



VAN HOOL

today



VAN HOOL N.V. of Lier-Koningshooikt near Antwerp (BELGIUM) is the largest independent manufacturer of integral buses and coaches in Western Europe. Approximately 1.400 buses and coaches are produced a year and commercialised through the VAN HOOL network.

Apart from that, VAN HOOL manufactures a comprehensive range of semi-trailers, road tankers and tank containers. The company is as such the indisputable market leader in Belgium and holds major positions in different export markets. The commercial vehicles department produces more than 4000 units a year.

Today, the number of employees in Lier-Koningshooikt is approximately 4.000. The industrial site in Lier-Koningshooikt covers an area of 55ha (from which 25ha under roof).

More than 80% of the company's production is exported: two thirds stay in Europe, the remainder goes to America, Africa and Asia.

VAN HOOL has an annual turnover of over 450 million EURO: roughly 2/3 buses & coaches and 1/3 commercial vehicles.

Shortly after World War II, in 1947, Bernard Van Hool - a born entrepreneur - sensed the growing need for transport means and built his first bus.

Not long afterwards, the new company started building integral vehicles on its own, home-made, VAN HOOL chassis. In 1956, the first integral buses, sold under the brand name "VAN HOOL", left the production department. The company VAN HOOL - manufacturer of integral vehicles and at the same time still body-builder - took hold.

In the sixties, road haulage rose to an intensity never known before. As the infrastructure, needed to manufacture commercial vehicles was operational already, VAN HOOL could not but seize this opportunity. And so, the first commercial vehicles of VAN HOOL were manufactured in 1964, at first inside the bus department.

In 1974, a 4 ha large complex was built for the commercial vehicle department. This modern and highly rationalised production unit now covers an area of 7 ha already.

At present, VAN HOOL builds a complete range of integral buses and coaches, designed and produced according to a modular concept. This has not prompted VAN HOOL to leave aside the status of bodywork builder, an activity thanks to which the company can operate world-wide, in co-operation with the large chassis manufacturers.

VAN HOOL's commercial vehicle department manufactures a comprehensive range of transport means including semi-trailers, road tankers, tank and bulk containers, swap tanks, swap bodies and container chassis in the most diverse executions and complying with the latest technologies.

Both the bus and the commercial vehicles plant have their own Research and Development Department. They design and test new vehicles and work at a constant improvement and further modernisation of the vehicle-producing machinery.

Over the Years, the VAN HOOL products have become a synonym for quality, reliability and a perfect finishing. As a matter of fact, VAN HOOL has an ISO 9001:2000 certificate.

VAN HOOL's industrial philosophy has been, from the outset, on a thorough standardisation blended with a well thought-out flexibility, which enables the company to meet the specific needs of each particular market and of each client with a maximum of accuracy.

Thanks to these two apparently contradictory principles, VAN HOOL can deliver both large batches of identical products and tailor-made constructions at the same time. Implemented by a thorough-going strategy of investments, innovations and internationalisation on the one hand and the craftsmanship of the VAN HOOL employees on the other hand, these two principles constitute the basis of VAN HOOL's success.

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