



We are driven by our values

Nonconformism
Impact
Empathy
Diversity
Courage

Our performance in 2021 | Our commitment for the future

Transformative Legal Experts

**PL
MJ**

Methodological approach to the report

This is our second Sustainability Report. Every year, we publish our sustainability performance in accordance with the methodology and indicators of the GRI - Global Reporting Initiative, and this includes the economic, social and environmental dimensions.

In addition, we monitor the targets previously set and fulfil our commitment to be constantly accountable to our community of stakeholders. This community includes our employees, clients, suppliers, partners, educational institutions and the community in general.

This Sustainability Report capitalises on the 2020 edition, available [here](#). The materiality analysis we use to identify the key topics that result from the intersection between the internal and external perspective on sustainability remains unchanged for 2021. The key topics are therefore (i) mental health and well-being, (ii) diversity and inclusion, and (iii) responsible business.

The renewal of concerns for each of these issues was mainly reinforced through the internal consultation we carried out with a group of our people who actively participated in focus groups and who contributed so much to the content of this report. We also tested their relevance with stakeholders.

The new content for the 2021 edition of the Sustainability Report is the inclusion of a learning section and a monitoring section for commitments made. The lessons learnt section is an exercise in reflection on what has gone well and what has failed, to record these lessons and better inform future decisions. Monitoring our commitments also requires us to be accountable in a transparent way.

This Sustainability Report covers the period from 1 January 2021 to 31 December 2021. If you would like to know more about the Report, or have any suggestions or comments, please do not hesitate to share them with us.

Focused on sustainability

with an eye on a regenerative economy

At a more macro level, 2021 was perhaps one of the most important years of the last decade for everything it represents. On the one hand, there were the challenges of a turbulent beginning marked by the limitations and negative impact of the pandemic. On the other hand, there was the hope that prevailed towards the end of the year, when we gained control over the pandemic situation and returned to normality. At all these points, we witnessed the power of collective mobilisation, both in containing the pandemic and in the search for effective solutions to it.

Looking at PLMJ's situation, in our efforts to achieve sustainability and alignment with our business, two key messages marked 2021. One of them relates to the concept of normality. The other, to our values as a firm.

Normality could not mean a return to the pre-pandemic period, because we would be ignoring everything that has happened – and changed – in the last two years, just as we would be dismissing the opportunity we have to change the course of structural elements of our lives. One of these elements is the focus on sustainability to ensure that each one of us, individually and as an organisation, contributes to a change of paradigm that enables us to promote a fair and inclusive society, and to achieve our global goals in response to the climate emergency.

The concept of sustainability means meeting the needs of current generations without compromising the needs of future generations. Unfortunately, being sustainable and leaving the world as we found it is no longer enough. Focusing on neutrality is not enough. We must go further, to promote justice in our society and the regeneration of our planet. And we must not only avoid negative impact, but actually create positive impact.

We are aware of our role and capacity to help achieve this as legal and strategic partners of the business sector. We are committed, especially through our responsible business practice, to working on a daily basis with our partners and clients to achieve this vision together.

Values cannot just be something you write on a wall to remind you when you walk by. They are not something that is imposed through evaluation tools. They are a source of inspiration for our decisions and the platform that leads us to reflect on our actions. Because it is decisions and actions that shape organisations. Each of our values lives within our vision of sustainability:

- Nonconformism that makes us refuse to accept impossibilities and pushes us to learn in order to constantly improve.

- The positive and negative impact we have on our stakeholders, as we aim to maximise the positive and minimise the negative.
- The way we identify with the problems of our people and our clients, the empathy we bring to the issue of mental health and well-being, one of our main priorities.
- The diversity that already gives us strength at various levels and which we aim to improve, because we know it makes us even stronger and more resilient as an organisation.
- The courage to invest in a new area of practice, responsible business, without fear of learning from our mistakes and making business commitments.

We have a road to travel and we are not afraid to travel it. Because we know where we want to go and, most importantly, because we travel it with the motivation to do so together with our own people and with our suppliers, clients and partners.

Bruno Ferreira

Managing partner at PLMJ



We focus on learning in order to improve

The question ‘Why not?’ is one that best defines our nonconformism. At PLMJ, we strive not to be constrained by preconceptions. We do not accept impossibilities. That is why the question we asked ourselves the most in 2021 was ‘Why not?’.



Why not...

...centralise all sustainability information to collect it systematically and use it to inform our management decisions?

This is what we have done with the adoption of the APlanet tool a piece of integrated management software that aims to monitor, manage and measure our sustainability performance. The implementation of this system has taken longer than expected, as we have learnt that:

- It is essential to empower teams across the board so they feel equipped to adopt this tool on a day-to-day basis;
- Existing management software must be aligned with new tools (such as APlanet) to avoid duplication of tasks.



Why not...

...ask our people and teams what concerns them, to make it crystal clear where we should act to improve their mental health and well-being?

We have answered this question through our annual employee satisfaction listening and measurement survey. Our people participated actively and we clearly identified what they value most:

- the possibility of flexibility to design their way of working, including working from home,
- communication and working together within teams, and
- autonomy in managing work.

However, we have also learned where we need to improve. And these areas tell us where our greatest focus will be over the coming year: (i) the feeling of working longer hours than prior to the pandemic, and (ii) the inability to switch off from work. We also learned that 75% of our employees want to exercise more, and over half want to eat in a healthier way. We know where we have to act.



Why not...

...become a B-Corp (Benefit Corporation), to integrate sustainability across our internal processes and in the way we support our clients?

- We have respected this commitment by starting a long and diligent process through which we are learning that we have several areas for improvement. These are mainly in the efficient management of resources and processes. We have also learned that we have undertaken a lot of internal initiatives that are not formalised as internal human resources policies, but they have the potential to be so.
- This process is teaching us that the significance of a classification is relative and that our aim is to improve annually, rather than having a very high classification from the start. We want to walk this path with our own people, and with our clients and partners. We expect to become a B Corp by the end of 2022.

We hope that our nonconformism of 2021 will lead us to have better data management in the area of sustainability, will make us more effective in providing better mental health and well-being conditions for our employees, and will lead us to be a B Corp that travels a path of continuous improvement.

Our commitment

In 2020, we made 24 commitments in our Sustainability Report and these were made in three areas: mental health and well-being, diversity and inclusion, and responsible business.

Mental health and well-being

Monitor the uptake and impact of our flexible working policies and adjust, as necessary.

Ongoing

Maintain and expand our annual pulse survey focused on the topic of mental health and well-being, to identify the main needs and inform our actions accordingly.

Ongoing

Organise a conference to discuss mental health in the legal profession with peers and clients.

Complete

Promote the Mindful Business Charter in Portugal.

Ongoing

Structure a tailored package of wellness support services for all employees, where PLMJ can be either a provider or an enabler.

Ongoing

Expand the pilot with Mystery Minds, an impact startup whose solution creates an informal support network among work colleagues.

Complete

In terms of mental health and well-being, 2021 saw an expansion in our practices of listening and measuring employee satisfaction through an extension of the annual questionnaire. The expectation for the coming years is that there will be a better understanding of the priority areas for action when it comes to this topic. Here, PLMJ will continue to lead the debate and promote the topic in the sector, especially through the [Mindful Business Charter](#).



Diversity and inclusion

As the first large organisation to join the HeforShe movement in Portugal, our aim is to help bring the initiative to other firms and companies in the country.

Complete

Analyse and monitor our compensation structure and packages.

Complete

Monitor the uptake and impact of our policies to address systemic barriers to inclusion such as our increased parental leave and flexible working policies.

Ongoing

Implement a sponsorship initiative to encourage and support career progression.

Not started

Implement gender diversity in interview panels and audit gender balance in recruitment.

Ongoing

Report on diversity metrics across several dimensions, beyond gender.

Ongoing

Monitor and mitigate unconscious bias and gender-related stigmas, and deliver employee training on inclusion and gender equality.

Complete

Support Leading Together, an INSEAD Alumni Association initiative that promotes gender balance in business leadership.

Complete

Join the second edition of Target Gender Equality, a gender equality accelerator programme from UN Global Compact.

Complete



The topic of diversity and inclusion was marked essentially by the support for external initiatives, organised by leading organisations such as HeforShe, INSEAD and the UN Global Compact.

Internally, we held the first workshops in the area of unconscious biases. These initial workshops should give way to across-the-board processes in the coming years, to ensure compliance with all the commitments in this area.

Responsible Business

Expand the Responsible Business practice.

Complete

Implement the Community and Sustainability modules of APlanet, an integrated solution to track and manage ESG key performance indicators.

Ongoing

Become a B Corporation.

Ongoing

Include ESG criteria in selecting suppliers.

Ongoing

Include quantitative and qualitative Responsible Business targets in annual appraisals of employees.

Complete

Implement internal and external whistleblowing channels.

Ongoing

Inclusion of our Code of Conduct on our website.

Complete

By 2025, 10% of revenues coming from our Responsible Business practice.

Ongoing

Net zero target: achieve carbon neutrality of our operations by 2030, via a combination of reduction, removal and offsetting actions.

Ongoing

The topic of responsible business requires long-term work because of the commitments assumed until 2025 (revenue) and until 2030 (carbon neutrality). 2021 was a year of expansion and of formalising our Responsible Business practice. It was also a year of creating internal incentives to foster greater dedication to working with clients to achieve sustainability goals.

For 2022, we hope to achieve B-Corp certification and adopt sustainability criteria for our suppliers in a structured way. To achieve these two objectives, the full implementation and widespread adoption of the APlanet tool will be fundamental.



Our focus



The next three chapters describe what each of these three key priority areas means to us, the work we have done on them and where we are falling short. For each area, we have defined commitments for which we can be held accountable in the years to come.

A large, dark, circular graphic on the left side of the page contains silhouettes of two people in a dynamic, athletic pose. They are positioned against a bright, glowing light source, creating a strong backlight effect. The person in the foreground is leaning forward, while the second person is behind them, with one leg raised high. The overall mood is energetic and focused.

Mental health and well-being

Mental health and well-being

Through the lens of empathy

A major part of our success as an organisation is due to the fact we identify fully with the situations of our people and our clients. Empathy is therefore one of PLMJ's core values. We take care of our people and our clients because we feel their problems as our own, and we pursue our efforts in the area of mental health and well-being with empathy.

We work on this area internally – by ensuring that our employees have the tools and conditions they need to feel a high level of well-being and mental health –and externally where we lead in driving debate and discussion on this issue in the legal sector.

2021 Focus

identification of priority areas for our lawyers and staff

In 2021, the annual listening and satisfaction measurement questionnaire for our people reached over 290 lawyers and over 130 members of the management team (support staff).

Most of the issues are consistent between lawyers and the management team. In particular, the issue that resulted in a unanimous conclusion is the positive perception about the possibility to design the way of working, including working from home. About 90% of the people working at PLMJ recognise this flexibility as something positive.



Initiatives to be maintained

Other positive points to highlight include the spirit of communication and cooperation, and autonomy in managing and carrying out our work. In the same measure, around 80% of our people can see how their work brings value and has a positive impact on the company. Based on this feedback, we are aware of the areas where we should continue to invest.

80%

of our people can see how their work brings value and has a positive impact on the company.

Areas for improvement

However, around 50% of our people feel that they work longer hours than before the pandemic. The is the same with the inability to disconnect from work, and this has greater incidence among the management team. These answers give us clues about the areas where we need to act, particularly in the phases of work management and planning, to ensure that that an adequate level of resources is allocated to each project.

50%

of our people feel that they work longer hours than before the pandemic.

What our people want to change

75% do more physical exercise

66% dedicate more time to other activities

50% eat more healthily

45% sleep better

45% deal with stress better

20% do meditation

6% give up smoking

Priority commitment for 2022

To structure a package of additional benefits in the area of mental health and well-being, where PLMJ can be both a provider and a facilitator. By implementing this commitment, PLMJ will respond to the requests from its lawyers and staff in a way that is customised to their individual needs and preferences.





Diversity and inclusion

Diversity and inclusion

Fundamental values

Our differences make us stronger. We see diversity as a broad concept, including socio-economic conditions, ideologies, age, race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, physical abilities, religious or other beliefs, skills, previous experience and ways of working. In our mission to support our clients and partners in their transformation processes, ensuring diversity in all these dimensions is essential for us to deliver the best results and quality support.

In the area of diversity and inclusion, we mainly look inwards to provide the best conditions for our people so that they can live their choices and ideals to the fullest.



2021 Focus

promoting gender equality initiatives

In 2021, our work on diversity was focused on the topic of gender equality.

Externally, we joined the HeforShe movement in Portugal, a United Nations initiative that aims to promote gender equity, with a special focus on mobilising men for this agenda. We supported the Leading Together initiative, led by the INSEAD Alumni Association. This organisation disseminates information and studies on gender equality in the business sector in Portugal, and rewards companies with the best performance in this area. We also participated in the UN Global Compact’s Target Gender Equality accelerator programme. This programme supports the implementation of best practices in the promotion of gender equality among companies.

Internally, we focused on the analysis and monitoring of our internal policies regarding the promotion of gender equality. These include parenting policies (for fathers and mothers) and flexible working policies. This internal work had two main objectives::

- to ensure that all our people are aware of the policies and initiatives available, and
- to continue to gather information and feedback from our people to improve our response in these areas.

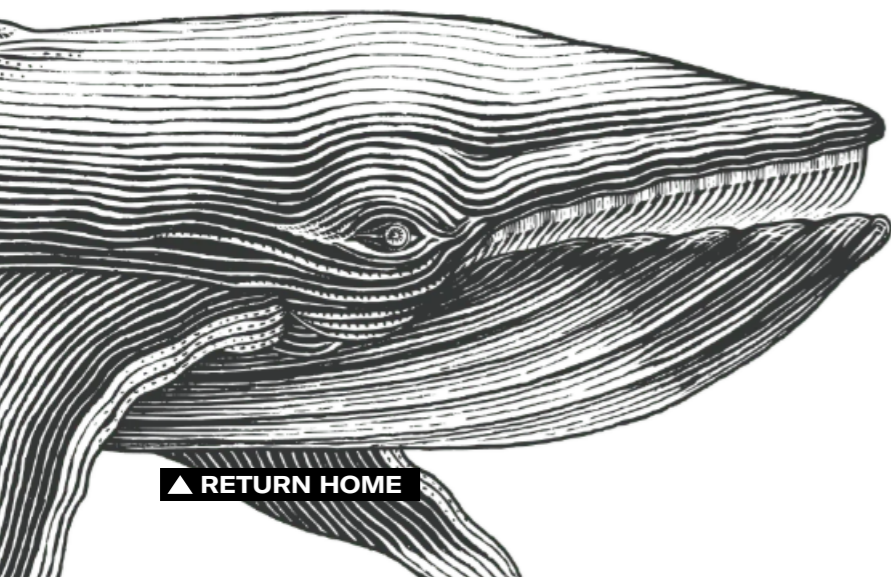
Key figures 2021 gender equality

Between 2020 and 2021, we saw a slight positive evolution in gender equality at the most senior levels – partners and associates – with an increase of two percentage points in the representation of women at both levels.

	♂	♀
Partners	68% 70% in 2020	32% 30% in 2020
Associates	40% 42% in 2020	60% 58% in 2020
Trainee lawyers	38% 37% in 2020	62% 63% in 2020
Management Team	37% 30% in 2020	63% 70% in 2020

Priority commitment for 2022

To implement support and mentoring initiatives to encourage career progression. We know that internal mentoring and aspirational role models are essential to inspire new generations of lawyers towards balanced, fair and inclusive career progression.





Responsible Business

Responsible Business

The courage to be trailblazers

Courage for us means not being afraid of anything or anyone. We confront complexity with the rigour it requires and with the levity that enables us to overcome any obstacles that arise.

Adopting a responsible business approach is a complex challenge. As a law firm, we know that we have to improve our internal practices in order to manage our business responsibly. However, the potential positive impact we can create is all the greater if we focus on the external as well as the internal.

We are in an excellent position to exert a positive influence over our clients and partners by providing legal and strategic support in areas aligned with sustainable development and a regenerative economy.

2021 Focus

expanding what we offer in the area of responsible business

In the past year, we have expanded the team working in our Responsible Business practice to nine people in conjunction with broadening our service offering to include support in:



**business and
human rights**



**social and
sustainable finance**



**business
ethics**

We continued to implement and advise on projects in partnership with our clients in the following areas:

- Preparation of sustainability policies in accordance with the main compliance standards at the national and international level.
- Analysis of reporting duties in ESG (Environmental, Social, Governance) matters.
- Preparation of internal policies on integrity, whistleblowing and good governance practices.
- Contribution to submissions to the S&P Global CSA/SAM benchmark.
- Legal analysis for investors and promoters of Social Impact Bonds.
- Advice on the structuring of contracts and bond issues aligned with sustainability indicators, with a special emphasis on the energy sector.

Priority commitment for 2022

Obtain B Corp certification. Through B Corp certification, we can ensure that we implement internal and external initiatives that are strategic and aligned with our areas of business. With this certification, we will formalise our work in sustainability matters with our stakeholders.

Execute to comply

The reporting and monitoring exercise of our sustainability work in 2021 has made it clear what our priorities are for the coming years. We know which issues are relevant to our stakeholders – mental health and well-being, diversity and inclusion, responsible business – and we have made commitments that are specific and measurable.

To achieve this, the next few years will be dedicated to executing the outlined plan and to reporting on our progress accordingly, while we learn along the way.

- In mental health and well-being, we want to move from internal listening – where we dedicated resources in 2021 – to tangible actions that meet the needs of our people.
- In diversity and inclusion, we intend to go beyond the issue of gender equality, by promoting a full diversity agenda, with tangible actions for career advancement for all our people.
- With regard to responsible business, we want to become a B-Corp, in order to more thoroughly formalise the business objectives that we have set for this new practice area.

Internally, we are committed to and aligned with meeting these objectives to make sure we have the social and environmental impact we have set as our target. Through the annual publication of our sustainability report, we will continue to be accountable to our partners and clients, and to our lawyers and staff, and our suppliers.

I want to share my sense of gratitude for all those who contribute on a daily basis to the stories, content and numbers that are mirrored in this report. It is on a daily basis, behind the scenes, that all our impact as an organisation is created, from the inside – from our people – to the outside – to our partners and clients.

For those who read this: we are always available for anyone who wants to be involved with our work on sustainability. My direct contact is daniela.amaral@plmj.pt and it would be an honour to work together, share and learn more about sustainability.

Daniela Amaral



GRI Metrics

Our performance: Economic, social, environmental and governance

We apply the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) standards in order to frame and report our sustainability performance. Our interpretation of these guidelines is based on the relevance of the issues to our business and to the sector itself. As a result, we do not report on every single GRI indicator, but only on those we consider to be relevant and even applicable to our business. The sharing of our 2021 performance is self-declared and its conclusions have not been audited by third parties. Our commitment is to return to this analysis of our sustainability performance on an annual, comparative basis, to allow us to tailor our policies to the ambitious goals we have set.

[GRI Disclosure](#)

