

Working together to leverage
Flanders as a sustainable and
innovative key logistics region in
Europe



know.apply.grow.



Preface

Through the “Flanders in Action Pact” (VIA), the Flemish government intends to turn Flanders into a competitive and sustainable knowledge economy by 2020. Logistics is one of the major focus areas in their policy. And that is entirely justified. Especially when one considers that logistics accounts for more than 9% of the GNP and is good for more than 200,000 jobs in Flanders.



As an independent knowledge centre and innovation platform for the logistics sector, the Flanders Institute for Logistics (VIL) fully supports the ambitions formulated by VIA. VIL offers the logistics service providers and shippers company-specific research into innovative topics and valorisation of the research results in practice.

Creating the future through innovation is the primary challenge. That message is not only intended for multinationals, but also applies, perhaps even more so, for the small and medium-sized enterprises.

Being average is no longer sufficient. In order to be competitive and to remain so, our companies have to distinguish themselves from the competition.

“Innovation is necessary for Flanders to become a key logistics European region.”

But how can we reconcile the economic ambitions with the social desire for sustainability and mobility? Flanders’ central location is a strength that we should be using to our advantage; that, at least, is a certainty.

The challenge is creating innovative added-value activities that are compatible with sustainable mobility and that make clever use of the available transport infrastructure.

VIL is taking up that challenge and wants to become your logistics partner for sustainable innovation.

With this brochure, we invite you to learn how we do things and what we do, and the advantages linked to VIL membership. We are convinced that, after having gone through this brochure, you will follow the example set by many of your colleagues and will seize the innovation opportunities that we offer.

Liesbeth Geysels
Managing Director



Who is VIL?

The Flanders Institute for Logistics (VIL) is a ‘competence pool’, a centre of expertise to support Flemish companies in implementing innovative logistics projects and to increase their competitiveness.

In order to do so, VIL is supported by the Flemish government, and more specifically by the Minister of Innovation. That support is used to finance the innovative projects with

companies: as much as 70% of the total project cost, from research to implementation, is covered by VIL.

Flanders: key logistics region in Europe!

Flanders already has a prominent place in the European logistics constellation. The region owes that position to its central location, the density and multimodality of its transportation infrastructure, the knowledge and experience of the logistics service providers and shippers and its well-trained, multilingual and highly productive workers. Foreign investors can count on a solid foundation of services. That is also why they look at Flanders as an ideal location for a European headquarter and/or distribution centre.



What does VIL?

The mission, objectives and activities of VIL are formalised in an agreement with the Minister of Innovation. The core business is to encourage Flemish companies to invest in innovative logistics concepts and technological developments. Hereto, VIL delivers financial support, advice and networking.

In addition, VIL has secondary activities that are not subsidised by the Flemish government.

For those activities, companies pay a market-standard fee.

Key activities supported by the Flemish government.

VIL has three main tasks: developing knowledge, applying knowledge and disseminating knowledge. All to increase the competitiveness of the logistics companies. VIL is the bridge between theory and practice.

Knowledge development

VIL wants to provide specific and practical answers to logistics compa-

nies. Every study aims to resolve the challenges encountered by the logistics companies, so that the business community will derive added value from them.

Knowledge application

The study results are valorised in practice. That is how VIL gives companies opportunities to strengthen their competitive advantage and helps them to grow.

Knowledge dissemination

VIL disseminates its knowledge. That is done through publications, workshops with VIL experts, the bi-monthly newsletter, the website and events that

companies are invited to.

Secondary activities at market rates

- Technological services to the SME sector. Companies can request advice from VIL as a recognised centre of expertise, and receive subsidies for support in their business, innovation and internationalisation processes.
- Technological services to large enterprises.
- Contract research: Studies and projects for governmental and/or semi-governmental institutions.

What wants VIL to achieve?



VIL wants to improve the competitiveness of companies in the logistics sector through implementation of sustainable and innovative concepts and technologies. That will help Flanders to become a smart hub and to retain and strengthen its position as a key logistics region in Europe.

Sustainable logistics

Public awareness with respect to the environment affects how actors in the supply chain organise their logistic activities and select their business partners. VIL wants to play a part in this process by reconciling economy and ecology through encouraging and promoting sustainable logistics. That means that all VIL projects have the objective of striking a balance between effectiveness, efficiency and ecology.

The VIL Mission
 “To leverage Flanders
 as a sustainable and
 innovative logistics top
 region in Europe”

VIL wants to achieve that degree of sustainable logistics at the level of internal business logistics and at the level of external – distribution – logistics, in the following three areas:

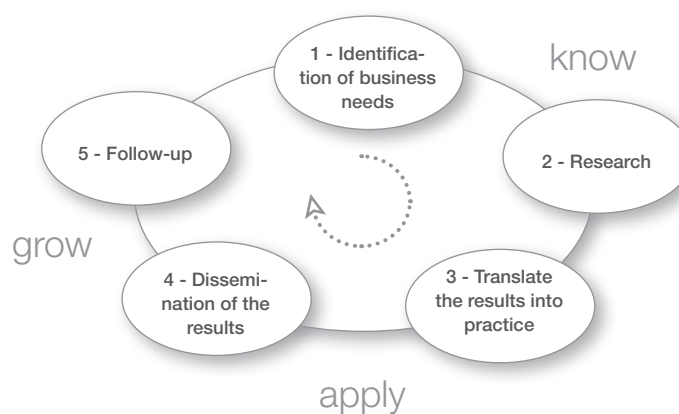
- **Supply Chain Organisation:**
VIL wants to improve and optimise the physical goods flows.
- **Supply Chain Intelligence:**
VIL wants to map the logistics information flows and manage them.
- **Supply Chain Security:**
VIL concentrates on projects that facilitate global trade and therefore wants to improve the integrity of the goods and information flows.

Substance is added to those three domains in a bottom-up process: on the basis of input from brainstorming sessions involving VIL members and others, in combination with company visits and enhanced VIL expertise.

The VIL approach



For all its activities VIL applies the same practical approach.



know

- **Phase 1:** Identifying the requirements of industry through brainstorm sessions with companies, company visits, attending seminars both at home and abroad, publications, etc.
- **Phase 2:** Conducting research into selected subject areas. If specific knowledge is not available, VIL, in cooperation with a university or college, carries out the necessary research.

apply

- **Phase 3:** The research results are translated into practical applications by means of a pilot project involving a representative group of companies. Those companies are VIL members and form together a user commission for a specific pilot project.

grow

- **Phase 4:** The results are disseminated through events, seminars and reports.
- **Phase 5:** Follow-up of the results implemented and adjustments when needed..

How VIL communication works



A motivated team is in daily contact with the companies to learn about what is preoccupying the logistics sector and what needs and problems are worthy of attention. This empathy with the sector is essential to be build the bridge between theory and practice.

Communication is important for disseminating innovation. VIL has a variety of communication tools:

- VIL publications: These are manuals that contain research results, practical examples and practical tips.
- VIL Newsletter: Bi-monthly newsletter in which primary attention is given to the results of recent projects and the start-up of new pilot projects.
- Events, seminars, trade fairs and

workshops

- VIL website with a members-only section
- Local theme cafés where members can discuss a specific logistics subject in an informal way

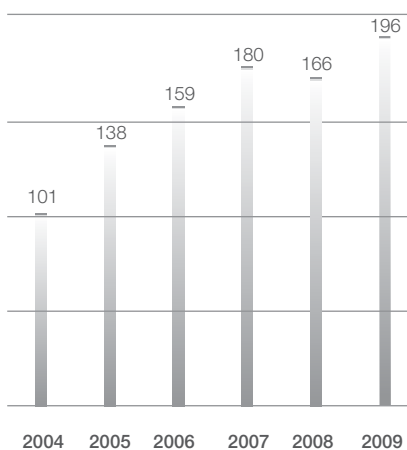
Who are the VIL members?



Evolution of membership

Since its foundation in 2003, the number of members has grown steadily. Several successful studies and innovative projects have helped to generate this growing brand-awareness.

The evolution of the membership



Types of members

• Effective members:

Logistic service providers and shippers based in Flanders, with special attention for the SMEs. These companies are the primary target

group and are therefore also entitled to vote at the general assembly. Their contribution varies based on the size of the company.

< 100 employees

€ 500/calendar year

101 – 250 employees

€ 750/calendar year

> 250 employees

€ 1000/calendar year

• Associated members:

Companies that are directly or indirectly related to logistics and who are interested in the work of VIL (e.g. infrastructure managers, IT suppliers, consultants, real estate companies, etc.). Associated members pay a membership fee of €1000/year.

• Supporting members:

Knowledge institutions in Belgium and abroad. Supporting members pay a membership fee of € 500/year.



Benefits of VIL membership

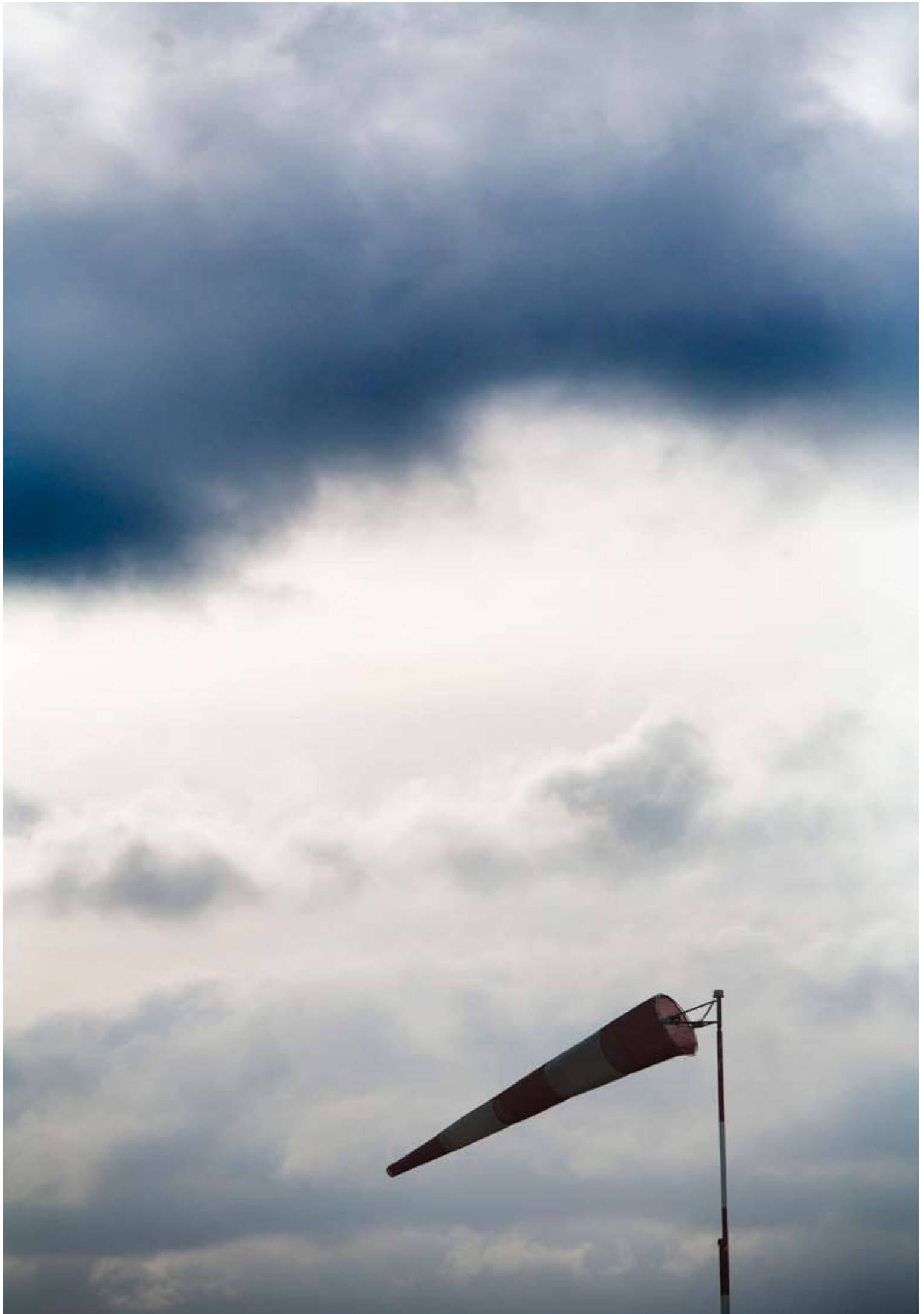
Becoming a VIL member is choosing for competitiveness, innovation, engagement, expertise, networking and much more.

Benefits of VIL membership

- Stimulating innovation: Through participation in projects, companies can achieve their innovative ideas and build up a competitive advantage without incurring excessive financial risks. VIL takes on 70% of the total project costs!
- Networking: The ideal forum for networking with logistics professionals from the most diverse sectors through participation in VIL events, seminars, trade fairs, theme cafés, New Year's Reception, etc.
- Publications: Free access to all VIL publications, free subscription to the VIL newsletter, and 50% discount on a subscription to "Warehouse & Logistics".
- Training & Development: Free participation or large discounts to VIL events and congresses organised by VIL in collaboration with other organisations.
- Member service: experts provide support and advice in their areas of expertise.
- Certified centre of expertise: SMEs can have VIL help them with technological services and receive subsidies as part of the SME stimulus programme.

Have we piqued your interest?

Call our key account managers today for a no-obligation introduction!
Call +32 3 229 05 00 or e-mail info@vil.be.



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