

# AUDIT REPORT

## VERIFICATION OF SHIFTINGPACT LABEL

JANUARY 2025



Forum Ethibel is a Belgian not-for-profit organisation that actively promotes Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and Socially Responsible Investing (SRI) to accelerate the transition to a more sustainable society. In this context, Forum Ethibel develops products and services to promote transparent and sustainable market behaviour.

The screening performed by Forum Ethibel guarantees that the procedure of BetterBusiness concerning the ShiftingPact Label is observed and applied as communicated.

### CONCLUSION

All documents to assess the processes for all organisations screened in January 2025 were provided.

Therefore, we declare that, for January 2025, the screening of organisations with the aim of receiving the ShiftingPact Label was in compliance with the processes described in the White Paper and in scope of this audit with the exception of:

- The formal documentation to assess proof checking by BetterBusiness, as these proofs were not safekept in a formal and auditable manner.

The processes have been applied consistently across all companies in the batch.

Brussels, 26 February 2025,  
For Forum ETHIBEL asbl,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Kenny Frederickx'.

Kenny Frederickx,  
General Director

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Alderik Scheirlinckx'.

Alderik Scheirlinckx,  
Research Officer

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Jérôme Voglaire'.

Jérôme Voglaire,  
Research Officer

# CERTIFICATION DECLARATION, JANUARY 2025

*To BetterBusiness's stakeholders,  
To the screened enterprises,  
To the public,*

Forum Ethibel is appointed by BetterBusiness to execute an external audit of their verification process on the awarding of the ShiftingPact Label.

BetterBusiness is a B Corp company whose mission is to help companies to create, develop and implement their sustainability strategy. BetterBusiness focuses on the need for very small businesses and SMEs to benefit from practical, tailor-made support that takes account of their size, sector and often limited resources.

Forum Ethibel audits BetterBusiness's implementation of the rules written out in the White Paper (*Livre Blanc*): January 2025 version. This is an internal document whose purpose is to explain the founding principles and operations of the ShiftingPact certification, and to explain the various stages of the process, from the initial assessment to recertification. The White Paper also describe specifically the sections that are covered by this audit. The sections out-of-scope are referenced at the end of this report as well. A simplified version of the White Paper will be available to the public on the ShiftingPact website in the coming months.

Forum Ethibel had BetterBusiness's full administrative cooperation for the audit work. All additional information requested was provided. This report concerns all organisations screened for the ShiftingPact Label awarding in **January 2025**. This concerns **5 companies** out of which **5** got the label.

## I. AUDIT PROCESS

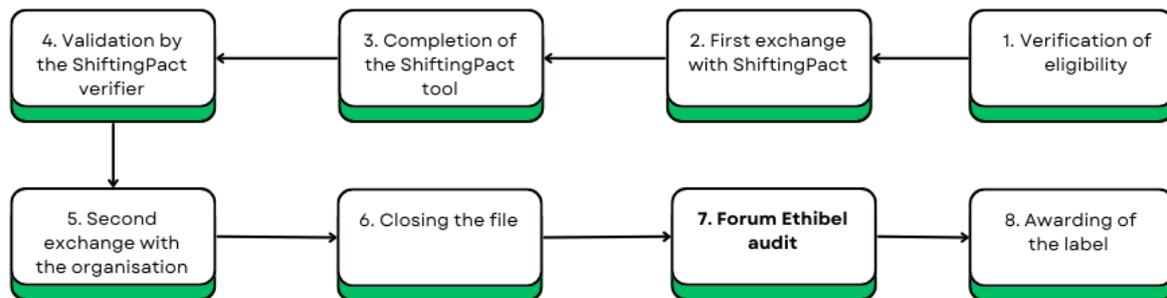
The process started by predetermining the scope of the audit. It was agreed on that all steps leading to the awarding of the label and the continuous improvement process of the label were in scope of the audit. All other parts of the White Paper are not covered by this report. The process of improvement and the engagement follow-up will be assessed quarterly, starting at the end of the first quarter.

Continuous dialogue took place between BetterBusiness and Forum Ethibel to assess the conformity of the verification process on ready-to-be-labelled enterprises.

For all screenings performed by BetterBusiness in January 2025, Forum Ethibel gathers its conclusions in one unique audit report. This audit is performed **ex-ante**.

For all enterprises, Forum Ethibel assessed if BetterBusiness went through all the steps described in the White Paper by reviewing the filled-in questionnaires and BetterBusiness's assessment. In general, Forum Ethibel also audits whether the rules of the White Paper were implemented for each label batch with consistency for all

enterprises of a verification batch, with an emphasis on data gathering, the motivation to give or cancel points, adherence to the overarching philosophy of the label and conflict of interest management. Below, the figure presents a visual representation of the ShiftingPact labelling process, highlighting the timing of the audit conducted by Forum Ethibel.



## II. ASSESSMENT

The following table details the verification carried out by Forum Ethibel for each of the White Paper's criteria. Unaligned points are discussed in greater detail below.

Criterion of White Paper	OutOfOffice	WEP Belgium	WEP International	Zeitgeist	RISH Copie
<b>Eligibility criteria</b>					
Organisation is not a franchise	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Organisation is not a management company	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Organisation is not active in a sector on the exclusion list	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Turnover is smaller than 50 million euros	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Contact person is willing to collaborate	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Company is not involved in controversies relating to social and environmental laws.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<b>Process</b>					
Tailor-made questionnaire created	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Onboarding meeting completed	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Assessment completed by the company	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Verification performed by BetterBusiness	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Verification of the documentation provided by the company	X	X	X	X	X
Verification meeting completed	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Delivered conclusion	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<b>ESG diagnostic</b>					
E, S and G were covered	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
All relevant challenges per pillar were assessed	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<b>SDG contribution</b>					
SDG contribution was covered	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<b>Commitments pact</b>					
Minimum commitments are included	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Additional commitments are formulated based on ESG diagnostic	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<b>Score calculation</b>					
SDG score is computed using the formula referenced	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
ESG score is computed using the formula referenced	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
ShiftingPact score is computed using the formula referenced	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<b>Conflict of interest procedure</b>					
Proactive detection	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Declaration of possible conflict of interests was provided	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Neutral decision-making safeguarding	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

## Observations

- For the companies assessed for January 2025, Better Business did not request or archive documentation from the companies to support their responses. Forum Ethibel believes that this is a practice that should be implemented as soon as possible.

## Disagreement with enterprises

When a disagreement arises between the certified company and the certifying entity concerning a verification point which has led to the refusal of a response, a constructive approach based on dialogue is systematically favoured by BetterBusiness. If such a situation arises, Forum Ethibel performs an additional screening to assess impartiality of the decision whose conclusions are discussed by an advisory committee.

The advisory committee has not yet been set up in January 2025. However, in view of the absence of conflict in this batch and insofar as all the applicants have received the label, Forum Ethibel does not consider that this shortcoming is of a nature to invalidate the certification decision.

	January 2025
<b>Number of organisations concerned by the disagreement policy</b>	0

## Recommendations

Forum Ethibel proposes the following recommendations for enhancing the ShiftingPact verification process as part of the continuous improvement philosophy shared by BetterBusiness and Forum Ethibel. These recommendations aim at strengthening the audit of the verification and the credibility of the approach:

- Forum Ethibel identified several inaccuracies in the scores during this audit, which have been diligently corrected by BetterBusiness. It is recommended to implement automated error-checking mechanisms in the Excel template to ensure accuracy and consistency in the correction, in the scoring, and in the implementation of minimum commitments.
- Company responses should be supported, where possible, by written documentation. All documents used in the assessment process should be securely stored to maintain data integrity and facilitate future audits.
- The Better Business verification methodology underwent several adjustments prior to the January 2025 batch, as is natural during the launch period and in a spirit of continuous improvement. However, it is strongly recommended that all modifications be systematically documented and justified, so as to have a clear view of how each batch was verified and the reasons for the change. Any

point correction by Shifting Pact should be clearly justified, providing a rationale for each change to enhance transparency and ensure alignment with regulatory or internal standards.

- It is recommended that the engagements be described in greater detail (KPIs, implementation methods, etc.), so that an objective assessment of their implementation can be made at the time of recertification.
- An independent committee must be set up to deal with any disagreements. This is already the ambition of BetterBusiness. It is also advisable that the company can initiate a disagreement procedure directly with this committee.

### III. Appendix

#### ***Appendix 1 - List of items In and Out-of-scope of this Audit Report***

**Based on the table of content of White Paper ShiftingPact of January 2025 distributed to Forum Ethibel**

#### **1. Context**

Certifying body	Out of scope
Evaluation	Out of scope
Referential frameworks	Out of scope
Objectives	Out of scope

#### **2. Certification procedure**

Eligibility Criteria	In scope
Certification process	In scope
Audit	Not applicable
Transparency	In scope
Engagement follow-up	In scope
Recertification	Not in scope for first 2 years, will be in scope when applicable

#### **3. The ShiftingPact Tool**

SDG Module	In scope
Negative impacts	Out of scope
ESG module and commitment pact	In scope

#### **4. Scoring**

Total score	In scope
SDG score	In scope
ESG score	In scope

#### **5. Reports and certificates**

Impact report	In scope
Exemplarity certificate	In scope

#### **6. Communication**

Communication	Out of scope
General terms and conditions	Out of scope

#### **7. Ethics and governance**

Conflict of interests	In scope
Conflict with organisation during verification	In scope, if applicable
Revision of standards	Out of scope
Consulting Committee	Out of scope
Greenwashing Directive	Out of scope