Corporate Governance Report

Corporate governance refers to the entire system for managing and supervising a company. This includes its organization, values, corporate principles and guidelines as well as internal and external control and monitoring mechanisms. Effective and transparent corporate governance ensures that BASF is managed and supervised responsibly with a focus on value creation. It fosters the confidence of our investors, the financial markets, our customers and other business partners, employees, and the public in BASF.

The fundamental elements of BASF SE’s corporate governance system are: its two-tier system, with a transparent and effective separation of company management and supervision between BASF’s Board of Executive Directors and the Supervisory Board; the equal representation of shareholders and employees on the Supervisory Board; and the shareholders’ rights of co-administration and supervision at the Annual Shareholders’ Meeting.

Direction and management by the Board of Executive Directors

- Board of Executive Directors strictly separate from the Supervisory Board
- Responsible for company management
- Sets corporate goals and strategic direction

The Board of Executive Directors is responsible for the management of the company, and represents BASF SE in business undertakings with third parties. BASF’s Board of Executive Directors is strictly separated from the Supervisory Board, which monitors the Board of Executive Directors’ activities and decides on its composition. A member of the Board of Executive Directors cannot simultaneously be a member of the Supervisory Board. As the central duty of company management, the Board of Executive Directors agrees on the corporate goals and strategic direction of the BASF Group as well as its individual business areas; determines the company’s internal organization; and decides on the composition of management on the levels below the Board. It also manages and monitors BASF Group business by planning and setting the corporate budget, allocating resources and management capacities, monitoring and making decisions on significant individual measures, and supervising operational management.

The Board’s actions and decisions are geared toward the company’s best interests. It is committed to the goal of sustainably increasing the company’s value. Among the Board’s responsibilities is the preparation of the Consolidated and Separate Financial Statements of BASF SE and reporting on the company’s financial and nonfinancial performance. Furthermore, it must ensure that the company’s activities comply with the applicable legislation and regulatory requirements, as well as internal corporate directives. This includes the establishment of appropriate systems for control, compliance and risk management as well as establishing a company-wide compliance culture with undisputed standards.

Decisions that are reserved for the Board as a whole by law, through the Board of Executive Directors’ Rules of Procedure or through resolutions adopted by the Board, are made at regularly held Board meetings called by the Chairman of the Board of Executive Directors. Board decisions are based on detailed information and analyzes provided by the business areas and specialist units, and, if deemed necessary, by external consultants. Board decisions can generally be made via a simple majority. In the case of a tied vote, the casting vote is given by the Chairman of the Board. However, the Chairman of the Board does not have the right to veto the decisions of the Board of Executive Directors. Members of the Board of Executive Directors are authorized to make decisions individually in their assigned areas of responsibility.

The Board can set up Board committees to consult and decide on individual issues such as proposed material acquisitions or divestitures; these must include at least three members of the Board of Executive Directors. For the preparation of important decisions, such as those on acquisitions, divestitures, investments and personnel, the Board has various commissions at the level below the Board that carefully assess the planned measure and evaluate the associated opportunities and risks, and based on this information, report and make recommendations to the Board – independently of the affected business area.

The Board of Executive Directors informs the Supervisory Board regularly, without delay and comprehensively, of all issues important to the company with regard to planning, business development, risk situation, risk management and compliance. Furthermore, the Board of Executive Directors coordinates the company’s strategic orientation with the Supervisory Board.
The Statutes of BASF SE and the Supervisory Board have defined certain transactions that require the Board of Executive Directors to obtain the Supervisory Board’s approval prior to their conclusion. Such cases include the acquisition and disposal of enterprises and parts of enterprises, as well as the issue of bonds or comparable financial instruments. However, this is only necessary if the acquisition or disposal price or the amount of the issue in an individual case exceeds 3% of the equity reported in the last approved Consolidated Financial Statements of the BASF Group.

For more information on risk management, see the Forecast from page 133 onward.

The members of the Board of Executive Directors, including their areas of responsibility and memberships on the supervisory bodies of other companies, are listed from page 159 onward.

Compensation of the Board of Executive Directors is described in detail in the Compensation Report from page 169 onward.

**Competence profile, diversity concept and succession planning for the Board of Executive Directors**

The Supervisory Board works hand in hand with the Board of Executive Directors to ensure long-term succession planning for the composition of the Board of Executive Directors. BASF aims to fill most Board positions with candidates from within the company. It is the task of the Board of Executive Directors to propose a sufficient number of suitable candidates to the Supervisory Board.

BASF’s long-term succession planning is guided by the corporate strategy. It is based on systematic management development characterized by the following:

- Early identification of suitable candidates of different professional backgrounds, nationalities and genders
- Systematic development of leaders through the successful assumption of tasks with increasing responsibility, where possible in different business areas, regions and functions
- Desire to shape strategic and operational decisions, and proven success in doing so, as well as leadership skills, especially under challenging business conditions
- Role model function in putting our corporate values into practice

The aim is to enable the Supervisory Board to ensure a reasonable level of diversity with respect to education and professional experience, cultural background, international representation, gender and age when appointing members of the Board of Executive Directors. Independent of these individual criteria, the Supervisory Board is convinced that ultimately, only a holistic approach can determine an individual’s suitability for appointment to the Board of Executive Directors of BASF SE. The overall aim is to ensure that the Board of Executive Directors as a whole has the following profile, which serves as a diversity concept:

- Many years of management experience in scientific, technical and commercial fields
- International experience based on background and/or professional experience
- At least one female Board member
- A balanced age distribution to ensure the continuity of the Board’s work and enable seamless succession planning

The number of Board members is based on the insights gained by BASF as a company with an integrated leadership culture and is determined by the needs arising from cooperation within the Board of Executive Directors. In May 2018, this was reduced from eight to seven members in the course of the changes to the composition of the Board of Executive Directors, and again in January 2020 to six members as part of ongoing efficiency measures. The standard age limit for members of the Board of Executive Directors is 63.

The current composition of the Board of Executive Directors meets the competence profile and the requirements of the diversity concept in full.
Supervision of company management by the Supervisory Board

- **Supervisory Board appoints, monitors and advises Board of Executive Directors**
- **Four Supervisory Board committees**

The Supervisory Board appoints the members of the Board of Executive Directors and supervises and advises the Board of Executive Directors on management issues. As members of the Supervisory Board cannot simultaneously be on the Board of Executive Directors, a high level of autonomy is already structurally ensured with regard to the supervision of the Board of Executive Directors.

In addition to the SE Council Regulation, the relevant legal basis for the size and composition of the Supervisory Board is provided by the Statutes of BASF SE and the Agreement Concerning the Involvement of Employees in BASF SE (Employee Participation Agreement), which also includes the regulations applicable to BASF for implementing the statutory gender quota for the Supervisory Board. The German Codetermination Act does not apply to BASF as a European stock corporation (Societas Europaea, SE).

The Supervisory Board of BASF SE comprises 12 members. Six members are elected by the shareholders at the Annual Shareholders’ Meeting. The remaining six members are elected by the BASF Europa Betriebsrat (BASF Works Council Europe), the European employee representation body of the BASF Group. It is planned to reduce the period of appointment for the members of the Supervisory Board from five to four years. The aim is to ensure that the maximum membership duration up to which a Supervisory Board member can be classified as independent continues to correspond to a total of three election terms. The Supervisory Board reduced this duration from 15 to 12 years in accordance with the new version of the German Corporate Governance Code, which was revised in 2019 (2020 Code). A change to the Statutes to this effect will be proposed to the Annual Shareholders’ Meeting 2020.

The meetings of the Supervisory Board and its committees are called by their chairpersons and, independently, at the request of one of their members or the Board of Executive Directors. The shareholder and employee representatives of the Supervisory Board prepare for Supervisory Board meetings in separate preliminary discussions in each case. Resolutions of the Supervisory Board are passed by a simple majority vote of the participating members. In the event of a tie, the vote of the Chairman of the Supervisory Board, who must always be a shareholder representative, shall be the casting vote. This resolution process is also applicable for the appointment and dismissal of members of the Board of Executive Directors by the Supervisory Board. Resolutions can, as needed, also be made in writing or through other means of communication outside of the meetings, as long as no member objects to this form of passing a resolution.

The Board of Executive Directors regularly informs the Supervisory Board about matters such as the course of business and expected developments, the financial position and results of operations, corporate planning, the implementation of the corporate strategy, business opportunities and risks, and risk and compliance management. The Supervisory Board has embedded the main reporting requirements in an information policy. The Chairman of the Supervisory Board is in regular contact with the Board of Executive Directors, especially with its chairman, outside of meetings as well.

BASF SE’s Supervisory Board has established a total of four Supervisory Board Committees: the Personnel Committee, the Audit Committee, the Nomination Committee and the Strategy Committee.

- **Personnel Committee**

**Members**

Dr. Jürgen Hambrecht (chairman), Michael Diekmann (until May 3, 2019), Franz Fehrenbach (since May 3, 2019), Sinischa Horvat, Michael Vassiliadis

**Duties**

- Prepares the appointment of members to the Board of Executive Directors by the Supervisory Board as well as the employment contracts to be entered into with members of the Board of Executive Directors
- When making recommendations for appointments to the Board of Executive Directors, considers professional qualifications, international experience and leadership skills as well as long-term succession planning, diversity, and especially the appropriate consideration of women
- Prepares the resolutions made by the Supervisory Board with regard to the system and amount of compensation paid to members of the Board of Executive Directors

- **Audit Committee**

**Members**

Dame Alison Carnwath DBE (chairman), Tatjana Diether, Franz Fehrenbach (until February 29, 2020), Anke Schäferkordt (since March 1, 2020), Michael Vassiliadis

**Duties**

- Prepares the negotiations and resolutions of the Supervisory Board for the approval of the Financial Statements, the Consolidated Financial Statements and the Management’s Reports including the Nonfinancial Statements and discusses the quarterly statements and the half-year financial report with the Board of Executive Directors prior to their publication
- Deals with monitoring the financial reporting process, the annual audit, the effectiveness of the internal control system, the risk
management system, and the internal auditing system as well as compliance issues
– Is responsible for business relations with the company’s external auditor: prepares the Supervisory Board’s proposal to the Annual Shareholders’ Meeting regarding the selection of an auditor, monitors the auditor’s independence, defines the focus areas of the audit together with the auditor, negotiates auditing fees, evaluates the quality of the audit, and establishes the conditions for the provision of the auditor’s nonaudit services; the chairman of the Audit Committee regularly discusses this with the auditor outside of meetings as well
– Deals with follow-up assessments of acquisition and investment projects
– Is authorized to request any information that it deems necessary from the auditor or Board of Executive Directors; can also view all of BASF’s business documents and examine these and all other assets belonging to BASF. The Audit Committee can also engage experts such as auditors or lawyers to carry out these inspections

**Financial experts**
Dame Alison Carnwath DBE and Franz Fehrenbach are members with special knowledge of, and experience in, applying accounting and reporting standards and internal control methods pursuant to the German Corporate Governance Code.

**Nomination Committee**

**Members**
Dr. Jürgen Hambrecht (chairman), Prof. Dr. François Diederich (until May 3, 2019), Prof. Dr. Thomas Carell (since May 3, 2019), Dame Alison Carnwath DBE, Michael Diekmann (until May 3, 2019), Franz Fehrenbach (since May 3, 2019), Waldemar Helber, Sinischa Horvat, Michael Vassiliadis

**Duties**
– Handles the further development of the company’s strategy
– Prepares resolutions of the Supervisory Board on the company’s major acquisitions and divestitures

**Meetings and meeting attendance**
In the 2019 business year, meetings were held as follows:
– The Supervisory Board met six times.
– The Personnel Committee met four times.
– The Audit Committee met five times.
– The Nomination Committee met once.
– The Strategy Committee met once.

With the exception of one meeting, at which one member was absent, all respective members attended all meetings of the Supervisory Board. With the exception of the meeting of the Nomination Committee, at which one member was absent, all respective members attended all meetings of the Supervisory Board’s committees.

For more information on the Supervisory Board’s activities and resolutions in the 2019 business year, see the Report of the Supervisory Board from page 176 onward

For an individual overview of meeting attendance, see basf.com/supervisoryboard/meetings

The Supervisory Board’s Rules of Procedure and its committees can be found at basf.com/supervisoryboard

**Competence profile, diversity concept and objectives for the composition of the Supervisory Board**

**Composition criteria: professional and personal qualifications, diversity, and independence**

One important concern of good corporate governance is to ensure that seats on the responsible corporate bodies, the Board of Executive Directors and the Supervisory Board, are appropriately filled. On December 21, 2017, the Supervisory Board therefore agreed on objectives for the composition, the competence profile and the diversity concept of the Supervisory Board in accordance with section 5.4.1 of the German Corporate Governance Code in the version dated February 7, 2017, and section 289f(2) no. 6 of the German Commercial Code (HGB). These were expanded on December 19, 2019, in particular with respect to the criteria for assessing independence, based on the new recommendations of the German Corporate Governance Code, which was revised and amended in 2019 (2020 Code). The guiding principle for the composition of the Supervisory Board is to ensure qualified supervision and guidance for the Board of Executive Directors of BASF SE. Candidates shall be proposed to the Annual Shareholders’ Meeting for election to the Supervisory Board who can, based on their professional expertise and experience, integrity, commitment, independence and character, successfully perform the work of a supervisory board member at an international chemical company.

**Competence profile**
The following requirements and objectives are considered essential to the composition of the Supervisory Board as a collective body:
- Leadership experience in managing companies, associations and networks
- Members’ collective knowledge of the chemical sector and the related value chains
- Appropriate knowledge within the body as a whole of finance, accounting, financial reporting, law and compliance as well as one independent member with accounting and auditing expertise (“financial expert”) within the meaning of section 100(5) of the German Stock Corporation Act (AktG)
- At least one member with in-depth experience in innovation, research & development and technology
- At least one member with in-depth experience in digitalization, information technology, business models and start-ups
- At least one member with in-depth experience in human resources, society, communications and the media
- Specialist knowledge and experience in sectors outside of the chemical industry

For more information on the Supervisory Board's competence profile, see basf.com/supervisoryboard

Diversity concept
The Supervisory Board strives to achieve a reasonable level of diversity with respect to character, gender, international representation, professional background, specialist knowledge and experience as well as age distribution, and takes the following composition criteria into account:
- At least 30% women and 30% men
- At least 30% of members have international experience based on their background or professional experience
- At least 50% of members have different educational backgrounds and professional experience
- At least 30% under the age of 60

Further composition objectives
- **Character and integrity:** All members of the Supervisory Board must be personally reliable and have the knowledge and experience required to diligently and independently perform the work of a supervisory board member.

- **Availability:** Each member of the Supervisory Board ensures that they invest the time needed to properly perform their role as a member of the Supervisory Board of BASF SE. The statutory limits on appointments to governing bodies and the recommendations of the German Corporate Governance Code must be complied with when accepting further appointments.

- **Age limit and period of membership:** Persons who have reached the age of 72 on the day of election by the Annual Shareholders’ Meeting should generally not be nominated for election. Membership on the Supervisory Board should generally not exceed three regular statutory periods in office; this currently corresponds to 15 years.

- **Independence:** To ensure the independent monitoring and consultation of the Board of Executive Directors, the Supervisory Board should have an appropriate number of independent members on the board as a whole, and an appropriate number of independent shareholder representatives. The Supervisory Board deems this to be the case if more than half of the shareholder representatives and at least eight members of the Supervisory Board as a whole can be considered independent. Effective immediately, the Supervisory Board’s assessment of independence is based on the criteria in the new version of the German Corporate Governance Code, which was revised in 2019 (2020 Code). Among other things, this means that a member of the Supervisory Board is no longer considered independent if they have been a member of the board for 12 years or longer. The previous threshold was a membership duration of 15 years. The Supervisory Board has additionally defined the following principles to clarify the meaning of independence: The independence of employee representatives is not compromised by their role as an employee representative or employment by BASF SE or a Group company. Prior membership of the Board of Executive Directors does not preclude independence following the expiry of the statutory cooling-off period of two years. Material transactions between a Supervisory Board member or a related party or undertaking of the Supervisory Board member on the one hand, and BASF SE or a BASF Group company on the other, exclude a member of the Supervisory Board from being qualified as independent. A material transaction is defined as one or more transactions in a single calendar year with a total volume of 1% or more of the sales of the companies involved in each case. In the same way, if a Supervisory Board member or a related party of a Supervisory Board member has a personal service or consulting agreement with BASF SE or one of its Group companies with an annual compensation of over 50% of the Supervisory Board compensation, or a Supervisory Board member or a related party of a Supervisory Board member holds more than 20% of the shares in a company in which BASF SE is indirectly or directly the majority shareholder, they likewise do not qualify as independent.

Status of implementation
According to the Supervisory Board’s own assessment, its current composition meets all of the requirements of the competence profile. With the election of the new Supervisory Board member Alexander C. Karp at the Annual Shareholders’ Meeting 2019, the competence area of digitalization – which is key to the future viability of BASF – is now also fully covered.

According to the Supervisory Board’s assessment, 11 of the 12 current members are considered independent based on the above criteria. Only one Supervisory Board member is no longer classified as independent: Franz Fehrenbach has been a member of the Supervisory Board since January 2008 and thus no longer meets the newly applied criterion of a membership duration of less than 12 years as of January 2020. To continue to ensure the full independence of the Audit Committee, the Supervisory Board therefore resolved to appoint Anke Schäferkordt to the Audit Committee as the second shareholder representative in place of Franz Fehrenbach, effective March 1, 2020.

For more information on the statutory minimum quotas for the number of women and men on the Supervisory Board, see the following section:
The independent Supervisory Board members are named under Management and Supervisory Boards from page 159 onward
Commitments to promote the participation of women in leadership positions at BASF SE

- Minimum quota on Supervisory Board, target figures for Board of Executive Directors and top management

The supervisory board of a publicly listed European stock corporation (SE) that is composed of the same number of shareholder and employee representatives must, according to section 17(2) of the SE Implementation Act, consist of at least 30% women and 30% men. Since the 2018 Annual Shareholders’ Meeting, the Supervisory Board of BASF SE comprises four women, of whom two are shareholder representatives and two are employee representatives, and eight men; its composition meets the statutory requirements.

As a target figure for the Board of Executive Directors, the Supervisory Board determined that, in accordance with section 111(5) AktG for the second target-attainment period after the law’s entry into force, which began on January 1, 2017, the Board of Executive Directors should continue to have at least one female member. This represented 12.5% on the date the target was set (based on eight members of the Board of Executive Directors), and represents 16.7% as of January 1, 2020 (based on six Board members). The Board of Executive Directors also decided on target figures for the proportion of women in the two management levels below the Board of Executive Directors of BASF SE: Women are to make up 12.1% of the leadership level directly below the Board, and the level below that is to comprise 7.3% women. This corresponds to the status at the time these target figures were determined. The deadline for achieving the goals for the second target-attainment period was set for December 31, 2021.

BASF views the further development and promotion of women as a global duty independent of individual Group companies. We set ourselves ambitious global goals for this and made further progress in 2019. BASF will continue working on expanding the percentage of women in its leadership team. The company is carrying out, and constantly enhancing, worldwide measures to this effect.

Shareholders’ rights

- Shareholders’ rights of co-administration and supervision at the Annual Shareholders’ Meeting

One share, one vote

Shareholders exercise their rights of co-administration and supervision at the Annual Shareholders’ Meeting, which usually takes place within the first five months of the business year. The Annual Shareholders’ Meeting elects half of the members of the Supervisory Board and, in particular, resolves on the formal discharge of the Board of Executive Directors and the Supervisory Board, the distribution of profits, capital measures, the authorization of share buybacks, changes to the Statutes and the selection of the auditor.

Each BASF SE share represents one vote. All of BASF SE’s shares are registered shares. Shareholders are obliged to have themselves entered with their shares into the company share register and to provide the information necessary for registration in the share register according to the German Stock Corporation Act. There are no registration restrictions and there is no limit to the number of shares that can be registered to one shareholder. Only the persons listed in the share register are entitled to vote as shareholders. Listed shareholders may exercise their voting rights at the Annual Shareholders’ Meeting either personally, through a representative of their choice or through a company-appointed proxy authorized by the shareholders to vote according to their instructions. Individual instructions are only forwarded to the company on the morning of the day of the Annual Shareholders’ Meeting. Voting rights can be exercised according to shareholders’ instructions by company-appointed proxies until the end of the agenda discussion during the Annual Shareholders’ Meeting. There are neither voting caps to limit the number of votes a shareholder may cast nor special voting rights. BASF has fully implemented the principle of “one share, one vote.” All shareholders entered in the share register are entitled to participate in the Annual Shareholders’ Meetings, to have their say concerning any item on the agenda and to request information about company issues insofar as this is necessary to make an informed judgment about the item on the agenda under discussion. Registered shareholders are also entitled to file motions pertaining to proposals for resolutions made by the Board of Executive Directors and Supervisory Board at the Annual Shareholders’ Meeting and to contest resolutions of the Meeting and have them evaluated for their lawfulness in court. Shareholders who hold at least €500,000 of the company’s share capital, a quota corresponding to 390,625 shares, are furthermore entitled to request that additional items be added to the agenda of the Annual Shareholders’ Meeting.

Implementation of the German Corporate Governance Code

- BASF SE follows all recommendations of German Corporate Governance Code

BASF advocates responsible corporate governance that focuses on sustainably increasing the value of the company. BASF SE follows all of the recommendations of the German Corporate Governance Code in the version dated February 7, 2017, the version in force on submission of the Declaration of Conformity. The additional recommendations of the new German Corporate Governance Code, which was revised in 2019 and is still to be published in the Federal Gazette (Bundesanzeiger) (2020 Code), are likewise largely already met. The remaining necessary implementation measures have already been initiated. In the same manner, BASF follows nearly all of the nonobligatory suggestions of both of the above versions of the German Corporate Governance Code. We have not implemented the suggestion to enable shareholders to follow the proceedings of the entire Annual Shareholders’ Meeting online.
The Annual Shareholders’ Meeting is publicly accessible via online broadcast until the end of the speech by the Chairman of the Board of Executive Directors. The subsequent discussion of items on the agenda is not accessible online in order to preserve the character of the Annual Shareholders’ Meeting as a meeting attended by our shareholders on-site.

(2) The joint Declaration of Conformity 2019 by the Board of Executive Directors and Supervisory Board of BASF SE is rendered on page 183

For more information on the Declaration of Conformity 2019, the implementation of the Code’s suggestions and the German Corporate Governance Code, see basf.com/en/corporategovernance

Disclosures according to section 315a(1) of the German Commercial Code (HGB) and explanatory report of the Board of Executive Directors according to section 176(1) sentence 1 of the German Stock Corporation Act (AktG)

As of December 31, 2019, the subscribed capital of BASF SE was €1,175,652,728.32, divided into 918,478,694 registered shares with no par value. Each share entitles the holder to one vote at the Annual Shareholders’ Meeting. Restrictions on the right to vote or transfer shares do not exist. The same rights and duties apply to all shares. According to the Statutes, shareholders are not entitled to receive share certificates. There are neither different classes of shares nor shares with preferential voting rights (golden shares).

The appointment and dismissal of members of the Board of Executive Directors is legally governed by the regulations in Article 39 of the SE Council Regulation, section 16 of the SE Implementation Act and sections 84 and 85 AktG as well as Article 7 of the Statutes of BASF SE. Accordingly, the Supervisory Board determines the number of members of the Board of Executive Directors (at least two), appoints the members of the Board of Executive Directors, and can nominate a chairperson, as well as one or more vice chairpersons. The members of the Board of Executive Directors are appointed for a maximum of five years. As a general rule, the initial term of appointment for Board members at BASF is three years. Reappointments are permissible. The Supervisory Board can dismiss a member of the Board of Executive Directors if there is serious cause to do so. Serious cause includes, in particular, a gross breach of the duties pertaining to the Board of Executive Directors and a vote of no confidence by the Annual Shareholders’ Meeting. The Supervisory Board decides on appointments and dismissals according to its own best judgment.

According to Article 59(1) of the SE Council Regulation, amendments to the Statutes of BASF SE require a resolution of the Annual Shareholders’ Meeting adopted with at least a two-thirds majority of the votes cast, provided that the legal provisions applicable to German stock corporations under the German Stock Corporation Act do not stipulate or allow for larger majority requirements. In the case of amendments to the Statutes, section 179(2) of the German Stock Corporation Act requires a majority of at least three-quarters of the subscribed capital represented. Pursuant to Article 12(6) of the Statutes of BASF SE, the Supervisory Board is authorized to resolve on amendments to the Statutes that merely concern their wording. This applies in particular to the adjustment of the share capital and the number of shares after the redemption of repurchased BASF shares and after a new issue of shares from authorized capital.

By way of a resolution of the Annual Shareholders’ Meeting on May 3, 2019, the Board of Executive Directors is authorized, with the consent of the Supervisory Board, to increase, until May 2, 2024, on a one-off basis or in portions on a number of occasions, the company’s share capital by a total of up to €470 million by issuing new shares against contributions in cash or in kind (authorized capital). A right to subscribe to the new shares shall be granted to shareholders. This can also be achieved by a credit institution acquiring the new shares with the obligation to offer these to shareholders (indirect subscription right). The Board of Executive Directors is authorized to exclude the statutory subscription right of shareholders to a maximum amount of a total of 10% of share capital in certain exceptional cases that are defined in Article 5(9) of the BASF SE Statutes. This applies in particular if, for capital increases in return for cash contributions, the issue price of the new shares is not substantially lower than the stock market price of BASF shares and the total number of shares issued under this authorization does not exceed 10% of the shares currently in issue or, in eligible individual cases, to acquire companies or shares in companies in exchange for surrendering BASF shares.

By way of a resolution of the Annual Shareholders’ Meeting on May 12, 2017, the Board of Executive Directors was authorized to purchase up to 10% of the shares in issue at the time of the resolution (10% of the company’s share capital) until May 11, 2022. At the discretion of the Board of Executive Directors, the purchase can take place on the stock exchange or by way of a public purchase offer directed to all shareholders. The Board of Executive Directors is authorized to sell the repurchased company shares (a) through a stock exchange, (b) through a public offer directed to all shareholders and – with the approval of the Supervisory Board – to third parties, (c) for a cash payment that is not significantly lower than the stock exchange price at the time of sale and (d) for contributions in kind, particularly in connection with the acquisition of companies, parts of companies or shares in companies or in connection with mergers. In the cases specified under (c) and (d), the shareholders’ subscription right is excluded. The Board of Executive Directors is furthermore authorized to retire the shares bought back and to reduce the share capital by
the proportion of the share capital accounted for by the retired shares.

Bonds issued by BASF SE grant the bearer the right to request early repayment of the bonds at nominal value if, after the date of issue of the bond, one person – or several persons acting together – hold or acquire a volume of BASF SE shares that corresponds to more than 50% of the voting rights (change of control), and one of the rating agencies named in the bond’s terms and conditions withdraws its rating of BASF SE or the bond, or reduces it to a noninvestment grade rating within 120 days of the change of control event.

In the event of a change of control, members of the Board of Executive Directors shall, under certain additional conditions, receive compensation (details of which are listed in the Compensation Report on page 172). A change of control is assumed when a shareholder informs BASF of a shareholding of at least 25% or the increase of such a holding. This change of control compensation will no longer be awarded to outgoing members of the Board of Executive Directors effective January 1, 2020, with the introduction of the amended compensation system for the Board of Executive Directors, which will be submitted for approval to the Annual Shareholders’ Meeting on April 30, 2020.

Employees of BASF SE and its subsidiaries who are classed as senior executives will receive a severance payment if their contract of employment is terminated by BASF within 18 months of a change of control event, provided the employee has not given cause for the termination. The employee whose service contract has been terminated in such a case will receive a maximum severance payment of 1.5 times the annual salary (fixed component) depending on the number of months that have passed since the change of control event. The remaining specifications stipulated in section 315a(1) HGB refer to situations that are not applicable to BASF SE.

Directors’ and officers’ liability insurance

BASF SE has taken out liability insurance that covers the activities of members of the Board of Executive Directors and the Supervisory Board (directors’ and officers’ liability insurance). This policy provides for the level of deductibles for the Board of Executive Directors as prescribed by section 93(2) sentence 3 AktG and for the level of deductibles for the Supervisory Board as recommended in section 3.8(3) of the German Corporate Governance Code in the version dated February 7, 2017 (10% of damages up to one-and-a-half times the fixed annual compensation).

Share ownership by members of the Board of Executive Directors and the Supervisory Board

No member of the Board of Executive Directors or the Supervisory Board owns shares in BASF SE and related options or other derivatives that account for 1% or more of the share capital. Furthermore, the total volume of BASF SE shares and related financial instruments held by members of the Board of Executive Directors and the Supervisory Board accounts for less than 1% of the shares issued by the company.

Share dealings of the Board of Executive Directors and Supervisory Board

As legally stipulated by Article 19(1) MAR, all members of the Board of Executive Directors and the Supervisory Board as well as certain members of their families are required to disclose the purchase or sale of financial instruments of BASF SE (e.g., shares, bonds, options, forward contracts, swaps) to the Federal Financial Supervisory Authority (Bundesanstalt für Finanzdienstleistungsaufsicht) and to the company if transactions within the calendar year exceed the threshold of €5,000. In 2019, a total of 26 purchases by members of the Board of Executive Directors and the Supervisory Board and members of their families subject to disclosure were reported as directors’ dealings, involving between three and 10,000 BASF shares or BASF ADRs. The price per share was between €56.85 and €68.21. The volume of the individual trades was between €188.31 and €585.500. The disclosed share transactions are published on BASF SE’s website.

For more information on share dealings, see Note 33 to the Consolidated Financial Statements on page 288.

Information on the auditor

The Annual Shareholders’ Meeting of May 3, 2019, once again elected KPMG AG Wirtschaftsprüfungsgesellschaft as the auditor of the BASF Group Consolidated Financial Statements and Separate Financial Statements of BASF SE for the 2019 business year, as well as the corresponding management’s reports. KPMG member firms also audit the majority of companies included in the Consolidated Financial Statements. KPMG has been the continuous auditor of BASF SE since the 2006 Financial Statements. For this reason, a public call to tender was issued in 2015 to all auditors for the audit of the 2016 Consolidated and Separate Financial Statements, in line with the E.U. Regulation 537/2014 of April 16, 2014. Based on the results of the tendering process, the Audit Committee recommended to the Supervisory Board that it once again propose KPMG for election. After completing the tendering process, KPMG can now be proposed for election at the Annual Shareholders’ Meeting as BASF’s auditor without further tendering processes up to and including the 2025 business year. Alexander Bock has been the auditor responsible for the Consolidated Financial Statements since auditing the 2017 Financial Statements. Since the 2017 Financial Statements, the auditor responsible for the Separate Financial Statements has been Dr. Stephanie Dietz. The total fee paid to KPMG and auditing firms of the KPMG group by BASF SE and other BASF Group companies for non-audit services, in addition to the auditing fee, was €0.9 million in 2019. This represents around 4.6% of the fees for auditing the financial statements.

For more information, see Note 33 to the Consolidated Financial Statements on page 288.