OBJECTIV	E	INDICATOR		OUTCOME	ADDITIONAL INFORMATION
Objective:	Be the public sector's most comprehensive employment and training service partner	INDICATOR 1:	Employing more than half of Barona's target group in Vantaa by summer 2023		More than half of Barona's target group was employed.
		INDICATOR 2:	Barona has a strategic educational institution partner in all business areas in Finland by the end of 2023		Barona has strategic educational partners all over Finland: in the Helsinki Metropolitan Area, Eastern Finland, Central Finland, Western Finland and Northern Finland.
		INDICATOR 3	We have launched an impact-based employment partnership with at least 10 municipalities by the end of 2025		



# 7 RESPONSIBLE CLIENT COOPERATION

# 7.1 TALENT SHORTAGE SOLUTIONS

Finland is experiencing a widespread talent shortage due to demographic problems and a mismatch between labour demand and supply, which has only temporarily eased in some sectors due to the economic downturn. Solving talent shortage requires multisectoral and comprehensive service solutions that focus on short- and long-term means.

Barona's short-term solutions include recruitment and applicant marketing services. Our versatile learning and training solutions, from crash courses to longer training and coaching programmes that last a few months, help companies to develop the competence of personnel or find new skilled workers. Our wellbeing and work ability services help employers prevent work ability problems, and our vocational rehabilitation services help insurance companies find rehabilitees a suitable way to return to work (read more in section 6.4).

We also help companies and municipalities recruit workers from abroad. For example, due to retirement and the increasingly critical nurse-patient ratio in the social welfare and health care sector, the shortage of nurses is becoming more serious every year. The Ministry of Finance has estimated that as many as 200,000 new workers will be needed in the sector over the next 15 years or so. We have recruited nurses from the Philippines for a long time for municipalities and companies in the social and health care sector. The majority of the Philippine workers we have recruited settle in Finland permanently.

Our goal is to boost international recruitment so that in 2025 we will recruit more than 6,000 employees internationally.

#### **BARONA GROUP COMPANY:**

## **ARFFMAN**

- Specialised in results-based employment services.
- Finland's largest provider of immigrant integration services.
- More than 240 employees. Provides training nationwide.
- More than 10,000 private clients every year, of whom approximately 50% have an immigrant background.
- In 2023, the company's revenue was EUR 16.4 million
- Read more: arffman.fi



# 7.2 RESPONSIBLE SERVICES AND

# **COMPREHENSIVE SOLUTIONS**

Our service offering consists of three focus areas: work, learning and wellbeing. We create service solutions building on these focus areas, the production of which emphasises digitalisation and the business and private customer experience.

Barona's service packages include management and supervisor training, renewal of current skills, recruitment through training, resourcing, HR support services, engagement & responsibility, changes in working life and support for coping at work. We offer all services both individually and as bespoke comprehensive solutions, in which we combine different areas of the service portfolio. For example, personnel resourcing services can be combined with diverse training options or digital application development.

We strive to be worthy of our clients' trust. We are actively listening to our clients and trying to understand their needs. This ensures that our partnerships are based on shared values and operating principles. For example, we cannot cooperate with a client that is not willing to

address observed shortcomings and issues. When we partner with a client, we actively search for areas of improvement, which we always address. We acknowledge the impact of reputational risks on all our business areas and promote ethical and responsible operations.

We measure our clients' experience and satisfaction with our services on a regular basis through client surveys and personal interviews. We develop and reform our service portfolio based on client feedback. Our client understanding team that specialises in client and market understanding provides us with research analyses of the world around us using various research data and methods to enable the building and development of even more impactful services.

In 2023, we were awarded the Gold level by Ecovadis for Barona's responsibility work.

OUR CLIENTS
GAVE BARONA A
RESPONSIBILITY
RATING OF 8.7 IN 2023.

#### **CLIENT FEEDBACK AND DEVELOPMENT**

At the end of 2023, the NPS for business customers was +47, which is very good, and we are grateful and proud of it. The long-term average (+44) is also high. In autumn 2023, 80 percent of our customers rated Barona's client experience as at least good (grade 8 or better). In autumn 2023, the average client experience rating was 8.2 (scale of 0–10, 0 = very poor and 10 = excellent).

In 2023, we received positive feedback on reliability, transparency of cooperation and the availability of the contact person. Our customers gave us a rating of 8.7 for responsibility, which is a lot higher than last year (8.0). The very positive feedback tells us about the continuous development of our responsibility work and its impact.

Our areas of improvement vary between services and business areas. We strive to be more proactive in offering new solutions and development ideas to our clients. In 2023, Barona Group companies gained approximately more than 1,000 new clients.





## BARONA'S SERVICE PACKAGES









**MANAGEMENT & SUPERVISOR TRAININGS** 

**RESKILLING & UPSKILLING** 

**RECRUITMENT VIA TRAINING** 

**RECRUITMENT SERVICES** 

**RESOURCING** 

HR **SUPPORT SERVICES** 

**ENGAGEMENT & RESPONSIBILITY** 

**CHANGES IN WORKING LIFE** 

**WORK ABILITY AND WELLBEING SUPPORT** 

## SPECIALIZATION & TARGET GROUP INSIGHT





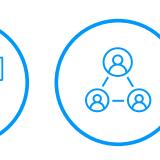




LOGISTICS



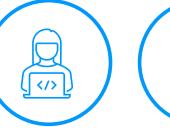
SALES & **CUSTOMER SUPPORT** 



HR



**FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT** 



IT &



**PROJECT** 



**HORECA** 



**SOCIAL & HEALTHCARE** 



CONSTRUCTION MANUFACTURING

DESIGN

**MAINTENANCE** 

DIGITAL **DEVELOPMENT** 

**MANAGEMENT** 





# 7.3 COOPERATION BETWEEN THE PRIVATE AND PUBLIC SECTORS

Barona helps public labour authorities and municipalities employ and train unemployed job-seekers. The purpose of this cooperation is to reinforce job-seekers' competence and employability and help them take the next step in their career. Efficient employment services save public resources, increase tax revenue as a result of faster employment, and help prevent social exclusion – thus efficient private-public cooperation has a major social impact.

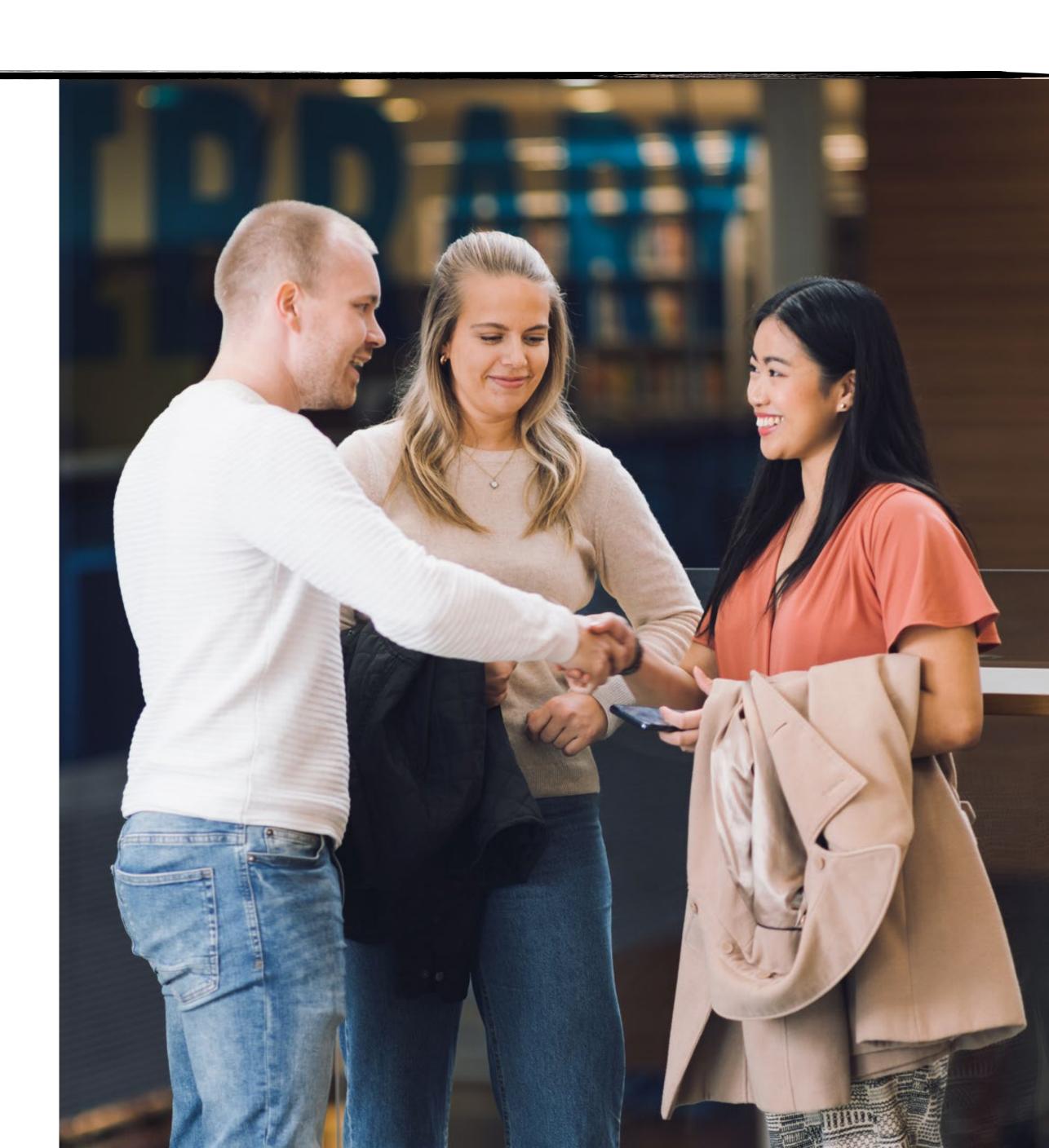
Barona helps municipalities coach, train and employ unemployed job-seekers. Barona is an expert in employing groups with difficulties entering the work force, such us immigrants and those with partial work ability. Our services include training, coaching, immigrant integration, and language training. Barona organises dozens of recruiting training programmes annually, which are realised in cooperation with Centres for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment, TE services and client companies.

Barona also partners with educational institutions nationwide. We consult educational institutions on the development of the labour market and companies' competence needs, to help them

develop their course selection accordingly. We help educational institutions to reach potential students and employees. In 2023, Barona's cooperation with educational institutions developed and expanded. We have strategic educational partnerships throughout Finland. In particular, we have helped educational institutions to develop and increase the volume of educational offering for foreign language students, such as English-language training.

As a major employer and labour market expert, Barona is obliged to use its expertise for the benefit of the whole of society. Barona engages in active dialogue with the authorities and political decision-makers to ensure that public procurements are efficient and meet the needs of companies.

At the heart of the logic of Barona's services is always the employment of the work applicant client and, on the other hand, an even better match between work applicants and employers. Barona aims to enhance social impact by taking the cooperation between the private and public sector towards a new model, in which the public sector procures services based on performance.





## TE24 REFORM AND RESULTS-BASED COOPERATION

Barona wants to be a pioneer in the TE24 reform, which will transfer the responsibility for organising employment services from the state to new employment areas formed by municipalities as of the beginning of 2025. This has meant getting to know the municipalities and a deep understanding of their needs.

Barona's aim is to build services that support the strengths of the new employment areas, while providing them with new tools that are difficult for the public sector to find or implement itself. At its best, the cooperation is based on a strong partnership where successes in employment management, lessons learned and good practices are shared.

Barona has developed and tested new employment management service concepts, in which cooperation with the municipality is based on results and impact – not outputs.

Concrete examples of this are the impact pilots in employment management that are under way across Finland. The target group to be employed in the pilot projects are the municipalities' most difficult to employ work applicants. The municipality only pays Barona for the savings in the municipal shares of labour market subsidy achieved through employment management efficiency, i.e. in practice only for successful employment.

Pilots are under way in Lahti, Tampere, Orimattila, Hämeenlinna and Jyväskylä. The pilots in Vantaa and Turku have already ended and the results are ready.

#### **VANTAA EMPLOYMENT PROJECT**

In 2021–2023, Barona helped the City of Vantaa to improve the employment of unemployed job applicants. The target group was comprised of job applicants who were under the age of 30 or non-native Finnish speakers who had been unemployed for 100–299 days. The pilot project, which ended in summer 2023, was impact-based: Barona was paid based on results, meaning the actual savings achieved by the City of Vantaa.

Overall, Barona found employment for more than one-half of its target group. The partnership provided the City of Vantaa with savings of EUR 850,000 in municipal contributions for labour market subsidy.

# CLIENT STORIES -



## BROMAN GROUP

## Työurahuolto service investigates the root causes behind challenges with ability to work

The Broman Group is a nationwide company that is particularly well known for its automotive parts and accessories business. At Broman Group, it was noticed that work and everyday life had created situations where the employee's current job no longer met their wishes, career aspirations or ability to work. With the help of Barona's Työurahuolto service, Broman Group began to solve career issues and wellbeing challenges and thus addressed the root causes behind the challenges with ability to work. The adoption of the service has reduced absences due to sickness and changed attitudes in the working community of more than 2,000 people.

"Barona is quite dedicated to the cooperation and they constantly come up with new ideas on how we can improve our working community. As the next big step forward, we've considered working community coaching."

Mira Printz, HR Director, Broman Group



## MA DANFOSS

## The shortage of employees was solved by training international talent and people who are changing fields

The growing popularity of renewable energy has led to increased demand for the heating, hydraulics and cooling solutions provided by Danfoss. For this reason, Danfoss is constantly recruiting, but finding suitable employees is challenging, especially in product assembly. Danfoss sought a solution to talent shortage with apprenticeship training for international talent and field changers, organised by the company in close cooperation with Barona. Apprenticeship courses in English have been very popular, receiving a lot of applications. The systematic work has yielded results and the number of personnel has developed as desired.

"The cooperation has continued since 2011, and during that time we have gained a lot of know-how and networks from Barona that we did not have on our own. We strongly believe that an English-language apprenticeship and international talent is the future. Our longterm cooperation with Barona has been excellent, as it is based on mutual openness."

Heidi Saarinen, HR Generalist, Danfoss



## # # JULA

## A retail chain arriving in Finland was promoted as an employer

The Swedish company Jula opened its first "department store for home fixers" in Finland in autumn 2022 and needed suitable staff for its outlet in Vaasa. The limited awareness of the Swedish chain in the Finnish market provided a challenge for recruitment. The recruitment for this complete newcomer on the market was started by promoting Jula as an employer in Finland. The cooperation between Barona and Jula is based on a partnership model, in which store recruitment is carried out together from start to finish. Aiming for a nationwide store network, Jula emphasised the recruitment partner's ability to operate at the national level.

"In terms of recruitment, we have done very well, because even though our brand is still unknown in Finland, we have managed to reach the right people. From the very beginning, Barona and Jula invested in building a strong partnership and got to know each other well. Barona has been able to offer us a service tailored to our needs, which we will also need in the future when opening new stores around Finland."."

Heidi Lehto, HR Manager, Jula Finland



## f CITY OF TAMPERE

## **Spouse programme for international talent establishes families in Finland**

The City of Tampere and Barona have been training and mentoring spouses of international talent arriving in Finland for working life since 2022, with the aim of finding employment for spouses as well. The service supports adaptation, where one of the key factors is how the employee's family as a whole attaches to their new home country. The clients of the service include people who have just arrived in Finland and those planning to move to Finland but whose spouse already works or lives in the Pirkanmaa region. During the service, the participant receives personal support for their integration and employment. The service can include, for example, training in Finnish at Barona's Suomi Hub or a hygiene passport test. In addition, everyone is given concrete help in their job search.

"For us it's important to provide support for families moving to Tampere, which is why we also wanted to promote the employment of spouses who are moving to Tampere. The Barona Group and Arffman have experience in supporting work-related relocation and integration and are therefore also a good partner in this pilot service."

Nuppu Suvanto, Service Manager in charge of the service, City of Tampere





## RESPONSIBILITY OBJECTIVES AND REALISATION OF THE ENVIRONMENT THEME IN 2023

Realised In progress Not realised New indicator

## 3.1 Reducing Barona's and our supply chain's environmental load

OBJECTIVE	INDICATOR		OUTCOME	ADDITIONAL INFORMATION
Objective 1: Carbon-neutral administration by 2025		We will make administration carbon neutral by the end of 2025		
Objective 2: Minimising the use of natural resources at our offices	INDICATOR:	Targets and measures are specified by the end of 2023		We will commit to the science-based targets (SBTi) of the Paris Agreement. We will carry out a more extensive environmental impact assessment, which is taken into account when setting targets.
Objective 3: Taking the environment into account in procurement decisions		Barona's Scope 3 emissions are calculated by the end of 2023		The results of the Scope 3 calculation can be found in section 8.1.
		Emission reduction targets to be set after the Scope 3 emissions have been calculated		We will commit to the science-based targets (SBTi) of the Paris Agreement. We will carry out a more extensive environmental impact assessment, which is taken into account when setting targets.
	į	Procurement guidelines to be revised to take into account environmental and social aspects by the end of 2023		The procurement guidelines have been updated. After setting science-based targets, we will develop the procurement guidelines further.



## 8 ENVIRONMENTAL RESPONSIBILITY

Barona's objective is to promote sustainable development and minimise the negative environmental effects of our operations. In 2023, our most significant identified environmental impacts were generated by purchased goods and services and leased cars in our operations.

## 8.1 CARBON FOOTPRINT

We have now calculated our carbon footprint for the third time. The accounting helps us develop our operations in a more environmentally sustainable direction. For 2021, we calculated the emissions of our operations, or Scope 1 and 2 emissions, and starting from 2022, also our indirect emissions, or Scope 3 emissions.

In 2023, emissions from our operations were generated by our vehicles and our offices' energy consumption. The majority of indirect emissions were generated by purchased goods and services, investments and leased property.

Our goal is to make Barona's administration activities (including energy use, business travel and waste) carbon neutral by 2025. In order to achieve this goal, we intend to switch district heating agreements to renewable sources in all possible offices, and our electricity agreements

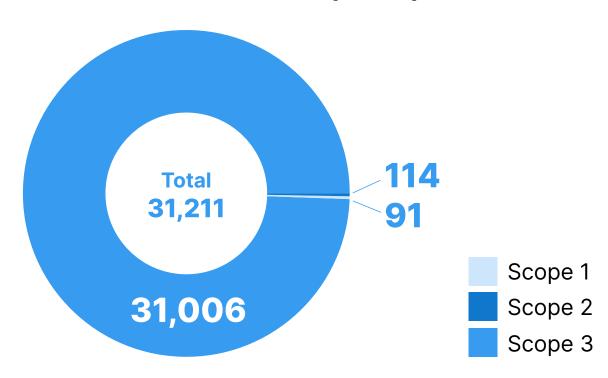
to carbon-neutral forms of production with a low environmental burden. We will also compensate for our Scope 1 and 2 emissions with the highest possible quality in the coming years.

The electricity and district cooling used by our headquarters has been fully emission-free since 2020. At Barona offices, we use IT equipment for the longest possible life cycle, after which we try to find a new use for the hardware. In 2023, the reuse of IT equipment saved 20,759 kilogrammes of greenhouse gas emissions (CO2e) at Barona Group level. We also promote eco-friendly means of commuting, and since 2021, we have offered Barona office employees the opportunity to acquire a company bicycle.

Our emissions intensity was 0.51g CO2e per revenue euro (Scopes 1 and 2) and that of the entire value chain was 78.1 g CO2e per revenue euro (Scope 1–3).\*

\* In relation to the turnover of the Finnish companies in the Group.

### **OUR EMISSIONS IN 2023 (tCO2e)**



GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS, tCO2e	2023	2022	CHANGE%*
Scope 1	91	172	-47%
Leased cars	91	172	-47%
Scope 2	114	155	-26%
District heating	65	47	+38%
District cooling	0	7	-100%
Electricity	49	101	-51%
Scope 3*	31,006	27,470	+13%
Fuels and energy (volume-based)	0	1	-
Purchased goods and services	29,616	25,326	+17%
Investments	154	1,200	-87%
Transportation and distribution	806	137	+488%
Waste generated by operations	2.4	1	+150%
Business travel	105	133	-21%
Leased property	322	672	-52%
Total	31,211	27,797	+12%

<sup>\*</sup>All EUR-based, unless otherwise stated



## HOW WAS OUR CARBON FOOTPRINT CALCULATED?

Barona carried out the accounting internally, after which an external expert checked and supplemented the accounting. The calculation of emissions in 2023 covers all of our offices and the Avialogis logistics centre.

Scope 1 emissions and Scope 2 emissions for the headquarters and electric leased cars were calculated based on activity data. Scope 2 emissions for other offices and Scope 3 emissions as a whole were accounted for on a cost basis, based on purchase invoices. Site-specific factors, namely Finland's average emission factors, were used for calculating the energy emissions.

Accounting based on purchase invoices (Scope 3) is always a rough estimate compared to activity data, so emissions data is subject to considerable uncertainty. The calculations will become more accurate in the coming years, and our aim is to both calculate a larger share of emissions based on activity data and to develop cost-based calculations to be more accurate.

Read more about the carbon footprint accounting methodology in <a href="#">Appendix 2.</a>

## 8.2. ENERGY USE

Barona offices use energy for normal office purposes, such as lighting, electronics and kitchen appliances. The electricity and district cooling used by our headquarters has been zero-emission since 2020.

In early 2023, Barona moved to a new head office, the Tripla Workery East Tower in Pasila. The figures for the Tripla office were used for the full-year calculations for the head office. We do not believe that this simplification will have a significant impact on the final result of the calculation.

Energy consumption decreased significantly in 2023, with the main reason for the decrease being the relocation of the head office. The head office floor area decreased by around 30 per cent, and the insulation and efficiency of the electrical equipment in the modern office building is better.

It should be noted that the monitoring method used in the property has a major impact on Barona's reported consumption and its comparability. The energy consumption of the new head office has been calculated as a percentage of the consumption of the office space in the Workery East tower.

#### **ENERGY USE IN 2023**

PURCHASED ENERGY (MWh)	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	CHANGE 2019-2023 (%)
Electricity	99	250	207	295	370	-73%
District heating	76	190	240	250	327	-77%
District cooling	44	110	112	133	165	-73%
Total	219	550	559	678	862	-75%

#### MISSION REDUCTIONS ACHIEVED WITH REUSED IT EQUIPMENT

EQUIPMENT GROUP	NO. OF UNITS	CO2e kg/UNIT	EMISSIONS SAVED (CO2e kg)
Desktop PC	1	235	235
Laptop computer	1	194	194
Display	65	312	20,280
Mobile phone	1	50	50
Total	68		20,759

<sup>\*</sup> source: 3StepIT report for Barona 2023



### **AVIALOGIS**

Since August 2023, Barona's logistics centre Avialogis has been using solar energy to generate electricity in the property. 700 solar panels have been installed on the roof of Avialogis, producing electricity with a peak output of 200 kWp. At its best, solar energy covers half of the logistics centre's electricity consumption on a daily basis. Thanks to its energy efficiency and other sustainable solutions, Avialogis has been awarded the second highest level of BREEAM certification, which is among Europe's leading environmental classification systems.

## 8.3 WATER CONSUMPTION

Barona's head office consumes water in the kitchen facilities and bathrooms. The background to the decrease in water consumption is increased remote working and, for 2023, the relocation of the head office, which has affected the comparability of consumption data.

## **8.4 WASTE**

Our goal is to minimise the volume of waste generated by our offices and to recycle waste as efficiently as possible. The move of our headquarters to new office premises in 2023 affects the comparability of the data.

WATER CONSUMPTION (m³)					
2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	Change 2019-2023 (%)
284	545	723	728	1,838	-85%

WASTE (kg)	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019
Biowaste	no data available	6,646	5,772	4,779	6,265
Glass	no data available	1,088	797	731	0
Metal	no data available	538	626	500	626
Plastic	no data available	269	306	137	68
Paper	3.2	134	139	164	180
Cardboard	1.7	1,384	1,368	778	1,130
Mixed waste	495	11,691	11,480	6,403	6,609
Total	500	21,750	20,488	13,492	14,878



## **GRI TABLE**

GRIINDICATOR	CONTENT	LOCATION	ADDITIONAL INFORMATION
General disclosu	ıres		
2-1	Organizational details		Barona Group, whose parent company is Barona Oy. Limited company (over 90% owned by Bravedo Oy + key personnel). Headquarters in Helsinki. Finland, Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Estonia, Poland, Slovakia, Spain and North Macedonia.
2-2	Entities included in the organization's sustainability reporting	Appendix 1: a list of companies belonging to the Barona Group.	This responsibility report covers Barona Group's business operations in Finland. The financial and personnel figures also take into account the Group's business operations abroad, unless otherwise stated.
2-3	Reporting period, frequency and contact point		1.1.2023-31.12.2023, which is the company's accounting period. The report was published in June, 2024. The contact person for the report is Head of Comms & Public Affairs Antti Möller.
2-4	Restatements of information		No adjustments.
2-6	Activities, value chain and other business relationships	About Barona, p. 3, Barona as a creator of value, p. 13	The company is part of Bravedo Group.
2-7	Employees	Barona in 2023, p. 5, Barona as an employer and road to working life, p. 36	The company does not collect data for all personnel at the level of accuracy that GRI requires for this indicator. The available information can be found in the relevant section of the report.
2-8	Workers who are not employees		The number of non-employee trainees in Barona's offices was 23. In addition, a total of 168 invoicing consultants worked on behalf of Barona companies.
2-9	Governance structure and composition	Barona's management system, p. 19	Some information omitted for confidentiality reasons.
2-11	Chair of the highest governance body		The chairman of board is not involved in operational activities.
2-12	Role of the highest governance body in overseeing the management of impacts	t Barona's management system, p. 19	
2-13	Delegation of responsibility for managing impacts	Barona's management system, p. 19, Management and measurement of responsibility, p. 26	
2-14	Role of the highest governance body in sustainability reporting	Barona's management system, p. 19	
2-15	Conflicts of interest		Barona reports possible related party transactions in the notes of the company's financial statement. In 2023, Barona had no related party transactions that were material or inconsistent with general market conditions. Related party reports are collected annually from persons subject to the reporting obligation.
2-16	Communication of critical concerns	Risk management, p. 19	In 2023, Barona had no critical incidents.
2-17	Collective knowledge of the highest governance body		Responsibility is part of the board of directors' annual plan. In the same context, stakeholders also report on responsibility matters. Every year, we examine how the board's expertise in matters related to responsibility can be developed.
2-19	Remuneration policies		The company's board receives a meeting fee for its work. The company's management is paid a reasonable fee in the form of fixed and variable compensation. In other respects, remuneration follows general market practices. Remuneration of the management is linked to the implementation of the company's strategy, which includes advancing responsibility. The company's financial statements contain more information on management remuneration. Some information omitted for confidentiality reasons.
2-20	Process to determine remuneration	Wages and rewards, p. 45	Rewards are determined on a one-over-one basis.
2-22	Statement on sustainable development strategy	CEO's foreword, p. 6	



GRIINDICATOR	CONTENT	LOCATION	ADDITIONAL INFORMATION
2-23	Policy commitments	Equality and parity, p. 23, Management and measurement of responsibility, p. 26	We comply with statutory personnel plans. Barona's way of working is guided by the Code of Conduct that was updated in 2023. The company's management team approves the Code of Conduct and it is available on the company's website.
2-25	Processes to remediate negative impacts		The goal is to report in the future.
2-26	Mechanisms for seeking advice and raising concerns	Barona as an employer and road to working life, p. 36	
2-27	Compliance with laws and regulations		Barona complies with all laws and other regulations in its operations. Any shortcomings or abuses detected will be addressed immediately.
2-28	Membership associations	Cooperation, stakeholders and memberships, p. 29	
2-29	Approach to stakeholder engagement	Responsibility themes and objectives, p. 28, Cooperation, stakeholders and memberships, p. 29, Responsible services and comprehensive solutions, p. 50	
2-30	Collective bargaining agreements		Share of personnel 95.0%.
Material topics			
3-1	Process to determine material topics	Responsibility themes and objectives, p. 28, Cooperation, stakeholders and memberships, p. 29, Responsible services and comprehensive solutions, p. 50	
3-2	List of material topics		Responsibility themes and goals can be found on page 28.
3-3	Management of material topics		Responsibility themes and goals and their management are addressed throughout the report in the relevant sections.
<b>Economic perfor</b>	mance		
201-1	Direct economic value generated and distributed	Barona in 2023, p. 5	More information in the company's financial statement, which is available by request from the Finnish Patent and Registration Office. Some information omitted for confidentiality reasons.
201-2	Financial implications and other risks and opportunities due to climate change		We will develop our calculation system and risk management policy.
201-3	Defined benefit plan obligations and other retirement plans		Pension obligations are reported in the financial statement which is available at the Finnish Patent and Registration Office.
201-4	Financial assistance received from government		No state ownership in the Barona Group structure.
Indirect economi	c impacts		
203-2	Significant indirect economic impacts	Barona as a creator of value, p. 13	
Anti-corruption			
205-3	Confirmed incidents of corruption and actions taken		0 incidents in 2023. The situation is actively monitored and our company values and transparency of operations are emphasized.
Anti-competitive	behaviour		
206-1	Legal actions for anti-competitive behavior, anti-trust, and monopoly practices		0 incidents in 2023. The situation is actively monitored and our company values and transparency of operations are emphasized.
Тах			
207-1	Approach to tax	Tax footprint, p. 14	



GRIINDICATOR	CONTENT	LOCATION	ADDITIONAL INFORMATION
207-3	Stakeholder engagement and management of concerns related to tax	Tax footprint, p. 14	
Energy			
302-1	Energy consumption within the organisation	Energy use, p. 59, Appendix 2 Carbon footprint calculation methodology, p. 66	2023 total energy use 219 MWh.
Water and efflue	ents		
303-5	Water consumption	Water consumption and Waste, p. 60	2023 total water consumption 284 m3.
Emissions			
305-1	Direct (Scope 1) GHG emissions	Carbon footprint, p. 58, Appendix 2 Carbon footprint calculation methodology, p. 66	Scope 1 emissions: 91 tCO2e.
305-2	Energy indirect (Scope 2) GHG emissions	Carbon footprint, p. 58, Appendix 2 Carbon footprint calculation methodology, p. 66	Scope 2 emissions: 114 tCO2e.
305-4	GHG emissions intensity	Carbon footprint, p. 58, Appendix 2 Carbon footprint calculation methodology, p. 66	Emissions intensity 78.1 g CO2e per revenue euro (Scope 1–3).
Waste			
306-3	Waste generated	Waste, p. 60	2023 total waste 500 kilograms.
Employment			
401-1	New employee hires and employee turnover	Personnel distribution at Barona, p. 39	Barona's offices received 272 new employees. 340 employees left Barona's offices. 31.12.2023 there were 928 employees working at Barona's offices.
401-2	Benefits provided to full-time employees that are not provided to temporary or part-time employees		There is no difference in employee benefits based on the nature of the employment relationship, but some of the benefits are proportional to working hours for part-time employees.
Labor/Managem	ent relations		
402-1	Minimum notice periods regarding operational changes		Restructuring will be carried out in accordance with current legislation and applicable collective agreements.
Occupational he	alth and safety		
403-1	Occupational health and safety management system	Wellbeing, p. 43, Occupational safety, p. 45	The system has been implemented as part of the company's risk management and quality control processes.
403-2	Hazard identification, risk assessment and incident investigation	Occupational safety, p. 45	The system has been implemented as part of the company's risk management and quality control processes.
403-3	Occupational health services	Wellbeing, p. 43, Occupational safety, p. 45	Barona provides occupational health services to employees, but their content and scope vary by business unit and occupational group.
403-4	Worker participation, consultation, and communication on occupational health and safety	Wellbeing, p. 43	In 2023, Barona established a wellbeing team offering comprehensive support to employees. The team consists of a wide range of healthcare professionals, and the purpose of the service provided by the team is to provide easy-to-access support to all Barona employees for work and leisure challenges.
403-5	Worker training on occupational health and safety	Wellbeing, p. 43, Occupational safety, p. 45	Regular trainings on, for example, worksite safety and cyber security. Basic training on occupational health issues. The contents vary depending on the work assignment.
403-6	Promotion of worker health	Wellbeing, p. 43	
403-7	Prevention and mitigation of occupational health and safety impacts directly linked by business relationships	Wellbeing, p. 43, Occupational safety, p. 45	



<b>GRI INDICATOR</b>	CONTENT	LOCATION	ADDITIONAL INFORMATION
403-8	Workers covered by an occupational health and safety management system	Wellbeing, p. 43, Occupational safety, p. 45	In principle, everyone, but the content and coverage vary depending on the work assignment.
403-9	Work-related injuries	Wellbeing, p. 43, Occupational safety, p. 45	
Training and edu	cation		
404-2	Programs for upgrading employee skills and transition assistance programs	Highlights of 2023, p. 7, Competence development, p. 41	
Diversity and equ	ual opportunity		
405-1	Diversity of governance bodies and employees	Barona as an employer and road to working life, p. 36	
Non-discriminati	ion		
406-1	Incidents of discrimination and corrective actions taken		0 incidents in 2023.
Freedom of Asso	ciation and Collective Bargaining		
407-1	Operations and suppliers in which the right to freedom of association and collective bargaining may be at risk		No known incidents.
Child labor			
408-1	Operations and suppliers at significant risk for incidents of child labor		No known incidents.
Forced or compu	lsory labor		
409-1	Operations and suppliers at significant risk for incidents of forced or compulsory labor		No known incidents.
Local communiti	es		
413-2	Operations with significant actual and potential negative impacts on local communities		No known incidents.
Public policy			
415-1	Political contributions		No donations in 2023.
Customer health	and safety		
416-2	Incidents of non-compliance concerning the health and safety impacts of products and services		No known incidents.
Marketing and la	beling		
417-3	Incidents of non-compliance concerning marketing communications		No known incidents.
Customer privac	у		
418-1	Substantiated complaints concerning breaches of customer privacy and losses of customer data		No known incidents.



## **APPENDIX 1: LIST OF BARONA GROUP COMPANIES**

Arffman Finland Oy

Barona AS

Barona Autonrakentajat Oy

Barona Contact Center AB

Barona Customer Care Ltd

Barona Customer Service Oy

Barona Eesti Oü

Barona Finance Oy

Barona Finland s.r.o

Barona Flexible Industries Oy

Barona Global Human Resources Oy

Barona Human Resource Services Ltd.

Barona HoReCa Oy

Barona HR Oy

Barona Human Resource Services AS

Barona Human Resource Services AB

Barona Human Resource Services Sp. Z o.o.

Barona ICT Services Oy

Barona ICT Services Poland Sp z o.o.

Barona Infra Oy

Barona IT Aps Barona IT Ltd

Barona Itä-Suomi Oy

Barona Kauppa Oy

Barona Lapland Oy

Barona Logistiikan Henkilöstöpalvelut Oy

Barona Logistiikan Koulutuspalvelut Oy Barona Logistiikan Ulkoistuspalvelut Oy

Barona Logistics Ltd

Barona Logistiikkapalvelut Oy

Barona Logistiikkaratkaisut Oy

Barona Lounais-Suomi Oy

Barona Luova Oy

Barona Oy

Barona Pohjanmaa Oy

Barona Production Oy

Barona Professionals AB

Barona Projects Ltd

Barona Construction Ltd

Barona Relocation Oy

Barona RU Ltd

Barona Sales East Oy

Barona Sales Fashion Oy

Barona Sales North Oy

Barona Sales Oy

Barona Sales Retail Oy

Barona Sales Services Oy

Barona Sales South Oy

Barona Sales South West Oy

Barona Sales Trading Oy

Barona Sales West Oy

Barona SCC East Oy

Barona SCC North Oy

Barona SCC North West Oy

Barona SCC West Oy

Barona Services Spain S.L.

Barona Sisä-Suomi Oy

Barona Solutions Ltd

Barona Sote Oy

Barona Tekniikka & Asennus Oy

Barona Teknik & Installation AB

Barona Teknisk Installasjon AS

Barona Industries Ltd

Barona Työkykypalvelut Oy

Barona Varastopalvelut Oy

Barona VVS AS

Creators Oy

**Entry Education Oy** 

Finaflow Oy

Finland Relocation Services Oy

Finstallation AB

Frontliners Oy

Koutsit Group Oy

Medimanageri Oy

Outplacement Finland Oy

Portiton Oy

Saranen Consulting Oy

Skillcode Oy

Suomen Rakennuslogistiikka Oy

TG Talent Gate Oy

Uggla Engineering Oy

Uggla Engineering Sweden AB

WMRT Rakennus Oy

## The companies of the FREE subgroup were part of the Barona Group between January and November 2023:

FREE-Laskutus Oy

Free-Talent Oy

FREE-Maksupalvelu Oy

FREE-Iceland Ehf



# APPENDIX 2: CARBON FOOTPRINT CALCULATION METHODOLOGY

## **STANDARDS**

Barona's carbon footprint was calculated in compliance with the Greenhouse Gas Protocol Corporate Standard, and the boundary approach was operational control.

The calculation was based on the principles of the GHG Protocol:

- Relevance: ensure the GHG inventory appropriately reflects the GHG emissions of the organisation and serves the decision-making needs of users.
- Completeness: Account for and report on all GHG emission sources and activities within the chosen inventory boundary. Disclose and justify any specific exclusions.
- Consistency: Use consistent methodologies to allow for meaningful comparisons of emissions over time. Transparently document any changes to the data.
- Transparency: Address all relevant issues in a factual and coherent manner, based on a clear audit trail.
- Accuracy: Ensure that the quantification of GHG emissions is systematically neither over nor under actual emissions and that uncertainties are reduced as far as practicable.

# SCOPE OF THE CALCULATION

Scope 1 emissions and Scope 2 emissions for the headquarters and electric leased cars were calculated based on activity data. Scope 2 emissions for other offices and Scope 3 emissions as a whole were accounted for on a cost basis, based on purchase invoices.

# EMISSION DATA AND COEFFICIENTS

Emission data and coefficients were mainly obtained from primary sources: the energy provider (Helen) and leasing service partner (cars' WLTP or NEDC value). With regard to electric cars, the information was completed using the national average published by the Government.

## **GREENHOUSE GASES**

Data provided by Helen take into account and data provided by the leasing service partner are assumed to take into account the following greenhouse gases: CO2, SF6, CH4, N2O and fluorinated hydrocarbons. The results were indicated as CO2 equivalents in line with one hundred years' Global Warming Potential (GWP100).

of the impact of greenhouse gases on the climate in relation to carbon dioxide over a specific time horizon (usually 100 years). Greenhouse gases have different GWP values depending on their capacity to absorb longwave radiation and their lifetime in the atmosphere. The GWP values presented in the table below are based on the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change's (IPCC) sixth assessment report (AR6). When the carbon footprint was being calculated, it was uncertain whether the following values had been used to generate the provided emission data.

GREENHOUSE GAS	GWP VALUE (100 YEARS)
CO <sub>2</sub>	1
SF <sub>6</sub>	25,200
CH <sub>4</sub>	27.9
N <sub>2</sub> O	273
HFC:t*	200-15,000
PFC:t*	7,000-14,000
NF <sub>3</sub>	17,400

<sup>\*</sup> varies between gases



If you have any questions about Barona's responsibility work, please contact Barona's communications team:

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