

5 years!



ANNUAL WRAP-UP 2023

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A WORD FROM OUR CEO



Vytautas Kaziukonis, CEO

As Surfshark turns 5, I want to reflect on our journey so far.

Long before Surfshark, when I first entered the IT field, I noticed a significant gap in people's understanding of online privacy and security. While tech-savvy enthusiasts knew the importance of cybersecurity, the everyday people were unaware of the online risks. They lacked the basic knowledge to stay ahead of the threats. I wanted to help people bridge this gap and secure themselves online, and that's how Surfshark came to be.

Looking back on the past 5 years, I am inspired by how far we've come. We started with a small in-house team, creating a single product — Surfshark VPN. Today, Surfshark is more than just a VPN. We have developed an online privacy package that includes multiple products and, most importantly, helps to keep millions of people safe online.

Despite many challenges, like the ever-changing global economic climate and the diverse regulatory regimes we work within, we have grown our team and attracted new investors. This underscores the global significance of cybersecurity and the need for reliable online safety solutions.

This is a competitive landscape, and finding our place has taken many people's hard work and dedication. It was never going to be easy, but after five years, we are proud to be frequently recognized as one of the leading VPN service providers worldwide.

Our passion for what we do is evident in our constant efforts to push the boundaries further and make our products even more accessible to all. We also recognize the importance of transparency, and we're sharing this report to offer insights into our company's operations and give you a better understanding of how we work.

We value your feedback and hope you enjoy learning more about the 2023 accomplishments from technical, educational, social responsibility, and other angles.

THE YEAR'S HIGHLIGHTS

01

January

Greeted the new year with a revamped visual identity across all our channels.

02

February

Participated in the crowdfunding campaign & doubled donations to Ukraine.

03

March

Moved to the dynamic & sustainable tech hub in Lithuania — Cyber City.

04

April

Celebrated 5 years of Surfshark & becoming an industry-leading cybersecurity service.

05

May

Created [Surfshark Trust Center](#), which outlines Surfshark's security efforts, quality, & values.

06

June

Announced a long-awaited new product — Dedicated IP.

07

July

Introduced an online identity & email generator — Alternative ID.

08

August

Launched [Emergency VPN](#) for activists, journalists, & NGO representatives.

09

September

Doubled our valuation to \$3B as a cybersecurity powerhouse with Nord Security.

10

October

Released an online course on social engineering and scam spotting.

11

November

Won the "German Fairness Prize 2023" in the VPN provider category.

12

December

Partnered with MrBeast and donated to the Big Dog Ranch Rescue.



TECHNICAL OVERVIEW



A WORD FROM OUR HEAD OF DEVELOPMENT

“In 2023, Surfshark prioritized personalized privacy and security solutions. We introduced Dedicated IP and Alternative ID, revamped the app design, and improved server infrastructure for a seamless user experience.”

– **Saulius Maslinskas,**
Head of Development

WHAT'S NEW

The past year was full of innovations – discover our latest lineup of features.



This year, we prioritized safeguarding online identities. Our latest offering, the Alternative ID, is a prime example of this commitment.

– **Šarūnas Šereika,**
Senior Product Manager

DEDICATED IP



Ensuring users are happy with our service is one of our top priorities. That's why we've implemented one of the most requested features – **Dedicated IP! It's a static IP address, which is exclusively yours.** It helps to avoid CAPTCHA prompts, access services sensitive to IP changes, and more. Our Dedicated IP also exclusively offers anonymous and non-anonymous modes and can be used for manual VPN configurations.

For now, Dedicated IP offers Los Angeles, New York, Dallas, San Jose, London, Amsterdam, Hong Kong, Tokyo, Frankfurt, Milan, Johannesburg, Sydney, Toronto, and Paris locations. More are coming soon!

ALTERNATIVE ID



We understand the importance of having control over your data. That's why we've introduced **Alternative ID – a tool that generates a brand-new identity and an email for you to use online.** What are the benefits of using Alternative ID?

Here are some:

- 1 It helps you keep your name and email address private.** You can sign up for services without revealing your data.
- 2 It minimizes the risk of getting spam emails.** By generating a new email address, you can avoid promotional and even phishing emails that might put your real email at risk.
- 3 It keeps your personal information out of reach of data brokers.** Your real email or personal data is never entered into website databases and cannot be sold to (or stolen by) bad actors.
- 4 It prevents online strangers from seeing your real information.** With no access to your personal info, malicious actors on public forums or marketplaces won't be able to stalk you online.

WHAT'S BETTER

Here's a closer look at our improvements for an even better experience while using Surfshark.



DYNAMIC MULTIHOP

We introduced the improved **Dynamic MultiHop** — a double VPN service that routes your information via multiple countries. This makes it twice as hard for hackers to track your connection. You now have complete control over customizing your connection and selecting both double VPN countries.

ALERT UPDATES

Surfshark Alert — a tool that alerts you if your personal information appears in breached online databases. It now provides recommendations and an emergency plan in case of a breach. The Alert page also displays even more categories of leaked data.

APPLE UPDATES

Our iOS app now has a dashboard voice-over feature for better accessibility. You can pause, connect, and disconnect your VPN with voice commands or Shortcuts without opening the app. Also, for iOS 16 users, we added lock screen widgets for a more seamless VPN connection.

BYPASSER ON BROWSER EXTENSION

The Surfshark browser extension now has a bypass list to manage your VPN connection and ensure you control which sites are bypassed. It's a useful way to connect specific apps or websites through the VPN and exclude those that don't work well with a VPN (for example, online banking).

LOGIN IMPROVEMENTS

Now, you can speed up your login process or add new devices swiftly by scanning the QR code on the device you're already logged in to. This feature is now available on iOS 3.14 and will soon be available on other platforms.

WHAT'S RECOGNIZED

Let's look at the top server choices of our users and the awards that acknowledge our dedication to providing excellent service.



PASSING THE MASA AUDIT

Our **Android app has passed the Mobile App Security Assessment (MASA) audit.** This means our app meets global security standards for user data established by OWASP. We have earned the "Independent Security Review" badge on the Google Play Store, which signifies that **our Android app has passed the security criteria and is safe to use.**

AWARDS



Forbes
ADVISOR
BEST OF
2023
Surfshark
Best VPN Services

Forbes Advisor
Best VPN for Unlimited
Connections 2023



EDITOR'S CHOICE
BEST VALUE
VPN 2023
INDEPENDENT ADVISOR

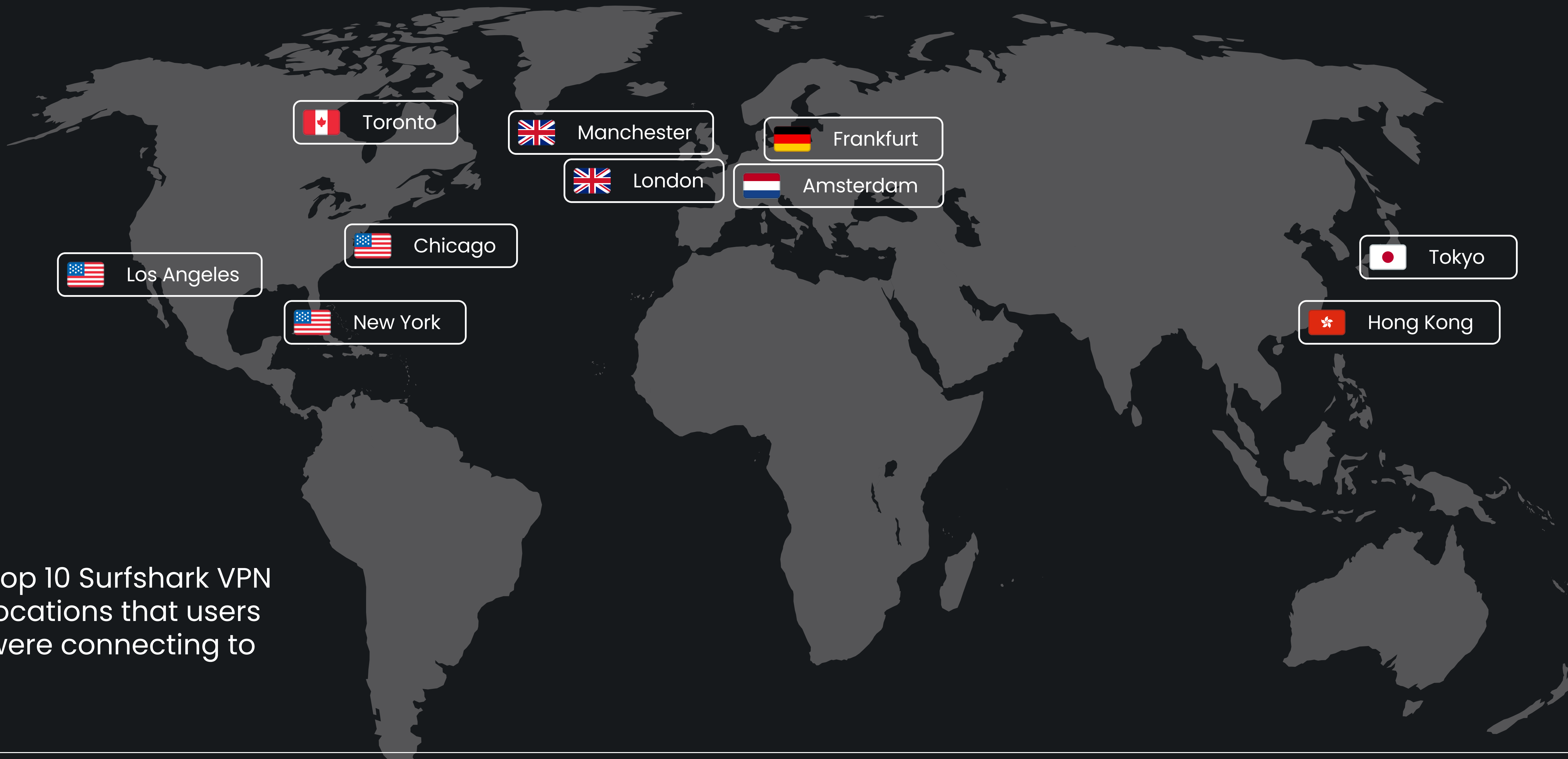
Independent Advisor
Best Value VPN 2023



CHIP
very good
Test: 10 VPN-services
CHIP 08/2023
Surfshark VPN
Unabhängige Tests seit 1978
CC164773

Best Value VPN 2023
(Germany)

SERVER DATA IN THE SPOTLIGHT



Top 10 Surfshark VPN locations that users were connecting to

GLOBAL RECOGNITION



A WORD FROM OUR CMO

“At Surfshark, we team up with industry partners, influencers, and media outlets to raise awareness about online security and privacy. We’re constantly exploring unconventional ways to draw attention to cybersecurity issues, and we’re grateful for the growing trust in our services.”

– **Regimantas Urbanas,**
Chief Marketing Officer

GLOBAL RECOGNITION

CYBERSECURITY POWERHOUSE DOUBLED VALUATION



Together with Nord Security, we **secured a \$100M investment from Warburg Pincus, doubling our company's joint valuation from \$1.6B to \$3B** within a year. With this funding, we plan to further expand our product lines, collaborate with our trusted partners, and enhance online security measures for millions of users worldwide.

REBRAND



We're bold and passionate about our product and its impact on the online community. We strive for simplicity by using a language that everyone can understand. Above all, we humanize technology, making cybersecurity solutions easy to use and creating a more delightful internet experience for everyone. Take a look at **our ongoing rebranding efforts**.

GETTING OUR MESSAGE ACROSS



We **focus on raising awareness about cybersecurity by questioning big tech's security standards**, such as in our **Data Leak project**. We also like humorous approaches – for example, we've offered rewards to people in the street who are willing to share their phones to look for personal data.

GLOBAL RECOGNITION

OUR EXPERTS



Our CEO, Vytautas Kaziukonis, has been recognized as a **Forbes Technology Council member** for showcasing his expertise and thought leadership in tech. Our Product Manager, Justas Pukys, has been acknowledged as an **Independent Advisor VPN expert**. Their expertise enriches our team and reflects our commitment to excellence and innovation.

PARTNERS



After 5 years in the industry, we have secured our place among the leading players in the cybersecurity field, earning the trust of the top-tier partners and media outlets.

“Surfshark is a wallet-friendly, reasonably fast, and well-rounded VPN. Surfshark is an excellent option for budget-conscious VPN users who enjoy streaming content and want an affordable VPN that’s innovative when it comes to privacy.”



“Surfshark is one of the best VPN services, comes crammed with features, runs on almost anything, and has some of the best download speeds around. The service is incredibly fast, has advanced functionality, and has likable and user-friendly apps. Great value and is an absolute must for your VPN shortlist.”



CYBERSECURITY COURSE



Nowadays, online scams are everywhere, and hackers are becoming smarter every day. Using security tools significantly increases your online safety, but these tools will not protect you from the weakest link in cybersecurity – the human factor. To address this issue, we have **developed an online course on recognizing and avoiding scams.**

It focuses on online scams across different platforms, including emails, phone calls, text messages, travel websites, digital banking, online shopping, dating apps, and social media.

With more than 2 hours of interactive video material, quizzes, and downloadable resources, our goal is to equip users with the essential knowledge to safeguard themselves against online threats and navigate the digital world with confidence.

GLOBAL RECOGNITION



COLLABORATIONS IN SPORT



World Surfing League



AIK Fotboll AB



Watford FC



FC St. Pauli



Heart of Midlothian FC



Taipei Fubon Braves



Montpellier Hérault SC

This year, we also partnered with several sports teams. Whether you're watching a game or browsing the web, strengthening your online privacy has never been easier!

SPONSORSHIPS & OTHER INITIATIVES



Empowering the youth with cybersecurity awareness is essential. We proudly **sponsor the Badminton Championship organized by European U17 Championships and Wave Camp** to achieve this. We aim to equip the younger generation with the necessary skills to navigate online threats and promote a safer digital future for everyone.

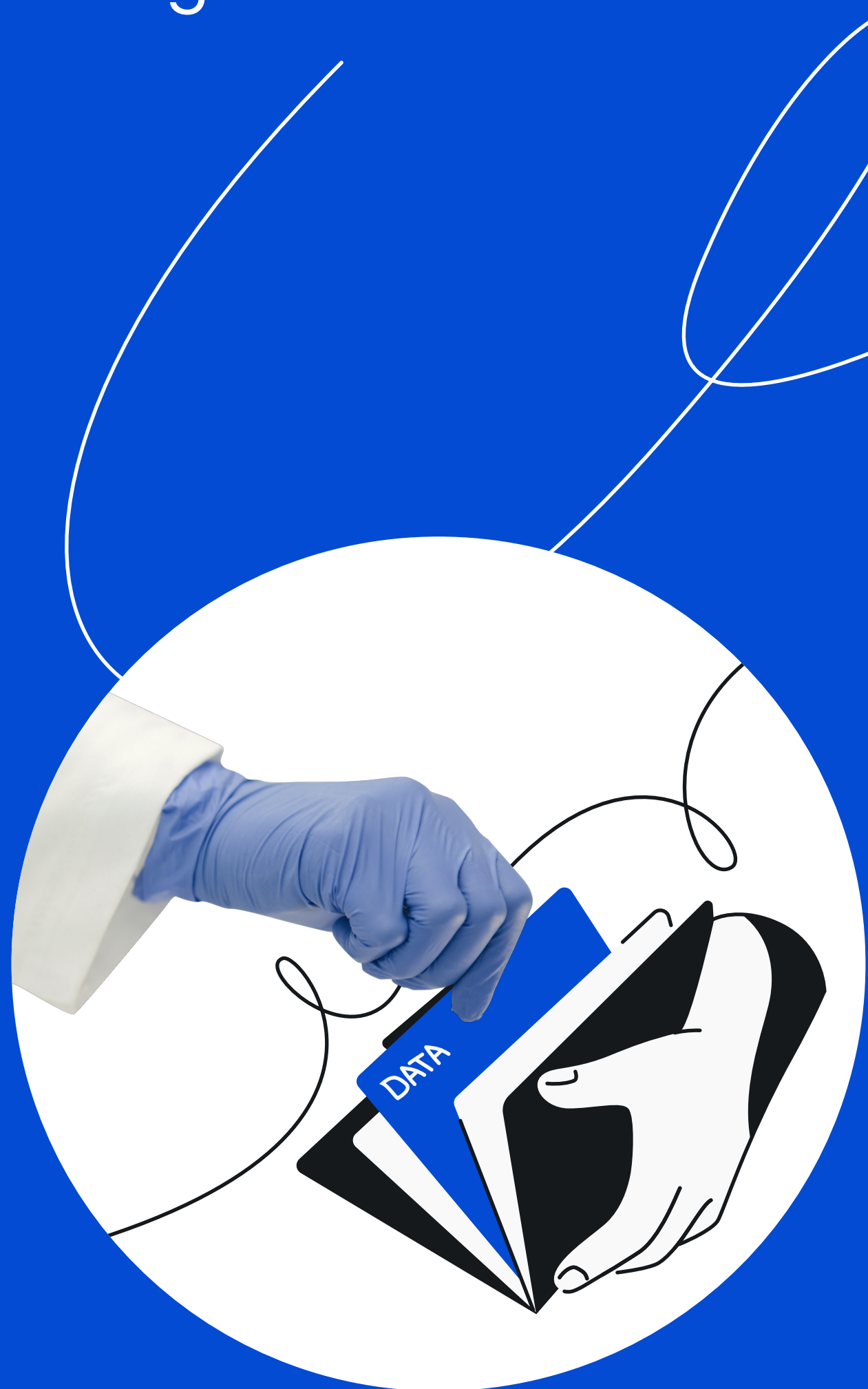
The significant interest from privacy-conscious users led to the launching of Incogni a few years back. It contacts data brokers and asks them to remove any personal information they may have on you. Incogni is a separate product, but it's also included in the Surfshark One+ subscription.



A WORD FROM OUR INCOGNI HEAD OF MARKETING

“Our privacy-conscious users appreciated the progress we made in our product this year. With millions of data removal requests processed monthly, we grew our business and, according to Google Trends, became the world's most searched data removal service.”

– **Mateusz Zalubski,**
Head of Marketing at Incogni



DATA REMOVAL FROM PEOPLE SEARCH SITES

Anyone who has an internet connection can access your sensitive information. This risk can lead to spam, scam attacks, stalking, and identity theft. That's why we not only **increased the number of data brokers we send data removal requests to** but also **added People Search Sites in the US to our list**.

People Search Sites allow users to find information about people based on their name, location, or other identifying details. The publicly available data may include contact information, social media profiles, criminal records, etc. Our goal is to reduce the mentioned risks and help restore our clients' privacy.

IMPROVED PRODUCT DESIGN

Following our users' feedback, we designed **a new dashboard and detailed view tab**. The new design aims to increase transparency in our data removal process and provide a better user experience.

SWIFT DEVELOPMENT

Our team at Incogni has experienced significant growth due to the high demand and interest in our services. As a result, we have already **processed over twenty million data removal requests and heavily expanded the number of data brokers we are reaching out to**.

THE NUMBER OF DATA BROKERS GREW FROM 133 TO 160

2022

2023

133 → 160

RESEARCH PROJECTS & INITIATIVES



A WORD FROM OUR RESEARCH TEAM LEAD

“Our research hub highlights the alarming statistics surrounding internet censorship, cyberattacks, and data privacy. By shedding light on these issues, we hope to encourage people to prioritize online security and freedom.”

– **Agneska Sablovskaja**,
Data Analytics Team Lead

MAPPING CYBERSECURITY WITH OUR RESEARCH PROJECTS



DIGITAL QUALITY OF LIFE 2023

For the fifth year in a row, our study, **Digital Quality of Life 2023**, examined **digital wellbeing globally**. This time, we researched 121 countries, covering 92% of the global population. We focused on five pillars: internet affordability, quality, e-infrastructure, e-security, and e-government. The study revealed valuable insights, such as that low-income countries work longer for low-quality internet, while wealthy countries enjoy high-quality internet at an affordable price.



[World Economic Forum](#)



[PCMag](#)



[Business Insider Africa](#)

INTERNET SHUTDOWN TRACKER

Autocratic governments increasingly use social media censorship and internet outages to maintain authority. These restrictions are often imposed to limit the freedom of speech and the right of the residents to assemble. We have **created an Internet Shutdown Tracker to document such cases of information suppression happening worldwide**.



[BBC Digital Planet](#)



[Independent](#)



[Time](#)

MAPPING CYBERSECURITY WITH OUR RESEARCH PROJECTS



GLOBAL DATA BREACH STATISTICS

Since 2004, there have been almost 17 billion account breaches, with roughly 6 billion of them containing unique email addresses. To **help people understand the scope of this issue, we provide global data breach statistics**, including interactive maps, country comparisons, quarterly and country-level trends, and other leaked data point statistics.

Forbes



[TechRadar](#)



[ZDNET](#)

REPORT ON GOVERNMENT REQUESTS FOR USER DATA

In our **report on government requests for user data**, we analyzed data requests made by government agencies from 177 countries to Apple, Google, Meta, and Microsoft between 2013 and 2021. The **research examines three aspects: the number of accounts mentioned in these requests, their global distribution relative to the population, and the number of partially or fully disclosed requests.**

THE  TIMES

[The Times UK](#)



[Deutsche Welle](#)



[Publico](#)

MAPPING CYBERSECURITY WITH OUR RESEARCH PROJECTS

INTERNET VALUE INDEX

Surfshark's Internet Value index (IVI) analyzes internet affordability and quality across 117 countries. By dividing internet speed by affordability, we determined how many people overpay for the internet globally and how many get theirs at a fair price. The index also examines each region in detail.



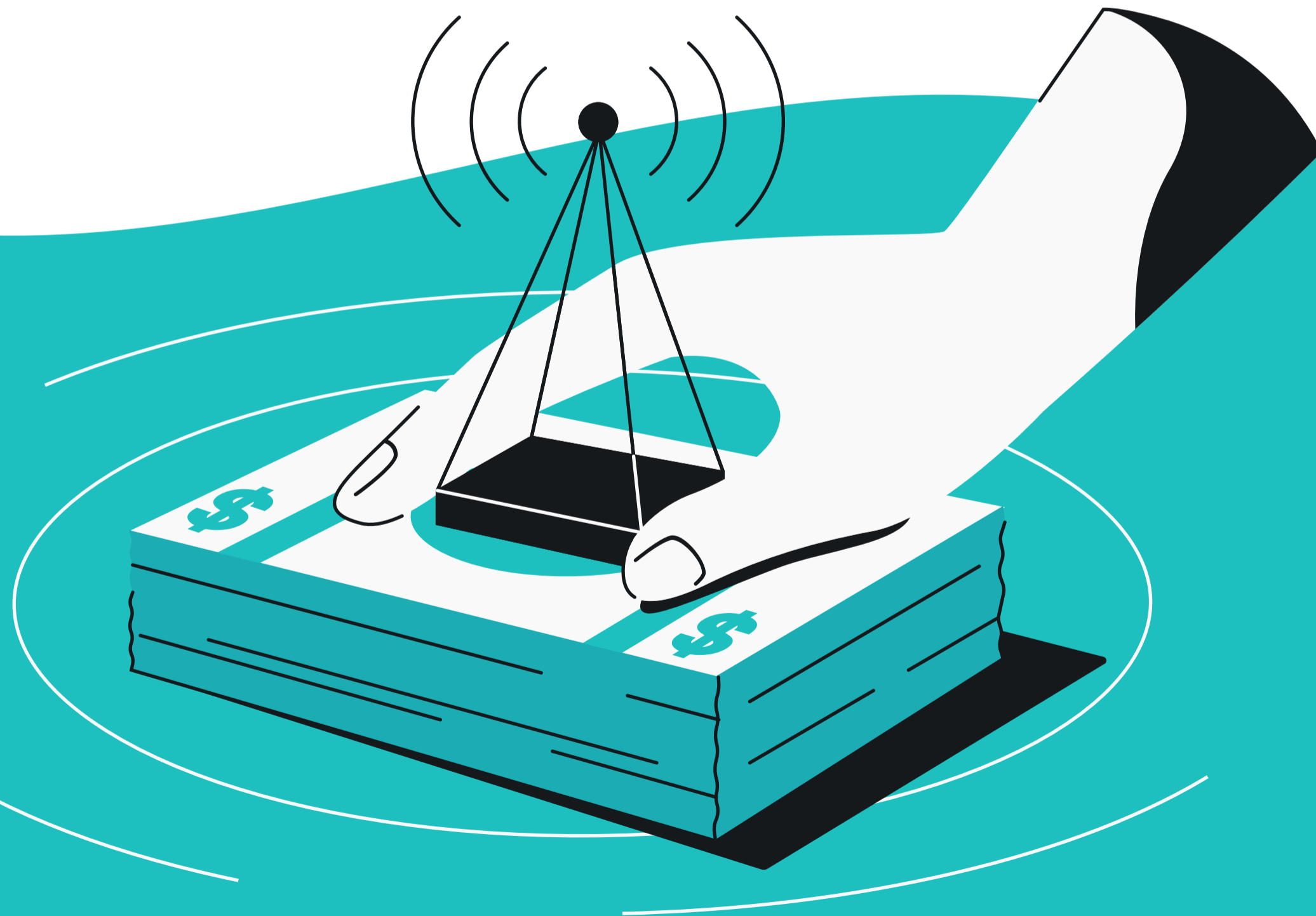
CTech



Mashable



ABC Spain



NGO COLLABORATIONS, DONATIONS & CSR



A WORD FROM SURFSHARK'S CORPORATE REPUTATION STRATEGIST

"Surfshark is a leading player in the cybersecurity industry, recognized for its high-quality services. However, our commitment to excellence does not end with our products. We strive to embody our values through our actions and take additional steps to promote internet safety and wellbeing. For this, we collaborate with trusted NGOs and nonprofits to organize various initiatives each year, such as preparing the Digital Survival Kit or launching the Emergency VPN program."

– **Gabrielė Dačkaitė**,
Corporate Reputation Strategist

NGO COLLABORATIONS, DONATIONS & CSR



EMPOWERING CHANGE WITH TRUSTED ORGANIZATIONS



The VPN Trust Initiative (VTI) is an industry-led, member-driven consortium of VPN business leaders **focused on improving consumer digital safety.** Surfshark is one of the founding members of VTI. The VTI principles focus on five key areas: security, privacy, advertising practices, disclosure and transparency, and social responsibility. All VTI members follow these principles.



The Global Encryption Coalition (GEC) was established in 2020 to **safeguard encryption in at-risk countries.** In 2022, Surfshark joined the coalition with the goal of pursuing policies that promote and reinforce robust encryption.



In 2022, Surfshark joined EDRi, the largest European network defending digital rights and freedoms, as its corporate member. We support EDRi's efforts to **push for enforced laws, inform people about online safety, and promote a healthy technology market.**



The Internet Society is a global non-profit organization that **empowers people to keep the Internet a force for good: open, globally-connected, secure, and trustworthy.** It fosters and advocates for the growth of internet infrastructure, offers programs to build skills, and more.

NGO COLLABORATIONS, DONATIONS & CSR



EMPOWERING CHANGE WITH TRUSTED ORGANIZATIONS



The Electronic Frontier Foundation (EFF) is a leading non-profit organization that aims to **protect digital privacy, free speech, and innovation.** Founded in 1990, it fulfills its mission through legal action, policy analysis, activism, and technology development.

♥ FIGHT FOR THE FUTURE

Founded in 2011, Fight for the Future is a small group of activists, engineers, technologists, and artists. They run hard-hitting campaigns that **fight for a future where technology is a force for the community and collective power, not oppression.**

Project Syndicate

Project Syndicate is a global trusted media platform that **delivers original and thought-provoking articles** written by leaders from fields such as politics, cybersecurity, education, and activism.



Access Now is a global organization that **protects the digital rights of at-risk users.** It offers direct technical support, advocates for comprehensive policies, engages in grassroots grantmaking and legal interventions, and organizes events such as RightsCon to fight for human rights in the digital age.



The i2Coalition is a voice for web infrastructure providers, advocating for best practices and industry standards to keep the internet open. They work to **protect innovation and the continued growth of the internet's infrastructure.** i2Coalitions' core values are education, engagement, advocacy, access, and privacy.

NGO COLLABORATIONS, DONATIONS & CSR

Accredited member of VPN Trust Initiative



VTI TRUST BADGE

Surfshark has **passed the VPN Trust Initiative (VTI) assessment and received the Trust Seal badge.** Together with other VTI members, we participated in reconfirming the VTI principles, which were then used to assess all of its members. This badge certifies that **Surfshark meets the highest standards of security, privacy, honest advertising, and support for internet freedom.**

DIGITAL SURVIVAL KIT

Together with NetBlocks, we **launched a Digital Survival Kit that addresses the challenges of internet censorship and disruptions.** The joint initiative stresses the importance of online safety and offers practical solutions to combat internet throttling and shutdowns. It also provides tips for enhancing digital privacy and security.

EMERGENCY VPN

We **launched the Emergency VPN initiative to emphasize the vital role of internet access for communication worldwide.** We provide VPN subscriptions to journalists, NGO representatives, and activists facing internet censorship. So far, we have given out more than 300 vouchers.

SUPPORTING EDUCATION

We **participated in the National Informatics Exam committee,** where we collaborated with other startups led by Unicorns Lithuania. We also **volunteered for Empowering Girls for the Future Jobs initiative** and extended our support to an IT competition by awarding prizes to the winners. Lastly, we **took part in the Bring Together program,** welcoming American Lithuanians for a visit to our company.

CYBERSECURITY AWARENESS MONTH

This October, Cybersecurity Awareness Month celebrated its 20th anniversary. We **marked this event together with European Digital Rights, i2Coalition, and the Internet Society.** This year, **Cybersecurity Awareness Month** promoted best online safety practices such as multi-factor authentication and strong passwords.

SPREADING AWARENESS

Many websites and apps collect your data without your consent. Surfshark experts and Natalie Campbell, Senior Director of North American Government and Regulatory Affairs at the Internet Society, appeared on an episode of **Viewpoint with Dennis Quaid.** Their conversation was about helping people understand the online risks (such as excessive data collection) and providing tips for online safety.

NGO COLLABORATIONS, DONATIONS & CSR



DONATIONS

Surfshark has participated in a few crowdfunding campaigns this year. One was organized by RADAROM, a Lithuanian organization, where **our company doubled the donations to Ukraine**. Another was organized internally – **our employees donated to kids, teens, elders, and animals during Christmas, and we doubled their donations**.

For the International **Shark Awareness Day** on July 14, we **partnered with and donated to a charitable organization Shark Trust to protect endangered sharks and rays**. Together, we aimed to raise awareness about the sharks' role in the ocean ecosystem and the threats they face. The partnership focused on conservation plans, policy changes to save declining shark populations, and more.

In collaboration with MrBeast, we **donated to Big Dog Ranch Rescue**, an organization that seeks to provide every dog with a loving and secure home. Evan Nader, Fundraising Officer from the Big Dog Ranch Rescue, said:

“Since our inception in 2005, Big Dog Ranch Rescue has saved and found homes for 58,000+ dogs. As America's largest cage-free, no-kill shelter, our focus is on rescuing dogs in need and providing medical care to dogs in life-threatening situations. Thanks to the generosity of Surfshark, Big Dog Ranch can care for more dogs, lead more rescue missions, and help save countless dogs' lives. Every dollar raised goes right back to these cherished dogs at Big Dog Ranch Rescue. We appreciate the support of Surfshark and Mr. Beast, who helped get over 100 dogs adopted!”

THE PEOPLE BEHIND SURFSHARK



A WORD FROM SURFSHARK'S HEAD OF HR

"At the end of this year, we had 89 sharks who had grown within our organization, and some had even become first-time team leads. These talented people bring a wealth of skills and knowledge to their new roles. With the added support of HR, consultations, and company learning opportunities, they are well-equipped to guide their team members toward achieving their goals."

– **Beatričė Leikaitė**,
Head of HR

PHYSICAL & MENTAL WELLBEING



HYBRID WORKING MODEL

We trust our employees to deliver exceptional results anywhere. Our **hybrid working model allows for three office-based workdays and two remote workdays per week, with the flexibility of working from anywhere in the world.** This approach fosters employee motivation, productivity, life-work integration, and job satisfaction.

PHYSICAL WELLBEING INITIATIVES

Surfshark offers **group training sessions focusing on cardio, core strength, and flexibility.** We also provide access to **online workout programs** that cater to different preferences and lifestyles.

EMOTIONAL WELLNESS SUPPORT

Employees' emotional wellness is a priority at Surfshark. That's why we offer **private health insurance that covers external counseling sessions.** Also, we provide access to **mental health apps** so that our employees can manage their mental health proactively.



LEARNING & RECRUITMENT

LEARNING

At Surfshark, we care about our employees' growth and self-development. For that, we have **internal and external training programs**. We also provide access to **books, online courses, podcasts, conferences, and other resources** to encourage continuous learning. This year, our employees have spent approximately 4000 hours improving their skills and expanding their knowledge base.



LEARNING & RECRUITMENT

RECRUITMENT



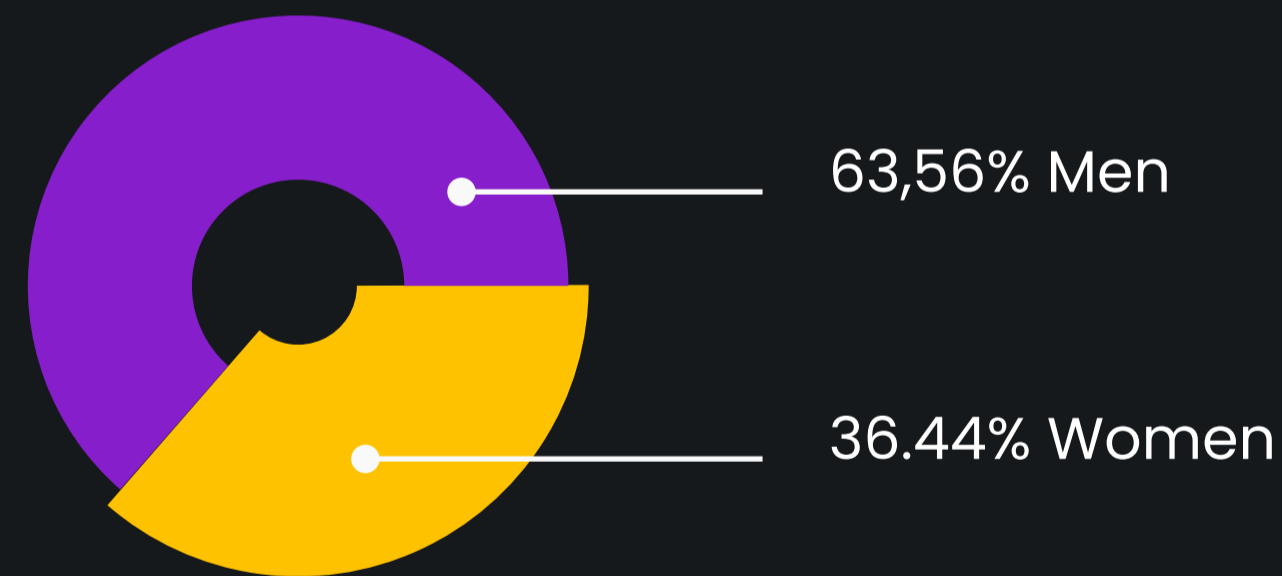
Surfshark has gone international, just as our recruitment! This year, we've **expanded our workforce to almost every continent worldwide**. We have appointed dedicated country managers in Europe, Asia, and South America. We have also witnessed significant growth in Poland, where we have one of our offices.

SURFSHARK EMPLOYEE STATISTICS

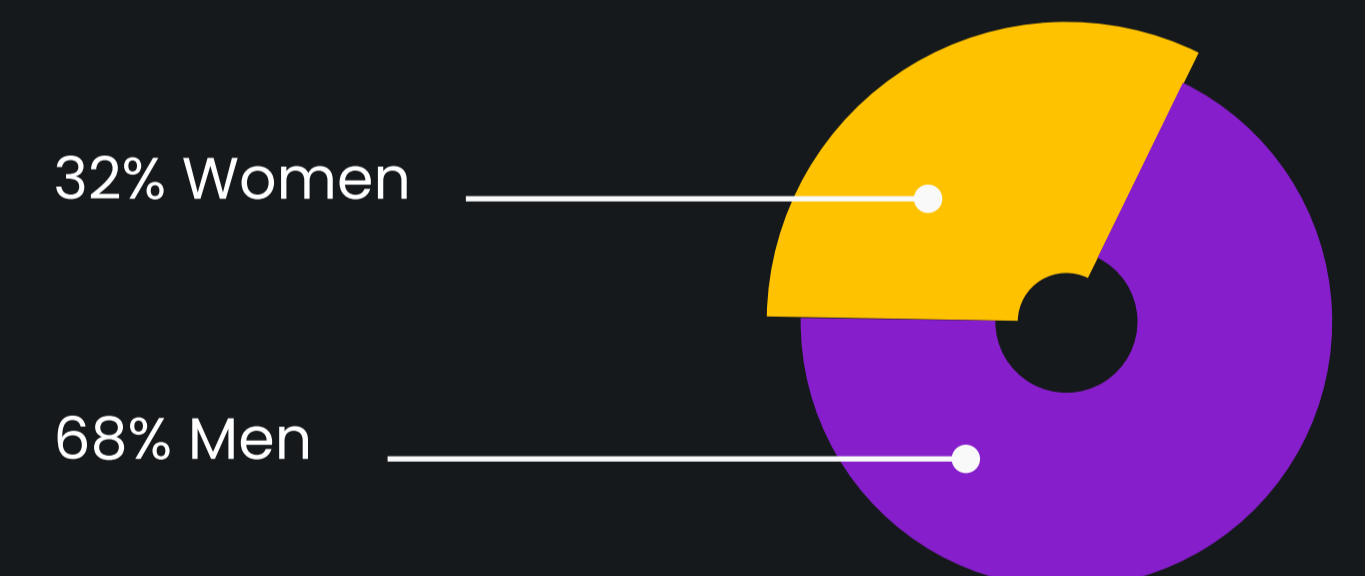
137 newbies during 2023

89 promotions during 2023

Employees



Leadership diversity

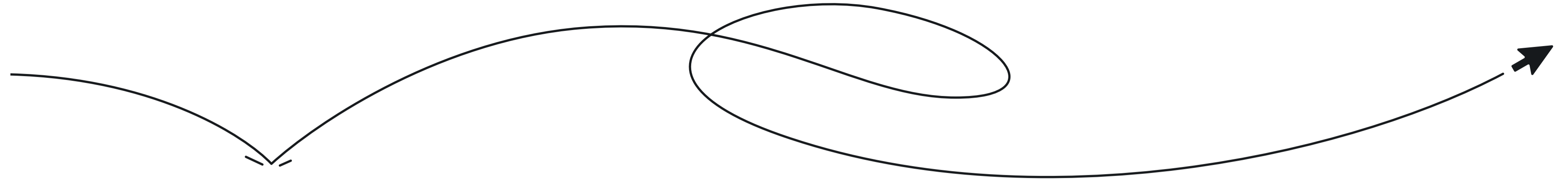


22% Managers



78% Specialists

WHAT'S NEXT FOR 2024?



TECHNICAL

Moving forward to 2024, we remain committed to gathering and using your feedback to improve the quality of our services, such as our website accessibility and VPN connection stability. We will also put more focus on personal online privacy protection with Alternative ID. Lastly, we're excited about upcoming releases, such as the Surfshark app on Apple TV and more countries for Dedicated IP!

MARKETING

In 2023, with the help of country managers, we started focusing on local communities, which helps us present cybersecurity topics in an accessible manner. Our efforts will continue in 2024 to ensure everyone can understand and stay informed about cybersecurity issues. Additionally, we will work on new initiatives to educate people about online safety and the importance of actively managing their online presence.

INCOGNI

In 2024, we will work on expanding our data broker network and implementing new measures to ensure that our customers' data is removed with their consent. We will also introduce the family plans and allow users to add more emails to their Incogni accounts.

RESEARCH

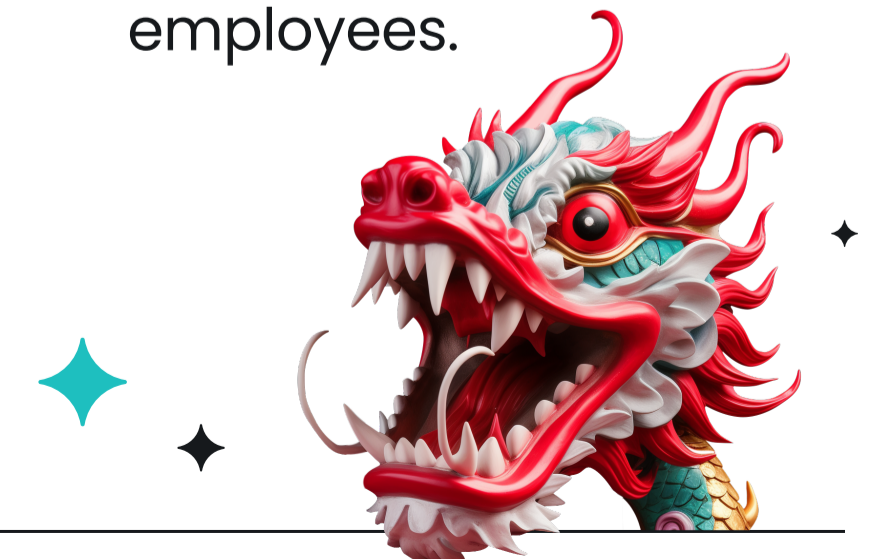
Next year, we will continue exploring cybersecurity and digital freedom issues by collaborating with NGOs, non-profit organizations, and people impacted by censorship and security breaches. Our research team strives to establish our Research hub as a go-to resource for learning about these topics. By revealing the impact of global threats, we hope to encourage people to focus on internet safety and protect themselves and their loved ones online.

NGOs AND CSR

Our goal for 2024 is to establish partnerships with selected organizations dedicated to promoting secure internet, privacy, and encryption. We also plan to focus on nature conservation initiatives and sustainability efforts in our day-to-day operations.

HUMAN RESOURCES

This year, in 2023, we moved to our new office in Vilnius – Cyber City – and welcomed many new team members. Our goal for 2024 is to continue to diversify our team, maintain sustainable growth, and expand our international presence. We also plan to put more focus on mental health topics by hosting workshops, seminars, and other initiatives for our employees.



AND THAT'S A WRAP!



Written by **Agnė Matusevičiūtė**

Edited by **Monika Repčytė**

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