



# Activities Report 2016

TOGETHER WE  
MAKE TOMORROW  
MORE BEAUTIFUL

**OVAM**



# About OVAM

The Public Waste Agency of Flanders is the principal authority in the Belgian region of Flanders for sustainable management of waste, materials and soils. OVAM uses its expertise on waste, materials and soils worldwide to help shape international policy.

OVAM works to achieve **six well-defined objectives**:

- reducing the amount of waste;
- re-using and recycling waste materials;
- processing waste materials in an environmentally-friendly manner;
- initiating the transition to a circular economy – an economy where goods are produced and re-used in a sustainable manner;
- remediating contaminated soils;
- preventing new soil contamination.

Together with citizens, companies and fellow governments we have turned Flanders into a leading region when it comes to the sustainable management of waste, materials and soils in the last several decades. To maintain this leading position, OVAM is now moving up a gear. We will expand the circular economy in Flanders, in which a sustainable management of waste, materials and soil provides new resources, materials and space.



# OVAM in figures

## OVAM TURNS 35



Since 1981, OVAM has focused on high-quality and efficient management of waste, materials and soils in Flanders.

## RESIDUAL WASTE



**141 kg**  
residual waste per capita  
in Flanders (2015)  
a **57.4%**  
decrease since 1991

## INDUSTRIAL WASTE



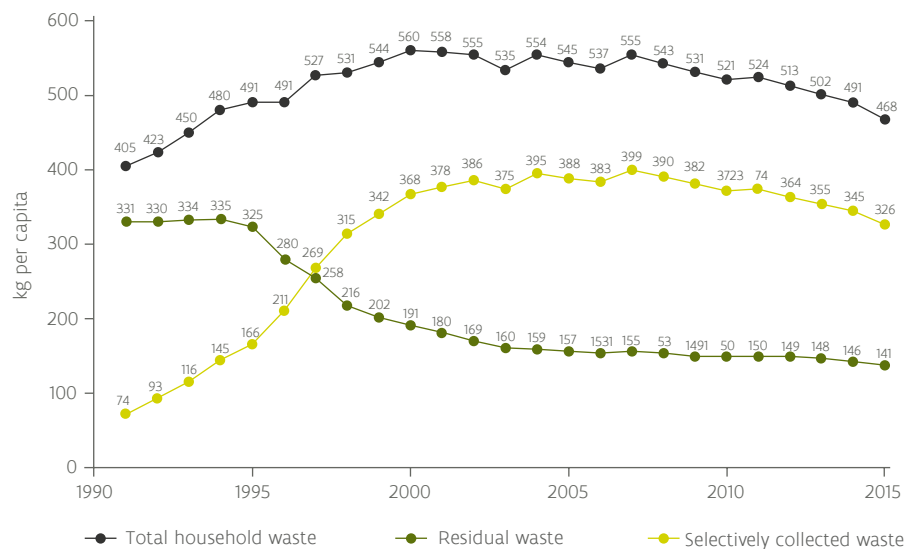
**77%** is re-used (2014)  
a **19.2%** decrease  
since 2004

## AREA OF LAND REMEDIATED

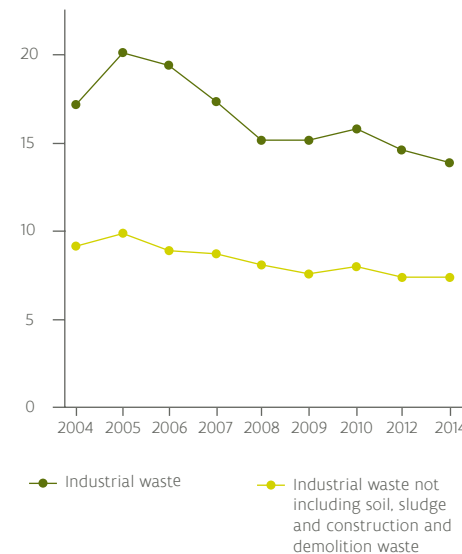


**820.6 hectares** of land  
was remediated in 2016, of which  
198.4 hectares by OVAM

## HOUSEHOLD WASTE



## EVOLUTION OF FLEMISH INDUSTRIAL WASTE UP TO 2014





## 1. URBANREC: THE SEARCH FOR SOLUTIONS FOR BULKY WASTE

**Participants:** 21 partners from 7 countries

Couches, mattresses, outdoor furniture ... Plenty of bulky waste still ends up in a land-fill or incinerator. Yet bulky waste contains a lot of valuable materials. Moreover, sorting analyses show that this amount can be reduced drastically. How can we accomplish this? That is what OVAM and several other partners are trying to find out in the European project URBANREC. The 21 project partners aim to develop an integrated approach for bulky waste: through prevention and increased re-use, improved selective collection, smart logistical solutions and better recycling techniques.

 [urbanrec.aimplas.es](http://urbanrec.aimplas.es)

# FLANDERS HITS INTERNATIONAL HIGHS

Flanders is an international player when it comes to the management of waste, materials and soils. We are always looking ahead. In four European projects (funding programme Horizon 2020) OVAM keeps a finger on the pulse of the newest insights and developments.

## 2. INSPIRATION: HOW DO WE KEEP EUROPEAN SOILS HEALTHY?

**Participants:** 20 partners from 16 countries

Which new knowledge do we need to ensure the quality of soil and land? And how do we address sustainably societal challenges related to soil management and land use? These are the questions the research project INSPIRATION seeks to answer. The partners formulated a joint strategic research agenda and will be looking for financiers for their research in 2017. In doing so, they aim for maximal cooperation across borders.

 [www.inspiration-h2020.eu](http://www.inspiration-h2020.eu)

## 3. REPAIR: 6 EUROPEAN CITIES EXPLORE THE CIRCULAR ECONOMY

**Participants:** 18 partners from 6 countries

What can a circular economy mean for cities such as Ghent, Hamburg or Naples? Eighteen partners from six EU-countries are trying to find out. Their objective: offer local and regional authorities innovative practices to use waste as material in the material loop.

 [www.h2020repair.eu](http://www.h2020repair.eu)

## 4. FISSAC: INDUSTRY LOOKS FOR RESIDUAL STREAMS FROM CONSTRUCTION

**Participants:** 26 partners from 9 countries

The FISSAC-project looks for a method to exchange residual waste streams from construction and demolition works. A software platform aims to pave the way for exchanging information and creating industrial networks.

 [www.fissacproject.eu](http://www.fissacproject.eu)

# NEW IMPLEMENTATION PLAN FOR HOUSEHOLD WASTE TAKES OFF

In September 2016, the Flemish Government approved a new implementation plan for household waste. The plan aims for 16 kilogrammes less residual waste per inhabitant in Flanders, more re-use and 20 percent less litter. “Flanders is at the forefront of Europe: we want to keep it that way.”

Flanders uses implementation plans to define the ways we collect and sort our household waste. This approach is clearly successful: today, 71 percent of household waste in Flanders is being recycled and the total amount of waste is decreasing steadily. The new implementation plan for household waste and comparable industrial waste, which covers the period of 2016-2022, further hones these ambitions.

“Our objective is for every citizen of Flanders to produce 16 kilogrammes less waste a year by 2022”, says **Ann De Boeck** of OVAM.

## INNOVATIVE COLLECTION

More re-use, actions to counter food waste and initiatives in the sharing economy aim to help realise these objectives. The implementation plan wants to help Flemish citizens sort more often and more easily. There will be a compulsory collection of hard plastics at civic amenity sites and more streams

(mattresses, furniture) will be extracted from bulky waste. Municipalities and inter-municipal associations continue to play a crucial role in the execution of the waste plan. After all, they know the local circumstances better than anyone. Under their direction, innovative collection systems can be constructed, such as mini civic amenity sites in densely built areas and underground or pop-up collection sites.

## FLANDERS MORE RAPIDLY ASBESTOS-FREE

Another important ambition of the Flemish government is to protect its citizens from the risks of asbestos. Flanders holds an estimated 3.7 tonnes of asbestos-containing materials. To remove these at an accelerated pace, OVAM is developing a phasing-out plan for asbestos. This plan will be finished in 2018 and should lead to a completely asbestos-free Flanders in 2040.



LITTER: **17,500 TONNES**



TOTAL HOUSEHOLD WASTE:  
**3,029,728 TONNES**

TOTAL INDUSTRIAL WASTE:  
**13,911,000 TONNES**



HOUSEHOLD WASTE PER  
CAPITA: **468 KG**

RESIDUAL WASTE PER CAPITA:  
**141 KG**

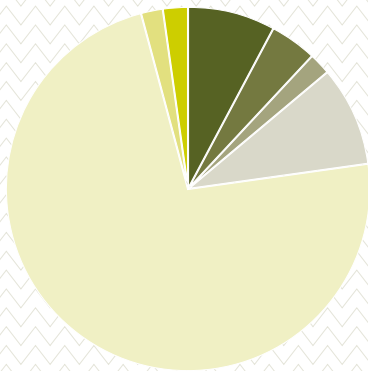


SELECTIVELY COLLECTED WASTE  
PER CAPITA: **326 KG**



## WHAT HAPPENS TO INDUSTRIAL WASTE?

77% of industrial waste gets a second life



### PROCESSING METHODS:

- Incineration | 8%
- Landfilling | 4%
- Sorting for further recycling | 2%
- Other pre-treatment | 9%
- Recycling | 73%
- Composting | 2%
- Re-use | 2%

# 77% OF INDUSTRIAL WASTE IS RECYCLED

In 2014, 77 percent of the waste produced by Flemish companies got a second life through material recycling. That is a 2 percent increase since 2012. The construction sector produces the most waste.

Collecting waste at the source results in purer waste streams and high-quality recycling. This is why all Flemish citizens are required to sort their waste. In total, companies must collect 18 waste streams separately and offer them to an accredited collector.

Re-use, recycling, composting or use as raw materials: more and more frequently, industrial waste gets a second life. In 2014, 40 percent of industrial waste in total was transported directly to a material recycling hub. In addition, 54 percent of industrial waste was pre-treated (for example, by sorting it) with a view on further recycling. Of this waste, another 69 percent was used in material recycling. In the end, approximately 77 percent of the waste in Flemish companies gained a second life through material recycling.

With 2.2 million tonnes of construction and demolition waste in 2014, the construction sector is responsible for the biggest part of the amount of waste. At the same time, this

is far less than the 4.2 million tonnes the sector produced in 2004.

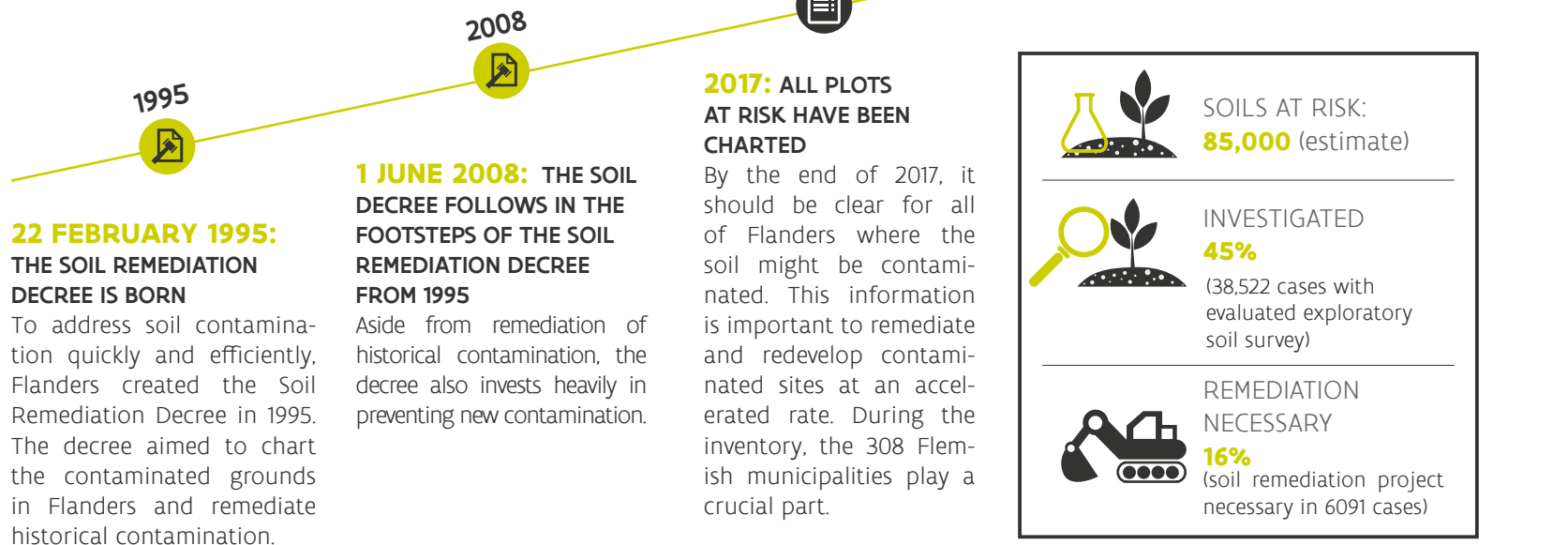
## FLANDERS FOCUSES COMPLETELY ON CIRCULAR ECONOMY

By 2050, the circular economy should be a fact in Flanders. This objective is one of the seven transition priorities of the Flemish government to realise its Vision 2050. The brand-new Flanders Circular has been called into life to make the transition to a circular economy a success. In this partnership, representatives of all layers of the society – from government to research institutes, companies and civil society organisations – work on three themes: circular city, circular entrepreneurship and circular purchases. Their objective: pushing Flanders towards a circular economy and sustainable management of materials and raw materials by 2050.

## 20 years Soil Decree

# 20 YEARS DOWN, 20 YEARS TO GO

In 1996, OVAM issued the very first soil certificate and kicked off the Soil Remediation Decree. Twenty years later, we have issued four million soil certificates and over four thousand heavily contaminated terrains have been remediated. Which milestones have led to this result and what are the goals of Flanders in the coming twenty years?



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