Creditreform ESG-Rating

Andernach & Bleck GmbH & Co. KG

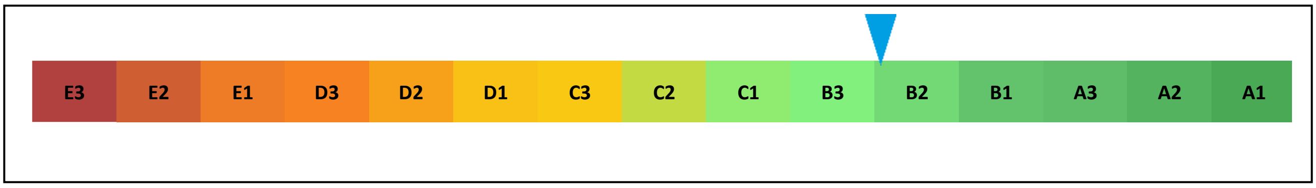
Rating object and rating information

Andernach & Bleck GmbH & Co. KG Creditreform ID: 4110010950 Foundation: 09.07.1903 Headquarters: Hagen (Main) industry: Metal production and processing Top Management: Armin and Carsten Bleck	**ESG rating: B2** **Environment: B2** **Social: C1** **Governance: A3**
Lead Analyst: Esra Höffgen e.hoeffgen@creditreform-rating.de Analyst: Magdalena Kiryakova m.kiryakova@creditreform-rating.de	Valid from: 18 November 2025 Valid until: 17 November 2026 Methodology: CRA Methodik ESG-Ratings v2.0

Rating result

Neuss, 18 November 2025

With an ESG rating of B2, we certify that Andernach & Bleck GmbH & Co. KG has a high level of sustainability, with high sustainability opportunities and low sustainability risks. Based on the sustainability of its business model, we consider the company to be future-proof and capable of transformation.



Andernach & Bleck GmbH & Co. KG (hereinafter also referred to as "company" or "A&B") is an owner-managed, medium-sized company with 172 employees (as of the end of 2024) that specialises in the production of bright steel profiles. A&B's customers process or incorporate the profiles into their own products, meaning they are not sold directly to end users. A&B is headquartered in Hagen (Westphalia), and, due to its business model, the company's sustainability impacts are primarily determined by the environment.

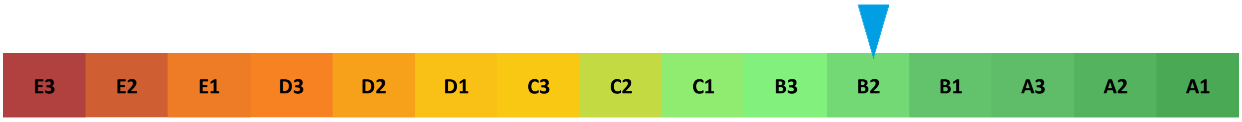
A&B’s energy-intensive production processes are a key factor in our rating result. A&B has already implemented various measures to reduce the company's energy consumption and thus also its CO_2 emissions. A&B actively monitors current regulatory and market developments, proactively implements measures to improve energy consumption and tests and analyses forward-looking technologies, such as switching to hydrogen burners, to secure its long-term competitiveness in the face of changing global conditions. This enables the company to effectively mitigate the increased transition risks associated with its business model.

Compared to our last rating, it should be noted that A&B has further structured its environmental activities by implementing company-wide policies to formalise its sustainability efforts. This has had a positive effect on the rating results. We see further potential for improving the rating result if, for example, binding, publicly communicated targets are developed for the areas of energy consumption and climate change, setting out a structured development path towards the company’s sustainable transformation.

Key rating drivers

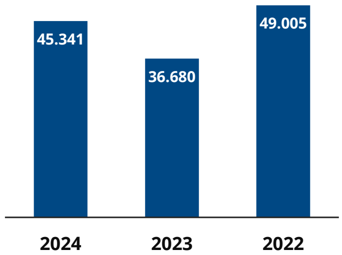
- Implementation of various measures to successfully reduce energy consumption and CO_2 emissions in the long term, in particular through operating efficient combined heat and power plants to supply the company with heat and electricity.
- Proactive analysis of regulatory and market requirements in response to the changing economic environment against the backdrop of the green transformation and derivation of specific measures to ensure long-term competitiveness and sustainability.
- Implementation and training of robust compliance policies and measures to ensure responsible conduct in the company.
- The introduction of policies in the environmental area (energy consumption/climate change, pollution/emissions, resource use and circular economy) and the social area (affected communities), which formalise sustainable action within the company and define it in a generally binding manner, had a positive impact on the result.
- Currently, there are no reliable, long-term, and publicly available sustainability targets that could define a clear development path for the company.
- The company's accident rates currently represent a dampening factor in the rating (which is typical for the industry). At the same time, it should be emphasised that A&B implements structured measures as part of its occupational safety system to prevent accidents, analyse and eliminate their causes, and thus reduce the number of accidents as much as possible.
- The structured collection of relevant environmental and social indicators provides a foundation for the effective management of these indicators, adapted to the company's specific circumstances, and could serve as the basis for a sustainability report in the future.
- Effective anti-corruption policies and measures, such as the whistleblower protection system, ensure structured compliance and strengthen governance structures within the company.

Environment



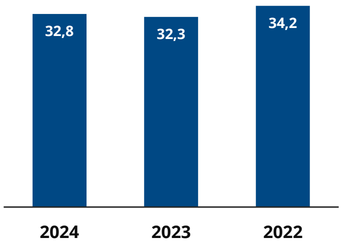
Based on the following environmental result of B2, we attest that A&B demonstrates a ***high level of sustainability in the environmental area*** *with high sustainability opportunities and low risks.*

Relative electricity consumption



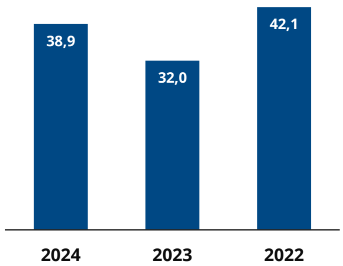
Electricity consumption in kWh per million euros of revenue

Relative CO_2 emissions



CO_2 emissions Scope 1 und 2 in tonnes per million euros of revenue

Relative waste volume



Waste volume in tonnes per million euros of revenue

At this point in time, the environmental sustainability of A&B can be considered high. While extensive measures are already being implemented, particularly regarding reducing energy consumption, which are having a positive impact on results, there is still potential for development in the further structuring of sustainable action from a rating perspective. This could be achieved in particular by formulating and implementing binding, long-term environmental targets.

Environmental sustainability is directly relevant to A&B's value creation processes, including from a business perspective. The production of bright steel profiles is a very energy-intensive process, largely due to the forming of the steel with a correspondingly high energy input. This limits the potential for reductions in energy consumption, as the core value creation process at A&B is energy-intensive for purely physical reasons.

However, A&B has already implemented various measures in the past to reduce the company's energy consumption. A relevant measure is the installation and operation of a natural gas-fired combined heat and power plant, which generates the process heat required for production, as well as providing heating for the office and production buildings directly on the company premises. The plant also supplies part of the electricity consumed by the company. Combined heat and power generation has significantly reduced energy consumption. In addition, the oil burners previously used for (hall) heating have been switched off. Accordingly, this measure has also had a positive effect on the company's CO_2 emissions (Scope 1).

Approximately 60% of gas consumption is fed directly into the combined heat and power plant, of which around 30% is used to generate electricity. The remaining approx. 40% of gas consumption is used to provide heat at temperatures of over 900 °C directly in the production process. In a pilot project involving one burner, A&B is testing the convertibility and operation of the burners with hydrogen with regard to their economic efficiency and process suitability. We see this as an example of the early exploration of possible solutions for the company's transformation to climate-neutral operations.

From a rating perspective, it is particularly noteworthy that A&B proactively monitors developments relevant to the company, which effectively limits the transition risks arising from the company's high energy intensity. However, for a successful transition, e.g. from gas as an energy source to an alternative energy source, A&B depends on the market availability of economically viable alternatives and on active customer demand for lower-carbon products.

In addition, A&B is continuously working to identify and implement energy-saving measures as part of its ISO 50001 certification. Taken together, these measures could lead to further reductions in energy consumption and the company's ecological footprint. The installation of a photovoltaic system is also being considered, which could provide part of the electricity consumed by the company in a CO_2 neutral manner. However, the company is largely dependent on external conditions for the approval to operate such a photovoltaic system. For A&B, this represents limitations beyond its control with regards to relevant sustainability impacts.

Another important measure in the area of energy and climate change is that A&B has been purchasing green electricity and gas since 2022. The use of green electricity reduces market-based Scope 2 CO_2 emissions to zero, which is clearly positive from a rating perspective. In line with ESRS E1 under the CSRD, greenhouse gas emissions must nevertheless be reported on a gross basis without accounting for offsetting measures. Accordingly, the purchase of green gas does not directly reduce A&B's reported CO_2 emissions. However, the associated offsetting mechanisms can support emission-reduction projects and thereby contribute to global decarbonization.

In the area of resource use and circular economy, it should be noted that A&B's products can generally be recycled multiple times. In addition, approximately half of the steel purchased by A&B originates from the electric steel route and is therefore already recycled steel. Another positive aspect worth highlighting in this context is that A&B effectively creates transparency regarding CO_2 emissions along the value chain by systematically collecting data on Scope 3 CO_2 emissions, including those from the upstream value chain. This provides a solid foundation for meaningful product-related CO_2 emissions, enabling the company's customers to actively select products with a comparatively lower environmental footprint.

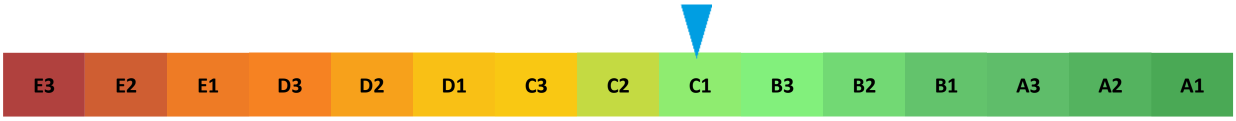
Furthermore, the company is committed to reducing its use of resources. For instance, it provides material-saving, end-product-oriented raw material profiles that can be processed without machining (and the associated waste). It is also working to switch the packaging materials for its finished products to more resource-efficient and recyclable film. However, the success of both measures in terms of market penetration largely depends on customer demand and acceptance.

In our last rating, we identified the need for further formalisation of environmental policies as a significant area for improvement. These policies should provide clear guidelines for the daily activities of employees and managers, ultimately contributing to continuous improvement in sustainability. A&B has formulated environmental policies covering energy consumption/climate change, pollution/emissions, resource use and circular economy, which has a positive impact on our rating assessment. Beyond the formulation of policies, we attach great importance to their specific implementation within the company through training, specific measures and overarching goals.

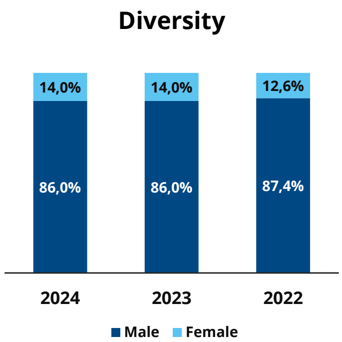
Accordingly, from a rating perspective, we see potential for improvement in defining company-wide goals, particularly with regard to climate change. As part of its ISO 50001 certification, A&B has set individual targets for reducing energy consumption through specific measures and is also working towards reducing Scope 1 und 2 CO_2 emissions by 75% by 2045. Thus, the company has defined an internal long-term ambition but has not yet adopted a binding, publicly communicated reduction pathway with scheduled interim targets for energy consumption and CO_2 emissions. It is precisely through the formulation, communication and implementation of such targets that positive sustainability development can be effectively supported and a contribution can be made to European and global climate targets. From our perspective, this is therefore a central element of sustainability development that is currently lacking.

In summary, it can be said that A&B is already very active in the environmental sector, particularly in the areas of energy and climate, and directly identifies potential for improvement so that it can be implemented quickly. On the other hand, however, we also see potential for further development by formulating and implementing targets in a structured manner to improve the sustainability impact.

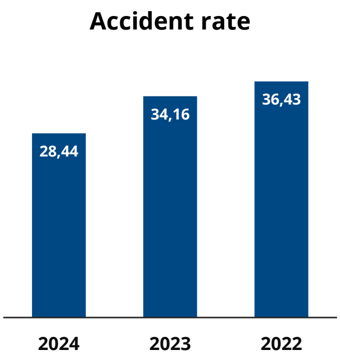
Social



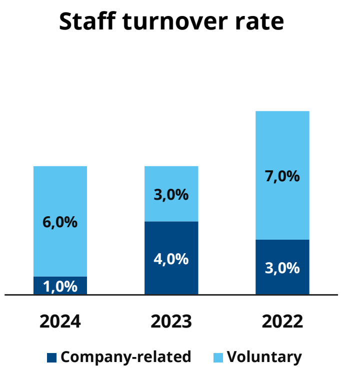
Based on the following social result of C1, we attest that A&B demonstrates a ***satisfactory sustainability in the social area*** *with a balanced ratio of sustainability opportunities and risks.*



Proportion of women and men among employees



Accidents per 1 million hours worked



Staff turnover rate based on voluntary and company-related resignations

A&B's sustainability in the social area can currently be considered satisfactory. While the company's clearly formulated policies for employees have a positive effect on the rating assessment, the company's accident figures are currently still a dampening factor.

In its Code of Conduct, A&B defines specific guidelines for sustainable social action. In particular, the specific instructions and guidelines for avoiding any form of discrimination and creating a safe working environment can contribute to positive sustainability development and help to avoid negative effects on the company's own employees. Training on the Code of Conduct is mandatory for new hires. In addition, training tailored to specific needs is provided by direct supervisors when changes are made to the Code of Conduct.

As is typical of the industry and business model, the accident figures are rather high and the proportion of women in the company is rather low. To prevent accidents, risk assessments are carried out at all relevant locations. Direct measures to prevent accidents or eliminate hazardous situations are then derived from these assessments. In addition, every single accident at work is investigated to identify and eliminate the cause.

We attach particular importance to this clearly formulated occupational safety system in our rating, as it allows accident causes to be effectively identified and eliminated. Although the figures for 2024 were declining, the number of reportable workplace accidents remains comparatively high. In the medium to long term, a further reduction in the number of accidents could lead to positive developments in sustainability. We therefore place great importance on structured measures in this area.

A&B has not yet formulated any specific targets for its own employees to reduce negative aspects or increase positive aspects. In principle, we see the potential for improving sustainability in the social area by formulating tailored targets for employees and, above all, pursuing these targets.

Compared to our last rating, A&B has formulated specific policies relating to employees in value chains and affected communities (neighbours), which can formalise sustainable action in these areas. This has had a clearly positive impact on our rating assessment, as it enables the company's sustainable actions to be structured and promoted. With regard to employees in the value chain, it should also be noted that A&B sources intermediate products exclusively from European suppliers, which effectively reduces the risk of human rights violations in the Tier 1 supply chain.

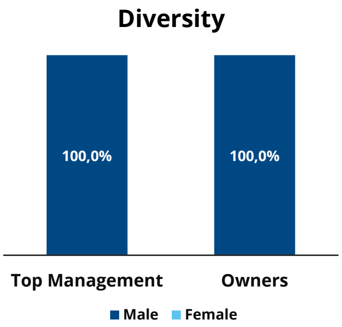
Another positive aspect is the measures that A&B has taken to contribute positively to the local community in Hagen-Halden. For instance, a packing station was set up at the company’s premises after the last post office in the town closed. Furthermore, neighbourhood/family celebrations are held locally, and student initiatives are supported. This local commitment can have a positive impact on the social impact of the company, which also had a positive influence on our rating assessment.

As A&B exclusively produces for business customers, who in turn usually process A&B's products further, the company has no direct relationship with consumers. This area was therefore excluded from the rating analysis, in line with the double materiality analysis that the company voluntarily carried out.

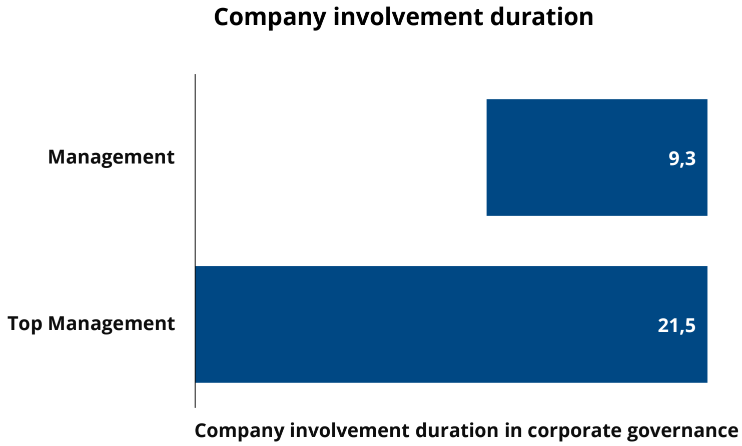
In summary, it can be said that A&B is already taking significant steps towards sustainable development, particularly with regard to its own employees. We see potential for further development of sustainability in the social area, particularly in the further reduction of accident figures and in the formulation and implementation of structured goals.

Governance

Based on the following governance result of A3, we attest that A&B demonstrates a ***very high level of sustainability in the area of governance*** *with significant sustainability opportunities.*



Proportion of women and men in Top-Management and among Owners



Company involvement duration of Management and Top Management in years

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A&B's sustainability in the governance area can currently be rated as very high. The result is primarily driven by the robust policies in place to ensure appropriate compliance and the way in which management handles relevant sustainability issues.

A&B has formulated clear policies on the topics of corruption prevention, whistleblowing (including the protection of whistleblowers), conflicts of interest and gifts, which are regularly trained when hiring new employees and when the policies change. This helps to ensure that its employees and managers always behave in accordance with the law. In our opinion, effective compliance can only be achieved when these aspects are implemented in everyday work, not just written down.

From a sustainability perspective, we attach particular importance to the fact that A&B actively monitors political developments - including those relating to sustainability - to identify relevant steps for the company's further sustainability development. A&B has already successfully implemented various measures, especially in energy management (see above), but the ongoing review and operational testing of new approaches can contribute to positive sustainability development in the medium to long term. By actively monitoring current developments and, above all, by responding proactively to them, A&B can also limit its transition risks, which can strengthen its long-term economic success.

In this context, it is also worth noting that the company already collects key performance indicators (KPIs), particularly in the areas of energy and CO_2, and reports them to the management. This means that even before the prospective implementation of sustainability reporting requirements in accordance with the CSRD, can ensure that key sustainability aspects can be managed in the long term. Preparing an externally available sustainability report in accordance with CSRD or VSME standards could substantially enhance transparency and could positively influence business partner assessments and the rating in the medium term.

We see room for improvement in sustainability management in the rating context, particularly in defining company-wide, long-term targets for sustainability management. By setting ambitious yet economically viable goals, sustainability development can be structured and sustainability performance improved over time.

Physical and transition risk

An analysis of the physical climate risk was carried out for the company's location. In conclusion, the physical climate risks can be assessed as manageable for A&B.

As a manufacturing company, A&B is relatively localised and dependent on the full functionality of its production goods. At present, we do not consider the company's location to be significantly jeopardised by physical climate risks. Even in scenarios without effective climate change mitigation, there are currently no risks that could threaten the company's business operations.

However, A&B is fundamentally exposed to transition risks that will become relevant for the company in the medium to long term in scenarios in which climate change is effectively limited to below 2°C

Against the backdrop of rising CO_2 prices to achieve global greenhouse gas reduction targets, A&B is exposed to the risk of rising costs and the corresponding impact on the company's financial performance. The production of bright steel profiles is energy-intensive, and energy is therefore one of the company's most important input factors. Through active energy management, the continuous search for potential improvements to further reduce energy consumption and proactive adaptation to long-term political, regulatory and market changes, A&B can effectively reduce its transition risks. Compared to our last rating, relative CO_2 emissions (CO_2 emissions Scopes 1 and 2 in relation to revenue in million EUR) have remained virtually constant, which means that the risk assessment in the rating remains unchanged.

Continuous monitoring and analysis of developments in the field of low-emission technologies is of paramount importance for long-term risk management. We therefore consider it crucial that A&B not only reacts to transition risks but also takes action and actively evaluates and tests the various options available to the company in this area.

In summary, the transition and physical risks can therefore be classified as manageable for A&B, with the long-term reduction of energy consumption and CO_2 emissions being particularly important for managing transition risks.

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