

# People

Swiss Re's bright and innovative employees unlock risk insights, facilitate risk transfers and build the partnerships needed to make our world more resilient.

In this section, we highlight some of the initiatives at Swiss Re's offices around the world that support and develop employees. Pravina Ladva, Swiss Re's Group Chief Digital & Technology Officer, then shares some of the surprising reasons why Swiss Re is becoming an employer of choice for technology experts. Finally, we share stories about a few of our people who build solutions to solve tough problems.

# HR initiatives worldwide

Swiss Re is proud to be an employer of choice in all of our markets. Here are just a few of the initiatives that support and develop our teams globally and some of the accolades received by our offices.

## EMEA

### Spain

Spain's Health and Safety Programme brings employees the convenience of in-office medical checks and flu vaccinations.

On 10 October, employees recognise mental health day with activities and workshops that help reinforce tools for resilience and facing mental health challenges.

### United Kingdom

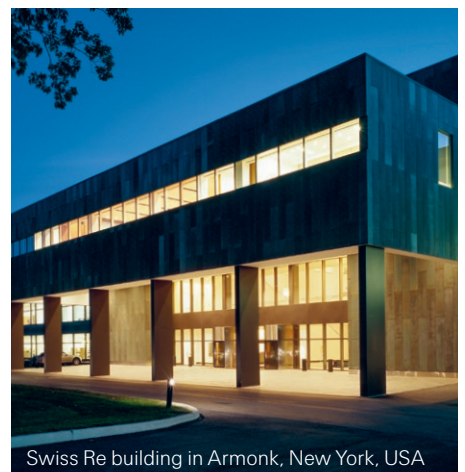
Swiss Re UK received the Ernst & Young National Equality Standard certification in March 2022. The certification is a leading workplace equality assessment framework which enables organisations to measure their Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) measures. Swiss Re UK received top marks for the DEI proficiency of its policies across 35 categories.

## Americas

### US

Employees can benefit from the online offerings for support with mental health issues via Pathways, Swiss Re's network for mental health support within the workplace.

Line manager dialogue sessions were launched, with a focus on the topic of supporting teams' return to the office. Line managers learned about current trends and shared best practices.



Swiss Re building in Armonk, New York, USA

## APAC

### All APAC

The Swiss Re Leadership Development Journeys were introduced for employees seeking to enhance their leadership skills and management effectiveness. Employees can tailor their experience and develop new skills to influence and inspire colleagues in the workplace.

### India

The Next Mile, India's Emerging Talent Acceleration Programme, was launched to develop talent and enable career success. This 12 to-15-month learning journey is talent-owned and line manager-facilitated to best suit the personalised development needs of each individual.

The India People Initiative was introduced to develop specialised offerings for employees interested in developing their cross-cultural understanding and leadership skills.

Hyderabad's innovative Digital, Data and Tech Talent hiring days provided a unique candidate experience for interviewees. Line managers and Human Resources conducted 80+ interviews from a list of 400+ pre-screened applicants, with two to three interview rounds in a span of three hours, finishing with on-the-spot job offers. While waiting, interviewees could learn about Swiss Re via videos and iPad experiences, or play football, air hockey or video games in the game room.

### South Africa

For the second year in a row, Swiss Re achieved a Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment (BBBEE) level 1 rating. This reflects Swiss Re's unwavering focus on hiring, developing and promoting black people. For the second consecutive year, 100% of new hires were black people, of which 55% were women.

As part of Swiss Re's local Employee Resource Group, Mosaic, local employees joined an initiative to read a book titled: "The Black Girl's Guide to Corporate South Africa" with the purpose of unpacking certain themes raised in the book and discussing them within a Swiss Re Africa context.



### Switzerland

Swiss Re Kids House opened in 2022. The flexible inhouse childcare service is highly innovative, allowing employees to book a childcare slot on a day-by-day basis. Kids House is suited for families who do not need a monthly childcare solution but would like to more flexibly integrate their work and family life. Kids House is especially useful for employees when something unexpected happens and a trustworthy solution for short-term childcare is required.



Swiss Re Kids House, Zurich, Switzerland

### Canada

Swiss Re Canada placed in the top 50 Best Workplaces in Canada in 2022 for organisations with 1 000+ employees.

Swiss Re Canada was also named a Best Workplace for Women and a Best Workplace for Hybrid Work.

### Brazil

The Generations Apprentice Programme was launched to help youth develop skills at Swiss Re's Brazil offices. The Connecting Minds Mentoring Programme provides employees in Swiss Re's Brazil offices with an opportunity to gain career insights and inspiration from colleagues.

Female Leadership Roundtables bring together women leaders for a chance to discuss current topics, network and learn from expert speakers.

### Mexico

Monthly Wellness Days give employees access to onsite vaccinations, health-related vendors, conferences and wellness-focused experiences.

One Day in My Parents' Office provides children of employees with an opportunity to experience the office and learn about their parents' workplace through fun activities and workshops.

### China

Resilience workshops and activities have been designed and made available to help employees stay resilient and focused on their wellbeing.

China's Emerging Talent Acceleration Programme kicked off its pilot in Beijing. This bespoke talent development programme aims to grow talent pools and build a sustainable and diverse talent pipeline.

### Australia

Swiss Re Sydney has a comprehensive set of wellbeing offerings and programmes to help employees focus on their health. These include wellbeing seminars, mental health sessions and employee health checks with local medical providers.

To enhance the office's performance culture and reinforce a One Swiss Re approach, Swiss Re Sydney's HR team has launched a yearly schedule of

activities to create connection, foster collaboration and enhance cross-business function insights.

The Sydney HR team has also implemented unique onboarding activities for new joiners, such as the Leadership Team Morning Tea check-ins with new starters during their first 18 months.

# “I enjoy change, growth and making something better than it was.”

Pravina Ladva is Swiss Re’s Group Chief Digital & Technology Officer. She has been instrumental in driving digital transformation since joining Swiss Re in 2017. In this interview, she tells us about her unexpected career path and explains why Swiss Re is a rewarding place to work for technology experts from all walks of life.

## **Can you tell us a little bit about your journey into tech and the insurance industry?**

I started out at Abbey National, on the frontline of selling life insurance, pensions and mortgages. I then became a retail bank manager, which gave me a great foundation in leadership, people management and handling clients.

As one of the Chief Information Officers at Barclaycard, I learnt how bringing together technology, people and commercial focus is what really makes the magic happen. There, I also focused on large-scale transformation enabled by digitalisation.

If we need to make a change, whether it is to improve the customer experience or to make operations more efficient, the underlying accelerator or scaler is technology.

The constant theme throughout my career was change – and change in any aspect of our lives has become intrinsically linked with technology.

## **What made you want to join Swiss Re?**

Swiss Re is a purpose-driven organisation – our purpose is to make the world more resilient. This really resonates with me.

From an industry perspective, I saw a huge opportunity for transformation and change – for example, there are many opportunities within the business to make better use of the data available to deliver on business priorities. That is what I loved about the opportunity of joining Swiss Re.

Another important thing to me is the culture at Swiss Re. It is truly inclusive; people here really want to get things done and are very thoughtful.

## **What are some of the challenges the insurance industry is facing?**

In today’s world, where do we start? At the moment, we are dealing with uncertain economic conditions, a volatile geopolitical environment, supply chain crises, inflation, exploding energy prices and increasingly severe natural catastrophes.

These real-world events have a large impact on the resilience of companies, households and governments. The question is: How can we provide resilience and build a strong business? Underpinning that answer is technology. We can use our data techniques to assess supply chain risks in a more predictive way – allowing us to shift from simply paying for losses after an event to providing data services that manage risks in a more predictive and preventive way.

For example, we spot how an approaching hurricane might affect a client’s manufacturing capabilities in one location. They can then prevent disruption by shifting production to a less affected location.

## **As Swiss Re’s Group Chief Digital & Technology Officer, what are your top priorities?**

There are a few key themes which are top of mind at the moment – from how we can make the best use of data to drive the business, to cyber security in a heightened risk landscape. Another priority is upskilling



**Pravina Ladva**  
Group Chief Digital & Technology Officer

Pravina Ladva is Swiss Re’s Group Chief Digital & Technology Officer and Member of the Group Executive Committee. She is responsible for driving Swiss Re’s digital transformation and delivering resilient technology and data foundations across the company.

our people to the new ways of working with new technologies and also getting great technology experts to join Swiss Re.

As a global company, we are adopting a global perspective. We have centres in Bangalore and Bratislava, and we have opened another one in Hyderabad. We are also hiring in Manchester and Madrid.

It is all about creating accessibility to talent and co-locating with our business colleagues – after all, the more you can bring the technology teams and the commercial teams together, the faster you create value.

#### **Why is Swiss Re an attractive employer for people working in tech?**

Swiss Re is a place where great tech meets a really strong purpose: making societies more resilient.

When you work at Swiss Re, you have the chance to put your tech skills to work on some of the world's toughest challenges: pandemics, natural catastrophes, healthcare systems and supply chains. It is exciting and truly rewarding to be a part of the solution to these challenges, applying tech to this meaningful work and moving society forward.

Also, we really value new perspectives. As part of our tech transformation, we offer resources to help employees to upskill in areas of innovation. So when people come in with new ideas, there is space to develop this mindset and see ideas transform into impact. Though the company has more than 150 years of experience, we are future-focused.

On top of that, we want our people to thrive. We do that by fostering inclusion and wellbeing as well as offering learning and development opportunities to build up knowledge and to shape careers in the diverse fields of tech at Swiss Re.

#### **What advice would you give someone who is maybe just starting out or looking to advance their career in tech?**

I left university as a history graduate – so I guess I am proof that there is no single right path into a tech career.

Think about the content of your role and think about what you enjoy. This is much more important than the job title. For me, I enjoy change, growth and making something better than it was – and that is where I can make a difference.

Having a full understanding of the business that you are working in is hugely important. Be curious and inquisitive. Educate yourself and continually learn about what is new – and find out what your passion is.

Courage is really important. Even if you have got that nervous feeling in your stomach, trust yourself and go for it – because that is where you are going to achieve your biggest personal growth.

Finally, be interested in people, as it is the combination of technology and people working together that makes the difference.

#### **How can we get more women into tech roles?**

Although a greater number of women are now studying STEM<sup>1</sup> subjects, when it comes to choosing a career, they tend to go into medicine rather than technology.

We need to start in schools and encourage girls to go into STEM, but then also show them that they can have a wide and diverse technology career.

At Swiss Re, we are creating awareness for what we do by offering traineeships and bringing in graduates. And it is equally about encouraging women once they have joined. We have mentoring programmes and support networks, but also leadership training programmes around diversity and inclusion.

I think the important thing is to always look at diversity and inclusion together. Focussing on diversity on its own may get the right number of that diverse population into the organisation, but only if you ensure the inclusion of that diverse population are you going to reap the rewards of achieving diversity in the first place.

It all comes back to inclusivity and creating the right environment for women to thrive.

# 2000

people work in tech jobs at Swiss Re

# 130

different tech roles available at Swiss Re

**Tech employees are spread over**

# 53

locations...

**... across**

# 20

countries

<sup>1</sup> Science, technology, engineering and mathematics.



# People bringing ideas to life

From understanding the impact of economic inflation on our business to laying foundations for new analytics solutions, our innovators bring a fresh perspective to solving problems. The following stories shine a spotlight on some of the exciting projects at Swiss Re and the people driving them.

## Empowering underwriters with economic insights

Dr Li Xing, Head of Insurance Market Analysis, Group Economic Research & Strategy at Swiss Re Institute, joined Swiss Re's Beijing office in 2008. "When I joined Swiss Re in Beijing, it was the first time an economist held this position in mainland China. Previously the role had been based in Hong Kong. I had the opportunity and privilege to strengthen the understanding of the concept of reinsurance in this new demographic."

Li has since become one of the long-standing members of Swiss Re's core research department. She has co-authored various editions of *sigma*, Swiss Re's flagship publication, and written other expertise publications as well.

After relocating to Zurich in 2021, Li has focused on bringing her team's insights on macroeconomics and the re/insurance market to support Swiss Re's business. "The premium outlook for re/insurance is ever-changing. To support the business to

be on a path of profitability, we collaborate closely with underwriters, client managers and strategic planners, among others."

Li works with Swiss Re's teams in various sectors to share insights into what is happening in their specialised business areas. "Our data and models capture key trends in the markets – such as the insurance market size for different lines of the business and for different regions", Li explains. "For example, we can share data and insights on natural catastrophe losses, premium outlook and regional insurance development trends to help our business counterparts with strategic planning, proactive engagement with clients, and also to help them understand how macro dynamics impact our portfolio."

In regular cross-functional meetings with different business units, including client management and underwriting, Li and her team bring advanced insights to Swiss Re's clients and to Swiss Re's own business portfolio.



**Li Xing**  
Head of Insurance Market Analysis, Group Economic Research & Strategy

Li has contributed to numerous publications during her almost 15-year career in Swiss Re's core research department.



Swiss Re office in Bangalore, India

## Mining knowledge from open data sources

Ashok Shetty joined Swiss Re in 2017 as a data scientist with Group Underwriting, Casualty Research & Development, then transitioned to Group Finance, before later joining Corporate Solutions. In his current role as Head Corporate Solutions Data Science CoE, Data Curation & Reporting, he helps Corporate Solutions find innovative solutions for tough challenges. Rounding out this impressive career trajectory, Ashok also won the AI & Analytics Industry Leader Award at the 2022 3AI Pinnacle Awards.

One of the most significant challenges Ashok has faced has been finding ways to automatically harvest risk knowledge from “unorthodox” data sources. Over the years, Swiss Re has accumulated an enormous amount of data. However, Swiss Re’s experts still depend on various external sources for data to predict the severity and frequency of different types of insurance losses. Ashok recognised the value of finding alternative data sources to increase the depth and breadth of risk knowledge.

Ashok explains, “I wanted to use open data sources. But there are very few formats in

which the data is available – and it takes considerable time to convert it into useful information.” To counter this problem, Ashok used advanced machine learning and artificial intelligence models to extract and transform unstructured data into structured information. He found this data in one of the world’s largest data sources – Project GDELT. Project GDELT is supported by Google’s Jigsaw team and captures news articles in real-time from 2 000+ sources and in 100+ languages.

Ashok used this resource to fill in knowledge gaps. “Once the data is extracted and curated using web-scraping and machine learning techniques, it’s made available to our analytics community. So when case analysts or data scientists research events like natural disasters, they can include data extracted by our solution.”

The machine learning-driven solution, called Company Profiler, helps Swiss Re’s teams by transforming the unstructured data into a readable format. Ashok notes, “This tech allows us to access significant data in an organised and interactive way.”



**Ashok Shetty**  
Head Corporate Solutions  
Data Science CoE

Ashok’s work with artificial intelligence and machine learning is simplifying Corporate Solutions’ claims processes and creates a positive feedback loop for analysing claims trends.

## Building bridges for public-private solutions

Preparing for the fiscal impact of major disasters is a mounting priority for many governments. By securing risk management tools in advance, authorities can help speed up recovery in the wake of hurricanes, earthquakes, floods and other catastrophes.

Swiss Re has helped structure many public-private solutions in emerging markets in the past. These include the five-year parametric earthquake cover for the construction of the 216 MW Upper Trishuli-1 Hydropower Project in Nepal (see Swiss Re’s Sustainability Report).

Helping governments strengthen their resilience strategies requires a wide array of stakeholders. Multilateral development banks (MDBs), for example, provide financial and technical assistance to nations to implement resilience strategies, often making use of insurance.

To bring such ideas to market, experts such as Swiss Re’s Tobias Meier are needed to “translate” concepts. Tobias currently serves

as Swiss Re’s Global Key Account Manager, Multilateral Development Banks, with the Public Sector Solutions team.

With a background in underwriting and experience in the public sector, Tobias has spent almost ten years at Swiss Re. Five of these were at Swiss Re’s Washington, D.C., office, working closely with the World Bank, before returning to Switzerland in 2022.

“Reinsurance-related language and concepts can be confusing”, admits Tobias. “So with my experience, I can make sure all points of view are accounted for. And MDBs’ interest in resilience, combatting climate change and mobilising private capital opens opportunities for Swiss Re.”

In a given day, Tobias will speak with clients in Asia, America, Africa and the UK. Despite the challenges, Tobias finds the work exciting. “By leveraging the expertise across Swiss Re, I can bring value to both my MDB counterparties and their sovereign clients.”



**Tobias Meier**  
Global Key Account Manager,  
Multilateral Development Banks  
Public Sector Solutions

Tobias works at the intersection of the public sector and the re/insurance industry, where he leads business development with multilateral development banks.



## Powering the Digital Analytics Team

In 2017, Darren Govender, Senior P&C Analytics Solutions Manager, P&C Solutions, started out in the graduate programme at Swiss Re in Cape Town, South Africa. After attending training and some months working in the Switzerland headquarters, he became fascinated by projects focused on analytics. Swiss Re's graduate programme offered Darren a chance to enjoy rotations in different locations worldwide, but he chose to stay in Switzerland with the P&C Analytics team.

"I spent my six months doing everything possible to get the most out of my rotation. I recognised the teams were taking on new challenges, so I wanted to learn as much as possible", says Darren. The work paid off – he ended up joining Swiss Re as a full-time employee after his graduate programme.

When Darren got the offer to join the Americas division of the P&C Analytics group, he immediately accepted. "I arrived in New York right before COVID-19 hit. But this

meant extra time to focus on projects." As the third employee to join the new team, he was able to see first-hand how the analytics strategy evolved. "We were trying to answer the question: 'How can we build data assets while adding value for the clients?'"

His team's first project was a commercial risk insights tool called COIN. This tool allows clients to put a value on their risks by combining their own exposure information, such as property locations and building types, with Swiss Re's enrichment data. This gives clients a more robust overview to assess risk for incidents such as water damage from flooding or exposure to potential earthquakes.

The team continues to build their assets and expand their arsenal of partnerships with data and model vendors in the US and global market. "Clients now want to license this data and share their information as we enrich it for them. This has been a huge win."



**Darren Govender**  
Senior P&C Analytics  
Solutions Manager

From the start of his career at Swiss Re, Darren has been involved in developing new approaches to data analytics and innovative data-driven products.

## Pioneering products for Life & Health



**Urs Widmer**  
Senior Global Medical Officer, Life  
& Health Products

After postgraduate research work and 13 years as an attending physician in internal medicine, Urs brings his medical knowledge to Swiss Re's Life & Health business.

Before joining Swiss Re as a Medical Officer in 2005, Urs Widmer had an extensive career as a clinical immunology specialist and attending physician. After research-focused work in the US and 13 years at Zurich University Hospital, Urs joined Swiss Re.

Around the time Urs joined, research in the area of HIV, the virus that can lead to Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome (AIDS), was beginning to produce some concrete insights for the insurance industry. The ability to provide life insurance to people with HIV was an urgent issue, as life insurance was a prerequisite for other financial services.

In the early 2000s, Swiss Re decided to ramp up efforts to close the life insurance protection gap for people with HIV. Swiss Re actuaries collaborated with biostatisticians at the University of Bristol who tracked nearly 50,000 HIV cases in several European countries. The goal was to increase equitable access to life insurance for individuals living with HIV who had a good prognosis.

"Thanks to this study, we were able to create life insurance options modelled according to the survival rates. Due to more effective therapies, better outcomes for patients were possible", notes Urs. "Swiss Re's support and advocacy for providing coverage solutions helped convince clients that life insurance was feasible."

In his current role as Senior Global Medical Officer, Urs interfaces with clinicians and medical officers. His insights into therapies that reduce HIV-caused morbidity and mortality continue to give Swiss Re's underwriters valuable data to update their models. In 2022, the team made important HIV-related updates to Life Guide, which adds disability and critical illness cover in addition to life insurance for individuals living with HIV.

"Bringing in up-to-date perspectives not only helps our Life & Health products stay current, it also gives our underwriters evidence-based metrics that can help close protection gaps", says Urs.

# Bringing employees a flexible childcare solution

Jeanine Waser and Barbara Schneider had been working in Swiss Re's Events team when their status as new mothers led them to explore solutions for childcare. Their first step was to create a job-share model for themselves so they could both continue to work in the team while still having enough time to devote to their children. This flexible model meant that they could work part time while ensuring their functional duties always covered.

Jeanine explains, "the job sharing worked really well for us as parents. We could work part time while ensuring that our internal clients still had fast answers and someone available for their events."

Their new roles as mothers also led them to realise the need for a solution to provide occasional childcare. "After my maternity leave in 2018, I realised we needed a more temporary childcare solution for when I was on a big project or running an event. This type of solution for working parents is

almost impossible to find in Switzerland", notes Jeanine.

Jeanine and Barbara proposed a new concept to Swiss Re: a flexible inhouse childcare service that lets employees book a childcare slot on a day-by-day basis. This idea evolved into Kids House, which supports families who do not need a monthly childcare solution.

"We worked with Swiss Re's Diversity Council to get internal support", says Barbara. "We also found a childcare provider, Tadah, who we had already worked with."

Over the course of two years, the two working mums were able to see their idea grow into a reality. "We were so happy at how supportive everyone was for this idea", says Jeanine. "There was an amazing spirit and drive at all levels of Swiss Re in Zurich to support working parents with Kids House."



**Jeanine Waser and Barbara Schneider**  
Specialists Development & Diversity CH

From Kids House to Own the Way You Work, specialists like Jeanine and Barbara work to enable everyone at Swiss Re to reach their full potential, as individuals and as teams.



Swiss Re Kids House,  
Zurich, Switzerland





Swiss Re office in Bratislava, Slovakia

## Improving real-time information on natural catastrophes

Since opening in 2006, Swiss Re Bratislava has evolved from a shared service centre to a business solutions centre. It is now Swiss Re's second biggest office, accounting for 14% of the total global headcount. When Peter Macinec and Robert Oles came on board as student data scientists in 2020 and 2021, respectively, they were inspired by the "can do" culture.

"When I first joined, I could see how people were deeply immersed in projects", says Peter. "We were working with complex spatial data science processes. But the outcomes were very tangible." After finishing their studies, Peter and Robert both became full-time data scientists for Swiss Re's Advanced Analytics Services.

One of their most important assignments has been their contribution to creating a centralised platform for real-time information on natural catastrophes. This service, EventHub, collects information about natural catastrophe events as they happen.

"Imagine there is a new cyclone moving towards the US – we want to know, close to real time, its track, its magnitude and its wind speed. To achieve that, we took multiple data sources and joined them together to show the footprint of the cyclone", says Peter.

"Although there were several services Swiss Re had used, they only offered a partial solution, such as imagery of the track of a storm", Robert adds. "But we wanted to be able to access more information at once so we could estimate the damages that the cyclone might create."

The EventHub solution has been integrated into the CatNet® platform and other internal databases. It now monitors many catastrophes and is used globally by risk analysts.

"It was rewarding to see how this combined data now improves CatNet®. I am proud to have contributed to this platform", Peter notes. "And I like to see how the data we worked on continues to help inform and improve other projects too", Robert adds.



**Peter Macinec and Robert Oles**  
Data Scientists, Bratislava

Swiss Re's graduate programmes offer graduates the chance to grow into their profession while exploring challenges such as hurricane modelling, pandemic responses and monitoring global supply chains.

# Key offices and people

Swiss Re is a global company headquartered in Zurich, Switzerland, with a presence in 29 countries. As of 31 December 2022, it employed 14 408 regular staff from 121 countries. 52% of Swiss Re’s people work in Europe, the Middle East and Africa (EMEA), 25% in the Americas and 23% in the Asia-Pacific (APAC) region.

# 14 408

Total regular employees as of 31 December 2022 (2021: 13 985)



Americas

# 3 578

people

- 2 411 United States
- 325 Brazil
- 312 Mexico
- 269 Canada
- 261 Colombia

EMEA

# 7 456

people

- 3 370 Switzerland
- 2 013 Slovakia
- 959 United Kingdom
- 450 Germany
- 119 Netherlands
- 113 France
- 108 Italy
- 106 South Africa
- 93 Spain
- 53 Luxembourg
- 31 Denmark
- 20 Israel
- 10 Ireland
- 8 Liechtenstein
- 3 Ivory Coast

APAC

# 3 374

people

- 1 830 India
- 738 China
- 342 Singapore
- 257 Australia
- 101 Japan
- 54 Malaysia
- 52 Korea

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Title:  
Business Report 2022

Editorial:  
Jessica Gaines  
Laura Schuon  
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Design:  
Superunion  
Swiss Re Corporate Real Estate & Services/  
Media Services, Zurich

Photography:  
Boris Baldinger  
Fredi Lienhardt Photography  
Getty Images  
Marc Welti  
Martin Rüttschi  
Peter Frolo  
Phosstudio Zürich  
Swiss Re  
Valeriano Di Domenico

Printing:  
Multicolor Print AG, Baar

printed in  
**switzerland**



This report is printed on sustainably produced paper and is climate neutral. The wood used comes from forests certified to 100% by the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC).

Original version in English.

The Business Report 2022 is also available in German. The web version of the Annual Report 2022 is available at: [reports.swissre.com](https://reports.swissre.com)

Order no: 1490793\_23\_EN\_2

03/23, 300 en