

## Exporting from France

*Improving the French economy's export performance is one of the main objectives of the government. Six companies, domestic and international, explain why they have chosen to produce in France, before exporting goods around the world.*

In 2018, exports of goods from France have gone up 3.8%. According to customs statistics, this growth is largely due to the automobile and textile/clothing/leather sectors with respectively +7.9% and 8.2%. These numbers have been closely monitored by the government which has made improving exports one of its top priorities. The stakes are high as nearly 6 million jobs are directly linked to exports, a quarter of France's working population.

Another encouraging sign, according to the Euler Hermes barometer, 8 in 10 exporting companies want to increase sales abroad, five points up from the last barometer. Furthermore, 72% of companies explain that their international development stems from exports from France. In the same vein, according to the latest *Baromètre Export* published by Business France, the vast majority of companies asked are predicting an increase in their export sales figures over the next three years. This growth will be driven by reaching new markets: 64% of companies based in France (two thirds of French companies and 52% of foreign firms) confirm a desire to export to new destinations within three years.

The deciders consider France enjoys a number of assets to encourage exports. They highlight the quality of French goods in services (93%), the country's reputation (87%), the quality of logistics across the country (85%), transport infrastructure (84%) as well as the stability of the Euro (82%). Moreover, 68% of deciders asked emphasize the value of France's numerous export facilitators.

France also enjoys a favorable geographic location, which, linked with high quality transport infrastructure, make it a "hub" for exporting to Europe and Africa. 70% of foreign companies based in France, confirm that France is their hub for exports towards Africa and 81% for exports towards Africa.

SMEs, big companies, domestic or foreign - here are six testimonies from companies that export out of France, irrespective of sector or industry.

### **Hélioscopie**

Based in Vienne (Isère)

Staff : 12 employees

Turnover : not provided

Hélioscopie, a company belonging to the Santé Actions group (500 collaborators and over 50 million euros in turnover) offers uninvasive solutions to people suffering from obesity (gastric bands, stomach balloons). These products are sold in around 50 countries.

*"We have started seriously developing exports in 2011,"* explains Jean-Pierre Duterlay, commercial director for the Santé Actions group. At the time, exports made up just 25% of the company's turnover. *"It is now the other way around; 75% of our turnover comes from export, mainly to Italy and the Middle East. Without exports, we wouldn't exist,"* he adds.

Next step: China and Brazil. *“Since 2012, Business France brings us crucial logistical support which allows us to take part in two conferences every year: Arab Health in the Middle East and Medica in Germany,”* highlights Jean-Pierre Duterlay.

## **Cimel Electronique**

Based in Paris (11<sup>th</sup>)

Staff : 25 employees

2017 turnover : 5 million euro

Cimel Electronique specializes in the design, production and sale of meteorological and pollution measuring equipment.

*“85% of our sales are exports and our main markets are the US, China and Europe,”* explains Didier Crozel, Cimel’s CEO. *“For example, Cimel Electronique is the only provider of photometers - a tool used to measure the luminous intensity of the atmosphere - for the global network, organized by Nasa, which contributes to the study of climate change.”* The company has also partnered up with the CNRS. *“France benefits from high quality research centres and an active policy of supporting innovation, notably with research tax credits,”* points out Didier Crozel.

The company also benefits from the support of Business France, for 25 years, notably through the organization of seminars around global meteorology, helping to build relationships with future clients.

## **VFP Ink Technologies**

Based in Villeneuve-la-Garenne (Hauts-de-Seine)

Staffing : 40 salariés

Turnover : 8 million euro in 2017

When Arnaud Maquinghen took the reins again in 2010, only 5% of the company’s sales were done abroad. *“We have completely changed the focus of the company by investing in R&D to lead a niche market: credit card ink,”* he explains.

The company now exports to 37 countries, mainly to China and the US and foreign sales make up 60% of their profits. The goal is to reach 80% of sales for export within three years by reaching new markets, like India and South America.

*“Since 2010, Business France offers us logistical and financial support which allows us to be present at big international conventions. We were at CES in Las Vegas under the Business France banner in the French automotive section offering a new solution: a conductive, flexible and stretchable ink, to print electronics on any type of base and everyday items. The Business France network has allowed us to meet big automotive equipment providers and introduce them to our solutions,”* explains Arnaud Maquinghen

## **PSA Group**

Based in Rueil-Malmaison (Hauts-de-Seine)  
Staffing : 212 000 employees and contractors  
Turnover in 2017 : 65,2 billion Euro

The second largest auto manufacturer in Europe has 17 production centers in France (five of which produce vehicles), producing from France as well as other European markets, Africa, the Middle East and even South America for certain models. *“The Group benefits from producing close to our distribution hubs and clients. Thus, France remains a very good location to service our main European markets,”* explains Yann Vincent, Executive Vice-President for Industrial Direction and Supply Chain.

The PSA Group employs 68 000 people in France as of late 2017 and its five assembly factories produced 1.1 million vehicles, a third of the group’s global production. *“The plan we’ve followed for several years for our factories is to make them more flexible and more productive; this allows us to have a very good industrial production in France,”* adds Yann Vincent. *“Furthermore, we have committed to our social partners, in the context of our “Nouvel Elan” plan for growth, to producing a million vehicles a year in France”*

With nearly 6 billion euro in commercial surplus, the PSA group is the biggest automotive contributor to France’s commercial balance in 2017.

## **Bayer**

German company  
Staffing : 99 800 employees  
Turnover in 2017 : 35 billion Euro

The Bayer group, whose core focus is in the health and agriculture industries, has had a presence in France since the start of the 20th century. This German company lists 13 sites in the country - with four dedicated to R&D and three to production - and employs 3036 staff. Bayer France registered a turnover of 1.4 billion euro, 783 million of which came from exports (70% to Europe). France is the seventh biggest market for the company globally.

*“Our research centers in France benefit from the very high level of competence and qualification of French engineers, explain Bayer’s representatives; the group has also chosen to produce and export from France due to the infrastructure quality and economic dynamism”.*

## **Adisseo**

Former franchise of the Rhône Poulenc group. Now a franchise of the China National BlueStar group since 2006 (23 000 employees 6,4 billion euro turnover)  
Staffing : 2 200 employees  
Turnover in 2017 2017 : 1,36 billion euro

Adisseo, one of the global leaders in animal nutrition, exploits seven industrial sites around the world, six of which are in France, and employs 1000 staff in country. *“More than 90% of our sales are exports. Europe and the Middle East/Africa represent 50% while Asia Pacific, South and North America make up the other 50%,”* details Jean-Marc Dublanc, Adisseo’s Ceo.

According to him, France has a number of assets to export globally (100 different countries): *“France is at the heart of Europe, with maritime routes towards Africa, the Middle East and the Americas. As for logistics, her transport infrastructure (air, road and rail) are of high quality and make for a full network.”* Among the other advantages, he notes a well-qualified workforce and a good quality of life as well as social standards (health, education) which *“attract and maintain a quality workforce with skills that are indispensable for developing and producing in France.”*

*“Finally, the main research tax credit is also a major draw for companies investing in R&D,”* he concludes.

Constance de Cambiaire