VIB

Sustainability Report

01/01/2025 – 31/12/2025

General

B1 Basis for preparation

Name of the reporting entity
VIB

VAT number of the reporting entity
BE0456343923

Registered address
Suzanne Tassierstraat 1, 9052 Gent, Belgium

Basis for reporting (consolidated or individual basis)
Individual

Reporting entity legal form
Other

Other reporting entity’s legal form specification
Non-profit association (VZW)

Size of balance sheet
323,722,048.77 EUR

Turnover for the 3 most recent years

	Turnover [EUR]
Reporting year	52,617,207.94
Year before reporting year	44,049,791.14
Two years before reporting year	42,443,212

Do you have your turnover breakdown per NACE code?

No

NACE sector classification code(s)

- NACE N - 72.10 Research and experimental development on natural sciences and engineering

Number of employees

970.9 FTE

Employee counting methodology (At the end of reporting period or as an average during the reporting period)

At the end of the reporting period

Country of primary operations

Belgium

List of sites

Address	Coordinates (geolocation)	Cadastral Reference	Area	Asset Type
Suzanne Tassierstraat 1, 9052 Gent, Belgium	51.0054787,3.7423480999999996	44082B0667/00A000	0.62	['Office', 'Other Property']
Kerrebroek 66b, 9850 Deinze, Belgium	51.028321299999995,3.5355790999999996	44049C0157/00N000	1.23	['Other Property']
Technologiepark-Zwijnaarde 71, 9052 Gent, Belgium	51.010363399999996,3.7104933	44082B0137/00V000	1.26	['Other Property']
Technologiepark-Zwijnaarde 75, 9052 Gent, Belgium	51.0109346,3.7100736999999997	44082B0137/00N002	0.43	['Other Property']
Technologiepark-Zwijnaarde 94, 9052 Gent, Belgium	51.008458700000006,3.7149242	44082B0081/00F000	1.2	['Other Property']
Kerrebroek 66A, 9850 Deinze, Belgium	51.027990499999994,3.5358161999999997	44049C0157/00M000	0.19	['Other Property']
Grotesteenweg-Noord 95, 9052 Gent, Belgium	51.012089499999995,3.7035921	44082A0087/00D000	0.41	['Other Property']

Have you obtained any sustainability-related certifications or labels for your organization?

Yes

Description of sustainability-related certification(s) or label(s), including, where relevant, the issuers of the certification or label, date and rating score

Certification	Certification Description	Certification Date	Rating score (if applicable)
Other	Laboratory Efficiency Assessment Framework (LEAF) lab sustainability certification issued by University College London (UCL) for sustainable laboratory practices across VIB research groups; levels achieved include Bronze, Silver and Gold.	2025-12-31	LEAF levels achieved at VIB overall: Bronze 28, Silver 12, Gold 6

C1 Strategy: Business Model and Sustainability – Related Initiatives

Description of significant groups of products and/or services offered

Product or Service	Description
Pioneering life sciences research	Fundamental and translational research across human disease mechanisms and plant biology, with researchers pursuing disruptive insights to expand understanding of life and enable innovative medical and agricultural solutions.
Tech transfer via the Innovation & Business team	Bridging science and society by fostering partnerships, launching spin-offs, and licensing intellectual property, generating industrial income and moving discoveries beyond the lab.

Product or Service	Description
VIB Technologies	Shared core facilities and Expertise Units providing access to advanced equipment and specialist guidance, complemented by the Tech Watch Core that scouts and implements emerging life-science technologies.
Training & Conferences program	Integrated offering of top-tier training, conferences, and workshops covering cutting-edge science, technologies, and professional skills for scientists and research support staff.
Incubator infrastructure	Bio-incubators in Leuven, Ghent (Ardoyen, Eiland), Nevele, and Brussels providing dedicated facilities and support for biotech start-ups.

Description of significant market(s) you operate in (e.g. B2B, wholesale, retail, countries)

Market	Description
B2B – Industry collaborations (pharma, biotech, agro) – Belgium	Industry collaborations in early-stage drug and agricultural product discovery conducted with corporate partners through VIB Discovery Sciences in Belgium
B2B – Research technology services (VIB Technologies) – Belgium	Provision of advanced research technologies and core facility services to academic institutions and companies in Belgium
B2B – Biotech incubator infrastructure – Belgium	Leasing and support of specialized biotech incubator infrastructure for life sciences companies in Belgium (e.g., VIB Bio-Incubator, Bio-Incubator Brussels)
Training and conferences – Belgium	Organization of scientific training and conferences serving researchers and research support staff in Belgium

Description of main business relationships (e.g. key suppliers, customers distribution channels and consumers)

Business relationship	Description	Estimated number of entities	Sectors	Countries
Supplier	VIB procures laboratory consumables, chemicals (solvents), lab life supplier, services, plastics, lab equipment, repair and maintenance, informatics and audiovisual, and glass products; purchased goods and services accounted for 73% of GHG emissions in 2023 with indicative CO2e shares (consumables 35%, chemicals 20%, lab life 18%, services 10%, plastics 9%, lab equipment 3%, repair & maintenance 3%, informatics & audiovisual 2%, glass 1%), and VIB applies sustainable procurement requiring product CO2 data, packaging criteria in tenders, and reusability/ repairability, including catering.	161	laboratory consumables; chemicals/solvents; lab life supplies; services (incl. repair & maintenance); plastics; lab equipment; informatics & audiovisual; glass products; catering	Austria, Australia, Belgium, Canada, Switzerland, China, Germany, Denmark, Spain, Finland, France, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Ireland, Israel, Latvia, Netherlands (Kingdom of the), Poland, Portugal, Sweden, Taiwan, United States of America
Customer (B2B)	VIB offers research collaboration and services to external parties. The organization also engages with industry partners for the creation of start-ups.	107	Life science industry companies in medical biotechnology, pharmacy, food- and agritech.	Belgium, Switzerland, Germany, Denmark, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Netherlands (Kingdom of the), United States of America, France

Does your strategy include key elements that address or influence sustainability issues?

Yes

What are the key elements of your strategy that relate to or affect sustainability issues?

Strategy Key Element	Description
Double materiality assessment and prioritization of focus areas	A CSRD-aligned double materiality assessment provides the foundation of the sustainability strategy and prioritizes impacts, risks, and opportunities, setting focus areas on own workforce, climate change, and circular economy to guide decisions and actions.
Policy commitments to embed sustainability and governance principles	Formal commitments include integrating sustainability and environmental best practices into all decisions, a board-level ambition to be a frontrunner, six guiding principles (regular reassessment, sustainable procurement tied to circularity and human rights, clear governance, awareness and knowledge sharing), and preparation for VSME/CSRD reporting.
Net-zero transition plan and science-aligned interim targets	Long-term climate objective of climate neutrality by 2050 with interim targets against a 2023 base year (Scope 1 −42% by 2030 and −70% by 2040; Scope 2 −60% by 2030 and −100% by 2040; Scope 3 −25% by 2030 and −60% by 2040; total −28% by 2030 and −63% by 2040), aligned with SBTi and EU climate strategies, steering investment and operational decisions.
Circular economy target for recyclable waste streams	Circular economy target to guide 50% of total waste outflow to recyclable streams by 2030, shaping procurement, packaging and operational waste management.
Sustainable procurement and supplier engagement program	A sustainable procurement policy positions supplier engagement as a major lever (addressing the largest emissions source in scope 3), requiring suppliers to share scope 1 and 2 emissions and reduction measures within one year, and applying transport and packaging criteria to reduce emissions and waste (including a transport target of −50% by 2030).
Sustainability governance structure	Defined sustainability governance structure—steer group, Directors' Committee, topical working groups, reporting and communication groups, center eco teams, and focal points—to drive strategy execution and decision-making across the institute.

Strategy Key Element	Description
Operational integration through LEAF and eco teams	Institute-wide programs (LEAF certification and eco teams) embed sustainable lab practices and grassroots change, operationalizing strategy and supporting achievement of climate and circular economy targets.
Carbon accounting baseline and transparent risk management	Full-scope carbon accounting (2023 baseline) informs priorities and actions; the strategy transparently acknowledges limitations (data gaps, investment dependencies) and commits to specifying them, enhancing risk management and credibility.

Description of governance and responsibilities in relation to sustainability matters

- Oversight and decision-making: A sustainability steer group (CFO/HR/COMM/MD) makes key decisions on sustainability reporting and investments, confirms proposals for policies, targets and actions, and reviews progress.
- Implementation by management: The Director's Committee implements sustainability policies, actions, and targets and challenges the materiality of topics.
- Topic-specific development: Temporary topical working groups (e.g., mobility, purchasing, waste, travel) develop actions, policies, and targets.
- Reporting governance: A reporting working group guides VSME-aligned reporting steps, including materiality, data gaps, and timing. A sustainability coordinator leads preparation for sustainability reporting and the double materiality assessment.
- Communications: A communication working group provides support for sustainability campaigns and reporting.
- Grassroots execution and feedback: VIB eco teams and center eco teams implement local actions, set and share best practices, and feed proposals and new topics into reporting and topical working groups; all staff can contribute ideas and proposals.
- Local coordination: Sustainability focal points or coordinators at center/site level act as first points of contact and manage coordination and communication flows.
- Board and organizational context: The Board of Directors sets strategy and main policies and supervises management; it has expressed the ambition for VIB to be a frontrunner in sustainability. VIB's governance framework includes the General Assembly, Board of Directors, General Management, and Directors' Committee.

Is the ultimate responsibility for environmental matters and the development of the ESG strategy clearly defined and assigned?

Yes

B2 Practices, policies and future initiatives for transitioning towards a more sustainable economy

Have you implemented any specific practices, policies, or planned initiatives to support your transition toward a more sustainable economy?

Yes

Practices, policies and future initiatives (PPI) for transitioning towards a more sustainable economy

	Do you have practices, policies, or future initiatives that address this issue?	If yes, describe the practices, policies, or future initiatives	If yes, specify the targets of the practices, policies, or future initiatives	If yes, specify the most senior level accountable for implementing these practices, policies and/or future initiatives
Climate change	Yes	Decarbonization of owned buildings (FSVM1, FSVM2, BIC1 & BIC2) through hybrid heating systems, heat recuperation, installation of EC motors on air groups, VAV valves to reduce ventilation energy use, and solar PV (481 panels on FSVM1 and FSVM2). Energy efficiency measures including LED relighting, freezer management and calibration of BMS. Sustainable mobility actions targeting a 50/50 modal shift (bike lease and allowance, bike accommodations and safety, reduction of car parking/increase of parking fee) and electrification of the car park. Travel policy discouraging and penalizing air travel (CO2 contribution per flight), promoting train travel (1st class allowed and reimbursed) and introducing an 8-hour rule.	2030 targets vs 2023: Scope 1 −42%, Scope 2 −60%, Scope 3 −25%, total −28%. Targets follow the EU Climate Act time line; that means -55% by 2030, -90% by 2040 and climate neutral with no or limited overshoot by 2050.	The board of directors
Pollution	Yes	Promotion of safer chemical use through promoting sustainable procurement of chemicals and solvents; regular water quality testing and proactive sharing of analytical results to enable a preventive approach and reduce incident risk; adoption of	Comply with applicable discharge limits; reduce use of hazardous solvents (no	The sustainability coordinator in cooperation with University peers,

	Do you have practices, policies, or future initiatives that address this issue?	If yes, describe the practices, policies, or future initiatives	If yes, specify the targets of the practices, policies, or future initiatives	If yes, specify the most senior level accountable for implementing these practices, policies and/or future initiatives
		phosphorus-poor products in water treatment where required for potential discharge to surface water.	quantitative target specified).	while reporting to the sustainability steer group
Water and marine resources	Yes	Action plan to reduce diluted wastewater and optimize water use on UGent Campus Ardoyen: disconnect pond overflow and rainwater from wastewater and route to front pond (pump installed); switch to phosphorus-free maintenance products in steam boilers and cooling towers (FSVM1 & FSVM2 except east boiler) to enable capture and reuse; use RO water in steam boilers to reduce blowdown and chemical use (RO installations ready in FSVM1 & FSVM2; connections planned); capture and reuse blowdown for sanitary use (new piping and disconnect tank needed, offers requested); route water to helophyte field and reuse for sanitary applications (in use at FSVM2; new lines needed in FSVM1); install meters and provide half-yearly “water-updates”; conduct regular water quality tests under permit conditions; collect SDS; monthly analyses of total phosphorus and use phosphorus-poor products as required.	Test waste water discharge for octylphenol 1 µg/L for 3 years then 0.1 µg/L objective to reduce discharge by 50 m^3 vs previous permit and submit study to VMM by July 2027.	The sustainability coordinator in cooperation with University peers, while reporting to the sustainability steer group
	Yes	Financial support through our Ghent eco teams to local biodiversity project ‘Rijvissche’ by Natuurpunt - soil analysis	no target, but we aim to hold annual biodiversity	The sustainability coordinator in

	Do you have practices, policies, or future initiatives that address this issue?	If yes, describe the practices, policies, or future initiatives	If yes, specify the targets of the practices, policies, or future initiatives	If yes, specify the most senior level accountable for implementing these practices, policies and/or future initiatives
Biodiversity and ecosystems		sponsored with 7953 EUR https://www.psb.vib-ugent.be/research/psb-nature	walks at all VIB locations	cooperation with University peers, while reporting to the sustainability steer group
Circular economy	Yes	Sustainable procurement policy requiring accurate product CO2 data from suppliers to inform purchasing and reduce GHG emissions; shift away from fossil-based products where possible; gradual shift to offering 100% plant-based catering for trainings, conferences and events; inclusion of packaging criteria aligned with the Packaging and Packaging Waste Regulation (EU) 2025/40 in tenders and framework agreements; supplier surveys and sustainability criteria integrated in tenders. Local real-time stock management and internal exchange/ delivery system to avoid over-purchasing; exchange platform for used VIB equipment; resource efficiency campaign based on the 5R principle (Refuse, Reduce, Reuse, Repurpose, Recycle) with best-practice materials and seminars across centers.	Reduce CO2 from purchased services and goods and capital goods by 25% by 2030.	CFO (sustainable procurement); VIB Purchasing Officer and CFO (stock management and reuse); Sustainability Officer (5R campaign)
	Yes	Center eco-teams drive grassroots sustainability actions (e.g., waste islands, raising ULT freezer temperatures to −70°C,	Expansion of LEAF certification across VIB	Sustainability coordinator,

	Do you have practices, policies, or future initiatives that address this issue?	If yes, describe the practices, policies, or future initiatives	If yes, specify the targets of the practices, policies, or future initiatives	If yes, specify the most senior level accountable for implementing these practices, policies and/or future initiatives
Own workforce		switch-off stickers) showing feasibility in day-to-day lab environments; roll-out of LEAF (Laboratory Efficiency Assessment Framework) certification to embed sustainable lab practices in group processes with audits and peer learning; 46 VIB research groups certified, with further expansion planned.	groups (no quantitative target specified).	together withe steering group
Workers in the value chain	Yes	As part of our supplier engagement program we conduct a yearly human rights due diligence survey with our main suppliers	We aim for a supply chain made of suppliers that show no HRDD risks.	Sustainability coordinator, together withe steering group
Affected communities	No	deemed not material	not material	not material
Consumers and end-users	No	deemed not material	not material	not material
Business conduct	Yes	Sustainability governance structure with a sustainability steer group (CFO/HR/COMM/MD) for key decisions on reporting and investments, confirmation of policies/targets/actions and progress assessment; Directors' Committee for implementation;	Maintain clear governance, confirm policies/targets/ actions, assess	Sustainability steer group (CFO/HR/ COMM/MD)

	Do you have practices, policies, or future initiatives that address this issue?	If yes, describe the practices, policies, or future initiatives	If yes, specify the targets of the practices, policies, or future initiatives	If yes, specify the most senior level accountable for implementing these practices, policies and/or future initiatives
		topical working groups (mobility, purchase, waste, travel) to develop actions/policies/targets; reporting and communication working groups; center eco-teams to implement local actions and propose VIB-wide initiatives; sustainability focal points/ coordinators at center/site level as first contact.	progress (no quantitative target specified).	

Do you have a process in place to address human rights related complaints?

Yes

General

B3 Energy and greenhouse gas emissions

Have you gathered the necessary information to report a breakdown of your energy consumption?

Yes

Breakdown of energy consumption

	Renewable [MWh]	Non-renewable [MWh]	Total [MWh]
Electricity	11,571	0	11,571
Fuels	-	7,672	7,672
Total	11,571	7,672	19,243

Do you calculate Scope 1 or 2 Greenhouse Gas Emissions?

Yes

Estimated Scope 1 and 2 Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Emissions

	GHG emissions [tCO2eq]
Gross scope 1 GHG emissions	1,941.38
Gross scope 2 location-based GHG emissions	68.62
Total scope 1 and 2 emissions	2,010

Are you disclosing information on your Scope 3 emissions?

Yes

Estimated Scope 3 Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Emissions

	Reporting year emissions [tCO2eq]
Purchased goods and services	17,320.93
Capital goods	5,330.63
Fuel and energy-related activities (not included in Scope 1 or 2)	48.65
Upstream transportation and distribution	2,743.2
Waste generated in operations	0.87
Business travel	1,445.35
Employee commuting	713.42
Upstream leased assets	1,766.85
Downstream transportation and distribution	0
Processing of sold products	0
Use of sold products	0
End of life treatment of sold products	0
Downstream leased assets	0
Franchises	0
Investments	0
Total scope 3 emissions	29,369.9

Scope 1 and Scope 2 GHG Emissions intensity
0.04 tCO2eq/EUR

Total Scope 1, Scope 2 and Scope 3 GHG Emissions intensity
0.6 tCO2eq/EUR

C3 Greenhouse gas reduction targets and climate transition

Have you established targets for reducing your greenhouse gas emissions?
Yes

Greenhouse gas (GHG) reduction targets

	Target year	Target year emissions [tCO2eq]	Base year	Base year emissions [tCO2eq]	Percentage reduction from base year [%]
Gross Scope 1 GHG Emissions	2,030	1,191	2,023	2,054.23	42
Gross Scope 2 location-based GHG Emissions	2,030	717	2,023	1,793.83	60
Total Scope 1 and Scope 2 GHG Emissions	2,030	1,908	2,023	3,848.06	50

Scope 3 greenhouse gas reduction targets

	Target year	Target year emissions [tCO2eq]	Base year	Base year emissions [tCO2eq]	Percentage reduction from base year [%]
Purchased Goods and Services	2,030	16,380.36	2,023	21,840.48	25
Capital Goods	2,030	3,851.85	2,023	5,135.8	25

	Target year	Target year emissions [tCO2eq]	Base year	Base year emissions [tCO2eq]	Percentage reduction from base year [%]
Fuel- and Energy-Related Activities (Not Included in Scope 1 or Scope 2)	2,030	600	2,023	802	25.19
Upstream Transportation and Distribution	2,030	905.64	2,023	1,207.53	25
Waste Generated in Operations	2,030	1.51	2,023	2.02	25.26
Business Travel	2,030	928.66	2,023	1,238.22	25
Employee Commuting	2,030	1,626.95	2,023	2,169.26	25
Upstream Leased Assets	2,030	412	2,023	550.66	25.18
Downstream Transportation and Distribution	2,030	0	2,023	0	-
Processing of Sold Products	2,030	0	2,023	0	-
Use of Sold Products	2,030	0	2,023	0	-
End-of-Life Treatment of Sold Products	2,030	0	2,023	0	-
Downstream Leased Assets	2,030	0	2,023	0	-
Franchises	2,030	0	2,023	0	-

	Target year	Target year emissions [tCO2eq]	Base year	Base year emissions [tCO2eq]	Percentage reduction from base year [%]
Investments	2,030	0	2,023	0	-
Total Scope 3 GHG emissions	2,030	24,706.97	2,023	32,945.97	25.01

Disclosure of list of main actions you seek in order to achieve your targets

Action to achieve targets	Description of the action
Improve the energy performance of your buildings through renovations	Decarbonize owned buildings (FSVM1, FSVM2, BIC1 & BIC2) by deploying hybrid heating systems, installing heat recuperation, replacing fans with EC motors on air handling units, and adding VAV valves to cut ventilation energy use.
Install renewable energy production on site	Install 481 solar PV panels on FSVM1 and FSVM2 to generate onsite renewable electricity and reduce grid reliance.
Improve energy efficiency of operations	Implement LED relighting, laboratory and facility switch-off policies, raise ULT freezer setpoints to −70°C where feasible, and optimize/calibrate BMS (including linking HVAC and ice-water setpoints to outdoor temperature and improving cooling/heating performance).
Change energy mix	Secure 100% green electricity through additional renewable power purchase agreements (PPAs).

Action to achieve targets	Description of the action
Change transportation practices of employees	Drive a modal shift via bike lease and allowances, better bike facilities and safety, and reduced parking/increased fees; implement a travel policy that discourages flights (e.g., 8-hour rule and CO2 contribution per flight) and promotes rail (including first-class reimbursement).
Switch to electric vehicles for employees	Electrify the car park/fleet to reduce emissions from employee and organizational vehicle use.
Change transportation practices for raw materials and products	Require sustainable transport and smart delivery criteria in supplier tenders and contracts to decarbonize upstream logistics.
Other	Strengthen sustainable procurement by adding CO2 criteria to purchasing/tenders, implementing an ERP punch-out to rationalize suppliers and highlight greener products, and creating an exchange platform for used equipment; sustain a 5R campaign (Refuse, Reduce, Reuse, Repurpose, Recycle).
Install employee awareness programs	Establish eco-teams across centers to implement day-to-day lab sustainability actions and roll out LEAF lab sustainability certification to embed sustainable practices.

Status of implementation of you decarbonisation plan

A decarbonisation plan has already been adopted

Description of your decarbonisation plan, including an explanation of how it is contributing to reduce greenhouse gas emissions

VIB's decarbonisation plan (transition plan) aims for climate neutrality by 2050 with rapid emissions reductions and intermediate milestones for 2030 and 2040, aligned with EU climate strategies and Regulation (EU) 2021/1119. The 2023 baseline is 36,892 tCO2e (Scope 3: 89.6%; Scope 1: 5.6%; Scope 2: 4.9). The roadmap focuses on phasing out fossil fuels in heat and steam, reducing emissions from procurement, mobility and travel, and improving energy efficiency, with 2030 targets based on approved investments and policies.

2030 targets (vs. 2023):

- Scope 1: −42%
- Scope 2: −60%
- Scope 3: −25%
- Total: −28% - 2040 targets (vs. 2023):
- Scope 1: −70%
- Scope 2: −100%
- Scope 3: −60%
- Total: −63%

Key actions and quantified contributions to 2030 reductions:

- Energy and buildings:
- Decarbonizing buildings (heat/steam) and efficiency in bio-incubators: towards Scope 1.
- Energy efficiency and renewable electricity sourcing (including PPAs): from planned on-site solar PV towards Scope 2.
- Achieved to date: 100% certified renewable electricity and 1,101 solar panels (~570,665 kWh/year; avoids 119 tCO2e/year), together delivering a 30% reduction in Scope 2 emissions.
- Sustainable procurement (Scope 3): measures including CO2 criteria, "5R" campaign, purchase efficiency and sustainable framework contracts, exchange platform, and decarbonising upstream transport.
- Mobility: Modal shift measures (bike lease/allowance, facilities, pricing) + electrification of car fleet (≈40% reduction of 2023 mobility emissions).

- Travel policy: Rules discouraging and pricing air travel (8-hour rule, CO2 contributions) and promoting train travel.
- Additional Scope 3 reductions: -25% in leased assets and fuel- and energy-related emissions not in Scopes 1–2.

Planned contributions are designed to meet or slightly exceed the targeted reductions.

B4 Pollution of air, water and soil

Do you already report your emissions of pollutants?

No

B5 Biodiversity

Do you know how your sites are located in relation to biodiversity sensitive areas?

Yes

Do you have sites located in or near biodiversity-sensitive areas?

No

Do you have a breakdown of your land into different types, like sealed areas (e.g., buildings, roads) and nature areas?

No

B6 Water

Do you know your water withdrawal and consumption?

Yes

Water withdrawal, consumption and discharge breakdown

	Water withdrawal [m³]	Water consumption [m³]	Water discharge [m³]
All sites	35,695.59	23,092.59	-

Do you know how your sites are located in relation to areas of high water-stress?

Yes

One or more sites are located in areas of high water-stress

Yes

Amount of water withdrawn at sites located in areas of high water-stress

35,695.59 m³

Do you have a water management plan to reduce water consumption?

Yes

Additional explanatory information to contextualise water withdrawals or consumption

VIB includes “Water and marine resources” — specifically water consumption, withdrawals and discharges — as a focus area in its Sustainability Strategy 2025–2030. In 2025, VIB is a co-promoter of the “Sky Water Ardoyen” project at Tech Lane Ghent campus Ardoyen, aiming to create a water-positive business park by collectively collecting and distributing rainwater, with three phases (financial/legal framework; technical study; implementation before 2027). These initiatives provide context for VIB’s approach to managing and potentially reducing future water withdrawals or consumption at relevant sites. In addition VIB has set up an action plan to divert ‘grey water’ discharge to reuse for sanitary purposes.

B7 Resource use, circular economy and waste management

Are you applying circular economy principles within your organization?

Yes

Description of how you apply these principles

Principle	Description of practices	Metrics/Indicators	Examples
Eliminate waste and pollution through optimized processes	Institute-wide lab resource efficiency based on the 5R principle to avoid creating waste and pollution at the source, including awareness initiatives such as Plastic Awareness Month in research buildings; actions promoted include switching from single-use plastics to reusable glassware, optimizing sample sizes to avoid excess consumables use, and repurposing materials; sustainable procurement policy requiring suppliers to provide product carbon footprint data (PAS 2050/ISO 14040), shifting away from fossil-fuel-based products where possible, and including packaging criteria in tenders and framework agreements in line with the EU Packaging and Packaging Waste Regulation; supplier sustainability surveys are in use; monitoring system implemented to trace and monitor the CO2/euro impact of purchases.	Waste outflow (2023): Household waste 139.8 t; Plastic waste 55.5 t; Medical waste 42.8 t; Chemical waste 31.1 t; Green waste 9.1 t; CO2e from purchased goods & services (2023, category shares): Consumables (non-plastics) 35%; Chemicals (solvents) 20%; Lab life 18%; Services 10%; Plastics 9%; Lab equipment 3%; Repair & maintenance 3%; Informatics & audiovisual 2%; Glass & glass products 1%.	Plastic Awareness Month with lab plastic waste exhibition and the 5R campaign, with labs switching to reusable glassware and adopting plastic-reduction plans; procurement applying packaging criteria and requesting product carbon footprint data from suppliers.
Prioritize reusable products and materials	Reuse and repair embedded in purchasing by requiring proof of reusability and repairability (including access to spare parts) for purchased materials/equipment; circulation infrastructure including an exchange platform for used VIB equipment to extend equipment life and development of real-time stock management to	LEAF uptake: 46 VIB research groups across ten centers had been certified; CO2e tracking of procurement and category shares (see above) to monitor reductions linked to purchasing less, reusing,	Platform for sharing used lab equipment across VIB centers to keep assets in use longer; reuse practices promoted via the 5R campaign (e.g., reusable glassware,

Principle	Description of practices	Metrics/Indicators	Examples
	make consumable stocks visible and shareable across groups before purchasing new items; laboratory efficiency and certification through adoption of the LEAF (Laboratory Efficiency Assessment Framework) to systematize and certify resource-efficient lab practices.	or choosing lower-impact products; waste outflow tonnages (see above) used to track diversion efforts and reductions in waste requiring disposal.	repurposing materials) and operationalized through LEAF.
Regenerate ecological function	Biodiversity plays a pivotal role in the development of climate-smart plants by providing a rich reservoir of genetic material and traits that can be harnessed for enhancing crop resilience to changing environmental conditions. VIB-Gent center for Plant Systems Biology is exploring different ways in which existing biodiversity can aid this process.	No KPI's established on biodiversity related publicaitons.	PSB has been and will be involved in the generation of high-quality reference genomes for threatened and endangered species, along with species significant for ecosystem function and stability, invasive species perturbing local ecosystems, underutilized, neglected, or 'opportunity' crops that are important for the Global South, and under-represented taxa that constitute a large percentage of global biodiversity.

Are you only generating household waste?

Yes

Do you know the amount of waste generated?

Yes

Total waste generated

312 ton

Do you operate in a sector using significant material flows (for example manufacturing, construction, packaging or others)?

Yes

Annual mass-flow of relevant materials used

Material	Annual mass-flow
Non contaminated plastics (hard and soft)	36.02
Chemical waste	28.39
Medical waste	39.43
Paper and cardboard	10.21
Residual waste	50.57
Plant and garden waste	19.25
Greens and food waste	1.87
Wood (treated)	3.12

Total annual mass-flow of relevant materials used

312 ton

Have you implemented any waste management initiatives?

Yes

Waste management initiatives

Sustainability Initiative	Description
Waste Audit	Optimizes sorting rules within host university constraints and applies to all waste generated in VIB centers (wet labs and office/catering); engages eco teams, center and facility managers, and staff to contribute to diverting 50% of total waste to recyclable streams.
Source Reduction	Rollout in all VIB labs to sort non-contaminated hard and soft plastics directly in wet labs, diverting them from medical/contaminated waste streams that are incinerated.
Centralized Waste Station	Installation of centralized waste islands with clear, visual signage of waste streams and do's/don'ts to increase correctly sorted and recyclable waste.
Employee Engagement Campaigns	Regular internal campaigns to repeat sorting rules and inclusion of sorting rules in induction/onboarding to improve compliance and sorting quality.
Supplier Collaboration	Center-level eco-teams of volunteers drive sustainability actions in daily lab environments, including leading waste-island initiatives and promoting proper sorting practices.
Recycling Program	Organization-wide initiative to divert waste from household and medical incineration toward recyclable streams (plastic, paper/cardboard, glass, greens) to achieve 50% recyclable waste of total outflow.
Employee Engagement Campaigns	VIB-wide campaign promoting smart resource use in laboratories based on the 5R principle (Refuse, Reduce, Reuse, Repurpose, Recycle) with posters and seminars, aiming to reduce resource use and waste generation.

Sustainability Initiative	Description
Data Tracking and Reporting	Implementation of the LEAF certification framework across research groups to consolidate and introduce sustainable lab practices and embed sustainability discussions in routine lab meetings, enabling day-to-day practices that support waste minimization and proper sorting.

C4 Climate risks

Have you identified climate-related hazards and climate-related transition events, which represent gross climate-related risks for your company?

Yes

Climate-related hazards

Climate related hazard	Description	Exposure & Sensitivity Description	Time Horizon	Adaptation actions	Category
Flooding	The VIB HQ and bio-incubator site on Eiland Zwijnaarde lies between the Schelde and the Tijarm and is indicated as a possibly flood-prone area; drainage is to the Tijarm basin.	Office and laboratory buildings and associated campus infrastructure located on a low-lying island area near waterways are exposed to pluvial and fluvial flooding and intense rainfall that can overwhelm site drainage without adequate buffering and infiltration.	Short-term	Terrain elevation of the project area; private separated drainage for wastewater and rainwater; permeable surfaces and sloped hardscapes to promote infiltration; routing of excess rainwater to natural ponds along the Tijarm for collection, buffering, infiltration and controlled discharge; rainwater harvesting tank of at least 80 m^3 with reuse for sanitary flushing and irrigation; green roofs with a minimum buffer volume of 35 l/m^2.	Acute
Droughts	Provision is made to bridge drier months through on-site rainwater storage and reuse for sanitary and irrigation demands.	Sanitary water consumption and irrigation of green zones/ facades may face reduced precipitation and water availability during dry periods, increasing reliance on stored rainwater or mains water.	Short-term	Rainwater harvesting sized to at least 80 m^3 with reuse for toilets and irrigation, designed to bridge drier months and to automatically switch to mains water via a buffer tank when levels are low; green roofs contributing to water retention.	Chronic

Climate-related transition events

Climate related transition event	Description	Exposure & Sensitivity Assessment	Time Horizon	Adaptation actions	Category
Policy and regulation	EU Climate Law (Regulation (EU) 2021/1119) establishes climate neutrality by 2050; VIB states its objective to achieve climate neutrality by 2050 as established in this regulation and aligns intermediate 2030/2040 targets with EU climate strategies and targets.	Exposure: VIB's operations in heat and steam production, procurement of consumables, mobility and travel, and electricity use are addressed by the net-zero roadmap. Sensitivity: UNKNOWN	Long-term	Net-zero roadmap with intermediate 2030 and 2040 targets; shift away from fossil fuels in heat and steam production, procurement of consumables, mobility and travel; purchase of 100% certified renewable electricity; installation of 1,101 solar panels; stated 30% reduction in Scope 2 emissions.	Policy & Legal
Policy and regulation	Revised EU Waste Framework Directive and legal waste rules of municipality/Flanders referenced as standards for VIB's waste sorting policy; VIB links incineration of household and medical waste to CO2 emissions and aims to divert to recyclable streams.	Exposure: Waste management across VIB centers, including wet labs and office/catering spaces. Sensitivity: UNKNOWN	Short-term	Optimize sorting rules within host university limits; implement waste islands and clear signage; roll out sorting of non-contaminated hard/soft plastics in wet labs; repeat sorting rules via regular campaigns; include sorting rules in onboarding; target 50% of waste to recyclable streams.	Policy & Legal

Climate related transition event	Description	Exposure & Sensitivity Assessment	Time Horizon	Adaptation actions	Category
Market dynamics	Following the Heidelberg Agreement, lab certification will be required in the future for funding applications and grants, indicating a shift in funder requirements toward sustainable lab practices.	Exposure: VIB research groups seeking funding and grants. Sensitivity: UNKNOWN	Short-term	Implementation of the LEAF lab certification scheme; 46 VIB research groups certified across ten centers.	Technology

Potential adverse effects of climate risks that may affect your financial performance or business operations in the short-, medium- or long-term

Effect	Description	Risk level
Increase in investments	Possible additional investment needed for decarbonizing buildings; the transition plan focuses on shifting away from fossil fuels in heat and steam production, and the 2030 targets are based on investment decisions and approved policies and actions.	Low

Significant assets affected by material physical risks

Address of the asset	Geolocation (coordinates)	Description
Suzanne Tassierstraat 1, 9052 Gent, Belgium	-	Located on Eiland Zwijnaarde between the Schelde and the Tijarm in a possibly flood-prone area (Watertoets 2017); acute flooding risk mitigated by raising the site above existing ground levels, implementing a private separated stormwater/wastewater system, a site-wide infiltration and buffering system, green roofs with minimum 35 l/m² water buffer, and a rainwater tank of at least 80 m³; time horizon not specified.

Do you have Energy Performance Certifications for your real estate assets?

Yes

Energy performance and carrying value of your real estate assets

Address	Energy performance	Carrying value
Technologiepark-Zwijnaarde 71, 9052 Gent, Belgium	-	21,471,623

General

B8 Workforce – General characteristics

Breakdown of employees by contract type

	Number of Employees [FTE]
Temporary	268.7
Permanent	702.2
Total Employees	970.9

Breakdown of employees by gender

	Number of Employees [FTE]
Male	450.3
Female	520.6
Other	0
Not Reported	0
Total Employees	970.9

Breakdown of employees by country

Country of employment contract	Number of employees
Belgium	970.9

Employee turnover rate

Number of employees who left during the reporting period [FTE]	Average number of employees during the reporting period [FTE]	Employee turnover rate in the reporting period [%]
146	970.9	15.04

Is diversity actively promoted?

Yes

Are diversity targets set?

Yes

C5 Additional (general) workforce characteristics

Do you know the breakdown by gender at the management level?

Yes

Female-to-male ratio at management level for the reporting period

	Number of female employees at management level	Number of male employees at management level	Gender ratio
Gender ratio at management level data	6	14	0.42

B9 Workforce – Health and safety

Rate of recordable work-related accidents in the reporting period

	Number of recordable work-related accidents in the reporting period	Total number of hours worked in a year by all employees in the reporting period [hours]	Rate of recordable work-related accidents in the reporting period
Work-related accidents data	3	1,556,263	-

Number of fatalities as a result of work-related injuries

0

Number of fatalities as a result of work-related ill health

0

B10 Workforce – Remuneration, collective bargaining and training

Employees receive pay that is equal or above applicable minimum wage determined directly by the national minimum wage law or through a collective bargaining agreement

Yes

Percentage of employees covered by collective bargaining agreements

	Number of employees covered by collective bargaining agreements [FTE]	Percentage of employees covered by collective bargaining agreements [%]
Collective bargaining coverage	970.9	-

Do you know the breakdown by gender of annual training hours?

Yes

Breakdown by gender of average annual training hours per employee

	Average annual training hours [hours]
Male	21,295
Female	23,967
Other	0
Not reported	0

C6 Additional own workforce information - Human rights policies and processes

Do you have a code of conduct or human rights policy for your workforce?

Yes

What types of content does this code of conduct or human rights policy cover?

	Policy coverage
Child labor	No
Forced labor	No
Human trafficking	No
Discrimination	Yes
Accident prevention	Yes
Other	Yes

Specify other types of content covered by the code of conduct or human rights policy

The Code of Conduct addresses harassment (including sexual harassment), bullying, micro-aggressions, verbal/physical abuse, and creating a hostile work environment. It also covers abuse of power and anti-retaliation protections for good-faith reporting. Corruption and bribery (passive or active) are identified as misconduct. The code addresses falsification of information or data and sets expectations for scientific integrity. It sets standards of professional conduct, including respectful behavior, constructive communication, recognition of others, maintaining appropriate professional relationships, and training expectations. It outlines reporting, investigation, and disciplinary or remedial actions for misconduct.

The human-rights-related policy on high-risk foreign collaborations covers avoiding contributions to government human rights violations (including surveillance and military use of research data) and refraining from feeding human genetic databases for such purposes. It requires protection of sensitive personal data and human samples and restricts sharing with high-risk entities. It sets knowledge security and IP protection measures, including collaborator vetting, limiting information sharing by sensitivity, secure data management and encryption, training and awareness, and requiring partners to follow ethical and data protection standards. It establishes case-by-case due diligence, prioritization of non-governmental partners, enhanced scrutiny for state-affiliated entities, and transparency with regular reviews.

Do you have a complaint-handling mechanism for your own workforce?

Yes

C7 Severe negative human rights incidents

Do you have confirmed incidents in your own workforce?

No

Are you aware of any confirmed incidents involving workers in the value chain, affected communities, consumers and end-users?

No

General

B11 Convictions and fines for corruption and bribery

Have you incurred any convictions or fines for the violation of anti-corruption and anti-bribery laws during the reporting period?

No

C8 Revenues from certain sectors and exclusion from EU reference benchmarks

Are you deriving revenues from one of the activities listed below?

- None of the above

Are you excluded from any EU reference benchmarks that are aligned with the Paris Agreement?

No

C9 Gender diversity ratio in the governance body

Do you have a governance body in place?

Yes

Gender diversity ratio in governance body

Number of female board members at the end of the reporting period	Number of male board members at the end of the reporting period	Gender diversity ratio in governance body
4	9	-

G1-1 Business conduct policies and corporate culture

Description of how the undertaking establishes, develops, promotes and evaluates its corporate culture

VIB's Good Governance Charter sets basic principles grounded in transparent segregation of duties and responsibilities and processes of verification and accountability, and commits to annual reporting on good governance. The Charter includes a Code of Ethics with a duty of confidentiality to promote open discussion, and states that scientific integrity is an integral part of VIB's organizational culture, supported by a scientific integrity charter to encourage good research practices. VIB's mission and vision emphasize a dynamic, multidisciplinary, inclusive community and collaboration to deliver societal impact.

VIB continues to develop and adapt its governance principles to meet local and international developments and stakeholder needs. Governance bodies—the general meeting, board of directors, general management, executive committee, and committees such as audit and remuneration—define roles and oversight, while management implements an institutional excellence policy and creates a stimulating environment for high-quality research.

The Code of Ethics and duty of confidentiality promote open dialogue within governance bodies. The Whistleblowing Policy provides an internal reporting platform with guaranteed confidentiality, impartial handling by designated persons, and feedback timelines, reinforcing a speak-up culture and transparent follow-up.

Evaluation is supported by the Charter's verification and accountability processes and the commitment to annual good-governance reporting. The Sustainability Strategy 2025–2030 engaged internal and external stakeholders through interviews, expert groups, and a survey to identify priority topics, including own workforce and business conduct, integrating these into policies and actions.

Description of the mechanisms for identifying, reporting and investigating concerns about unlawful behaviour or behaviour in contradiction of its code of conduct or similar internal rules

VIB's audit committee oversees compliance with laws and regulations, risk management and internal controls, and directs ongoing internal audits; results are reported to the audit committee, alongside statutory external audit.

VIB provides an internal whistleblowing platform via the intranet or https://vib.sdwhistle.com, accessible only to designated impartial persons. Reporter identity is kept confidential.

For alleged research misconduct, reports are made to the Research Integrity Officer.

Confidentiality of the reporter's identity is ensured, personal data are processed in line with GDPR, and a confidential register of messages is maintained. Protected persons are safeguarded against retaliation and can access support measures including information, legal assistance, and other technical or psychological support; knowingly false reports are not protected and may incur sanctions.

Policies on anti-corruption or anti-bribery consistent with United Nations Convention against Corruption are in place

Yes

Disclosure of safeguards for reporting irregularities including whistleblowing protection

VIB has formal safeguards for reporting irregularities, as set out in its Whistleblowing Policy (effective 1 June 2023):

- Internal reporting channel: A dedicated online platform (https://vib.sdwhistle.com via the intranet) accessible only to designated impartial persons. They ensure neutral, independent follow-up and absence of conflicts of interest.
- External reporting options: Reporters may also contact the Federal Ombudsman (federal coordinator) or other competent authorities designated by Royal Decree. External reports can be made verbally or in writing.
- Confidentiality and data protection: The identity of the reporter and any identifying information are kept confidential and not disclosed without explicit consent, except where legally required in proportionate circumstances. Processing of personal data follows GDPR and Belgian data protection law; irrelevant data are not collected or are promptly deleted.
- Record-keeping: All reports are entered in a dedicated register with confidentiality guaranteed; reports are retained as long as the contractual relationship with the whistleblower is ongoing.
- Protection against retaliation: Retaliation is prohibited (e.g., dismissal, demotion, pay reduction, negative appraisal, harassment, discrimination, blacklisting, contract termination, license revocation). Protection applies to the whistleblower, facilitators, related third parties, and associated legal entities, provided the report is made in good faith and within scope. Anonymous reporters are also protected if later identified and subject to retaliation. Protected persons may file complaints with the Federal Coordinator and have access to support (free information and advice, legal assistance, technical/psychological/social/media-related support, and potential financial support for legal proceedings). Sanctions may apply under the Social Penal Code for obstructing reports, retaliation, or breaching confidentiality.
- Scope: The policy covers staff (including those at research centers, core facilities, and headquarters), contractors, suppliers and their personnel, shareholders and board members, trainees/volunteers, job applicants, former employees, facilitators, related third parties, and relevant legal entities; and it addresses breaches of EU/national law in specified areas (e.g., public procurement, AML/CFT, product and transport safety, environmental protection, data protection and NIS security, tax/social fraud, etc.).

Policies on protection of whistle-blowers are in place

Yes

Timetable for implementation of policies on protection of whistle-blowers

VIB's Whistleblowing Policy (version 1.0) took effect on 1 June 2023 and forms part of the Employee Regulations.

Undertaking is committed to investigate business conduct incidents promptly, independently and objectively

Yes

Policies with respect to animal welfare are in place

Yes

Information about policy for training within organisation on business conduct

VIB operates an integrated Training & Conferences program (since May 2024) that offers training, conferences, and workshops for scientists and research support staff at all career stages. The program covers topics such as leadership, communication, and career development and explicitly aims to foster a culture of lifelong learning, collaboration, and research integrity.

VIB's Good Governance Charter includes a Code of Ethics and states that VIB strives to operate with the highest level of business, scientific, and ethical integrity. It also references a charter on scientific integrity to encourage good research practices.

VIB maintains a Whistleblowing Policy that sets out procedures and protections for reporting suspected breaches of EU or national law within a work-related context, supporting ethical business conduct across the organization.

G1-2 Management of relationships with suppliers

Description of approaches in regard to relationships with suppliers, taking account risks related to supply chain and impacts on sustainability matters

VIB has a sustainable procurement and supplier engagement program that targets supply-chain climate and circularity impacts, acknowledging that procurement (purchased goods/services and capital goods) accounts for 73% of its GHG emissions.

Key elements of the approach:

- Supplier engagement and disclosures:
- Suppliers are asked to share a sustainability report (CSRD, VSME, SASB or GRI) or complete a VIB sustainability survey before meetings.
- Basic condition: suppliers must share their scope 1 and 2 emissions and concrete reduction measures; a one-year grace period is provided to comply.
- VIB requires accurate CO2 data for purchased products (using PAS 2050 and ISO 14040 for product carbon footprint/LCA).
- Procurement criteria and tendering.
- CO2 emissions are included as a criterion in purchase/tender/contract decisions.
- Packaging criteria are included in tenders and framework agreements in line with the Packaging and Packaging Waste Regulation (EU) 2025/40 (e.g., minimizing substances of concern; recyclability).
- Sustainable transport and smart delivery criteria are included in tenders (e.g., suppliers' environmental management systems such as ISO 14001/EMAS/BS8555; delivery vehicles at least Euro VI with a share of zero-emission vehicles; award criteria favoring zero-emission/low-noise vehicles, LEVVs, and avoided vehicle-kilometers).
- Product expectations and circularity:
- Preference to shift away from fossil-based products where possible.
- Require proof of reusability and repairability (including access to spare parts) for purchased materials/equipment.
- Campaigns and tools to reduce single-use and waste: 5R campaign (Refuse, Reduce, Reuse, Repurpose, Recycle); exchange platform for used equipment; improved stock management; ERP punch-out to reduce supplier count and product variety and increase visibility of "green" products.
- Governance, scope and targets:
- CFO is the senior-level accountable for sustainable procurement; policy coordinated with the Purchasing Officer and center purchasing leads.

- Scope covers all products purchased (including catering; with a gradual shift to 100% plant-based meals for training/conferences/events).
- Targets addressing supply-chain risk and impacts: reduce emissions from purchased goods and services by 25% by 2030; reduce delivery transport emissions by 50% by 2030 (goal: 600 ton/year); achieve 50% recyclable waste streams by 2030; 50% of purchased material/equipment to meet reusability and reparability; supplier criteria embedded in new tenders.

Disclosure of whether and how social and environmental criteria are taken into account for selection of supply-side contractual partners

Yes. VIB integrates social and environmental criteria into the selection of supply-side contractual partners through its Sustainable Procurement Policy and supplier engagement process:

- Supplier engagement and pre-selection: VIB requests suppliers to share a sustainability report (CSRD, VSME, SASB or GRI) or complete VIB's sustainability survey; suppliers must share their scope 1 and 2 GHG emissions and concrete reduction measures (suppliers are given one year to comply) [Duurzaam aankoopbeleid – e-procurement; Duurzaam aankoopbeleid – large tenders].
- Environmental selection criteria (tenders)
- Require the tenderer's ability to apply environmental management measures, verified via ISO 14001/ EMAS/BS8555 or equivalent [e-procurement; large tenders].
- Road transport/deliveries technical specifications: vehicles must meet at least Euro VI; at least 30% of the service network operated with zero-emission vehicles; use of LEVVs encouraged; verification via fleet lists and technical data sheets [large tenders; e-procurement].
- Packaging technical specifications: minimize substances of concern (per EU rules) and ensure all packaging offered is recyclable; verification via reports on substances and recyclability [large tenders].
- Social and safety-related award/selection aspects (transport tenders):
- Points awarded for technologies that promote road safety and safe routing; verification through qualitative memoranda and proof of technologies [large tenders].
- Noise emissions criteria: points awarded for vehicles meeting EU noise limits, with verification documentation [large tenders].