

Hauts-de-France

At the heart of a region
with proven appeal

Excerpted from a 2017 study by KPMG

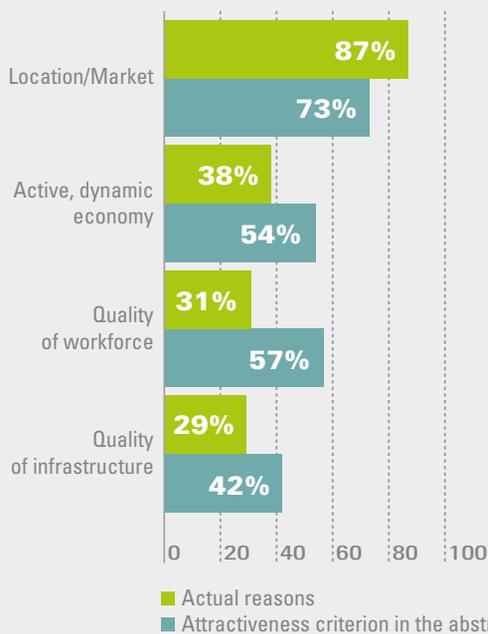


In November 2017, KPMG published its third report on the economic attractiveness of Hauts-de-France — a sequel to surveys in 2011 and 2014. Based on interviews with 138 foreign subsidiaries doing business here, the report sketches a portrait of the newly expanded region.

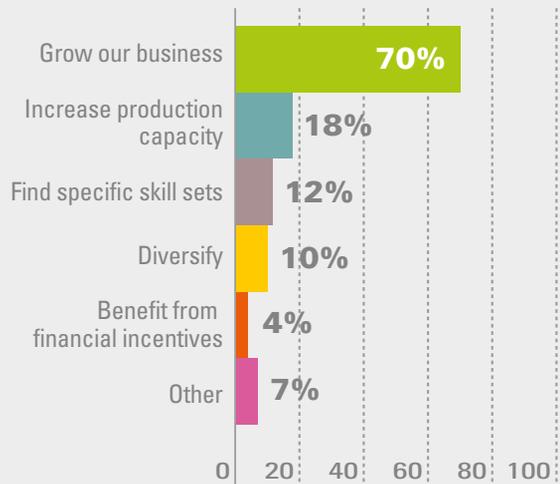
Fertile ground for acquisitions and investments

Of the foreign companies that invest in Hauts-de-France, 70% are attracted by business development opportunities, and 56% invest through an acquisition. Regardless of their long-term goal in coming to the region, location is its primary appeal. Of the foreign subsidiaries operating in Hauts-de-France, 74% are European-owned and 53% are industrial.

Why did you choose this region?

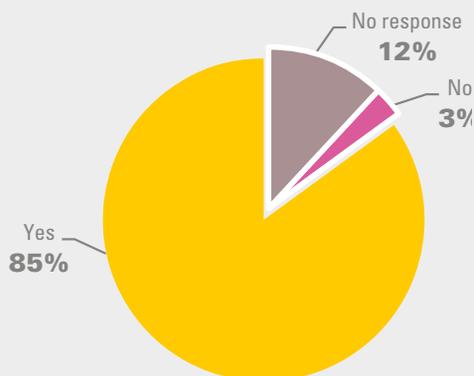


What was your primary reason for setting up in the region?



Optimism and strong selling points

Would you advise another company to set up a subsidiary here?



According to 34% of respondents, the primary obstacle to launching operations here seems to be the negative sociological portrait of the region painted by the media and other sources. Yet 88% of respondents have a positive image of Hauts-de-France themselves. Nearly six in ten subsidiaries are growing, and of those, 15% are growing rapidly. The two-year outlook is also very encouraging, with 76% anticipating growth. Three out of four respondents see their decision to locate in Hauts-de-France as successful, with 44% describing it as an advantage and 28% as a strategic move. In addition, 85% say they would recommend Hauts-de-France as a place to do business, and 17% already have. Respondents also cite region's strong values as a selling point, spontaneously referring to its work ethic, community spirit, energy, hospitality, tenacity and friendliness.

If the region were a value, what would it be?



Appeal on the rise

Nearly two-thirds of participating subsidiaries say that the region's appeal has increased over the past five/ten years. Overall, marketing campaigns that present a modern, dynamic image of Hauts-de-France have been well received. Key factors include centers of excellence, logistics hubs, projects such as the Seine Nord Canal, and the presence of Toyota and Amazon in the region.

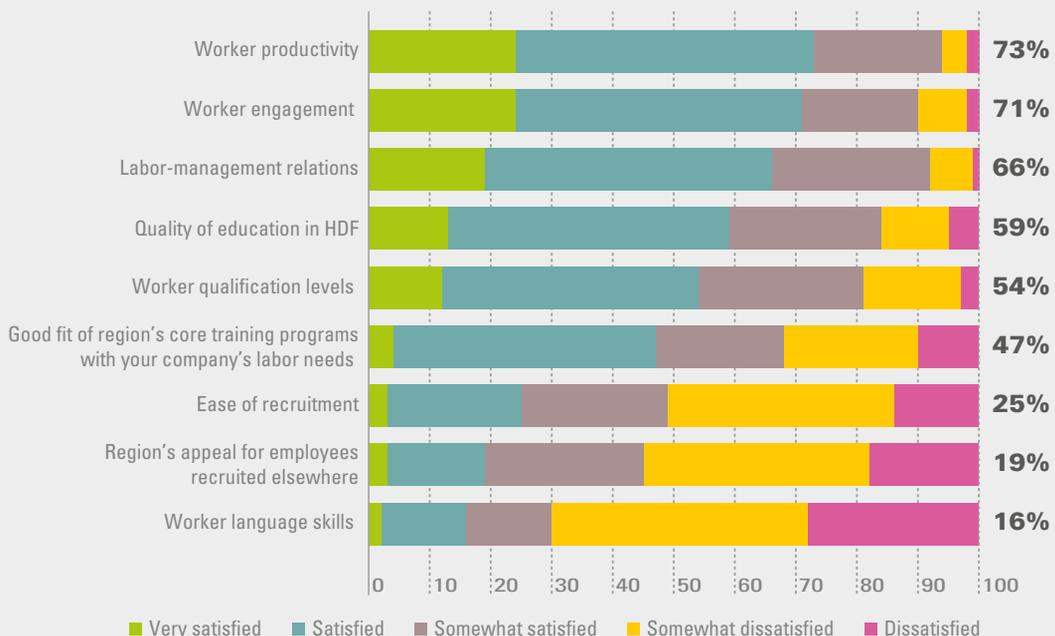
The three industries that hold the most appeal for respondents are the automotive sector, agrifood and services, and their perceptions of the economic, technical and financial environment are positive as well. In addition, 69% of participating subsidiaries said they are satisfied with the R&D environment.

A CLOSER LOOK

Productive workers

Over 70% of respondents view the Hauts-de-France labor force as productive and engaged, though they identify a few areas with room for improvement. In particular, they would like to see progress in upstream areas such as quality of education, qualification levels, and matching training to the needs of the business community, especially in the area of foreign language skills.

How would you rate your current satisfaction level in the following areas?



Extensive infrastructure network

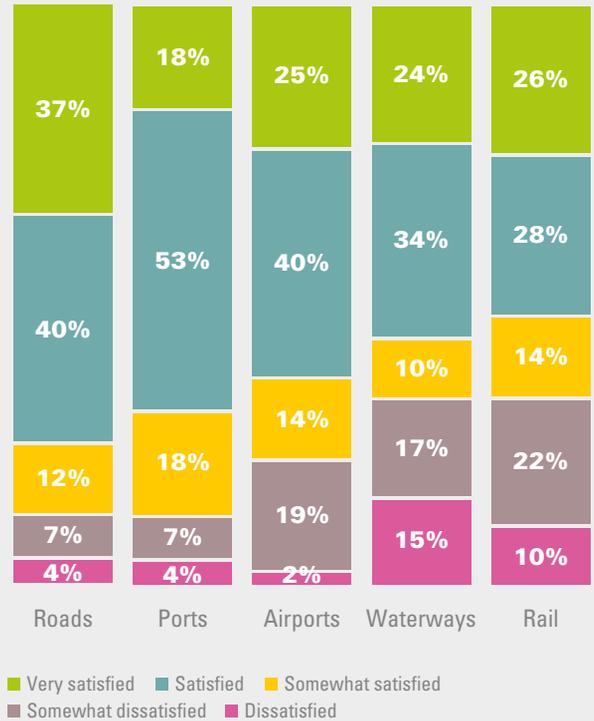
The region has an extensive infrastructure network, viewed as a real asset by two-thirds of the subsidiaries. Satisfaction with road and port infrastructure tops 70%, with airports a close third. Hauts-de-France also benefits from nearby infrastructures in the Paris region, Belgium and even the Netherlands (port of Rotterdam).

Rising quality of life

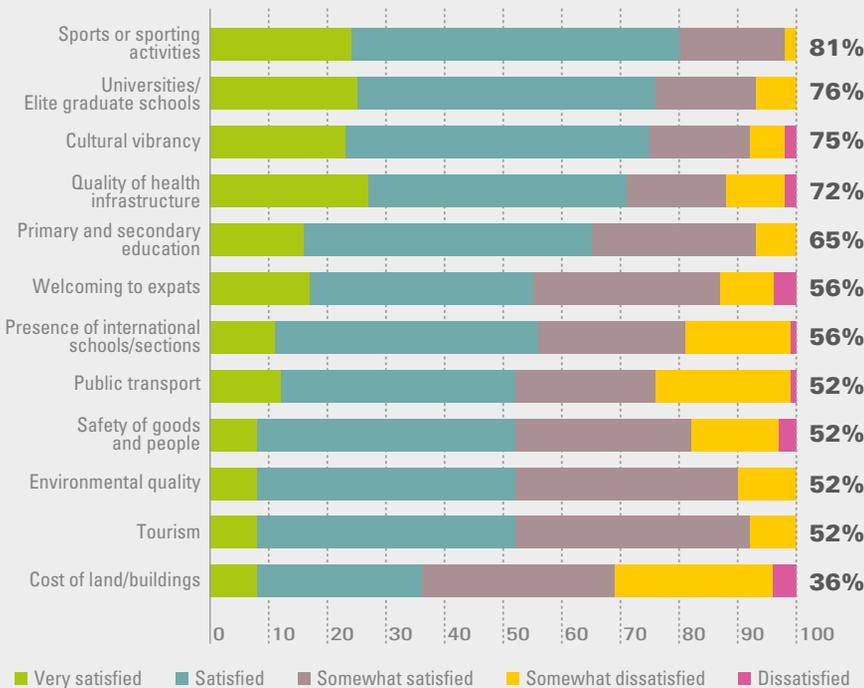
53% of respondents say that quality of life in Hauts-de-France has risen over the past ten years, noting improvements in culture and tourism thanks to a broad range of diverse leisure activities. Higher education was an especially prominent asset, with a 76% satisfaction rate, and the region's health infrastructure also scores well at 72%.

How would you rate your current satisfaction level in the following areas?

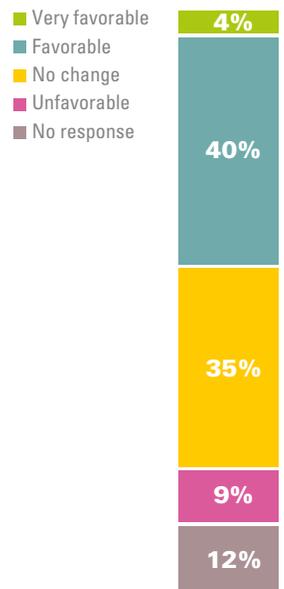
INFRASTRUCTURE ACCESSIBILITY



How would you rate your current satisfaction level in the following areas?



Overall, how would you describe the change in quality of life over the past ten years?



This new KPMG report clearly shows that Hauts-de-France—described by one respondent as a “gold mine”—has powerful assets: a central location, infrastructures with enormous potential, and a productive workforce, as well as strong human values and satisfying quality of life.