

# Assurance Report of the Independent German Public Auditor to the Group Sustainability Report

To DZ BANK AG Deutsche Zentral-Genossenschaftsbank, Frankfurt am Main

## Assurance Report of the Independent German Public Auditor on a Limited Assurance Engagement in Relation to the Group Sustainability Report

### Assurance Conclusion

We have conducted a limited assurance engagement on the group sustainability report of DZ BANK AG Deutsche Zentral-Genossenschaftsbank, Frankfurt am Main, (hereinafter the “company”) included in section “sustainability report” of the group management report for the financial year from 1 January to 31 December 2024 (hereinafter the “group sustainability report”). The group sustainability report has been prepared to fulfil the requirements of Directive (EU) 2022/2464 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 14 December 2022 (Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive, CSRD) and Article 8 of Regulation (EU) 2020/852 as well as §§ [Articles] 315b to 315c HGB [Handelsgesetzbuch: German Commercial Code] to prepare a group non-financial statement.

Based on the procedures performed and the evidence obtained, nothing has come to our attention that causes us to believe that the accompanying group sustainability report is not prepared, in all material respects, in accordance with the requirements of the CSRD and Article 8 of Regulation (EU) 2020/852, § 315c in conjunction with §§ 289c to 289e HGB to prepare a group non-financial statement as well as with the supplementary criteria presented by the executive directors of the company. This assurance conclusion includes that no matters have come to our attention that cause us to believe:

- that the accompanying group sustainability report does not comply, in all material respects, with the European Sustainability Reporting Standards (ESRS), including that the process carried out by the company to identify the information to be included in the group sustainability report (hereinafter the “materiality assessment”) is not, in all material respects, in accordance with the description set out in section “Approach for materiality assessment (IRO-1)” of the group sustainability report, or
- that the disclosures set out in section “Mandatory disclosures for the DZ BANK banking group under the EU Taxonomy” of the group sustainability report do not comply, in all material respects, with Article 8 of Regulation (EU) 2020/852.

### Basis for the Assurance Conclusion

We conducted our limited assurance engagement in accordance with the International Standard on Assurance Engagements (ISAE) 3000 (Revised): Assurance Engagements Other Than Audits or Reviews of Historical Financial Information, issued by the International Auditing and Assurance Standards Board (IAASB).

The procedures in a limited assurance engagement vary in nature and timing from, and are less in extent than for, a reasonable assurance engagement. Consequently, the level of assurance obtained is substantially lower than the assurance that would have been obtained had a reasonable assurance engagement been performed.

Our responsibilities under ISAE 3000 (Revised) are further described in the “German Public Auditor's Responsibilities for the Assurance Engagement on the Group Sustainability Report” section.

We are independent of the company in accordance with the requirements of European law and German commercial and professional law, and we have fulfilled our other German professional responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. Our audit firm has complied with the quality management system requirements of the IDW Standard on Quality Management: Requirements for Quality Management in the Audit Firm (IDW QMS 1 (09.2022)) issued by the Institut der Wirtschaftsprüfer (Institute of Public Auditors in Germany; IDW). We believe that the evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our assurance conclusion.

### **Responsibility of the Executive Directors and the Supervisory Board for the Group Sustainability Report**

The executive directors are responsible for the preparation of the group sustainability report in accordance with the requirements of the CSRD and the relevant German legal and other European regulations as well as with the supplementary criteria presented by the executive directors of the company. They are also responsible for the design, implementation and maintenance of such internal controls that they have considered necessary to enable the preparation of a group sustainability report in accordance with these regulations that is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud (i.e., manipulation of the group sustainability report) or error.

This responsibility of the executive directors includes establishing and maintaining the materiality assessment process, selecting and applying appropriate reporting policies for preparing the group sustainability report, as well as making assumptions and estimates and ascertaining forward-looking information for individual sustainability-related disclosures.

The supervisory board is responsible for overseeing the process for the preparation of the group sustainability report.

### **Inherent Limitations in the Preparation of the Group Sustainability Report**

The CSRD and the relevant German statutory and other European regulations contain wording and terms that are still subject to considerable interpretation uncertainties and for which no authoritative, comprehensive interpretations have yet been published. As such wording and terms may be interpreted differently by regulators or courts, the legal conformity of measurements or evaluations of sustainability matters based on these interpretations is uncertain.

These inherent limitations also affect the assurance engagement on the group sustainability report.

### **German Public Auditor's Responsibilities for the Assurance Engagement on the Group Sustainability Report**

Our objective is to express a limited assurance conclusion, based on the assurance engagement we have conducted, on whether any matters have come to our attention that cause us to believe that the group sustainability report has not been prepared, in all material respects, in accordance with the CSRD and the relevant German legal and other European regulations as well as with the supplementary criteria presented by the executive directors of the company, and to issue an assurance report that includes our assurance conclusion on the group sustainability report.

As part of a limited assurance engagement in accordance with ISAE 3000 (Revised), we exercise professional judgment and maintain professional skepticism. We also:

- obtain an understanding of the process to prepare the group sustainability report, including the materiality assessment process carried out by the company to identify the information to be included in the group sustainability report.
- identify disclosures where a material misstatement due to fraud or error is likely to arise, design and perform procedures to address these disclosures and obtain limited assurance to support the assurance conclusion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than the risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misleading representations, or the override of internal controls. In addition, the risk of not detecting a material misstatement within value chain information from sources not under the control of the company (value chain information) is generally higher than the risk of not detecting a material misstatement of value chain information from sources under the control of the company, as both the executive directors of the company and we, as assurance practitioners, are ordinarily subject to limitations on direct access to the sources of value chain information.

consider the forward-looking information, including the appropriateness of the underlying assumptions. There is a substantial unavoidable risk that future events will differ materially from the forward-looking information.

#### **Summary of the Procedures Performed by the German Public Auditor**

A limited assurance engagement involves the performance of procedures to obtain evidence about the sustainability information. The nature, timing and extent of the selected procedures are subject to our professional judgement.

In conducting our limited assurance engagement, we have, amongst other things:

- evaluated the suitability of the criteria as a whole presented by the executive directors in the group sustainability report.
- inquired of the executive directors and relevant employees involved in the preparation of the group sustainability report about the preparation process, including the materiality assessment process carried out by the company to identify the information to be included in the group sustainability report, and about the internal controls relating to this process.
- evaluated the reporting policies used by the executive directors to prepare the group sustainability report.
- evaluated the reasonableness of the estimates and the related disclosures provided by the executive directors. If, in accordance with the ESRS, the executive directors estimate the value chain information to be reported for a case in which the executive directors are unable to obtain the information from the value chain despite making reasonable efforts, our assurance engagement is limited to evaluating whether the executive directors have undertaken these estimates in accordance with the ESRS and assessing the reasonableness of these estimates, but does not include identifying information in the value chain that the executive directors have been unable to obtain.
- performed analytical procedures and made inquiries in relation to selected information in the group sustainability report.
- performed site visits.
- considered the presentation of the information in the group sustainability report.
- considered the process for identifying taxonomy-eligible and taxonomy-aligned economic activities and the corresponding disclosures in the group sustainability report.

### Restriction of Use

We draw attention to the fact that the assurance engagement was conducted for the company's purposes and that the report is intended solely to inform the company about the result of the assurance engagement. Accordingly, the report is not intended to be used by third parties for making (financial) decisions based on it. Our responsibility is solely towards the company. We do not accept any responsibility, duty of care or liability towards third parties.

Frankfurt am Main, 7 March 2025

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