

PRESS RELEASE

For the sixth year in a row, France was the leading destination in Europe for foreign investors in 2024

Paris, May 15, 2025 – EY today published the 2025 edition of its “France Attractiveness Survey”, which provides an overview of foreign investment projects in Europe and analyzes how France is perceived by economic decision-makers. Conducted annually, this study helps position France in the European competitive landscape when it comes to welcoming investment.

In an environment marked by a decline in investment to the European Union (-23%, according to UN Trade and Development (UNCTAD)), **France has managed to maintain its leading position for the sixth year in a row.** It recorded 1,025 projects in 2024, despite a fall of 14%, and was still ahead of the United Kingdom (853 projects, -13%) and Germany (608 projects, -17%). **France received 19% of foreign investments destined for Europe in 2024**, a slightly higher share than it recorded in 2019 (18.7%). This continued pole position in the EY survey illustrates France’s ability to remain attractive to investors, despite an unstable global economic context.

In 2024, France maintained its leading position among European destinations for industrial investment, with 415 projects. It attracted more than one-quarter of foreign manufacturing projects in Europe, ahead of Turkey (227 investments) and the United Kingdom (183). This positioning strengthens France’s status as a preferred host country for industry in Europe, thanks in particular to fast-tracked procedures, the consolidation of available skills and the development of strategic sectors. These enhancements are contributing to improving the country’s competitiveness and supporting its economic attractiveness to industrial investors.

With 104 projects identified in 2024 in the field of research and development, **France is consolidating its position as the leading European destination for innovative investments.** This leadership is based on a pro-active public strategy for future technologies, embodied by the “France 2030” plan. The combination of innovation financing, support for strategic sectors and backing for research ecosystems creates favorable conditions for long-term investment. In a context of increased international technological competition, **France stands out particularly in the sectors of artificial intelligence and quantum research, where it is ranked first in Europe**, with 41 projects hosted from abroad, ahead of the United Kingdom (27 projects) and Spain (15 projects).

In terms of geographic distribution, foreign investment benefited every French region, with 75% of all projects located outside Ile de France (Paris region) in 2024. This figure confirms the economic attractiveness of the regions in their diversity, driven by solid industrial ecosystems, suitable infrastructure and the involvement of local stakeholders. It also illustrates France’s ability to offer competitive local location solutions, thereby contributing to greater balanced economic development between regions.

The perception investigation accompanying the survey shows that **62% of the executives surveyed were planning a project in France as early as 2025, while 70% anticipate an improvement in the country’s economic attractiveness over the next three years.** These results reflect strong confidence in the French economy, perceived as stable, resilient and full of opportunities, confirming its ability to adapt to global economic uncertainties.

“And six! For the sixth year in a row, France was the most attractive country in Europe for foreign direct investment in 2024. Despite a sharp decline in foreign investment flows, despite trade tensions and uncertainties, France maintained its standing. In industry, in artificial intelligence, in R&D, France is

asserting its leadership and excellence. This good result is the fruit of the work undertaken since 2017 under the leadership of the French President to make France more competitive, more innovative and more attractive. Foreign investors are not mistaken: France is at the forefront in key sectors that contribute to our sovereignty and are preparing the future of our economy: agri-food, energy and even quantum, for example.

“We have stayed the course of supply-side policy, we continue to invest to transform our country with ‘France 2030’, and we’re working to continue making life easier for business leaders. With more than 75% of investments taking place outside of Ile de France (Paris region), all our regions benefit from foreign investment projects. With seven out of 10 investors anticipating an improvement in economic attractiveness over the coming three years, this survey encourages France and Europe to continue the work undertaken so far. This is what we did in February 2025 with the Artificial Intelligence Summit and this is what we’ll continue to do, beside the French President, with the eighth edition of the ‘Choose France’ summit,” said Laurent Saint-Martin, Minister Delegate with responsibility for Foreign Trade and French Nationals Abroad.

“For the sixth year in a row, France has topped the European attractiveness rankings, a performance that reflects the impact of a strategy that is clearly focused on innovation. Whether in artificial intelligence, quantum technologies, healthcare or the energy transition, France is attracting projects intensive in technology across the country. The announcement of €109 billion in investments at the global Artificial Intelligence Summit in Paris illustrates the credibility of our ecosystem and the confidence that our vision inspires. This momentum is not limited to a few sectors of excellence but is based on reforms, regional commitment and the ability to support industrial transformations. It’s this model of economic attractiveness, based on innovation, stability and a forward-looking vision, which makes the difference,” said Pascal Cagni, Chairman of the Board of Directors of Business France.

“France is pursuing its re-industrialization strategy, while boosting its commitment to ecological transition and innovation. This coherent trajectory is now fully recognized by foreign investors, who find in France a stable, transparent environment that is focused on future technologies. The projects we support illustrate this dynamic: industrial establishments with high value-added, that are sustainable and anchored in the regions. In 2024, 66% of investment projects benefited from tailored support from Business France, accounting for a significant share of jobs created or maintained,” said Marie-Cécile Tardieu, Chief Operating Officer (Investment Division) of Business France.

About Business France

Business France is the public consulting business serving the international development of the French economy. It is responsible for fostering export-led growth by French businesses, as well as promoting and facilitating foreign investment in France.

It promotes France’s firms, business image and nationwide attractiveness as an investment location, and also runs the VIE international internship program. Business France has more than 1,400 personnel, both in France and in 53 countries throughout the world.

In 2024, support from Business France made it possible to generate €1.8 billion in additional export revenues for French SMEs and mid-size companies, accounting for more than 31,010 jobs created or planned. Business France supported 66% of the 1,688 foreign investment decisions in 2024, accounting for 69% of the 37,787 jobs to be created or maintained nationwide within the next three years.

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