



WESTHOLLAND
FOREIGN INVESTMENT AGENCY

Summary WestHolland Foreign Investment Agency annual report 2008

By actively supporting international inward investment projects, The WFIA actively contributes to the enhancement of WestHolland's economy and labour force. In cooperation with the local governments, the WFIA develops activities with a focus on countries, market sectors, and companies. Through its Investor Relations programme, the WFIA supports local governments in strengthening relationships with international companies, and assists in relocation, expansion, networking and other matters that enhance the operations of foreign companies within WestHolland.

Even though a number of international organisations decided to postpone their investment activities in the second half of last year because of the international financial crisis, 2008 closed with a positive result. A total of 28 successful projects have been counted, of which include 19 new establishments (135 jobs created at the start and 453 jobs created after three years), 7 investor relations projects (503 jobs created after three years) and 2 successful matchmaking projects which contribute to the strengthening of knowledge cluster. The choice for targeting specific countries and markets is based on the presence of companies and organizations which together form knowledge intensive clusters in West Holland. In 2008, the primary focus countries were the United States, United Kingdom, China and India, followed by Japan, Korea and Taiwan.

Collaboration among cities and agencies in West Holland is important to attract international companies. In particular, the partnership with organisations like Steenworp, Leiden Life Meets Science, Science Port Holland, Kennisalliantie, ICT Kring, The South Holland Shanghai Pudong Co-innovation Program and the

Holland Business Promotion Office are invaluable for the success of the WFIA's work. Also, service providers such as the Chamber of Commerce, accountants and tax advisors, lawyers and notaries, real estate agents and human resource specialists are indispensable for a high quality service.

When we are operation abroad, we work closely together with the national inward investment body, The Netherlands Foreign Investment Agency (NFIA), which is part of the Ministry of Economic Affairs. The WFIA is a stable organisation, and since 2008, operating with a new company structure, which includes an Advisory Board, a Board of Participants and a transparent administration.

The WFIA is closing 2008 as a financially healthy organisation with 7 solid partners, including the Cities of The Hague, Delft, Zoetermeer and Leiden, Stadsgewest Haaglanden, and the Chamber of Commerce. Since November, the City of Lansingerland joined forces and became the 7th solid partner. The WFIA has been both financially, as well as with respect to content, supported by the Province of South Holland.

The expectations for 2009 have softened due to the economic crunch. Investments from emerging economies like China and India will decline, but we expect a comeback of the American economy. From our point of view, the crunch also provides new opportunities, because the European market still offers plenty of advantages to companies from Asia and the United States to market their products.

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