

# Message from the CEO of BESIX Group

Rik Vandenberghe - CEO BESIX Group



Dear Readers,

In 2019, BESIX Group and its entities began, continued or completed hundreds of construction projects, on five continents. The multiple achievements presented in the pages of this Activity Report are representative examples of them. The Group's 14,000 employees have once again demonstrated their talent, passion and intelligence, showing to our clients and partners the reliability of our group and the excellence which is our main purpose. I would like to congratulate them and thank them with all my heart.

More than ever, BESIX Group will need their qualities and their dedication in the months to come. In March 2020, many worksites were halted or slowed down due to the coronavirus pandemic which has spread around the world. Our first priority has been the health of our employees, their families and their respective communities, as well as actively participating in the various initiatives taken by the states in which we are present.

The second priority is the actions we are taking inside BESIX Group in order to pass through the difficult economic conditions that will follow this pandemic. Inevitably, the financial results for 2020 will suffer.

We are nonetheless confident in our group's ability to overcome the difficulties and challenges that this crisis imposes. In addition to its employees, BESIX Group can rely on its clear strategy, its sense of entrepreneurship, as well as its financial health and operational expertise.

After four consecutive years of growth, BESIX Group closed 2019 with a record turnover of €3.3 billion and an order book of €4.8 billion, also a record. On the other hand, the consolidated net profit, at €42.2 million, is significantly lower than was forecast. Our net cash position is increasing again and our solvency ratio has been above the industry average for many years.

This financial solidity, combined with the first-rate expertise we have developed in recent years in future-oriented sectors, will help us to face the upcoming headwinds.

This forward-looking approach is demonstrated by the cutting-edge infrastructures – road, marine, airport and rail, as well as water and waste treatment – built by BESIX Group in 2019, some of which we also designed and financed, and for which we will provide operations and maintenance for decades.

This year we have also designed, built and developed high-quality buildings of various types, housing and offices in particular, as well as sports and logistics facilities. To these achievements we must also add the many specialist trades in the group's subsidiaries, some of which contributed significantly to our result.

The pages of this activity report give a clear overview of our achievements both in our core business, that is to say construction, and in our two other major activities, real estate development and concessions. Real estate development continues to perform well with record turnover in 2019, while the concessions activity has achieved good results, particularly in the Middle East.

We hope you enjoy discovering them through the following chapters.

Another specificity that makes our group stand out in the sector, is our internal Engineering department. It is also thanks to these in-house experts that we are able, today, to meet the expectations of our clients, offering them unique Value Engineering solutions and undertaking projects of unprecedented scale and complexity.

BESIX Group's investments in innovation are also starting to bear fruit. In 2019, we started our 3D concrete printing activities, experimented with promising new technologies on our sites, and achieved strong performance in terms of sustainability and circularity, especially in the building sector. We have constructed energy-neutral infrastructure and a new generation smart building, to which are added several promising research programmes in which we participate.

Our strong operational skills coupled to our decade-long investment in new knowledge constitute a pledge of the future. Even if it will be difficult, BESIX Group is today equipped to overcome the economic consequences of the coronavirus crisis, and then to continue to grow. We will achieve this by retaining, at the centre of our actions, the values of our group – excellence, passion, unity, co-creation and respect – and by being faithful to our purpose: "Excel in creating sustainable solutions for a better world."

Thank you for your interest in BESIX Group and in the extraordinary projects that we are carrying out in collaboration with our clients and many partners.

Happy reading,

**Rik Vandenberghe**  
CEO BESIX Group



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# Message from the Chairman of BESIX Group

Dear Readers,

In 2019, BESIX Group celebrated its 110<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

During these eleven decades, BESIX and its entities have provided Europe, and in particular the Benelux, with state-of-the-art buildings and infrastructure. Many a time we have stood at the forefront of progress in our business sectors. In the Middle East, through our subsidiary Six Construct, we have been actively contributing to the spectacular development of the Arabian Peninsula, as early as 1965, when only few companies were keen on venturing in this region of the world. From Australia to Africa, we have built the reputation and quality brand of BESIX and its subsidiaries.

We have always been curious to experiment, to dare and to be innovative; often having the courage to do what no one else had ever done before us. The world's tallest skyscraper, harbours or quay walls in hardly-accessible remote locations, a stadium within a limited schedule like never done before. Finally, in all circumstances, we have made sure that our projects are responding to the expectations of our clients. The year 2019 again provides multiple examples, as evidenced in this Activity Report.

Throughout its history, BESIX Group has experienced many crises, economic troubles and wars. The strength of BESIX has always been, not only to overcome them, but above all to transform them into opportunities. For instance, today we are recognised worldwide as one of the most performant companies in the maritime sector. BESIX acquired this expertise immediately after World War I, by committing to rebuild Belgium's ruined canals and locks, to build new ones and carry out the largest infrastructure projects in the country.

The same goes for the period from World War II to the first Gulf War, and from the economic crisis of 1929 to the one of 2008. BESIX Group has always bounced back.

Again, at the start of 2020, we have entered a new time of crisis. Its origin this time is public health-related and it will undoubtedly have deep economic consequences. The coming months will be challenging and for BESIX it will certainly be no exception. However, the Board of Directors and I remain confident. Because if there has been one constant in the history of BESIX Group, it is that of having always employed the most talented, intelligent staff and workers, who are always keen to take up the challenge and explore new paths. It is they who, over the decades, have enabled our group to dare and excel. In 2020, from senior management to workers, BESIX Group can count on the best and I have tremendous confidence in them. Together, we will not only survive this crisis, but will transform it, I am convinced, into new opportunities.

**Johan Beerlandt**  
Chairman of the Board of Directors  
BESIX Group



**Johan Beerlandt** - Chairman of the Board of Directors BESIX Group



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