

Foreign multinationals in 2023

Hauts-de-France

Context

The French National Institute of Statistics and Economic Studies (INSEE) collects, produces, analyzes and disseminates information and data on the French economy. In the area of business statistics, INSEE can identify foreign businesses established in France. Based on this data, the institute carries out studies at national and regional levels, particularly through its regional offices, to contribute to a better understanding of foreign multinationals in public discussions.

Business France produces an Annual Report on Foreign Investment in France. This report includes firm decisions regarding foreign investment projects that create or maintain employment nationwide. These projects are detected by Business France through the monitoring of public announcements and the recording of projects by local authorities. Regardless of the method used for data collection, all projects are approved by the Regional Economic Development Agencies. In 2025, 1,878 investment decisions were made by foreign businesses in France, creating or maintaining 47,734 jobs.

This collaboration between INSEE and Business France aims to provide an overview of foreign multinationals in France and the establishments involved in a project supported by Business France. A national picture of foreign businesses in France therefore aims to improve understanding of the footprint left by foreign firms across France's regions and, in particular, the establishments supported by Business France at least once since 2014. Twelve regional profiles also feature foreign businesses within their respective regions.

This data will enable a better understanding of the role of foreign businesses in the French economy and Business France's support in terms of their establishment and sustainability.

The partnership between INSEE and Business France for this report required methodological adjustments to match the data. The scope of this report therefore only covers a portion of the more than 7,800 foreign businesses that chose to invest in France between 2014 and 2025, according to data from Business France. The methodology and definitions are featured at the end of the report.

Foreign multinationals in the region

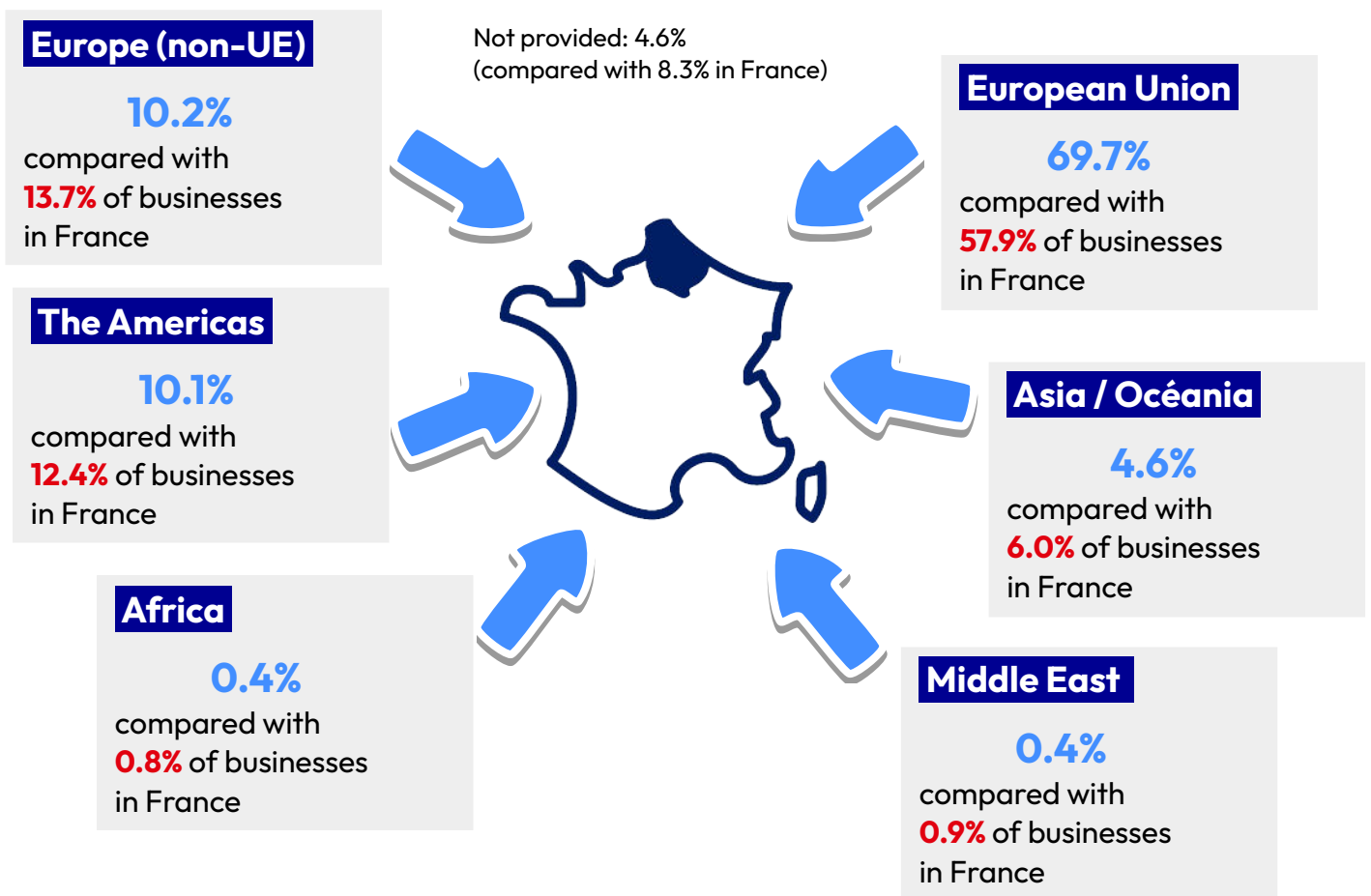
2,460
businesses operating
in Hauts-de-France
in 2023



Namely **13%** of
foreign
multinationals
based in France

189 firms supported by
Business France
at least once since 2014
within the scope of the report

Geographical source area of businesses



(N/A): Confidential statistical data
Scope: France, excluding Mayotte; all active establishments of non-agricultural commercial enterprises (excluding micro-entrepreneurs) belonging to a foreign multinational.
Source : Insee, Fare 2023, Flores 2023.

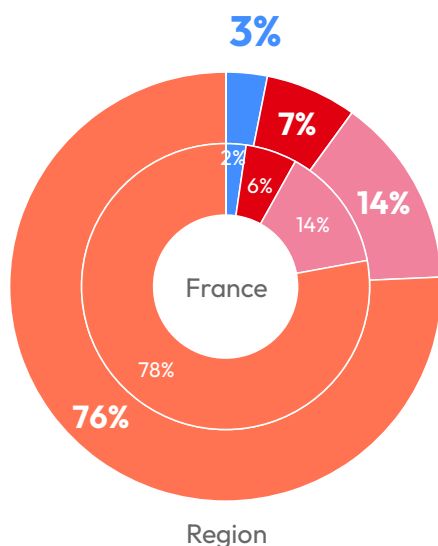
Source of establishments

8.2% of **foreign-owned** establishments in France
are in the Hauts-de-France region.
(they belong to foreign multinationals)

Source of the establishment group

■ Foreign multinationals ■ French multinationals ■ French groups based in France ■ French independent businesses

Establishments



7,510

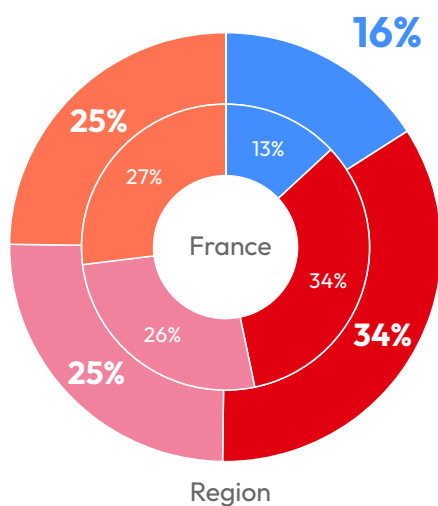
foreign-owned establishments
in 2023.



264

supported by
Business France
at least once since 2014

Full-time equivalent (FTE) employees



176,030

full-time equivalent (FTE) employees
under foreign ownership
in 2023.



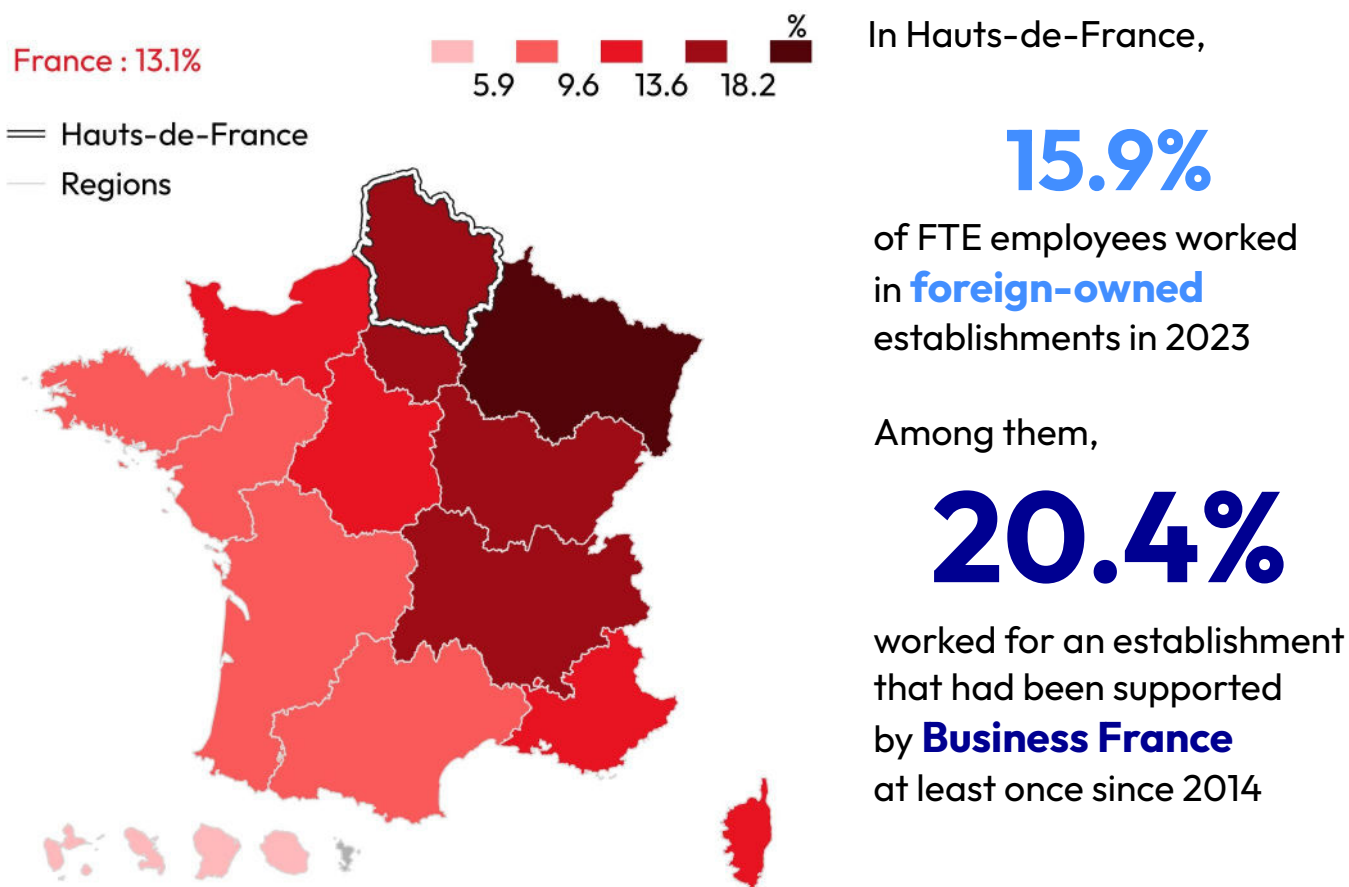
36,000

employees of an establishment
supported by **Business France**
at least once since 2014

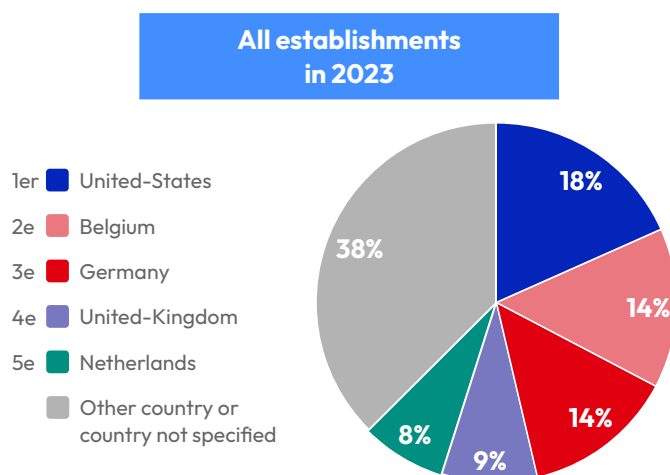
*Scope: France, excluding Mayotte; all active establishments of non-agricultural commercial enterprises (excluding micro-entrepreneurs).
Source : Insee, Fare 2023, Flores 2023.*

Employees under foreign ownership

Share of full-time equivalent (FTE) employees working for a foreign multinational in 2023 by region



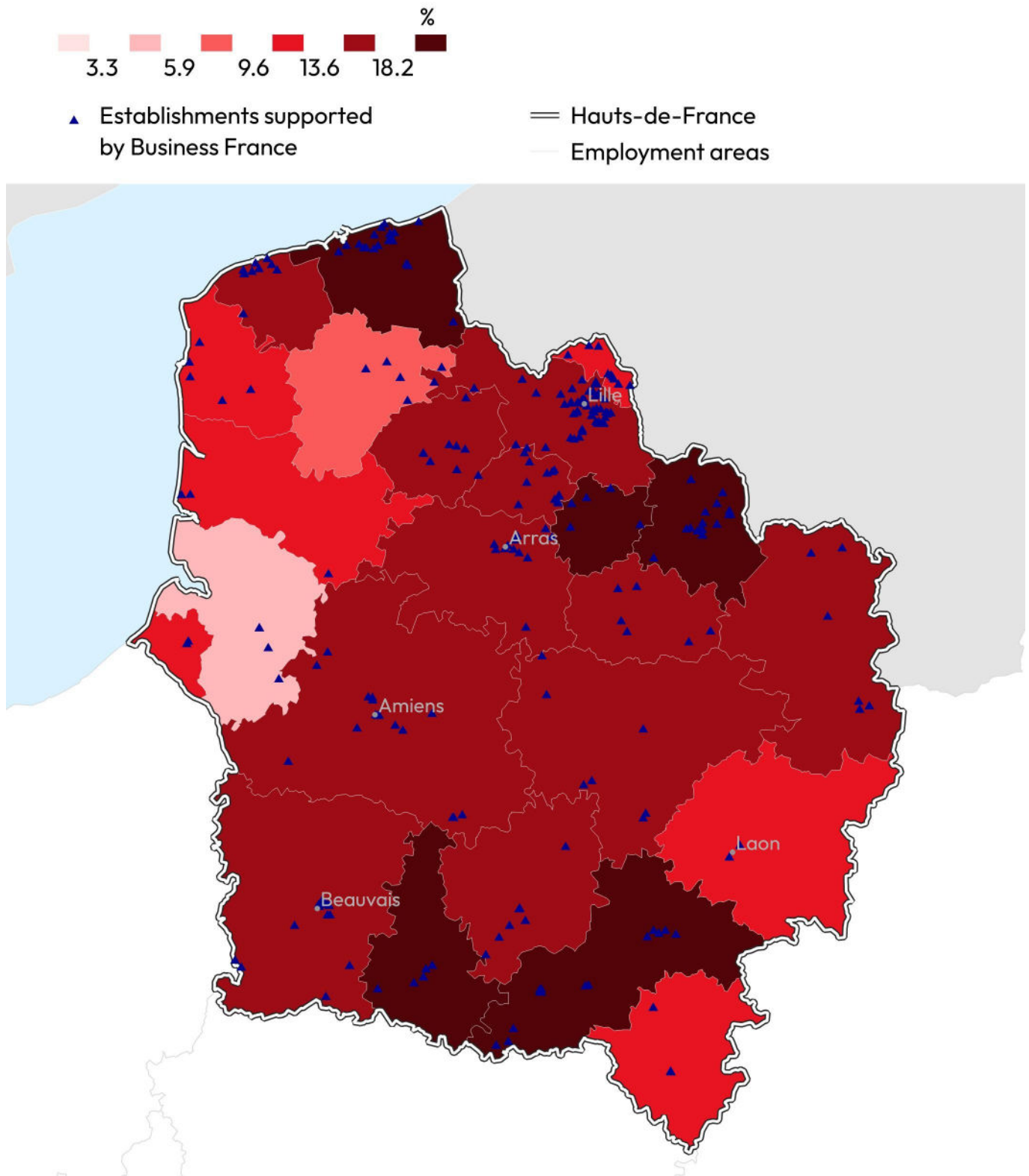
Share of full-time equivalent (FTE) employees under foreign ownership by the five main source countries in Hauts-de-France



Scope: France, excluding Mayotte; all active establishments of non-agricultural commercial enterprises (excluding micro-entrepreneurs) belonging to a foreign multinational.
Source : Insee, Fare 2023, Flores 2023.

Location

Share of full-time equivalent employees under foreign ownership by employment area in 2023 and location of establishments supported by Business France at least once since 2014



*Scope: France, excluding Mayotte; all active establishments of non-agricultural commercial enterprises (excluding micro-entrepreneurs) belonging to a foreign multinational.
Source : Insee, Fare 2023, Flores 2023.*

Business categories

In Hauts-de-France, **47%** of full-time equivalent (FTE) employees work for a **mid-sized company** under **foreign ownership**, compared with **51%** in France

A business category applies solely to the French footprint of that particular firm.

Distribution of foreign-owned establishments and full-time equivalent (FTE) employees by business category

Micro-enterprises SMEs (excluding micro-enterprises) Mid-sized companies Large corporates

Establishments

FTE employees

All establishments in 2023



Supported by Business France since 2014



2,980 establishments under **foreign ownership** in 2023 belong to a

mid-sized company

of which

125

1,890 establishments under **foreign ownership** in 2023 belong to a

large corporate

of which

54

had been supported at least once by **Business France** since 2014

Scope: France, excluding Mayotte; all active establishments of non-agricultural commercial enterprises (excluding micro-entrepreneurs) belonging to a foreign multinational.
Source : Insee, Fare 2023, Flores 2023.

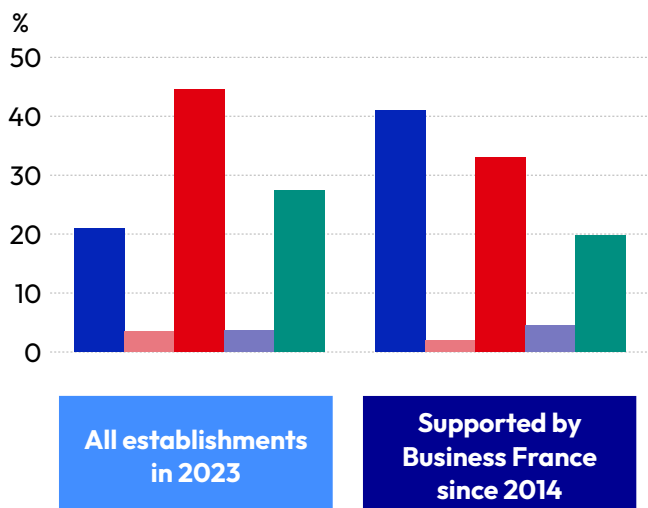
Business activity

In Hauts-de-France, **46%** of full-time equivalent (FTE) employees working for a **foreign ownership** firm are in the **INDUSTRIAL** sector, compared with **38%** in France

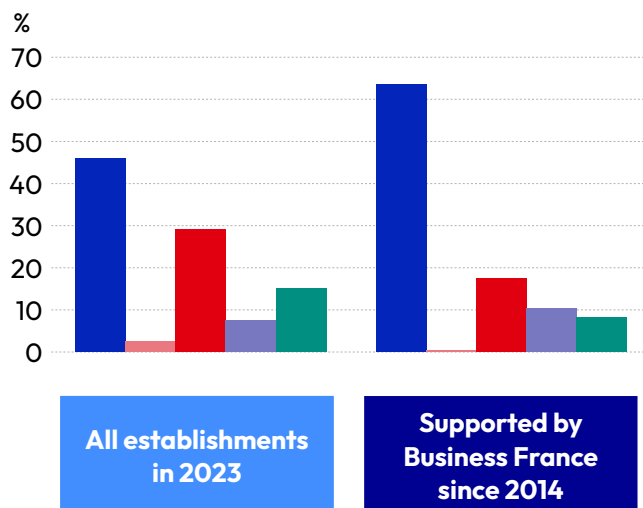
Distribution of establishments under foreign ownership and full-time equivalent (FTE) employees by business sector

■ Industry ■ Construction ■ Retail ■ Transport ■ Services

Establishments



FTE employees



3,350 foreign-owned establishments in 2023 in the **WHOLESALE** sector of which **87**

1,570 foreign-owned establishments in 2023 in the **INDUSTRIAL** sector of which **108**

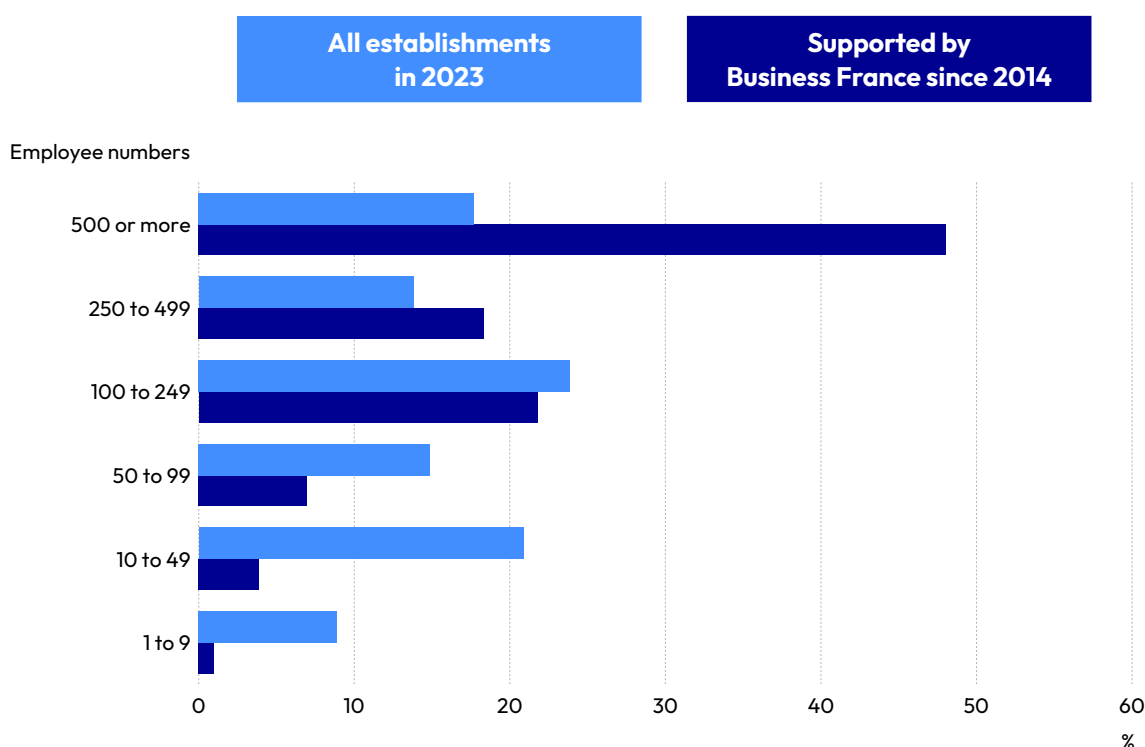
had been supported at least once by **Business France** since 2014

*Scope: France, excluding Mayotte; all active establishments of non-agricultural commercial enterprises (excluding micro-entrepreneurs) belonging to a foreign multinational.
Source : Insee, Fare 2023, Flores 2023.*

Establishment size

In Hauts-de-France, **24%** of full-time equivalent (FTE) employees work in **foreign-owned** establishments that employ between **100 and 249 people**, compared with **22%** in France

Distribution of full-time equivalent (FTE) employees working for a business under foreign ownership by the size of the establishment



42,010 full-time equivalent (FTE) employees worked for a **foreign-owned** business in 2023, with between **100 and 249 people** of which **7,840** worked for an establishment that had been supported at least once by **Business France** since 2014

Scope: France, excluding Mayotte; all active establishments of non-agricultural commercial enterprises (excluding micro-entrepreneurs) belonging to a foreign multinational.
Source : Insee, Fare 2023, Flores 2023.

Sources

Fare : The É sane (preparation of annual business statistics) Approximate Results Database (Fare) is a tool that produces structural statistics for businesses. Fare contains individual accounting data. It combines administrative data and data from the annual sectoral survey (ESA) and the annual production survey (EAP) .

<https://www.insee.fr/fr/metadonnees/source/serie/s1188>

Florès : Set of microdata files that describe salaried employment at the level of establishments.

Definitions and Scope

Foreign multinationals

In this publication, the term “foreign multinationals” refers to businesses owned by foreign multinational firms (92%) but also to foreign independent units (8%).

A foreign multinational firm is a group of companies whose decision-making center is located abroad and which controls at least one subsidiary (a legal entity, of which more than 50% is owned by another foreign legal entity) in France.

The scope covers all non-agricultural foreign commercial enterprises (excluding micro-entrepreneurs) with at least one active establishment in France (excluding Mayotte) in 2023.

Foreign-owned establishments

All active establishments located in France (excluding Mayotte) belonging to a foreign multinational in 2023.

Establishments supported by Business France

Establishments that were supported by Business France at least once between 2014 and 2023, under foreign ownership and still operating according to INSEE data in 2023.

The Business France investment decision database includes all projects identified since 2014. Retail projects are not included in this report as they are based on an independent establishment strategy.

Source of the business's parent group

- **Foreign multinational** : see above;
- **French group based in France** : A business with its decision-making center and all its subsidiaries in France. ;
- **French multinational** : A multinational firm with a decision-making center in France and at least one foreign subsidiary ;
- **French independent business** : A firm with a decision-making center in France and which does not belong to a group.

Full-time equivalent (FTE)

Total number of hours worked in the relevant activity divided by the annual average of hours worked in full-time jobs nationwide.

Business categories

A business category applies solely to the French footprint of a particular firm.

- **Small and medium-sized enterprises** (SMEs) are those that, on the one hand, employ fewer than 250 people and, on the other, have annual revenues not exceeding €50 million or a balance sheet total not exceeding €43 million ;
- Among these, **micro-enterprises** employ fewer than 10 people and have annual revenues or a balance sheet total not exceeding €2 million ;
- **Mid-sized companies** (ETIs) are businesses that do not belong in the SME category and that, on the one hand, employ fewer than 5,000 people and, on the other, have annual revenues not exceeding €1.5 billion or a balance sheet total not exceeding €2 billion ;
- **Large corporates** are businesses that are not classified in the preceding categories.

Services

Service activities here exclude transport and retail. They encompass business services, personal services, mixed services (hotels and restaurants, real estate activities, information-communication), and principally non-market services.



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 V.I.E international internship program. Business France has more than 1,400 personnel, both in France and in 55 countries throughout the world.

www.businessfrance.fr - © Business France



The National Institute of Statistics and Economic Studies (INSEE) conducts its work with complete professional independence.

In coordination with the statistical services of government ministries, the institute collects, produces and analyzes data on the French economy and society, based on surveys of households and businesses, as well as administrative data. It makes all the information produced freely available on insee.fr.

INSEE also conducts the population census and manages major national registers, such as the Sirene business register and the single electoral register.

INSEE coordinates French statistical activities for the statistical service of the European Commission (Eurostat) and provides a large portion of its French data.

