



**ethical
supply chain
program**
FOUNDED BY ICTI

Worker Well-Being Impact Report 2024





Introduction

In an era where the importance of employee welfare is increasingly recognized, I am pleased to present the Ethical Supply Chain Program (ESCP)'s Worker Well-Being Impact Report 2024.

This report reflects our ongoing commitment to enhancing the lives of workers within global supply chains and shares the progress and impact of key initiatives and programs implemented over the past year.

A central component of ESCP's commitment to worker well-being is our Family-Friendly Factory Program. In 2023, we shared our ambitious target to benefit a further 30,000 children by the end of 2025. This goal is being achieved through the creation of 100 childcare centers and the recognition of 50 factories as Family-Friendly. By fostering an inclusive workplace culture that supports the diverse needs of workers and their families, this program aims to create environments where employees, their families, and their communities can thrive.

I am delighted to report that we are well on track to achieve this ambition. **Our ongoing efforts have already led to the establishment of 78 childcare spaces – 74 factory-based and four community-based** – providing critical support to working parents. Additionally, the criteria for recognizing a factory as Family-Friendly has been drafted and is now in the consultation phase. This consultation will seek the expert advice of stakeholders including UNICEF, Save the Children, workers, unions, and employers.

The results we've seen from this program during 2024 demonstrate significant improvements in employee satisfaction and productivity and clear financial benefits for employers, reinforcing the belief that a supportive workplace leads to a more engaged workforce and a business that is resilient and set for success.

In recognition of the work still required globally to achieve gender equality in society, ESCP has continued to develop its Gender Equality Program. This program encompasses training initiatives aimed at breaking down gender stereotypes, promoting equal opportunities for career advancement, support in handling complaints, and advice on implementing policies that support equality in the workplace. Significantly more progress is needed in this area and this report reminds us all of the need, opportunities, and tools available to take effective action.

The ESCP Worker Helpline has undergone significant expansion, now providing essential support to both factory and construction workers. **Since its launch in 2010, over 10 million workers have been given access to the Helpline.** This service is a vital resource for employees seeking assistance with workplace issues. The broadened scope of the Worker Helpline reflects our expertise and understanding of the unique challenges faced by workers in diverse environments. By providing a confidential platform for workers to voice their concerns and receive guidance, we are cultivating a culture of transparency and trust throughout global supply chains.

Adopting a worker-centric business approach not only enhances employee well-being but also yields substantial business benefits. Companies that prioritize the needs and well-being of their workforce experience lower turnover rates, reduced absenteeism, and increased productivity. A satisfied and engaged workforce is crucial for driving innovation and maintaining competitiveness. Furthermore, such an approach promotes a positive corporate reputation, attracting top talent and enhancing customer loyalty.

■ ■ a supportive workplace leads to a more engaged workforce and a business that is resilient and set for success



Introduction

The scalability and sustainability of our programs are integral to their success. By developing frameworks that can be adapted to various contexts and industries, we ensure that the initiatives can be replicated across different locations and sectors. This scalability enables us to reach a broader audience and maximize our impact on worker well-being. Moreover, the sustainability of these programs is supported by ongoing partnerships and stakeholder engagement, which are essential for nurturing a culture of continuous improvement and adaptation.

As we delve into the findings of the ESCP Worker Well-Being Impact Report 2024, we invite stakeholders, partners, and the broader community to engage with us in our mission. The data and personal stories shared within these pages emphasize the significance of worker well-being

as a fundamental component of sustainable business practices. Through collaboration and commitment, we can continue to enhance the lives of workers and create workplaces that are not only productive but also nurturing and equitable.

The report serves as both a reflection of our achievements and a roadmap for future initiatives. We are excited to share these insights and look forward to the continued journey, improving worker well-being across our supply chains.

Together, we can build a future where every worker feels valued, supported, and empowered.

CARMEL GIBLIN

President and CEO

Ethical Supply Chain Program





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Our impact in words



The LEGO Group is proud to support the ESCP Family-Friendly Factory Program, and we are pleased to see its positive impact reach more families in 2024. By adopting family-friendly workplace policies, companies not only elevate employee morale and reduce turnover, but also enhance productivity. This creates a win-win scenario that fosters a more engaged workforce, ultimately benefiting businesses and enriching communities.

Marie Enemark Olsen, Senior Director, Human Rights, Reporting & Responsible Sourcing, the LEGO Group



The Family-Friendly Factory program has made remarkable strides in 2024, further supporting children's well-being and aligning perfectly with our commitment to giving children and their families the opportunity to grow, learn and explore through play. We're proud to see supplier relationships grow stronger, as factories report increased employee morale and a more meaningful connection to the products they create. This initiative truly reflects our commitment to enabling positive change.




Tammy Smitham, Spin Master



The Family-Friendly Factory Program



Our impact in numbers

	2024	2016-2024
 Participating factories	73	121
 Workers supported	8,197	29,394
 Children benefiting	10,415	32,267



What is a Family-Friendly Factory?

A Family-Friendly Factory has considered the distinct needs of its employees who have family and carer responsibilities. Through our Family-Friendly Factory program, we empower employers to improve and create policies and facilities that promote a positive family-work balance.

Since 2016, our Family-Friendly Factory program has positively impacted more than 32,000 children. Two years ago, with a desire to scale the program and make a life-changing difference to more families, we set ourselves an ambitious target to benefit a further 30,000 children from 2023 to 2025. We're delighted to report that we are well on the way to reaching this milestone, with a total of 20,703 children benefiting so far during the period. Our plans for 2025 provide us with confidence that we will achieve the target, but to do this we need the continued support of all our stakeholders, especially factories and suppliers and our program funders.

Creating ethical working conditions is not a 'nice-to-have'; it's both a moral imperative and an economic and social necessity. Factory workers are the backbone of production, but many are forced to choose between their jobs and their families due to rigid schedules, inadequate childcare support, and unfair or unsafe environments. It's a common predicament that fuels absenteeism, high turnover rates, and lower productivity.

A well-supported workforce is a more engaged, healthier, and more productive workforce. Employees feel valued and appreciated, which leads to greater loyalty to the company and increased motivation to work. And when workers – especially women – can remain in secure, well-paying jobs while raising their families, entire communities benefit.

Throughout 2024, 73 factories (65 in China and eight in Vietnam) participated in the program – transforming lives for over 8,000 workers.

With the support of our program funders, we can have an even bigger social impact worldwide.

Our impact in words



The factory owner helped us secure a place in the local free public school, significantly reducing our financial burden. There's also a system that allows dual-income families to request shift adjustments, even if your husband or wife works at another company; this means that one of us is always present with our child in the evenings. I'm hoping to work here for a long time and be part of the factory's continued success.

Feedback from a worker at a Family-Friendly Factory in China



How does the Family-Friendly Factory program work?

The Family-Friendly Factory (FFF) program has benefited from UNICEF's policy guidance and expert advice on family-friendly policies. The program encourages factories to implement policies that improve the physical and mental well-being of workers, typically focusing on time, finances and services.

Each factory entering the program undertakes an initial needs assessment with ESCP, from which a bespoke package of policies, facilities and activities will be suggested. Our teams engage directly with employers, to understand their existing practices and support systems and to speak with the workers themselves, enabling us to pinpoint areas that need transforming.

Senior management and frontline leaders often agree that helping their staff to maintain a work-life balance is important and that companies should bear the responsibility for this. However, they may know very little about family-friendly policies and not be familiar with the process of establishing them and associated services in the workplace.

While each Family-Friendly Factory will look slightly different based on the requirements of the workers and their employers, a typical support package may include:

- **Establishing employer-funded childcare (see page 13)**
- **Creating or improving policies which offer parents benefits, such as flexible working arrangements, enhanced parental leave, and breastfeeding support**
- **Providing employer-funded training and support for parents**

Thanks to donor funding to support factories in year one, we provide the blueprint, support and training. And if amenities like breastfeeding rooms or childcare centers are needed, the factories take control and install them. With this support, factories continue to directly invest in the program themselves

in subsequent years as the business benefits secured are clear. This is an investment in their future success.

The program is designed to be both sustainable and scalable, ensuring long-term positive impacts for workers, their families, and the broader community. Its flexible framework means it is easily customized to meet the specific needs of various factories and regions, adaptable to diverse cultural and operational contexts. Through this strategic approach, we not only deliver immediate benefits but also foster enduring positive change across global supply chains.

Our impact in words



The ESCP team has been a strong pillar of support throughout our journey. They've helped establish the framework for us to successfully implement several initiatives aimed at making life better for our workforce. They've done this by listening to our needs and working with us in an incredibly professional, but also very practical, way.

Man Huang, HR Manager, Dongguan Morning Light Printing Co., Ltd, China



Policies



Our impact in numbers

2024

2016-2024



New policies introduced

44

121



Existing policies enhanced

18

46



Management staff trained

265

677



Policies that balance work and personal life

Implementing family-friendly policies helps factories to boost retention, productivity and loyalty, leading to a more stable, committed and efficient workforce. It also sends a clear sign that the factory is taking ownership of the well-being of its employees, their families, and the community in which it operates.

The focus of the Family-Friendly Factory program is always on empowering managers to look after their workforce in the best way possible, and includes training for management staff to help them implement new policies and practices. Such training is designed to build the foundational knowledge and skills necessary for factories to create a supportive work environment that benefits both workers and their families.





New and updated Family-Friendly policies in 2024

Policy

Measures introduced at the 16 factories that participated throughout 2024 include:

Parental Leave

Increasing maternity leave, parenting leave, companion leave, and flexible paternity leave, enabling working parents to care for – and bond with – their infant, establish routines for feeding and care, and attend to their medical care needs, while also giving recovery time to mothers who have been through childbirth.

Breastfeeding Support

Introducing or optimizing breastfeeding rooms and improving the arrangement for breastfeeding leave to allow for more flexibility. Such support is critical to maternal health and well-being, infant health and development, and gender equity in the workplace.

Flexible Working Arrangements

Creating flexible work options for mothers with children aged 0-3 and breastfeeding mothers, allowing parents to spend quality time caring for their children and supporting early childhood development.

Childcare Support

Arranging themed parent-child activities, creating Family-Friendly Spaces to support childcare (see p13), and giving a monthly childcare allowance.

Other Measures

Providing comprehensive health check-ups for all employees, parental training, scholarships for children, nutritional meals for pregnant women, and women's health knowledge seminars. Additionally, off-site team-building exercises, and celebrating International Women's Day and International Children's Day.



Sustainable Development Goal 8:

Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all.



Five reasons to support the Family-Friendly Factory program

1. Stronger, more resilient supply chains

Supporting Family-Friendly Factories creates a more stable and productive workforce, reducing absenteeism, turnover, and disruptions in the supply chain. When workers' needs are addressed, they are more engaged and committed, leading to higher-quality production and more reliable supply chains for buyers.

2. Enhanced reputation & ESG leadership

For brands and retailers, supporting supplier factories to become Family-Friendly demonstrates leadership in responsible business practices. Representing an important investment in capability building and worker well-being, it's an effective way to integrate child rights into ESG (Environmental, Social, Governance) or Social Impact Investing strategy, and contribute to the UN Sustainable Development Goals (Global Goals/SDGs).

3. Economic growth & community impact

Family-Friendly policies don't just benefit workers, they uplift entire communities, creating a ripple effect of economic stability and growth, and inspiring other local businesses to adopt similar practices.

4. A gender-equitable workforce for the future

Women make up a significant portion of the global manufacturing workforce, yet they are often forced out due to caregiving responsibilities and lack of support. Family-Friendly Factories enable women to remain in employment, advance in their careers, and contribute to business success. This is key to achieving gender equity and maximizing workforce potential.

5. Measurable social & business ROI

Factories participating in the program report financial benefits. For example, Mr Wu, General Manager of Best Top Factory, a long-standing member of ESCP and supporter of worker well-being initiatives, shared factory records that showed a rapid turnover fall from 19.7% in 2016 to 5.1% in 2024, and staggering economic savings of over US\$80,000 per year on employee training through improved worker retention.



At UNICEF, we recognize the vital link between work conditions and the well-being of workers, their children and families. In the past year, ESCP has made significant strides to support companies in addressing challenges like the lack of affordable childcare and insufficient protections for mothers. Central to this is the role of businesses in driving meaningful change for families. They have the opportunity – and responsibility – to eliminate the difficult choice millions of parents face between earning a living and nurturing their children. Family-friendly policies require ongoing engagement and understanding of workers' needs in managing their care burden, and with a view to creating a nurturing environment for children. By scaling these initiatives and creating workplaces and business practices that minimize risks to child development and support families and children to thrive, companies unlock their employees' full potential while contributing to healthier societies and stronger economies.

Ida Hyllested, Senior Adviser, Child Rights and Business, UNICEF



Childcare



Our impact in numbers

2024

2016-2024



Factories participating

55

78



Workers supported

2,179

7,706



Children benefiting

2,140

7,345



Childcare: Supporting workers, strengthening families

Finding affordable, safe and accessible childcare is a challenge for all families globally and for production workers the challenge is even greater. Factories have consistently told us that this issue is the number one reason why workers leave their jobs.

Over 45 million children under five are left at home without adult supervision in low- and middle-income countries¹ and three in four parents have to make major financial changes, such as taking on more work and spending less on food, to pay for childcare².

This is why our Family-Friendly Spaces initiative is so important. Creating employer-funded childcare facilities in factories and communities during school summer vacations or throughout the year, it offers safe, stimulating environments where young people can learn and play while their parents work – free from the stress of worrying about their children's safety.

What began as a small pilot at two Chinese factories in 2016 has grown into an indispensable program that delivers transformative change. Following its biggest year yet in 2023 – when 33 factories participated and 1,384 children benefited – the program continued to go from strength to strength in 2024, made possible with the continued support of our primary funder the LEGO Group, and other funders.

Addressing the evolving childcare needs of left-behind, migrant and local children, a landmark 51 factories and four community centers in China took part and 2,007 children benefited. We also carried out a needs assessment at a factory in Mexico, underlining our commitment to inspiring and supporting companies to create workplaces where all employees can thrive.

Over the years, we have opened 78 Family-Friendly Spaces, with more than 7,000 children enrolled, supporting around 8,000 workers. While this is cause for celebration, we know that many more parents struggle to balance work and family without reliable childcare options. With continued investment from donors, we're determined to reach more factories and change more lives.

We have opened 78 Family-Friendly Spaces, with more than 7,000 children enrolled, supporting around 8,000 workers.

Our impact in words



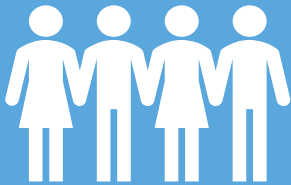
At Macy's, Inc., we are committed to caring for the people who make our products. We take pride in being a source of positive social impact in the communities where we operate. Our partnership with ESCP Family Friendly Spaces helps create a brighter future for all.

**Keelin Evans, VP, Sustainability and Responsible Sourcing,
Supply Chain - Sustainability, Macy's**





Benefits of the Family-Friendly Spaces childcare program



For workers

As well as removing the financial burden of childcare, parents feel supported, knowing their children are safe and well cared for. This leads to greater job satisfaction, reduced stress, and improved mental well-being.



For children

Family-Friendly Spaces foster early childhood development by offering structured activities that promote cognitive, social, and emotional growth. Children benefit from engaging learning experiences, increased social interaction, and a stable routine.



For Employers

Factories report increased efficiency and concentration, as well as more trust between workers and management. The result is lower turnover rates, greater success in attracting new employees, and improved productivity.



For Communities

By easing the childcare burden on working parents, more families can stay together, reducing the social strain caused by family separations. This, in turn, contributes to greater economic stability in local areas, as workers are more likely to remain in their jobs and spend locally.

¹ [UNICEF, 2019](#)

² [Act For Early Years, 2023](#)



Family-Friendly Spaces 2016-2024: Our impact in numbers

Supporting

7,345

children from 2016-2024

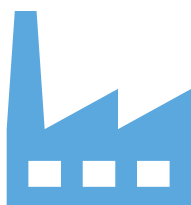


Employees



98%

said their children now had
a safe place to go and had a
good time during summer



93%

cited Family-Friendly Spaces
as a reason to continue
working in the factory



81%

said they now have a
closer relationship with
their children

Factory management



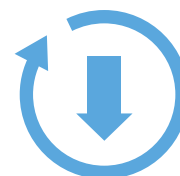
98%

said worker satisfaction
levels have improved



87%

said the program helps
in recruitment



81%

said the program reduces
the turnover rate



A sustainable, scalable solution to a global problem

The program is funded through the generous support of buyers and the customers of participating factories. This means we're able to help a factory implement the scheme in year one and provide all the expert support needed to ensure its success.

After this initial year, every single one of the participating factories with continued operations has consistently funded these spaces year after year. The reason they do so is simple: the program delivers benefits to them, as well as their workers and their customers. It brings long-lasting change and is an incredibly effective solution to what is a global problem.

While the initiative was originally created to support 'left-behind children' in China – estimated at more than 66 million – whose parents migrated domestically to major cities for work, it has evolved to meet changing challenges. More parents now bring their children to live with them full-time, but childcare continues to remain a widespread concern, and we now provide childcare for both local and migrant children.

Looking ahead, we aim to have helped set up 100 childcare spaces worldwide by the end of 2025, ensuring that more workers and their children experience the life-changing benefits they bring.



An example of one of the activities in the Family-Friendly Spaces program is based on the LEGO Group's concept of 'Learning through Play', in this session children were encouraged to learn and understand the living habits of various animals, realize the importance of protecting animals, and build an ideal home for them.

"There was a LEGO building course at the summer program," said the nine-year-old daughter of a worker at a Family-Friendly Factory in China. "Back in the countryside, we had very few toys, so I had never had any experience with LEGO bricks. The teacher guided us and I learned how to use them properly. It was so much fun, and I felt really happy. I've also made a lot of friends here, and whenever I have homework that I don't understand, the teachers and classmates help me out."



Case study

The power of Family-Friendly Spaces



The parents in this photo both work in the sewing department for Huaxing Garments in Hangzhou, about an hour from Shanghai. They are two of the 800-plus staff who produce workwear, leisurewear, and outdoor wear that's exported to more than 20 countries. While the couple live in a dormitory provided by the factory, their 12-year-old son Yuhang is over 450 miles away in the family's hometown of Zhoukou, where he is looked after by his grandparents and attends the local school.

Every summer, Yuhang comes to the factory to live with his parents for about a month. Until recently, he would have to stay alone in the dormitory during the day, doing homework, playing on his phone, and waiting for his parents to finish work. It was a monotonous routine, and one that raised safety concerns due to the lack of adult supervision.

Such a scenario is common. There are an estimated 66 million 'left-behind' children in China, whose parents migrated domestically to major cities for work. But even those parents who have brought their children to live with them full-time have concerns over access to affordable and trusted childcare, particularly during the long school vacation.

In 2024, the factory ran a new Family-Friendly Spaces summer program, which his father signed Yuhang up to, hoping it would provide some supervision and stimulation for his son. Yuhang was quite looking forward to it, as he felt he would have

the chance to meet other children and play together, alleviating his loneliness. But once the program began, they were both overjoyed, as it far exceeded expectations.

The father told us,

"I didn't expect it to have such a rich curriculum and so many activities. It offers science and critical thinking courses, teaches children how to use microscopes, and engages them in LEGO building games, promoting teamwork. It also helps with the children's summer homework."

He was particularly impressed with how the program helped his son to develop good habits and become more responsible: "It has brought many improvements and positive changes. Previously, Yuhang was quite untidy and didn't clean up after himself, but now he takes the initiative to complete daily tasks, and has even been assigned the role of lunchtime supervisor, ensuring that everyone returns their trays after eating."

The father said he was very satisfied with the summer program and would definitely sign up again in 2025 if the program continued.

**The name in this case study has been changed.*



Professional Training



Our impact in numbers

2024

2016-2024



Factories receiving Professional Training

61

121



Professional Training participants

385

1,083



Professional Training

Comprehensive professional training is pivotal to developing supportive work environments and ensuring the success of our Family-Friendly Factory initiatives.

Our training programs are meticulously designed to equip factory management, program leaders, and childcare professionals with the knowledge and skills necessary to promote worker well-being and deliver high-quality childcare through our Family-Friendly Spaces program.

These sessions provide managers with strategies to create a positive work environment, address employee concerns effectively, and implement policies that support the holistic well-being of their workforce.

Training for factory management and program leaders

To ensure the effective implementation of our programs, we ran training sessions for 292 management staff across 73 factories in China and Vietnam during 2024. These sessions covered key areas, such as setting up and operating Family-Friendly Spaces, managing daily activities, ensuring child safety, and effective communication with parents.

Factory leaders also received guidance on handling unexpected situations, such as illness, and the recruitment of teachers. And program leaders were trained in classroom management, child protection, and developing engaging activities – in 2024 with a special focus on Learning Through Play using a LEGO Playbox.

As part of our foundational training, we provided guidance on what Family-Friendly policies are and the benefits they bring to both businesses and workers. Participants were taken through the steps of developing, implementing, and monitoring these policies effectively. The training also explored real-world examples across five categories: breastfeeding support, paid parental leave, flexible working arrangements, childcare support, and

additional measures to create a more supportive and inclusive workplace. In each category, we shared examples of the types of policies launched by others, to inspire the factories to brainstorm and discuss what is most appropriate for them.

Training for teachers and childcare professionals

Recognizing the pivotal role of educators in the Family-Friendly Spaces program, we organized specialized training for 93 teachers and childcare professionals in 34 factories and three communities. By investing in this professional development, we ensure that children receive high-quality, engaging, and developmentally appropriate care.

The training introduced educators to the Family-Friendly Spaces Activity Handbook, equipping them with the skills to conduct lessons and activities effectively. It also incorporated the LEGO Group's concept of 'Learning through Play' approach, helping teachers integrate play-based learning methodologies into their sessions. Additionally, the program covered essential classroom management techniques, including discipline, safety, and child protection, to create a secure and nurturing environment for every child.

Our impact in words

W

Shortly after joining the company, I was tasked with setting up the summer program. Initially, I felt a lot of pressure and didn't know where to start. However, after attending the project manager training and visiting the summer program center at the Shanghai factory, the previously abstract idea of a summer program became much clearer, which gave me confidence. With strong support from my supervisor, the preparation work went smoothly, and the summer program opened as scheduled.

Mr Wu, Project Manager, China








Parental Training



Our impact in numbers

	2024	2016-2024
 Factories participating	38	137
 Workers receiving Training	2,231	9,580
 Children benefiting	4,107	11,456



Parental Training

Family education plays a fundamental role in children's development. Recognizing this, our Parental Training Program equips factory workers – particularly migrant parents – with essential knowledge and skills to build stronger, healthier relationships with their children. By addressing key parenting challenges, the program helps children thrive while also improving the well-being of working parents.

Since 2016, 137 factories and 9,580 employees have participated in these training sessions. In 2024, we expanded our efforts to reflect the evolving challenges of modern family life, introducing new topics such as healthy internet usage, child protection, motivating children's learning, quality companionship, and nurturing positive parent-child relationships.

Training takes place within the factory, making it accessible for workers who may otherwise struggle to find time for parental education. Sessions allow participants to master scientifically proven communication techniques, understand child psychological development, and build essential parenting skills. Themes include:

- **Emotional support: Helping parents cope with the emotional strain of being away from their children and reinforcing their role in their child's life.**
- **Conflict resolution: Teaching effective problem-solving strategies to strengthen the parent-child bond and manage conflicts constructively.**

- **Communication skills: Enhancing parent-child interactions through structured activities and scientifically backed methods.**

Understanding that continuous learning is vital, we provide free, online training materials for workers and management, ensuring they can revisit key lessons at any time. This enables them to refine their skills and apply best practices as their children grow.

In 2024, our training program was implemented across 38 factories in China and Vietnam, with participants once again reporting significant benefits. Workers shared how they have improved their ability to manage their emotions, listen more attentively to their children, and spend quality time together – whether learning, playing, or sharing household responsibilities.

By supporting our Parental Training Program, donors are investing in stronger families, more engaged workers, and healthier communities. Together, we can continue to create environments where parents feel empowered, children feel supported, and workplaces thrive.



This course has been instrumental in helping me manage my emotions. I no longer get angry easily or suppress my feelings; instead, I now find ways to balance my emotions. Once I feel at ease again, I'm able to continue my work effectively.

A parent at a factory in Vietnam



My relationship with my child feels just okay. I think that when he was younger, we were too caught up in our work and didn't focus enough on building our parent-child relationship. Now that he's older and has his own group of friends, our communication has dwindled. After attending the training, I realized how many areas I had overlooked. The examples the teacher provided were incredibly relatable, making it easy for us to grasp the concepts. I also recognized many aspects of my communication style with my child that need improvement. I'm really grateful for the opportunity to attend this class. I've gained a wealth of parenting knowledge. While I know I can't change our relationship overnight, I believe that this learning will help bring us closer together.

A parent at a factory in China

The Gender Equality Program





Gender Equality

Gender equality in the workplace emphasizes equal employment opportunities, equal career development opportunities, maternity protection, equal compensation and benefits, work-life balance support, and the prevention of workplace violence and sexual harassment.

It is a fundamental pillar of worker well-being, yet achieving full parity remains a challenge. Significant inequities in economic participation, leadership representation, and workplace conditions persist, making the urgency for action undeniable.

At ESCP, we are committed to ensuring that all workers – regardless of gender – can thrive and have seen tangible results over recent years. In 2022 we ran a pilot program across 12 factories in China, followed by continued initiatives throughout 2023: all 12 showed marked improvements, with an average Gender Equality Score increase of 43%.

It's clear that life-changing progress is within reach when businesses commit to action, but for us to extend the benefits to more workplaces, greater collaboration and investment is needed. We want to ensure that more factories are supported to create safer and more equitable working conditions; in fact, it's our ambition for 100% of our factories and suppliers we work with globally to have access to our Gender Equality program.

The benefits of gender equality extend beyond individual workplaces. Closing the gender gap fuels economic growth, strengthens social development, and contributes to more stable societies. Factories that prioritize gender parity find it easier to attract and retain employees, reduce risks related to workplace discrimination, and enhance their global reputation. A diverse and inclusive workforce drives innovation, enhances productivity, and unlocks new business opportunities – making gender equality both a moral responsibility and a smart business decision.

We celebrate the brands, factories, and partners who have joined us in making gender equality a reality. And we invite businesses from all industries and regions to contact us – because only with your help can we create workplaces where everyone, regardless of gender, has an equal opportunity to succeed.

Global Gender Gap Report 2024

The World Economic Forum has published the Global Gender Gap Report every year since 2006, examining inequality between men and women in four areas: economic participation, educational attainment, political empowerment, and health.

The most recent publication shows minimal progress across these dimensions. The Global Gender Gap stands at '68.5% closed' among 146 countries. If the gender gap were 100% closed, men and women would have equal opportunities and outcomes in the above four areas. At the current rate, full gender parity will not be achieved until 2158, around 133 years from now.

The message in the Report is a stark one: "Resourcing gender equality efforts is crucial to avoid the rollback of hard-earned progress."

[Download: Global Gender Gap Report 2024](#)



How does the Gender Equality program work?



We welcome both ESCP supplier members and non-certified factories to join our Gender Equality program. It begins with a baseline survey to understand the current policies in place at the factory and gauge employees' awareness of gender equality, gender discrimination, and sexual harassment.

Such insights may include, for example: the factory not having an established internal grievance channel for processing and dealing with issues of discrimination; a sizeable percentage of management staff believing that male employees are more valuable than female staff members; and a significant number of workers saying that sexual harassment is caused by a colleague wearing revealing clothing or appearance.

The education and support provided following the baseline survey takes a different shape in each factory depending on the workplace's needs, but typically covers:

Processes and policies

Helping to establish Gender Equality management systems and methods, as well as using inclusive language in hiring policies and training materials, for example.

Breastfeeding and pregnancy

Enhancing workplace support for pregnant and breastfeeding workers, including creating or improving breastfeeding rooms and ensuring access for pregnant employees to rest when needed.

Support for working parents

Introducing measures such as flexible working hours and improved maternity and paternity leave to better accommodate caregiving responsibilities.

Grievance procedures

Developing or strengthening complaint mechanisms to safeguard workers' rights and meet an increasing number of legal and policy requirements compelling organizations to establish clear, accessible, and safe reporting systems for gender-related workplace grievances, including harassment, discrimination, and unequal treatment.

Awareness Initiatives

Creating a safe and respectful workplace through providing education on recognizing and addressing workplace harassment, and promoting this via measures such as posters in communal areas, morning briefings, flyers, and on-site representatives to address employee concerns.



Sustainable Development Goal 5:

Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.

Gender Equality Resources

Guidebook on Gender Equality in Factories

We have developed a Gender Equality handbook, suitable for deployment in workplaces all over the world. It is designed to be used by companies according to their own unique set of circumstances and encourages businesses to think about how they can proactively do better on gender equality through practical guidance.

Currently available in Simplified Chinese and English, and free of charge to ESCP members, the Guidebook covers:

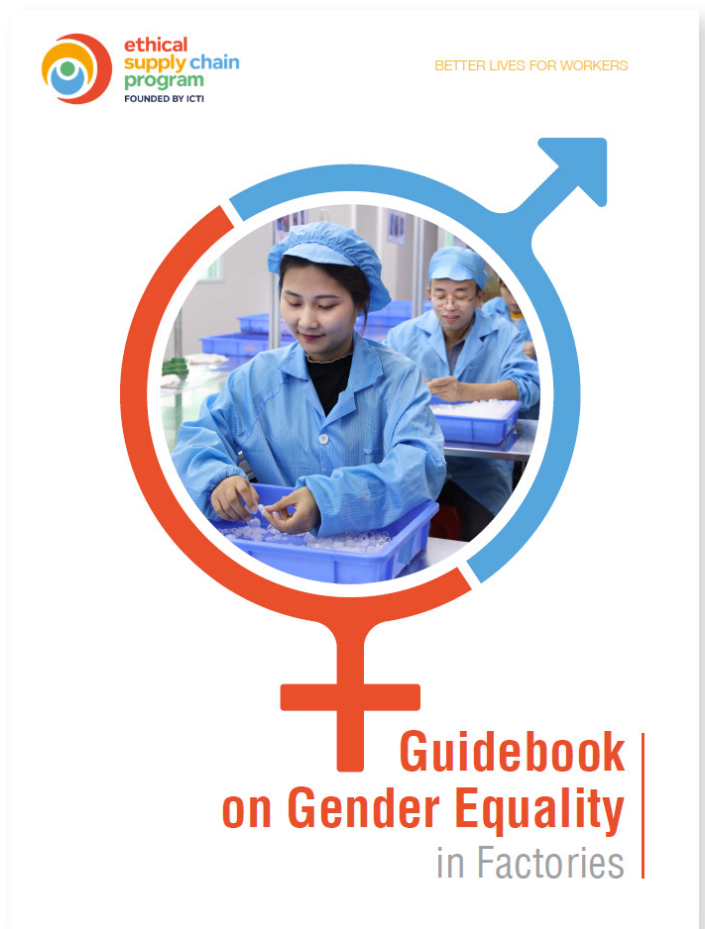
- **The meaning of gender equality in society and in the workplace.**
- **The benefits of promoting gender equality, from preventing harassment, discrimination and workplace violence to meeting customer needs and societal responsibilities and improved talent acquisition.**
- **Tools and steps for establishing policies and systems that ensure gender equality in the workplace.**
- **Real-world case studies and examples of best practice to educate and inspire.**

Educational video series

Our six-part educational video series provides essential guidance on promoting gender equality and preventing workplace harassment and violence. Presented in Simplified Chinese with English subtitles, they are available on the ESCP e-learning platform.

The series emphasizes that creating a harassment-free environment is a shared responsibility, highlighting the importance of recognizing power imbalances, speaking out against harassment, and ensuring that victims feel safe and supported. Other topics include taking immediate action to stop harassment in workplaces and public spaces, protecting individuals from retaliation when filing complaints, and helping victims recover and regain confidence.

By equipping workers with the knowledge and tools to identify, prevent, and respond to harassment, this series fosters safer, more inclusive workplaces where everyone can thrive.



Capability-building workshops

Our online capability-building workshops equip management and staff with the knowledge and skills needed to strengthen gender equality in the workplace. The training is divided into three key areas:

- **The Right Foundation:** Establishing a strong understanding of gender equality, relevant laws and policies, and employer responsibilities.
- **The Right Environment:** Exploring strategies for promoting gender equality and empowering women in the workplace.
- **The Right Information:** Enhancing communication with workers and raising awareness of sexual harassment and violence prevention.

By addressing both legal frameworks and practical implementation, these workshops empower organizations to create safer, more equitable workplaces where gender equality is actively promoted and protected.

Workplace Safety Project

Between May and December 2024, we implemented a gender equality initiative across five factories in China that manufacture apparel for a major fashion brand.

Recognizing that women make up approximately 64% of the brand's tier-one supply chain, this project aimed to enhance workplace safety, well-being, and empowerment. A key component was the introduction and promotion of a worker helpline, providing a confidential resource for workers to report grievances and access counseling support, with a particular focus on female employees.

The anonymous helpline plays a vital role in addressing a broad spectrum of concerns including harassment, discrimination, maternity protection, industrial injury, workplace policies and practices, living condition and parenting challenges.

We look forward to reviewing and sharing the learnings from this program.



Posters at a factory promoting the 'Women Are Safe' Grievance Channel.

ESCP is proud to be a signatory to the UN Women Empowerment Principles (WEP), which support the gender equality dimensions of the SDGs, and a member of the UN Global Compact (UNGC), which exists to advance the achievement of social goals.

**WOMEN'S
EMPOWERMENT
PRINCIPLES**



Worker Helpline



Our impact in numbers	2024	2010-2024
 Workers able to access free, confidential counselling and advice	294,080	10 million
 Participating factories	603	6,142
 Enquiries received and addressed	1,253	24,564



Confidential support for work and life challenges

Our Worker Helpline offers free, confidential counselling and guidance to help employees manage work-related issues impacting both their working and personal lives. It also acts as a confidential grievance mechanism, enabling workers to raise any concerns regarding their employment, workplace safety or well-being with us for further investigation.

Since its launch in 2010, the Helpline has been available to more than 10 million people, with independent qualified professionals providing expert advice on employment matters – such as hours, wages, labor contracts, dismissal and resignation processes, social health insurance, pension plans, and paid leave – as well as relationships, homesickness, and health and hygiene issues.

Without it, employees who aren't well informed about basic health, safety and labor protections face higher risks of rights violations in the workplace. Many do not have the time, knowledge or adequate resources to resolve labor disputes or pursue their labor rights through the legal process. And migrant workers in particular may have limited access to friends and relatives who can provide the emotional support they need at times.

Many migrant workers away from home for the first time struggle with homesickness, with the Helpline offering personal support that may not otherwise be available. Foreign migrant workers can face increased challenges, as they are often recruited through agents and labor brokers and may be unclear of their rights and the commitments companies make to responsible recruitment principles.

Helping factory management and their buyers to identify recurring or emerging issues and drive positive change, the Helpline is a fundamental part

of the ESCP Factory Certification Program, and all supplier members must promote this resource to their workers. It is also available on request to companies whose suppliers are not certified, where employers are seeking to enhance their grievance mechanism and proactively support workers and their managers.

Crucially, the Helpline enables employees to raise any concerns about their safety or well-being with us for further investigation, without fear of retribution. This enables the reporting of worries that may otherwise not be voiced – for example, around unsafe working conditions, harassment or bullying, underage workers, documents being withheld, or being unable to leave a job voluntarily.

The Helpline has managed more than 24,000 cases to date, operating successfully in China since 2010 and extended to Vietnam in 2021, where it has managed 1,219 cases for workers across multiple industries, from apparel to construction.

In response to growing legal requirements for ethical supply chains, the Helpline offers companies a structured way to meet due diligence obligations. This includes supporting compliance for existing regulation including the German Supply Chain Due Diligence Act (LkSG) and the United States' Uyghur Forced Labor Prevention Act (UFLPA) as well as expected future regulation such as the Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Directive (CSDDD).



Together with ESCP and insights gained from the ESCP Helpline data, we are able to enhance our training for factory management and teams, resulting in improved working environments.

**Amita Lam, Senior Director, Global Governance,
Risk Management & Compliance and Human Rights & Social Impact, Mattel.**



Our impact in words

W

I used to work in another factory where I often had to work overtime and was treated poorly, but I had no one to talk to about it. I am grateful that my new employer provides this Helpline service for us, and I am pleased to see a more caring and supportive environment.

A newly employed worker at an ESCP-certified factory.

I want to extend my heartfelt thanks to the ESCP Helpline team for their invaluable support in resolving the severance payment dispute. Your expertise and professionalism were instrumental in clarifying the situation for the employee and ensuring a smooth resolution.

A factory manager in China who sought professional knowledge on a specific matter relating to labor law.

Thank you so much! Your words were so comforting. I no longer feel lost and afraid; I feel empowered to face my work again.

Xiaohui, a recent graduate in China, who received valuable communication skills, methods for improving workplace relationships, and encouragement to have confidence in herself.

Our impact in numbers

2024

2010-2024



Helpline cards distributed

29,000

1,813,500



Cases escalated and resolved

17

1,644

The Worker Helpline card



Find out more: [Worker Helpline](https://www.ethicalsupplychain.org/worker-helpline)



How does the Worker Helpline function?

Access

Operating daily from 9am to 9pm, the Worker Helpline provides trusted, person-to-person support for employees. Unlike automated systems, calls are handled by trained professionals who specialize in counseling, ensuring workers receive friendly, empathetic assistance.

To ensure workers are aware of the Helpline service, all ESCP certified factories must display worker rights information in public areas and distribute Helpline Cards – pocket-sized resources that highlight labor rights details and the toll-free number. Since 2010, 1.8 million Helpline Cards have been distributed across 6,142 factories, with 29,000 distributed in 2024. If a worker calls outside the standard hours or when lines are busy, their message is recorded and they receive a prompt call back.

As well as providing immediate support, the Helpline serves as a grievance mechanism, allowing workers to report serious issues – such as withheld wages, unsafe conditions, or labor disputes – without fear of retaliation. Helpline cases that cannot be fully resolved through phone or email conversations with workers are referred for further follow-up. The majority of these cases are subsequently resolved via our Simplified Procedure, where we liaise with factory management to discuss issues on the workers' behalf.

In most cases, factories respond with a prompt explanation or a solution to the issue raised. When

urgent cases arise, our in-country Programme Monitoring Team investigates and, if necessary, arranges on-site assessments to resolve the problem. Factories are engaged in remediation plans when compliance violations are identified.

Although some factories may initially have anxieties about the Helpline, our data shows that workers use the service responsibly. And by enabling employees to raise concerns through a third party, this confidential channel is a cost-effective mechanism for factories to quickly address issues in real time, improving worker satisfaction and productivity. Supporting factories to strengthen communication with their workforce in this way helps to promote a harmonized working environment and enables factories to respond to issues before they escalate.

Data collected from Helpline interactions is housed in Connect, our factory oversight technology platform for ESCP members. Companies with supplier factories linked to the Helpline can access anonymized insights into the number and nature of calls, escalated cases, and overall workforce concerns. This allows buyers to monitor risks and improve labor conditions in their supply chains.

With a 100% case resolution rate, the Worker Helpline continues to be a vital tool for protecting employees, promoting ethical business practices, and supporting regulatory compliance across global supply chains.



Benefits for workers

Relieves stress, improves job satisfaction, and increases morale.



Benefits for factories

Improves worker-management relationships, and achieves quicker resolution of issues before these escalate.



Benefits for brands, retailers and licensors

Supports the safety and well-being of supply chain workers, assuring the delivery of responsible sourcing commitments and provides access to an effective grievance mechanism.



Top 10 Worker Helpline enquiries in China, 2024

Subject	Percentage of calls
Resignation	15%
Factory rules & policy	10%
Exploratory call*	9%
Wages calculation	9%
Learning about Helpline function	9%
Other / personal issue	8%
Working hours	6%
Leave arrangements	6%
Social security	4%
Job termination	4%

Top 10 Worker Helpline enquiries in Vietnam, 2024

Subject	Percentage of calls
Exploratory call*	34%
Forced / prison labor	8%
Wages calculation	8%
Resignation	7%
Behavior of leaders	6%
Job termination	5%
Delayed salary payment	4%
Discrimination / harassment	4%
Working hours	4%
Social security	3%

* Exploratory calls build trust in the Helpline function and establish relationships with the Helpline team, making them a valuable part of the process.

The Helpline in action

Examples of Worker Helpline calls that were addressed and resolved during 2024 included:

Forced labor and resignation

Workers submitted their resignation letters, but these were rejected by production supervisors, or the production team did not transfer the forms to HR for resolution. As a result, workers were unable to leave after their notice period.

Payment issues

Due to the late submission of resignation letters to HR, these cases were treated as job abandonment, which is considered an illegal resignation. This leads to workers being required to compensate the factory as mandated by law.

Behavior of leaders

Due to cultural and language differences, there were communication gaps between supervisors and local workers; this resulted in misunderstandings, as supervisors appeared to be in a bad temper and shouting at workers. There were also instances of inappropriate language when communicating with workers who made mistakes in production, particularly relating to interactions with female workers.

Working hours

With reduced customer orders, we saw an increase in calls around working hours from employees who were not receiving as much overtime work as in the past.

Capability Training



Our impact in numbers

2024

Total



Progress Visits conducted

683

4,313
(2019-2024)



Training videos reach

270

2,212
(2021-2024)



Capability training: From certification to continuous improvement

Underlining our commitment to protecting workers every day in the workplace, ESCP offers a comprehensive suite of capability-building initiatives designed to enhance factory compliance and promote ethical manufacturing practices.

Progress Visits

Progress visits (PVs) are one of the many benefits ESCP factory members receive after they've achieved certification. We introduced PVs in late-2018 to enhance supplier capabilities in managing labor standards and have conducted more than 2,200 since then, with the annual number rising each year.

Led by a team of PV Specialists, progress visits are key to helping factories remain in compliance with our standards after the auditors have left. During these announced visits we engage with factory staff and management to review and discuss their ongoing efforts to maintain ESCP certification, providing tailored guidance and technical tutoring to address specific social compliance challenges, and being on hand to ensure that all improvements are fully implemented.

PVs differ from traditional audits by fostering open communication and collaboration between ESCP and factory management. It's an approach that promotes

trust and transparency, and allows factories to share difficulties and receive practical solutions aimed at continuous improvement.

During the PV our team also speak directly to workers, this can be in 1:1 conversations or in focus group meetings. We may deploy worker surveys during the visit and share the findings with management during our feedback session. These insights are welcomed by factory management as they provide real-time feedback from workers allowing management to respond promptly.

Our data shows that PVs effectively reduce the occurrence of critical non-compliances identified during audits

– the number of critical violations has decreased year by year since 2020, indicating that our certified factories have made steady progress with our support. In 2024, only 44% of factories were found to have critical violations that appeared and/or reoccurred, compared to 74% in 2020.



The PVs are an essential tool for us. They are really different from the formal auditing. Philip [Liu, one of ESCP's PV Specialists] and his team encourage us to share any areas of concern, and then work together with us to understand the root causes and provide relevant training programmes. They understand the labor laws very well, helping us to deal with any changes that have come, as well as advising on environmental protection issues, which are having more and more focus in this region. They also know every detail around safety compliance and can point out any issues during the visit. When the PV was conducted last year, some issues with the fire evacuation map were identified, so ESCP gave us very detailed guidance on the placement of fire signs, for example.

Joe Zhang, Human Resources Manager, D&S Products Manufactory



Most common challenges raised by factories during Progress Visits in 2024

Challenge	ESCP Recommended Measures
Labor Shortage	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lean Manufacturing: Cost-efficient automation reduces manual labor to a minimum. A higher degree of automation can not only improve production efficiency but also help better collect waste gases and dust, reducing occupational health risks for workers.• Effectively leveraging labor dispatch services and recruitment agencies to enhance recruitment capabilities.• Promote employee benefits to increase worker satisfaction.
Rising Labor, Materials & Energy Costs	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Analyze industry trends and expand into emerging markets.• Strengthen your independent research and development capabilities.• Implement a robust internal quality system to enhance production efficiency while minimizing waste of labor and materials.
Ineffectiveness of Environment, Health, and Safety Training for Workers	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develop training materials that are easy to understand and use a variety of training methods.• An effective supervisory, reward, and punishment mechanism.• Optimize technological processes to reduce occupational hazard factors and minimize injury risks.

Training

The range of training opportunities we offer to factories as part of our Certification program includes online resources and in-person sessions. All focus on driving continuous improvement.

The Ethical Supply Chain Program Essentials course provides a foundational understanding of ESCP requirements over two days, incorporating practical operational examples. For factories seeking deeper insights, an Advanced Training program explores critical topics such as labor practices, wages, working hours, and health and safety standards, such as the use of PPE, and working with machinery or chemicals.

A Fire Safety Training session helps factory staff understand accident prevention and emergency response measures. For those requiring flexible learning, webinars cover various topics with




interactive Q&A segments, while online training via the Connect Platform presents engaging animated materials addressing frequently asked questions about compliance.

Our eLearning platform offers free, engaging educational content, including videos and mini-tests designed to strengthen understanding of workplace safety and responsible recruitment. To further support factories on their certification journey, we also provide a Factory Welcome Pack, consolidating essential training resources, videos, and guidance to build knowledge and capability in responsible sourcing.

And, to accommodate individual factory needs, we provide onsite customized training, tailoring content to address specific challenges and operational requirements.

Focus on China



Our impact in numbers	2024	2010-2024
 Participating factories	571	6,035
 Workers supported	233,142	10 million
 Children benefiting	7,626	29,478



Focus on China

China has one of the largest internal migrant worker populations, at over 295 million, making up more than a third of the country's total workforce¹. These employees are essential to manufacturing industries, but, when moving to urban areas for work, many are forced to leave their children behind in rural areas due to restrictive residency (hukou) policies, lack of childcare, and economic constraints.

There are an estimated 66.93 million 'left-behind children', meaning one in five children grows up without daily parental care². This separation can lead to social and emotional challenges for both the parents – who commonly suffer from feelings of guilt – and the children, who face higher risks of depression, anxiety, and poor academic performance.

Many factory workers quit jobs prematurely due to the stress of family separation, creating high turnover rates and recruitment difficulties for businesses, which in turn suffer from higher operational costs, disrupted production, and reduced efficiency. By addressing workers' family needs, our well-being programs are helping to improve job satisfaction, reduce attrition rates, and create a more stable workforce.

We're proud that during 2024 over 230,000 workers across more than 500 factories were able to access our dedicated Worker Helpline, a vital resource that helps address whatever personal and professional issues they're experiencing, and almost 30,000 children have benefited so far from the bespoke support provided under our Family-Friendly Factory program.

But despite this incredible impact, we know there's more work to do. The need for ethical and Family-Friendly workplaces in China remains urgent, and we're committed to scaling our programs to support even more workers, children, and factories in the coming years.

China Impact Assessment 2024

Impact assessment data underlines how our programs drive real change in workplace culture and retention:



95%

of managers would recommend Family-Friendly policies and measures to other factory management.

92%

of managers said that there was higher engagement from their team members.

82%

of managers said turnover had reduced compared to 12 months ago.



We feel that we have accomplished something particularly meaningful, creating a magical energy that attracts like-minded individuals to work together towards a better society!

Factory management team member

¹ National Bureau of Statistics of China (2023)

² National Bureau of Statistics of China, UNICEF China, UNFPA China (2023), 'What the 2020 Census Can Tell Us About Children in China: Facts and Figures'

Building bridges to employee well-being



In 2019, Broadway joined our Family-Friendly Factory program. “We’ve had a lot of guidance on how to improve employees’ well-being,” says Bill Huang, HR Director. “This has led to us creating new policies to support pregnant and breastfeeding workers, as well as establishing activities that promote meaningful engagement with workers on an ongoing basis.”

Ask Bill what he’s most proud of, and he points to the creation of a safe space for children to learn and play onsite while their parents are at work. The summer program is free to employees and sees professional teachers hired to run activities designed to build children’s trust, self-assurance, and social skills.

“Over the past few years, more than 200 children have participated in the program at our Shenzhen factory,” he says. “It’s truly remarkable to see how these children develop during this short learning experience, becoming more confident and outgoing.”

The program has contributed to a supportive environment that cultivates loyalty, as well as maintaining production schedules and reducing absenteeism: “Before, many employees were taking leave over summer, or requesting an hour or two off work to care for their children,” Bill recalls.

Like all our Family-Friendly Factory support, the childcare initiative at Broadway follows UNICEF policy guidance and expert advice, guaranteeing the highest level of care for workers’ families while also being practical to implement.

Broadway has also introduced parent training sessions, teaching employees how to better communicate with their children, especially in cases where families live apart. And the company is in no doubt that these changes have led to stronger connections between workers and management.




“Workers are happier now,” says Bill. “They feel the company genuinely cares about them and their families – that it’s not only a factory where you go to earn money, but a place where you can also be part of a community that has shared values and is actively seeking to improve people’s lives.”

This is reflected in stats that show the average tenure of Broadway’s frontline workers now exceeds five years and the average monthly turnover rate across all factories was down to 7% in 2024. Bill also notes that being a Family-Friendly Factory is a selling point for recruiting new talent, while the well-being initiatives have created a ripple effect in the community, inspiring other local businesses to adopt similar practices.

With so many elements to the support, how would he sum up the impact our programs have? Bill pauses for a moment, then says: “When you’re by a river and there’s no bridge, then maybe you will die because there’s no way across. ESCP provides that bridge across the water so you can go to the place you want to be.”

Focus on Vietnam



Our impact in numbers	2024	2021-2024
 Participating factories	59	144
 Workers supported	62,758	110,693
 Children benefiting	2,789	2,789



Focus on Vietnam

Working parents in Vietnam face multiple challenges – from lacking time to spend with their children to high childcare costs and the resulting overreliance on grandparents, who may not have the physical ability or financial means to provide adequate care.

While the majority of parent workers live with their children, around 10% live apart, having moved away from their hometowns for work¹. This separation puts a strain on relationships, parents' well-being, and children's development.

Even those parents able to live with their children face significant issues, with 46% saying that they don't have enough time to spend with their sons and daughters, 62% believing that factories should allow them to take time off to care for sick children, and 14% reporting that they leave youngsters under the age of six unattended throughout the year while they are at work¹.

Addressing such issues is why ESCP exists. Our worker well-being programs in Vietnam reached 2,055 factory employees and helped more than 2,000 children throughout 2024. The life-changing measures introduced included training to equip workers with parenting skills, as well as

Family-Friendly policies on maternity, paternity and working hours. We also saw the introduction of breastfeeding rooms, childcare allowances, student awards, and family day activities that enabled parents and children to enjoy quality time together.

On top of this, our Helpline provided free, confidential advice and an effective grievance mechanism for more than 62,000 workers during the year.

By supporting employees in Vietnam to maintain a better balance between work and personal life, we're not only helping businesses contribute to the overall well-being of society and promote sustainable economic growth, but also to increase worker loyalty and productivity. Continued commitment to scaling these programs is essential to empowering more workers, children, and businesses in the coming months and years.

Vietnam Impact Assessment 2024

Employee survey data reveals a positive shift in management styles and attitudes toward employees following the introduction of worker well-being measures:



100%

of parent workers said that parent-child activities organized by the factory can help strengthen their relationship with their children.

91%

of workers said their manager now had a better understanding of the challenges employees face.

96%

of workers were 'very satisfied' or 'satisfied' with their factory's support for parents, showing a strong positive response to the Family-Friendly initiatives.



The company organized a Family Day event, which was very joyful and meaningful. My children really enjoyed participating because they played many games and made many new friends, who are the children of my colleagues. We had a very memorable time together. I hope the company will organize this event again next year, and I will definitely continue to register my children to participate with me.

A mother of seven-year-old and four-year-old sons

¹ Needs Assessment in Eight Vietnam Factories by ESCP and The Centre for Child Rights and Business, 2023

Case study

Supporting pregnancy in the workplace

For many factory workers in Vietnam, pregnancy can present considerable challenges, from physical discomfort to concerns about workplace safety and balancing work and health.

Thanks to ESCP and the factory's dedication to worker well-being, one quality control (QC) department worker has experienced firsthand how thoughtful policies and initiatives can make all the difference.

Having worked at the company for nine months, Tran Thi Hoa was seven months pregnant with her first child when we spoke to her. From the early stages of pregnancy, the factory's management recognized the importance of ensuring Tran's well-being and implemented a range of measures to help her navigate work while prioritizing her health.

In the first month of pregnancy, she experienced common symptoms for expectant mothers of fatigue and discomfort. Understanding her needs, the factory provided two days of paid leave to allow Tran to rest and recover. To ensure a healthy work-life balance, her schedule was adjusted to regular hours, eliminating the need for overtime. She was also granted paid time off for prenatal check-ups, aligning with her doctor's recommendations. Recognizing the importance of a safe work environment, the factory assigned her to lighter, non-hazardous tasks to reduce strain. She was also given access to a designated motorcycle parking area for pregnant women and mothers with young children, making the daily commute easier.

With adequate nutrition crucial during pregnancy, the factory's on-site kitchen plays an important role in ensuring expectant mothers receive the best possible care. Meals are tailored to provide a special diet for pregnant women, ensuring adequate nutrition for both mother and baby. The kitchen strictly follows dietary guidelines, avoiding salty foods and other items that should be limited during pregnancy.

Tran has also felt a strong sense of community within her workplace. Her team leaders and colleagues regularly offer assistance, especially



during peak production times when many items need quality checks. This collaborative and understanding work culture has made the pregnancy journey much smoother.

Reflecting on her experience, Tran said:

"I feel incredibly supported here. The work environment is comfortable, and everyone is friendly. The benefits provided make me very satisfied, and I plan to stay with the factory for the long term."

Tran's experience emphasizes the importance of Family-Friendly workplace policies in retaining colleagues, boosting morale, and fostering a loyal workforce. Through ESCP's initiatives, factories can promote a healthier, more sustainable work environment for employees.

Focus on Mexico





Focus on Mexico

Needs Assessment

In 2024 we conducted a 2nd needs assessment in Mexico. This time in Monterrey, in the state of Nuevo Leon. This assessment aimed to gather information about the current situation and determine the needs and priorities of workers, specifically focusing on parent and female workers.



80%

of parent workers said they would like to participate in parent-child activities at the factory (17 % said 'maybe')

67%

of working mothers said that managing childcare responsibilities is sometimes challenging

52%

of parents said that they would like to send their child to a factory-organized childcare center or after-school centre (30% said 'maybe')

As we expand our initiatives globally, Mexico represents a key part of our future ambition. In 2024, we strengthened our presence in the country, carrying out a further needs assessment activity to better understand the well-being and family support requirements of workers, as well as the priorities of factories.

Findings from this assessment highlighted significant difficulties for working parents related to childcare access, shift schedules, and balancing work and family responsibilities. Many parent workers struggle to find time for their sons and daughters, with some leaving them unattended at home or relying on informal childcare arrangements.

Long hours and limited childcare options make it hard for many mothers to return to their jobs after maternity leave. Workers may have limited awareness of maternity protection, while the lack of a designated breastfeeding room makes things even tougher. At the same time, young adults want more career growth opportunities and help with balancing their jobs and personal lives. HR management teams also struggle, as long shifts and short breaks make it hard to schedule training or put policies into practice.

It's important to understand the broader policy landscape in Mexico, which influences these conditions. The end of childcare funding in 2019, which had covered 90% of costs, has greatly affected worker well-being. With two million children previously supported, its removal has left many families struggling to afford childcare, forcing parents – especially mothers – to choose between employment and caregiving. The 18% rise in women's employment while the funding was available shows

how many depended on it to balance job and family life.

Factories and businesses feel the effects of these struggles in multiple ways: a less stable workforce, lower productivity, and increased employee turnover, especially among women. Companies without Family-Friendly policies may lose experienced workers and find it harder to recruit and retain staff. Offering solutions like childcare, flexible working hours, and parental support can help tackle these concerns while promoting gender equality.

Addressing these gaps requires a collaborative approach, bringing together industry leaders, policymakers, and organizations committed to creating meaningful, long-term solutions. Over the last year, we have engaged with key industry clusters, across the automotive, aerospace, home electric appliances, and manufacturing sectors. Collaboration with UNICEF Mexico has been instrumental in promoting the Family-Friendly Factory program, and discussions with government officials have further strengthened our efforts.

ESCP is committed to supporting real change in Mexico for working parents and their children. Together, we can achieve improvements in childhood development and well-being, and contribute to a more inclusive workforce.



Future Plans

As we look ahead, the Ethical Supply Chain Program remains steadfast in its commitment to enhancing worker well-being across global supply chains. Building on the successes of our current programs, we are excited to outline our future ambitions that will further our mission and expand our impact globally. A priority will be to enable more workers, in more sectors, to access our support programs globally.

We aim to broaden the scope of our Family-Friendly Factory Program, creating more supportive environments for working parents and fostering a culture that prioritizes work-life balance. We are dedicated to promoting gender equity at all levels of the workforce, empowering women through opportunities, advocacy, and training programs which contribute to a more inclusive workplace culture.

Enhancing our Worker Helpline and other support services is also a priority, ensuring that all workers have access to the resources they need for their health and well-being. This includes expanding offerings to encompass other services of value to employers and employees. Our future efforts will emphasize collaboration with NGOs, local communities, and other stakeholders, creating a wider network of support and resources that amplifies our positive impact on worker well-being.

We will continue to focus on improving our data collection and reporting practices, ensuring that we can effectively measure the impact of our initiatives. Transparency and accountability will remain central to our mission, allowing us to adapt and improve continually.

Our ambitions will continue to align closely with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly those pertaining to good health and well-being, quality education, gender equality, and decent work and economic growth. We recognize the challenges posed by the 2030 deadline for achieving these goals. Many factors, including socio-economic disparities and evolving workplace dynamics, complicate efforts to make meaningful progress.

However, we remain committed to overcoming these challenges through innovative solutions and collaborative approaches. By integrating the SDGs into our strategic framework, we aim to enable companies to contribute positively to global efforts to achieve these critical goals.

As we close the ESCP Worker Well-Being Impact Report 2024, I am filled with optimism for the future. The journey ahead is one of collaboration, innovation, and unwavering dedication to improving the lives of workers. Together, we can build a sustainable framework that not only meets the needs of today's workforce but also sets a precedent for future generations.

I invite all stakeholders to join us in this vital mission as we strive to create workplaces where every worker feels valued, supported, and empowered. Let us continue to work hand-in-hand towards a brighter, more equitable future for all.

CARMEL GIBLIN

President and CEO

Ethical Supply Chain Program

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Creating a better life for workers

The following factories and communities participated in ESCP worker well-being programs in 2024:

China

Factories

Beijing Topcent Printing Co., Ltd	Hape International (Ningbo) Ltd.
Beihai Hongsheng Toys Limited	Heshan Astros Printing Ltd.
Best Image (Ying De) Toys Co., Ltd.	In-Tech Electronics Ltd.
Best Pacific International Holdings Limited	Loong Run (He Yuan) Toy Co., Ltd.
Broadway Precision (Shenzhen) Company Limited	Million Best (Fogang) Toys Co., Ltd
C & C Joint Printing Co. (Shanghai) Ltd.	New Time (Jiangxi) Plastic Mfg., Ltd
C&C Joint Printing Co., (Guangdong) Ltd.	Quality and Beauty Garments Co., Ltd
Chongqing Xiongye Toy and Garment Company LTD	Ruee Appliances Co., Ltd
Combine Will (Cangwu) Industrial Company Limited	Shanghai Donnelley Printing Co., Ltd.
Dongguan ChangAn Mattel Toys Co., Ltd	Shanghai Security Printing Co., Ltd.
Dongguan Golden Cup Printing Co., Ltd.	Shanghai Zidan Food Packaging & Printing Co., Ltd.
Dong Guan Lam Sun Plastic Products Co., Ltd.	Suzhou MYS Environmental Protection & Technology Co., Ltd.
Dongguan Hungor Plastics Electronics Products Ltd.	Taixiang Auto Parts (Shenzhen) Co., Ltd
Dongguan L C Technology Co., Ltd.	Tak Yuen Plastic Products (Dongguan) Co., Ltd.
Dongguan Morning Light Printing Co., Ltd.	Topwin Creative (Chongqing) Limited
Dongguan Showtime Plastic Product Co., Ltd	Topwin Toy (Chongqing) Limited
Dongguan Sunjune Electronic Technology Company Ltd.	Tung Pak Printing (Huizhou) Co., Ltd.
EVERWIN TOYS (DONGGUAN) CO., LTD.	Wistron InfoComm (Zhongshan) Corporation
Fo Gang County Million Best Electronics Plastic & Amp Co Ltd	Wynnewood Industrial (Heyuan) Co., Ltd.
Forte-Mind Industrial (BeiHai) Company Limited	XINGYUE (YongZhou) Investment Co., Ltd.
Foshan City Nanhai Mattel Diecast Co., Ltd.	Ying De Best Top Toys co. Ltd
Foshan Sansico Printing & Packaging Co., Ltd.	Yinpin Electronic (Shenzhen) Co., Ltd
Global Furniture (Zhejiang) Co., Ltd	Yongzhou Mayuanda Toys Co., Ltd.
Gold Eagle Printing Co., Ltd	Yuanli Toys (Heyuan) Limited
Guangdong Asano Technology Co., Ltd.	Zhejiang Cayi Vacuum Container Co., Ltd
Guangdong Firstunion Animation Technology Co., Ltd.	Zhejiang Pinghu Huaxing Garment Co., Ltd
Guangdong UBO electronics Co., LTD	Zhongshan Yong Sheng Toys Factory
(Ultimate Beneficial Ownership)	
Guangdong Yanjing Beer Co., Ltd	

Communities

Baiyulan Family Service Center (in Gaobu town)

Community Service of Shenzhen Toy Association (in Leyuan Kindergarten)

Dongguan Yuyuan Industrial Park

Shangken Community in Changping Town of DG



Vietnam

Factories

Anh Khoa Brother Co Ltd
Cotec Plastic Co Ltd
GFT Unique Vietnam Co Ltd
Leo Paper Products (Vietnam) Ltd
Quilling Card Vietnam Co Ltd
South Thien Long Manufacturing Trading Co Ltd
StarPrint Vietnam Joint Stock Company
Superior EMS Vietnam Ltd

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Sustainable Development Goal 17:

Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development.



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As a Non-Profit Organization, the Ethical Supply Chain Program fosters industry collaboration, creates impact, increases efficiency, and reduces costs. We are a proud member of the United Nations Global Compact (UNGC) and our programs support a number of the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). In particular, SDG3 : Promote Good Health & Wellbeing; SDG4: Quality Education; SDG5: Gender Equality; SDG8: Decent Work & Economic Growth; SDG10: Reduced Inequalities; SDG13: Climate Action; and SDG17: Partnerships for the Goals.

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