



Lille, 3 April 2018

Press release

Foreign direct investments (FDI): Hauts-de-France, 2nd most attractive region in 2017, Top region for industrial investments

According to the report published today by Business France, Hauts-de-France ranks second only to Ile-de-France, among the most attractive regions of France in terms of jobs created or saved. Data collected by Nord France Invest shows that foreign investors created or saved 5,761 jobs in the region in 2017, which is an increase of some 26% against 2016.

These 5,761 jobs come from 97 investment projects, with an average size of 59 jobs, whereas the national average is around 26 jobs per project. The region achieved its best result ever recorded for job numbers (that is not counting the takeover of ARC by PHP which saved more than 5,000 jobs in 2015), while the number of projects stayed more or less at the same level as in 2016 (97 versus 103).

Hauts-de-France also confirms its first place in job numbers for industrial projects which enabled 3,214 jobs to be created or saved. 2017 was particularly good for investment projects in the automobile manufacturing sector as well as in the manufacture of machinery and mechanical equipment which together amounted to more than 1,730 jobs and 14 projects, representing more than 30% of the jobs in this report.

Another fact emerging from the 2017 report is the increase of the number of jobs in R&D projects, which brought us into 5th place nationally. The region has maintained a momentum of six projects of this type a year since 2015, but it's their size that is remarkable: for the first time, three of them exceed 50 jobs, including IBM which announced 100 jobs for a security operations centre and Dickson Constant with 50 jobs dedicated to product development.

Large nations are reaffirming their confidence

This year the USA comes top of the class of the nations most represented in the region because alone it represents some 37% of the jobs in this report and counts for almost a quarter of the projects (2,128 jobs created or saved in 22 projects). In addition to a significant number of jobs created, essentially due to the growth of large groups like Booking.com and AGCO, American companies also help maintain jobs by taking over promising companies (e.g. Pentair acquired by Emerson).

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This year the United Kingdom comes second with 861 jobs (including 570 saved thanks to GFG Alliance's takeover of Aluminium Dunkerque). Germany, usually on the podium, takes third position in the number of jobs and remains second in terms of projects (15 projects and 718 jobs).

Finally China, with 465 pure creation jobs and 3 projects listed, comes 4th of the countries investing most in the region this year. Thus 2017 is marked by the arrival of BYD (assembly of electric buses), the largest Chinese project for jobs (400 planned over three years) since the MA Steel takeover of Valdunes in 2014. Above all it is the largest all-new Chinese investment in Hauts-de-France. China is thus confirming its commitment to the territory, after the 5 projects listed last year.

Breakdown by nationality and business sector

Nationality	Number of projects	Jobs created and maintained
USA	22	2128
United Kingdom	6	861
Germany	15	718
China	3	465
Japan	4	446
Austria	4	252
Canada	3	215
Belgium	11	169
Luxembourg	4	104
Switzerland	3	78
Others	22	325
Total	97	5761

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Business sectors	Number of projects	Jobs created and maintained
Hotels, tourism and restaurant	3	1007
Machinery and mechanical equipment	7	936
Automotive manufacturers and outfitters	7	795
Metals, metalwork	6	779
Advice, engineering and operational services to companies	4	434
Software and IT services	7	330
Glass, ceramics, minerals, wood, paper	6	308
Building, construction materials	9	208
Agrifood, agriculture, and fishing	9	197
Commerce and distribution	7	144
Others	32	623
Total	97	5761

Sources: Nord France Invest – Business France

Some examples:

In industry:

Häagen-Dazs:

Operating in the Hauts-de-France region for 25 years, the company regularly reinvests, this time with the development of a new range of mini ice cream bars. It is a standalone unit of the group emerging in Europe, whose products will be exported to 89 countries worldwide. Around €14 million will thus be invested by Häagen-Dazs at Tilloy-lès-Mofflaines near Arras to develop this production line to make more than 160 million ice cream bars. This investment is supported by 80 new permanent positions.

AstraZeneca:

This company, whose regional site created in Dunkirk in 1991 produces aerosols for asthma and chronic obstructive pulmonary diseases, is making a major reinvestment there (€135M). The goal is to enable very high added-value production dedicated to a new inhalation

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technology. The Dunkirk site is thus becoming a key global site for producing inhaled medicines, 90% of which are exported to the USA.

BYD:

The Chinese group BYD (Build Your Dreams) chose Allonne near Beauvais to install its electric bus assembly site. This is the first all-new production site created by a Chinese company in the region, a very rare event at national and European levels; production sites generally become Chinese following an acquisition. The project, concerning a strategic sector for the future, plans for the creation of 400 jobs over three years.

AGCO:

The top Picardy private employer is extending its production plant for Massey Ferguson tractors in Beauvais. It is planning to internalise the storage and logistics functions for the spare parts required for manufacturing the vehicles. This investment of €5 million for a 30,000 m² site on 8 ha will enable the creation of around a hundred jobs.

In services:

BOOKING.COM:

The largest online hotel booking site, with operations in Tourcoing since 2011, is moving into a new building to house its future employees. At the moment the American company (belonging to Booking Holdings) employs 430 people in Tourcoing. In a few years they will number 900 employees.

IBM:

IBM France is establishing lasting roots in Lille with the opening of its French security operations centre (SOC). Featuring a crisis room, accessed with badges and biometrics, data isolation for vitally important operators, and electricity protection by UPS and power generator, the Lille SOC is expected to work with French (partnership with Auchan) and international clients.

IBM opened this centre with some ten people, but hopes to add about a hundred specialists working 24/7 in the detection and analysis of cyber-attacks over three years. IBM's Security service is permanently connected to its data and solutions centre in Montpellier and is seeking the new PDIS certification (security incidents service provider) announced by the ANSSI (French national cybersecurity agency).

The European command centre is located in Wroclaw, Poland and is supported by sixty odd IBM SOCs across the world.

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